

# MAGNETISM AND MAGIC

*This book is an abbreviated translation of "La  
Magie Dévoilée," of which the first edition was  
issued in Paris in 1852.*

# MAGNETISM AND MAGIC

BY

BARON DU POTET DE SENNEVOY

EDITED AND TRANSLATED

BY

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**“ Si quis habet AURES audiendi, audiat.”**

Sleep, sleep on ! forget thy pain.  
My hand is on thy brow,  
My spirit on thy brain,  
My pity on thy heart, poor friend ;  
And from my fingers flow  
The powers of life, and, like a sign,  
Seal thee from thine hour of woe,  
And brood on thee, but may not blend  
With thine.

SHELLEY, 1822.

All I believed is true !  
I am able yet  
All I want, to get  
By a method as strange as new :  
Dare I trust the same to you ?

BROWNING, 1855.

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## INTRODUCTORY ESSAY

THERE are certain controversial subjects which seem to die away in one generation only to be reborn, under new names, in the next, and not the least interesting of these is the question of what has come to be known popularly as Mesmer's "invisible fluid" or Animal Magnetism. Official science attempted (in its own opinion successfully) to banish all such ideas from the realm of "ascertained" knowledge. Yet the air to-day is filled with discussion of Mental Healing, Psycho-therapeutics, Christian Science, "New" Thought, and Spiritual Healing. The smoke of one fire no sooner disperses than fresh sparks spring up elsewhere. Most of the latest discoveries—such as those of Radium and Relativity—are destroying, not the old dogmas of mysticism, but the hastily formed dogmas of Victorian science. "The atom," as G. K. Chesterton says, "has been smashed into atoms. The agnostics have been driven back on agnosticism, and find themselves in a really unknown world, which is more mystical, at least more mysterious." The cosmic pattern is changing, almost under our eyes. And of all the old hard-shell materialisms perhaps the medical type is affected most directly. Christian Science is already avenging the wrongs of Mesmer and Elliotson: while the well-known case of Sir Herbert Barker recalls the dry observation of Bergasse during the Paris controversy about Mesmer's cures: "It looks as if the Art of Medicine and the Art of Healing are two quite distinct things with no necessary connection between them."

The purpose of this volume is to present to English readers an abbreviated translation of a book by a remarkable Frenchman whose strange exploits were for a period the talk of Paris. Du Potet, indeed, when he died in 1881, might well claim to be the "Grand Old Man" of French Magnetism. He is an isolated figure; he flamed like a comet and, in a sense, survived his own celebrity. Apparently he left no school of disciples behind, and has suffered the fate of most of the champions of Animal Magnetism in being officially regarded as an idle dreamer of dreams. To-day, however, miracles and magic are no longer the monstrosities they appeared to be in the Huxley-Tyndall period. We cannot rule out the old marvels as impossible in face of the new marvels which we have to admit as possible. Du Potet's recorded phenomena, indeed, at first seem to lead nowhere, and he admits that he is only a pioneer. Yet for the reader who comes properly prepared, such facts may be shown to point towards regions of which he and his adversaries scarcely dreamed. As the controversy has largely centred round the question of Magnetic cures, it will be simplest to use this avenue in approaching the true "Subject-Matter" of his writings.

Hippocrates observed long ago that Nature herself often cured disease: and in his opinion the best physicians were those who watched her in her more subtle workings. There seems to be hardly any malady from which the patient does not sometimes recover without the aid of ordinary medical remedies, i.e. by the simple unhindered operation of the Vital Principle. Doctors, confronted by this phenomenon, attribute it to the "*Vis Medicatrix Naturæ*"—which they do not further explain: nor, indeed, can they, on those

materialistic assumptions which are still associated with what is called a "scientific basis of knowledge." For no one can test this "Vis Medicatrix" in a laboratory, and therefore it does not officially exist, and is accordingly left to "the superstitious, the mystics, and the occultists," who are despised and rejected by Harley Street.

What is the "Vis Medicatrix Naturæ"? It is universal, invisible, intangible, imponderable. It can perform feats which the doctor cannot rival, and it escapes round the corner before its presence has even been guessed. It is like the luminiferous ether which tantalizes our scientists, all-pervading, yet subtly elusive of every attempt to capture it. Indeed, there seems only one clue to its identity. It is an aspect, or a mode, or an effect—whichever the reader may choose—of the "Universal Subject" or "First Matter" of ancient Alchemy: the substrate of life centrally subsisting in all that circumferentially exists from it. A common name for it was the "Sophic Mercury"—i.e. Wise Men's Mercury, to distinguish it from common quicksilver. Yet it has received so many names that it is really unnameable, though not unknowable.

A certain thing is found in the world  
Which is also in every thing and in every place:  
It is not earth, nor fire, nor air, nor water,  
Albeit it wants neither of these things. . . .  
It contains in itself all Life;

Of it is made the medicine that will preserve you from  
all maladies.

"Lucerna Salis."

It is, indeed, one of the most ancient of all beliefs that there is a fluid or vitalizing principle permeating the whole universe and latent in the air we breathe—a quality in the atmosphere which is a secret food

of life. This One Element, insisted on by the alchemists as their "Sola Res," has naturally been derided by most modern scientists, yet its existence has been granted by such chemists as Homberg, Boerhaave, Boyle and others, and by such master-minds as Newton. This diffused substance (or fluid) is sensible only in its mixed forms: yet it is the only pure and active source of all things, binding the natural elements, vitalizing bodies: the fontal Spirit of Nature, apart from manifestation, and as distinct from that elementary ignition with which our senses are familiar.

This invisible "Fire," "Stone," or "Ether," became known to certain sages through its masculine and feminine, or attractive and repelling, effects or aspects, and was noticed especially through the analogy of the magnet. From very early times it was observed that the magnet appeared to possess a certain curative power: and the idea dawned that the human body possessed magnetic properties. Paracelsus held that all animated beings are endowed with an occult power analogous to mineral magnetism. This, he thought, was derived from the stars: he called it "Magnale," and said that by its virtue the magnetism of healthy persons attracts the enfeebled magnetism of the sick. He is said to have personally used the magnet with his patients. His chief medicinal "medium" he called "Mumia," the life-essence contained (invisibly) in some physical vehicle, such as part of a human animal, or vegetable body: which even when separated from its parental organism retains for a period its vital power.<sup>1</sup> Robert Fludd, who attained some

<sup>1</sup> The usual method of securing it was to cut off a limb from the recently suspended corpse of some (preferably young) criminal. See Appendix A, p. 141.



distinction in the middle of the seventeenth century as a "Rosicrucian" writer, gives a fairly succinct view of the magnetic theory. "Man containeth in himself his heavens, circles, poles, and stars even as the great world outside. These particular (i.e. micro-cosmic) heavens ordinarily govern themselves according to the harmony of the superior motions (i.e. in the outer heavens). Sick persons by the persuasion of their proper heaven have wandered from the motion of the universal heaven, and through the disharmony they feel more keenly the changes of seasons, etc. When man was made in the Divine likeness he was able to effect all things by his mere beck or will, but this magical power now sleeps in him because of the Fall."—"Mosaicall Philosophy.") Maxwell, a Scottish physician of the same period, writes: "From the stars, the human body, and all substances in the universe there radiate forth beams which reciprocally affect all other bodies: but the starry influence is original and predominant. Every astral influence in creation doth by a natural inclination, and that sympathetically, aspect the Star or celestial Fountain whence it sprang. Likewise the Star in heaven by a paternal respect doth send down his influence to feed and nourish his like filial force and fire in creation here below. The stars bind the vital spirit to its proper body by light and heat and pour it into the same by the same means."—"De Medicina Magnetica.") Fludd and Maxwell mean that these rays or beams are of inconceivable tenuity, but are only the vehicle of the indwelling spirit which directs their operation and gives them their virtue. Fludd continues: "The Ethersical Sperm or Astrallical influences are of a far subtler condition than the vehicle of visible light. . . . Yea,

they are so thin and mobile, penetrating and lively . . . that they continually penetrate even unto the centre or universal bosom of the earth, where they generate metals of sundry kinds. It is not the starry light which penetrateth or deeply or operateth or universally, but the Eternal Central Spirit." All things emit these beams: it is thus that medicines send forth their healing influence. Man holds within himself a secret mystery, the centre or miracle of the world. Fludd describes the spiritual "mumia," which has its seat in the blood, thus agreeing with the alchemical teaching that the universal principles of attraction, repulsion, and circulation are in their natural generation unequally composed in the vital spirit of the arterial blood: or that, the repulsive force predominating over the interior attraction, the total circulating life is expulsive and is drawn away in a weakened consciousness from its First Cause.

Johann Baptist van Helmont (1597-1644), an eminent Belgian chemist who established the present scientific sense of the word "gas," was another practising disciple of Paracelsus. Material nature, he declared, draws her forms through constant magnetism from above, and implores for them the favour of heaven: and as heaven, likewise, draws something invisible from below, a free and mutual intercourse is established, and the whole is (micro-cosmically) contained in an individual person. Magnetism contains nothing new but its name. Man is a magnet and contains his own "poles" or points of reciprocal attraction and repulsion, corresponding to the opposites of light and darkness, centripetal and centrifugal action, male and female, etc. The medium by which his influence is conveyed is a subtle and vital essence, pervading all bodies, establishing

a correspondence between all the different parts of the world, and regulating their forces. This essence Van Helmont called "*Magnale magnum*": but he did not connect it specially with the stars. "The stars of our intelligence are far above the stars of heaven." All magical power lies dormant in man and it requires to be excited. *Will* is the first of all powers, for by volition motion is impressed on all objects: the will existing in man is the principle of all his actions, and the will can direct the subtle "*Magnale magnum*." No patient is in a favourable condition unless his internal imagination abandons itself entirely to the impression the physician wishes to produce upon him: or if he possesses more energy than he who operates. If the patient be well disposed, or weak, he readily yields to the magnetic influence of the operator through the medium of his imagination. Thus Van Helmont seems to have anticipated the modern schools led by Charcot and others with their endless insistence upon suggestion and imagination and the subjective factor in the patient. He claimed to have cured thousands of patients yearly "without any diminution of his medicine." So astounding were his cures that he was actually accused of magic and thrown into prison, whence, fortunately, his friends rescued him. He left two medical treatises on magnetic healing.

Up to the end of the eighteenth century the Magnetic system was, broadly speaking, based on a spiritual philosophy: and in practice religion and healing without drugs were interdependent on each other. In the eyes of such men as Fludd, Maxwell, Van Helmont, and others it was the link between heaven and earth which operated vitally. Man could only obtain complete mastery and use of his latent (or

occult) powers by assimilating his will to the Divine Will. In some writers, such as Paracelsus and Maxwell, greater stress might be laid on the visible operations of the subtle element (*Magnale magnum*), but they never lost sight of the mystical aspect and basis of the whole matter. When religion and healing of this kind parted company, the result was disastrous to both: medical science began to grow materialistic, and Du Potet (not altogether unjustly) complains of the doctors of his day being little else than "mechanics," who had lost sight of Nature's more subtle workings. While, on the other hand, Christian Science has gone to the opposite extreme, and denies the reality or potency of any medical material at all. There can be no real reconciliation until we recognize that the spirit and matter which God has joined together must not be put asunder by our theories.

The man who, unwittingly and innocently, began this disastrous process was Anton Mesmer (1733-1815), the Viennese physician who came to Paris and published his "discovery" of the subtle fluid in 1775. In his system the spiritual aspect practically disappears. For him "Animal Magnetism"—as it began to be called—was purely a question of matter and motion. Probably he presented his theories in this manner, as being better calculated to appeal to Paris doctors in the "Age of Reason," for France was already trembling on the verge of revolution. In any case, Mesmer only revived an old doctrine or philosophy, shorn of its deeper aspects, and gave it a new name: he secularized a mystery, and his explanations suggest it as the mechanical operation of an indifferent non-moral force. It is, however, only fair to remember that he came to Paris, not primarily as a healer, but as the exponent of what he sincerely

believed to be a "new" physical fluid : to demonstrate which, being a doctor, he practised healing. He was personally benevolent and treated his poor patients *gratis*, giving them the same care that he bestowed on the wealthy. Whether he became a greedy charlatan, as his enemies asserted, is doubtful : certainly he spent the last years of his life still practising magnetic cures gratuitously for the poor. Mesmerism has never been proved to have caused any patient's death,<sup>1</sup> or even injury, though its strongest adherents never claimed that it could save every patient's life. One of his remarks deserves mention as it will command assent from many who have scarcely heard of the Mesmeric system : "Nothing proves decisively that either doctors or medicine heal sickness."

Mesmer did not really add anything to the principles of his spiritual predecessors, some examples of which have been quoted, and the twenty-seven articles of his creed may be found in any good book on the subject. It will suffice, therefore, to quote a summary of his ideas from an able English advocate of his system : "Animal Magnetism is that organic susceptibility which renders the nervous system of one individual capable of being affected, in various ways, by particular acts and processes<sup>2</sup> performed by another, especially when accompanied with faith, or some degree of abandonment in the patient, and with an energetic volition on the part of the operator. The same name is also employed to designate the processes

<sup>1</sup> Mesmeric anæsthesia has this great superiority, that no injury has ever resulted to the patient from its use : the recoveries in Dr. Esdaile's hospital were far beyond the average success.—J. Braid, "Magic, Witchcraft, Animal Magnetism, etc.," 1852, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> For a description of Mesmer's "passes," see Appendix B, p. 144.

themselves which are used to produce a cure by means of this susceptibility." \*

Bitterly opposed as he was by his professional brethren, Mesmer became the vogue; in one year he and Dr. Deslon, his lieutenant, are said to have treated 8,000 patients. The logic of M. Bailly and his Commission (condemning Mesmer's theory) was doubtless incontrovertible to the official mind. A "force," intangible, invisible, imponderable, was to them a sort of infernal trinity and could not possibly be admitted to exist. Yet patients, having escaped ordinary medical treatment, went on being cured by a "non-existent" force. To say, as Mesmer's opponents were wont, that such cures were merely the result of a change of treatment, was a rather dangerous admission for doctors to make. If it be, indeed, the purpose of a physician to heal, the sceptical Commissioners might have discovered that even a thing "which does not exist" (for the official mind) may yet be of some use. A second Commission, appointed by the Academy of Medicine after five years' investigation, presented in 1831 a report in which, rather grudgingly and of necessity, the existence of Animal Magnetism was allowed to exist. Though "in the majority of cases the results are negative or insufficient, some results depend solely on magnetism, and cannot be produced without it. These are physiological phenomena and well established therapeutically."

\* J. C. Colquhoun, "Isis Revelata," 1836, i. 59.

Mesmer would probably have agreed with the American, Dr. John Bovee Dods, that medicine produces a physical impression on the system, but never directly cures, the curative power in the patient himself doing this, when summoned by mental impressions to the right spot, so as to enable it to perform its work. The well-known efficacy of bread pills and coloured water as medicine shows that medicines often act as mechanical "suggestives."

MM. Binet and Féré say that the magnetizers made so much of this Report that the Academy did not venture to print<sup>1</sup> it. Mr. J. C. Colquhoun published an English translation in 1833. In 1823 Alexandre Bertrand, a young Paris physician, anticipated Braid in discovering the important part played by suggestion in the phenomena of induced trance, maintaining that the cures and symptoms formerly attributed to Animal Magnetism resulted from the suggestions of the operator acting on the imagination of the patient, whose suggestibility was greatly increased. Bertrand, however, admitted that his own somnambule testified to the reality of the subtle fluid.

As early as 1829 Mesmerism was introduced into England. Its leading champion, Dr. John Elliotson, gave public demonstrations in the University College Hospital. But he, like Mesmer, seemed to his colleagues to be a setter-forth of strange gods, and was opposed so unscrupulously that his private practice was seriously injured. The "Zoist,"<sup>2</sup> founded and edited by him, ran for fourteen years (1842-56), and contains full details of numerous magnetic cures, notably the remarkable operations of Esdaile on Hindu patients:<sup>3</sup> while the hierarchs of medicine (with a few honourable exceptions like Simpson) boycotted all such evidence, and never allowed any record of his painless operations to appear in any official medical journal such as the "Lancet." Into the long and bitter controversy it is not necessary to enter. At length James Braid, a Manchester surgeon,

<sup>1</sup> "Animal Magnetism," 1887, p. 39.

<sup>2</sup> "Zoë," a Greek word, indicating in the New Testament the more subtle and spiritual, as "Bios," indicates the natural, life.

<sup>3</sup> Mesmeric anæsthesia had long been known to Hindu fakirs as "jar-phoonka" (stroke-breathing).

found that by constraining his subjects to fatigue the levator muscles of the eyelids by a prolonged upward gaze, he could obtain a complete trance with the attendant phenomena, usually attributed to Animal Magnetism : rigidity of limbs, exaltation of the senses, etc. Denying *in toto* the existence of Mesmer's "fluid," Braid not only admitted the genuineness of the magnetic sleep, but used it freely for therapeutic purposes : and maintained that he could teach any intelligent medical man to do what he himself did. It has, of course, been the custom for many years to praise him for picking the one jewel of truth out of a heap of Mesmeric rubbish, and this in spite of the glaring fact that the British Association in 1842 refused Braid's proffered paper on hypnotic phenomena ; while after his death in 1861 the whole subject was "suspect" until Liébault, Charcot, and others took it up. In our own country, with the exception of Dr. Kingsbury's book and some translations, little further notice was taken of it until the publication of Dr. Bramwell's book in 1903.

The widely circulated theories of the Salpêtrière school, led by Charcot, depend upon a studious disregard of all facts, however well attested, that do not square with their own. MM. Binet and Féré, in their "Animal Magnetism" (p. 94), refer to "manœuvres which formerly led to the belief that it was possible to magnetize (a subject) from a distance." This belief is then disposed of by the gratuitous supposition that in every such case the subject had been already told to expect such an effect at such and such a time. All, therefore, can be explained by Suggestion (a word as scientifically "blessed" as the old lady's "Mesopotamia") in the



waking state.<sup>1</sup> Anyone who will look into the older Mesmeric literature will find plenty of cases illustrating magnetic influence successfully exerted from a distance on persons quite unprepared to expect it.<sup>2</sup> Another curious assumption of MM. Binet and Féré is that "as far as its mode of production is concerned hypnotic sleep does not essentially differ from natural sleep, of which it is, in fact, only a modification, and all the causes which produce fatigue are capable of producing hypnosis in those who are subject to it. . . . Sensorial excitements produce hypnosis in two ways—when they are strong and abrupt, or when they are faint and continued for a prolonged period" (p. 88). Now if one thing is only a "modification" of another, there can hardly be any essential difference. According to our authors, therefore, there is no essential difference between ordinary sleep and the sleep of the patient whose leg was amputated in 1842 by Mr. Ward, surgeon of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, the patient being in a completely unconscious state, having been mesmerized by Mr. Topham, a barrister: or the sleep of the mesmerized patients on whom Esdaile performed capital operations painlessly! If this be so, the obvious inference is that doctors should abandon anæsthetics and treat their patients as soon as the latter have fallen asleep at night. Again, who can tell us of ordinary sleepers who converse freely (with people wide-awake) on recondite and difficult subjects quite unknown to them in their normal waking condition? <sup>3</sup> What MM. Binet and Féré might have

<sup>1</sup> Although Dr. Bramwell distinctly denies that Suggestion *per se* can explain hypnosis and its phenomena ("Proceedings," Society for Psychical Research, vol. xii, p. 224).

<sup>2</sup> See "Zoist," vol. x, p. 11, article by W. Gregory, Professor of Chemistry in Edinburgh University.

<sup>3</sup> For an example of a remarkable communication on the lucid state see Appendix C, p. 146.

said (with proper modesty and caution) was: "In the narrow phase of magnetic or mesmeric conditions with which we are here concerned—and *until more is known*—there is some analogy between what we term 'hypnosis' and ordinary sleep"—as there is, poetically, between "death and his brother sleep"! As F. W. H. Myers said, "Not one sleep in a million is really hypnosis: not one suggestion in a million reaches or influences the subliminal self. If the theories of Bernheim (of Nancy) in their extreme form were true, there would by this time have been no sufferers to heal."¹ Modern writers on the subject seem to differ from one another, almost as much as they differ from Mesmer and his disciples. Moreover, Charcot "queered the pitch" from the therapeutic point of view, by teaching that the hypnotic condition was a "morbid" one and allied to hysteria: a theory which, naturally enough, created a prejudice against the practice for therapeutic purposes. Pierre Janet went further by saying that all suggestibility implies a departure from perfect sanity! After which we cannot wonder that M. Richet, savant and sceptic, in his latest volume, accuses the whole civilized world of insanity. "A mad world, my masters!" said Shakespeare—but some of us will prefer the divine "mania" of Plato to the frenzied neuroses which seems the only reality left to the mentality of ultra-sceptical scientists.

The real mesmeric or somnambulic sleep is not a sleep in the sense of an alternative and opposite state to the waking state. The old phrase "sleep-waking," though now abandoned, is not entirely incorrect. For the condition described is one which partakes of some of the characteristics of both sleeping and waking.

¹ "Human Personality," 1903, vol. i, p. 161.

The outer or normal senses are put to sleep : while subsequently or simultaneously certain inner senses (sight, hearing, touch, etc.) emerge into activity. The complete arousal of such senses causes perfect lucidity. In former days this activity, exercised independently of the outer senses, was called "the power of the soul." But when scientific men began to doubt whether they had souls, belief in any such phenomena was considered superstitious. The soul has been carefully separated from the body and—so far as it exists—relegated to religion to do what it likes with it. The physiologist concentrates on the body. The result has not been happy, for both religion and science are confronted by problems to which there seems no answer. The fact is that even when religion and science have each carried off their portion, a mysterious "*tertium quid*" in the human being remains, which neither of them is anxious to claim, because they have nowhere to "place" it, no means of explaining it, and consequently do not know what to do with it. Yet ultimately neither can do without this residue. It is distinct both from the body with which physiologists occupy themselves and the spirit which has been the special concern of theologians. Nor can there be a bridge between modern Physics and Metaphysics without some comprehension of the phenomena of sleep-waking or somnambulism.

In view of the spread of Magnetic cures, the doctors clamoured for a monopoly of the right to magnetize or hypnotize : and in most European countries they succeeded in getting it, unencumbered by any obligation to either study or practise the method, or to prove their competence. It is true that Mesmer and other medical magnetizers declared that only doctors should

magnetize, and were supported by some lay magnetizers such as Puységur. But their demand was that a knowledge of Animal Magnetism should form part of the training and equipment of every physician: that only a person who understood both Magnetism and the ordinary knowledge of medicine, and could use either, should be allowed to practise as a doctor. They certainly did not mean that members of a profession ignorant of, and opposed to, Magnetism, should monopolize its employment. The effect of such a monopoly, along with other facts to be mentioned presently, was disastrous to Magnetism, which obviously needed further exploration and study. Medical men who employed it used it empirically, as they did their drugs, or explained its action by some superficial hypothesis: and deprecated its use for any other purpose than the cure of disease. Like Sir Oliver Lodge's "higher man of to-day," they were not "worrying over sins," and were more anxious that patients should "rise up and walk" than that their minds should be clarified from those sick and feverish mental concepts which so frequently accompany sin. Even the daring and successful Dr. Esdaile thought it wrong to induce the higher phenomena solely for the purpose of scientific investigation. So far as he meant to discourage idle curiosity, he was perfectly right; but he failed to see that Mesmerism, if applied only towards bodily cure, is at best only a half-way house.

The result was that only in France and the United States, where such a monopoly was refused, were new developments in Magnetism possible.<sup>1</sup> Such

<sup>1</sup> In France by the "Schools" of Nancy and the Salpêtrière, and the researches of de Rochas, Boirac, and Baraduc; in the U.S.A. by certain pioneers such as Fahnstock, Laroy Sunderland, the "Electro-biologists," and the Quimby-Eddy movement,

developments have been more and more on the psychological side. By reason of their education and conservative reliance on drugs and medicine, doctors are less qualified to deal with this aspect than laymen who have been chiefly responsible for such advance as has been made. Hypnotism, as understood and practised by Braid, was principally physical in regard both to causes and to effects. Braid's discovery was the one that operated chiefly against the Magnetizers, because it seemed to take the wind out of their sails. Hence Mesmerism in England to-day is much where it was half a century ago. But Braid himself was an isolated figure, and after his death in 1861 not much serious notice was taken in this country of his theories or practice until the publication of Dr. Milne Bramwell's book in 1903.

Yet, though the opponents of the Magnetic theory barred its entrance into the realm of official science, they did not finally destroy, but only succeeded in side-tracking, it. Braid, unconsciously, was blazing a trail for Mrs. Eddy and Christian Science. The Mesmerism that he condemned as unproved superstition she, by some strange mental kink, called "Malicious Animal Magnetism," and identified with the Red Dragon of the Apocalypse. Quimby himself, from whom she learnt her fundamental thesis, started as a Mesmeric lecturer and evolved into a "Mental Healer." And so the ancient half-perceived truths, which Mesmer had tried to revive in a secular form, became lost in a blind battle in the mist between rash magnetizers, sceptical doctors, and uncompromising Christian Scientists.

Added to this, the discovery of anæsthetic ether and chloroform gas (about the year 1847) steadily diverted public attention away from the Mesmeric

method. It was easier and shorter—though perhaps not so natural or safe—to bludgeon patients by nitrous oxide into unconsciousness than to spend a considerable time in making the mesmeric “passes.” Still another disintegrating factor was at work in the Mesmeric camp. Many of them drifted into the new Spirit-rapping movement, especially in America, where the tendency was to identify such phenomena with those connected with the mesmeric fluid. Entranced patients began to describe beings whom they themselves, and usually their audience, identified as angels or departed human spirits.<sup>1</sup> The “Hydesville knockings” and the influence of Andrew Jackson Davis, the famous seer of Poughkeepsie, attracted inquirers into the marvellous away from the older traditions into that peculiar mentality which Mr. Waite calls a “Masque of Anarchy.” The spirit of the age was one of desolation in matters of faith. Except perhaps Browning (who had not then gained many readers), no great mind condescended even to consider the phenomena of Mesmerism and mediumship: and popular interest drifted steadily towards the deeps instead of the heights.

Between the years 1850–60, about the time when Du Potet’s book first came into circulation, the Mesmerists found themselves at the crossroads. Two courses lay before them: one was the broad and easy path leading to the sentimental trivialities of the “Summerland” *et hoc genus omne*. This, being the line of least resistance, was the line generally taken. What of the other? In 1839 the Rev. Chauncy Townshend, a practising Mesmerist, published

\* Notably L. A. Cahagnet’s somnambule, Bruno, who gave a vivid description of the Archangel Gabriel (Podmore, “Mesmerism and Christian Science,” 1909, p. 201).

"Facts in Mesmerism," an ingenious and eloquent plea for a reconciliation between his fellow-believers and their enemies. He treats with contempt the "imagination" theory. "A thousand times I have seen mesmeric patients placed under circumstances where the action of imagination was plainly impossible." He points out that the French savants who rejected Mesmer's theory really conceded the main point at issue as far as cures were concerned: indeed, they went even further than the Magnetizers in attributing power to mind. Even apart from the debated "fluid" man can act on man by striking his imagination: and such action may be reduced to an art and conducted methodically when exercised on patients with faith. Townshend suggested, as a working hypothesis, some "elastic ether" (as yet unidentified), modified by the nerves, its operation depending on their condition: which ether can be thrown into vibration, mediately by the mind and immediately by the nervous system: which latter may produce mental effects through the unusual stimulation of brain and nerves. Through such a medium the thought and will of other persons can be transferred to the sensorium and brain of the patient, whose sense-organs are in temporary abeyance. Townshend further called attention to the frequency of unconscious quasi-mesmeric action in everyday life; e.g. the sleep of the infant rocked by the beating of the mother's heart, the attraction of an unknown face, falling in love at first sight, being tickled, and the curious fascination of the eye:—

He holds him with his glittering eye,  
The wedding-guest stands still.

Townshend seems to have been one of the first to observe the "community of sensation," or "psychic

link," set up invisibly between operator and subject,<sup>1</sup> and showed by his own experience and that of Dr. Chapelain of Paris that it is not the mere mental strength of the mesmerizer, but the proportion between the respective strength of agent and patient, which ensures success: less or more on either side would prevent the result desired. To ascertain more of this relationship was a task which the Mesmeric movement, unfortunately, did not survive long enough even to undertake. As a clergyman, Townshend was deeply interested in the fact that the mesmeric sleep normally will tend to elevate the patient's moral nature. Separated so peculiarly from the senses, the mind appears to gain juster notions: to experience a new sense of spiritual things and to be lifted nearer to the fountain of all goodness and truth.<sup>2</sup> Patients passing into the mesmeric state often spoke of an internal light: which (the present writer suggests) may be distantly connected with what the ancient Hebrews called "Shekinah," and the mediæval Schoolmen "Lumen Gloriæ."<sup>3</sup>

Townshend's book went into a second edition, but no one seems to have worked upon his few hints, such as they were. In fact only one other person then living in England was able to point out the true path for the Mesmerists: this was Mary Anne South (afterwards Mrs. Atwood), who published in 1846 a thin octavo volume entitled "Early Magnetism," and, four years later, "A Suggestive Enquiry into the Hermetic Mystery," suppressed by its authoress immediately after its actual appearance in printed

<sup>1</sup> Some analogy to this may be found in the "transference" process familiar to modern psycho-analysts.

<sup>2</sup> A phenomenon either entirely absent from, or ignored in, the modern hypnotic experiments in the Salpêtrière and Nancy schools.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix D, p. 147.



form, and republished under the able editorship of W. L. Wilmshurst in 1918.<sup>1</sup> It will be best to give, in the gifted authoress's own words, her suggestion of the "other path" which the champions of Mesmerism might have chosen :—

"The ordinary effects of Animal Magnetism are now familiarly known . . . thus it is true we can lull the senses, cure the sick, etc. : and it is a glorious step in progress. But are we to halt here always, or how long? The phenomena of lucidity, prevision, community of sense, will and thought, might have instigated to more important discovery : but the years have passed, and the Science has not grown, but retrograded rather in interest and power, since Puységur, Colquhoun, Elliotson, Townshend, Du Potet, and the rest, faithful spirits, first set their fellow-men on the road of inquiry.

"But the best effects of Mesmerism, if we connect it with the ancients' Sacred Art, appear as trifles in comparison : the Supreme Wisdom they investigated, the Self-Knowledge and perfection of life and immortality promised and said to be bestowed on those initiated in the higher Mysteries ! What has Mesmerism to do with these things? What is its philosophy, or has it yet made an attempt even to investigate the subject-being,<sup>2</sup> the cause of its own effects? In common arts, the ingenuity is set to work how it may advance and adapt them to the best advantage ; new capabilities are discovered which, put in action, often prove the fruitful source of more ; whereas Mesmerism, dwelling altogether in the *practice* (the same which, from the first, unfolded nature as far

<sup>1</sup> William Tait, Marlborough Park North, Belfast ; J. M. Watkins, 21, Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London.

<sup>2</sup> I.e. the "One Thing" of the Alchemists, which is invisibly in all and is the substrate of all.

as it was able), continues to run on with her in the same commonplace round. Our sleep-wakers<sup>1</sup> are little better than dreamers, and resemble children born into a new world, without a guide, unable of themselves to educate their latent faculties, or discriminate truth from falsehood in their revelation. And, as respects the Universal Medium,<sup>2</sup> they even, who believe in such a thing, take it as it presents itself naturally, having no knowledge of the capabilities or means of improvement, whether it is able to ascend or descend, or what is its right determination. The few experimental tests<sup>3</sup> that have been instituted hitherto prove nothing but to identify the same 'Imponderable' through all: and if we make trial of the Spirit's instincts, asking for revelations of prophecy and distant scenes or journeyings through the air—and they follow us, those patients of our will—we then go out from them to philosophize, or wonder, or to think no more about it, as the case may be: repeating the same mechanical operations and witnessing their effects until at length the enthusiasm which raised expectation has generally and naturally died away.

"Now this, according to our gatherings, was not the sort of investigation that the ancients followed in their Mysteries: although working in the same materials and with similar instruments, on the same ground, yet their practice was different: for it was conducted upon established principles and with a truly philosophic as well as benevolent aim. Theurgists, indeed, condemn the Spirit of the natural life as degraded and incapable of true intelligence, nor did they therefore value the revelations of its first included

<sup>1</sup> I.e. somnambules, or mesmerized patients.

<sup>2</sup> The "One Thing."

<sup>3</sup> Such as Reichenbach's of the "Od" or "Odic" force.

sphere ;<sup>1</sup> but proceeded at once, passing these, as it appears, in the Lesser Mysteries, to dissolve the medium more entirely ; and, as they knew how, to segregate the Vital Spirit away from those defilements and imaginative impressures which, by the birth into natural sense, had become implanted there, obscuring its intelligence and that divine eye which, as Plato says, is better worth than ten thousand corporeal eyes ; for by looking through this alone, when it is purified and strengthened by appropriate aids, the truth pertaining to all beings is perceived. . . . And in what the disease of the spirit consists, and from what cause it falsifies and is dulled, and how it becomes clarified and defecated, and restored to its innate simplicity, may be learned in part from their philosophy, for by the lustrations in the Mysteries, as they describe, the soul becomes liberated and passes into a divine condition of being.”<sup>2</sup>

Now Mrs. Atwood shows very clearly that the normal action of Mesmerism is an external picture and outer “key” of that separation which Paracelsus

<sup>1</sup> Cp. the “revelations” of angels and the dead through common trance-mediums.

<sup>2</sup> “Suggestive Inquiry,” 1918, pp. 186-88.

Another contemporary writer says: “The Magnetists have found an element—its laws, its results, some of its original sources ; but they still lack the revelation. They have not yet open vision or the Key of the Oracle. Accidents have revealed spells which thrill the wires. Touch has answered touch, but the system is undiscovered by man. The Magnetic Man is a Spirit. What they call magnetism is the casualty which has jarred the wires of the Holy Catholic Church. Influence, Grace, is a fluid element invisibly pervading the Universe, full of ducts. The law is that the touch of hands shall lead and rule and fasten the fibres, threads, etc., of this element in men and things.

“An ecstatic said to a mesmerizer who spoke in Greek: ‘It was your thought that I understood, not your language.’ Now there the thought was in his mind first in the form of his own tongue—then she knew it before it went into a strange phrase” (Rev. R. S. Hawker, “Stones Broken from the Rocks,” 1922).

declared to be "the greatest miracle in philosophy, and effected by a most singular magic: very excellent for quickness of penetration and swiftness of operation, the like whereof Nature knows not." This "Hermetic Separation" was made on "water," i.e. the fluid, volatile medium-life which ever subtly flows through and from everyone, and can never be seized or analysed by any visible instrument. In this "Separation," the Mind, co-operating with the Divine Mind, is the true separating instrument: nor must any foreign admixture, i.e. false idea or illusion, be allowed to enter the work. That life-essence, which acts sensuously through the blood, must be assumed into the Will: it dies to live: a new "life-spin" is born from the reversal or death of the old normal life. As Townshend and others had observed, if you magnetize a person he is lifted for the time into a purer sphere: the sensuous medium once put aside or dissolved, the consciousness is aware of the Divine Life, in a much deeper way than is possible in the normal sense-life. The mesmeric passes loosen the outermost chain which links the spirit to its corporeal dwelling-place: and at such a time a trained clairvoyant might clearly perceive the true atmosphere of the patient's spirit, the brightness or blackness which are its "ethers." This atmosphere is called by Easterns the "âkashic record," containing all the imaged ambitions, desires, passions, etc., of the patient's life. It was from the observation of this atmosphere or etheric aura that painters drew the halo or aureole round the heads of saints.

Now the position of the Magnetists in the mid-Victorian age was this. Mesmer had, as it were, half-opened a forgotten door, grimy with ages of neglect, yet ever capable of giving access, if the true

key be applied, to an inner sanctuary of infinitely greater worth. But, owing partly to the secularism of his method, and still more to the materialistic scepticism of his age, those who availed themselves of his discovery were "unprepared": and therefore were too soon deceived by the vague and flickering shadows which hang about that portal. *Æneas*<sup>1</sup> needs the "golden bough" before passing into that "Avernus" (or subconscious) which lies open night and day. In other words, those who experiment and launch out into the great deeps of Nature must remember the old warnings against the illusions, images, and shells of the first or "Hades" state of consciousness induced by such a venture. The true secrets of Isis are not revealed by her janitor or "inner guard." Her temple contains veil within veil. All the masters of contemplation teach that its only perfect form is without exercise of imagery: Plato's cave of shadows is the simplest and profoundest contrast of the relation between the natural and spiritual life: shadows cannot finally satisfy. Therefore the "visions," "revelations" of the "lucides," somnambules, and trance-mediums of the nineteenth century are mostly worthless: and the welter of psychic literature has produced no single work that even approaches neo-Platonic wisdom, nor an utterance that can be compared with those of the leading lights of Christian (or Oriental) Mysticism. The reason is simple, though hardly popular: it lies in the lack of that "katharsis"<sup>2</sup> or purgation, the need of which was known both to Neo-platonists and to Christian saints: but no such need was dreamed of by the Walpurgis-night revellers in the circles of American and other spiritualists. Only by the "Turned Eye"

<sup>1</sup> Virgil's "*Æneid*," Book vi.

<sup>2</sup> See Plato's "*Phædo*."

of Boehme can we discern Truth from her substitutes : but it is less trouble to turn tables.

From a different angle modern psycho-analysis also approaches the mystery half revealed by Animal Magnetism : but many analysts of to-day apparently are not even theists, and have, we venture to say, no true metaphysical ground from which to move and direct their own or their patients' "libido" (to use the hideous modern jargon) : the result is much dabbling in the somewhat murky regions of primitive sex-desire, yet with no sure certainty of success in the attempt at "sublimation." Nor can it be expected while God is dismissed as a "father-complex," or until a wider investigation has been attempted of the "latent content" in dreams.<sup>1</sup>

Properly regarded, Magnetism is the necessary bond between spirit and matter—Hermes, the messenger, passing invisibly and connecting two worlds. In itself it is neither spirit nor body. As Du Potet (amongst others) shows, it operates in disentangling soul from the enlacements of the flesh : and accompanies the immortal spirit on its journeys, acting as its cortège until that spirit is recalled to God. Even after death it seeks, as long as may be, to protect the "deserted house" from corruption. Those who knew its secret and how to operate therewith could perform "miracles," and the wise among them have ever regarded this as a Sacred Science. Through the ages it has been sometimes honoured, sometimes degraded, usually ignored—according to the mentality and morals of its users. Its history may be compared to that of those strange Pacific islands which appear

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the best effort so far in this direction is Silberer's "Problems of Mysticism and its Symbolism" (trans. S. E. Jelliffe ; Moffat, Yard & Co., New York, 1917).

and disappear at intervals. It has been discovered, lost, and rediscovered, only to be lost once more until some fresh Columbus is born: yet each new investigator of this "No-man's Land" only finds what others have known before: though he often imagines that, like the Ancient Mariner,

We were the first that ever burst  
Into that silent sea.

Thus it has swayed and oscillated between fools, rogues, and a few wise men. *Qui capit, ille sapit.* The subtler operations of Nature continually escape our obtuser senses, though they need not escape our understanding. Others, like Paracelsus, have found and declared that he who believes in Nature<sup>1</sup> receives from Nature everything in proportion to his faith. Things are affected by their similars: like comes to like. "With the holy Thou shalt be holy, with the froward Thou shalt be froward" is the spiritual analogy of the law of "survival of the fittest." That which is gross affects the outer senses: that which is mental, the inner, and so on to the final "projection" of the Reason towards Intelligibles, by which we are magnetized back, or re-ligated, to the super-substantial source of all. The power of the magnetizer's will in changing his patient's fluid disposition is a true, though feeble, type of the renovating power—"Vis Medicatrix Cælestis"—of that all-pervading Vital Spirit called Wisdom by the Ancients: and of whom, for Christians, the crowning revelation walked on earth in the great Magnetizer of the Gospels.

As He was despised and rejected of men, so also

<sup>1</sup> And does *not* utter such pompous and unproven dogmas as "No one can ever know anything of the mysteries on the other side of death."

through the centuries has been neglected and ignored the true Subject-matter, which once more fitfully emerged into the purview of Mesmer, Reichenbach, Du Potet, and the rest, but was even by them seen only through a glass darkly. For, as the old Adepts said, this Subject-matter is, "a thing indifferent, abject, and exposed on all hands, moving here below in shadowy manifestation, invisibly and unconsciously converted to every will and use. It is what the world cares not for, but disesteems it: it hath it in its sight, carries it in its hands, yet is ignorant thereof: for it passeth away with a sudden pace without being known; yet he who knows the *Art* and the *expressions*, and hath the medium, will be richer than any other." Truly the light shineth in the darkness: and the darkness apprehends it not.

The unexplored storehouse of Nature ever lies open to research by magnetist, medical man, and mystic alike. But she can teach only those who have faith in her dumbly eloquent logic. She cannot speak through lectures and learned periodicals: she can only make signals and point. She cannot of herself initiate the work of dissolution leading on to purgation and so to final regeneration. As Vaughan pointed out, she has no hands. Only the being created in his Maker's image possesses those instruments, so vitally necessary for spiritual and material activity. As Christ sits enthroned at the Father's "Right Hand" above, being the Divine Regenerator of man,<sup>1</sup> and of nature through man, invisibly drawing His

<sup>1</sup> "God is the great, *positive* Magnet of the Universe, and whatever, in the Universe, aspires to approach Him must assume the *negative*, the feminine or passive and receptive aspect." Thy Maker is thy Husband is one of the chief teachings of the Old Testament.—Coventry Patmore, "Rod, Root, and Flower," p. 118.



members to Himself, so man is the divinely appointed executive agent below : and his task is to use his visible and invisible hands in magnetizing Nature and himself out of mere wild fecund generation into perfection by Art. Hence, as the old Adepts said, the " manual work " was the employment of the Hand with ingenuity, i.e. with spiritual discernment, towards a mechanic trituration, as it were, for obliterating the defects of soul and body alike. " The Hand," said Van Helmont, " is the instrument of instruments which the soul likewise useth and whereby it bears its image into operation." Mens (Mind), Manas (Soul), and Manus (Hand) must co-operate in the true work of men's hands, referred to often in Scripture. Indeed, some of the old writers purposely used the phrase " obstetric hand," meaning that by such tractive action the hidden fire of Nature can be elicited and drawn forth into visibility : so that the ordinary processes of childbirth are a rough pattern of the mystery called the New Birth, whereby " unto us a child is born," i.e. we ourselves enter into a higher and truer life-process and evolution. Nature, in her normal condition, ever circulating monotonously out of and into herself, is, as it were, " magically bound " and cannot bring forth her secret agent. Man, like Lazarus of Bethany, has also sunk into the magical and false sleep of blind materialism. Yet he can be roused by the voice of the true Magnetizer—" Lazarus, come forth " : and when he emerges from the sepulchre " bound hand and foot " it is the common duty of the Church and Science to " loose him and let him go."

Neither of them during the last two centuries has quite understood or obeyed this counsel. As Colquhoun wrote in 1836 : " The medical faculty have always been peculiarly unfortunate in their crusade

against heretical remedies. In 1566 the Paris Faculty of Medicine issued a mandate prohibiting the use of antimony and this mandate was confirmed by Parliament. Paumier, of Caen, a celebrated Paris physician and chemist, having disregarded this mandate, was degraded. The Quinquina, or Peruvian bark, was imported into Europe in 1640, and Jesuits, nine years afterwards, distributed a great quantity of it in Rome, curing intermittent fevers with it, as if by enchantment. The physicians declared war against this efficacious remedy." <sup>1</sup> So it was not surprising that they condemned Mesmer in 1784. To-day the genuineness of "faith" or "spiritual" healing is occasionally, though somewhat grudgingly, admitted: but the tendency is still towards dissuading the public from admitting any "supernatural" explanation. Any definition of the exact boundary between "natural" and "supernatural" in these matters is still wanting.

Undeniable cures (such as those of Lourdes) are attributed to "suggestion," "mono-ideism," "sympathetic environment," and similar useful phrases. The old prejudice against the theories of Mesmer and Reichenbach lives on under new forms. All through the nineteenth century the extraordinary power of soul, mind, and imagination over body was, seemingly, ignored by medical orthodoxy: "Christian Science" is a natural (though very extreme) swing of the pendulum in the direction most opposed to materialism. Now the minds of those who breathe only the atmosphere of their own brain-begotten theories tend to fall asleep: they lose touch with those principles which operate unmistakably (sometimes in the most amazing way), yet cannot be reduced to the formulas of the latest medical fashion, which

<sup>1</sup> "Isis Revelata," p. 228.

itself constantly changes. An unconscious soul exerts no more influence than an unconscious body: it ignores Causal Truth and wanders in the dreary desert of such substitutes for God as the sex-complex.

On the other hand, the Church—timidly enough—is showing some signs of a revival of Spiritual Healing, but there are still many forgotten gems waiting to be brought by wise householders out of her treasury. She still uses the Psalmist's prayer, "Prosper Thou our handiwork," and she preserves the "manual acts" of her ministry, but without much apparent intuition of their significance. The laying-on-of-hands is a custom pervading the whole of Bible and Church history from Jacob blessing his sons down to the regular consecration of bishops, priests, and deacons, confirmation, joining of hands in matrimony and unction of the sick. Yet still our Nonconformists, asking why episcopal imposition of hands is necessary for a "valid" ministry, only receive some such answer as "Because it was (virtually) ordained by Christ and has been the unbroken custom of the Catholic Church," which answer, though possibly true in itself, does not somehow convince the other side. "Apostolic Succession" appears little more than a superstition of past ages, unless we boldly couple with it the idea of a chain of Divinely magnetic influence continuing from age to age, and always invisibly linking "that which is above" to "that which is below." Reunion of the Churches will never come by an attempt to water down their respective beliefs. Either the Church is a Body supernaturally "magnetized" (and therefore surviving all the follies and weaknesses of her members) or she is merely a human and temporal association of good people. While the Church assented to the full her Charismatic Ministries such as healing

the sick and expelling demons, she was strong. The moment she seemed awed and cowed before the dogmatic assertions of modern agnostic scientists men began to despise her. The path to Reunion between the sundered branches of the Christian Body, like the reconciliation between Faith and Knowledge, lies in the re-discovery of those secrets and mysteries which are only hidden from stupidity and sloth. We must imitate Columbus and bring in a "new world" to redress the balance of the old.

There are no formal Magnetic schools to-day: yet the passeurs, masseurs, masseuses, osteopaths, etc., are merely carrying on the old "manual work," without perceiving its inner significance. Massage is Animal Magnetism in blinkers. Scores of little books on Mental Cure issue yearly from the press, many containing some account of the electro-magnetic forces and advice as to their direction in healing. Their phraseology is hardly as profound as that of Paracelsus, Van Helmont, and Mesmer, but their message is substantially the same. Terms change—ideas continue—from one age to another.<sup>1</sup> F. W. H. Myers admitted that his researches seemed to lead him back to the psychology of the Stone Age. Magnetic research will bring us towards the psychology of the wise adepts of old: and not the least of its services will be a clarifying of the old Christian orthodoxy. Christ is the Hope of the World—but a present and not merely a future Hope. His magistracy and lordship depend not primarily on credal beliefs held by His disciples (though these are perfectly true), but on His power to make separation, upon our psychic, fluidic nature between the vital and deathly ethers of the personality. He comes—as the creed says—

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix F, p. 150.

“to judge the quick and the dead”; and by such mighty magnetism is “able to subdue all things to Himself.” Here and now—not merely in some future post-mortem state—the mysterious Primal Seed, fluidic medium, in us may be raised or sublimated from corruption to incorruption. Here and now, this mortal may put on immortality, which is not the prolongation of life in a “line” but the achievement of the circular life in eternity. The Christian Creed is only narrowed if—as so often happens—its historic aspect is emphasized at the expense of every other. The much-talked-of “reconciliation” of the Church with modern Science can only be achieved when both admit the promise and potency of the Hermetic Art which, older than either, contradicts neither and in many ways fulfils both. So will their mutual energies blend into that Great Work whereby human life is clarified and conjoined to its Primal Source: and humanity reintegrated into Divinity.



## BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE

JULES-DENIS, Baron Du Potet de Sennevoy, was born on April 12, 1796, at the little village of La Chapelle, in the Commune of Yonne, Department of Sennevoy. His family belonged to the old nobility of Burgundy, and Dijon still commemorates their name in the Rue du Grand-Potet. His early years were those of a child revelling in Nature : he spent his time in rambling by wood, meadow, and stream. When he was fourteen the reproaches of his parents goaded him into study, but he frankly confesses that he preferred the songs of birds and waters to Latin and other tongues. He was not destined to be a great light in the Academies : his own accounts show that he could not fully grasp the relationship between his own remarkable achievements in magic and the records and writings of ancient sages. Eliphas Lévi considered Du Potet's work as " the most remarkable of all products of pure intuition," which intuition we may trace to his early and much-cherished communion with Nature. From her he attracted and absorbed those subtle magnetic potencies upon which he afterwards drew freely in his years of activity in Paris.

In 1815 his attention was drawn to the Mesmeric School, and for five years he studied under Deleuze, Puységur, and the Abbé Faria. In 1820 he performed certain experiments on the sick in the presence of many incredulous doctors at the Hôtel Dieu, an account of which is given on pp. 37-43 of his " Introduction to the Study of Animal Magnetism." After passing through many interior struggles caused by the " insolent incredulity " of the savants, and perhaps by the birth-

pangs of the strange power developing within himself, he now began to leave his early instructors far behind. He discovered that, without using Mesmer's elaborate preparations and methods, he himself could obtain the same positive results. In 1826 he opened a free school for instruction in Magnetism, and before long nearly a hundred people, a fair proportion of whom were medical men, attended his demonstrations. For these, as for his later magical experiments, conducted on Sunday mornings, he never took payment. His pamphlet "Experiments at the Hôtel Dieu" went through four editions. In 1827 he started "The Propagator of Magnetism"; six years later he published a "Course of Instruction in Seven Lessons," a second edition appearing at Besançon in 1840, to which he added a lengthy Report by M. Husson, of the Academy of Medicine, expressing the favourable opinions of the Commission sitting between 1825 and 1831.

About the year 1838 Du Potet visited this country for a short time. Through the influence of Dr. Elliotson he was enabled to treat certain patients at the North London Hospital, and some account of his experiments appears in his "Introduction to the Study of Animal Magnetism."<sup>\*</sup> Owing to the opposition of the Managing Committee he was prevented from further work at the hospital, and afterwards treated patients at his own residence, 20, Wigmore Street. His "Introduction" contains nothing of any special importance: he freely admits that animal magnetism does not suffice to cure certain acute diseases without medicines, and desires a sound medical treatise on the subject, proposing himself to supply such a work, which, however, does not seem to have appeared. The

<sup>\*</sup> Saunders & Ottley, Conduit Street, London.



experiences of one of his English patients will be found in Appendix E.<sup>1</sup>

Returning to his native country he lectured at Rheims, Bordeaux, Montpellier, and Béziers: in 1844 appeared his "Magnetism contrasted with Medicine," and, four years later, "An Essay on the Philosophical Significance of Magnetism," and, simultaneously, a "Manual for Students of the Magnetic Science," which went through three editions. He was also editing the "Journal of Magnetism" which had commenced in 1841. By the time "*La Magie Dévoilée*" was first published (1852) the Baron had become notorious, and it will be worth while to notice the opinions of some contemporary observers.

Alexandre Erdan dedicated his "*La France Mystique*" (1855) to Voltaire, and describes among other "superstitions" of the day the "rare and inconstant psychological curiosity" known as Animal Magnetism. After admitting that, "though most of its phenomena are due to imposture, yet there seems to remain a residuum inexplicable by all known laws," Erdan continues: "M. Du Potet is its real high priest—the fourth pontiff of the animal 'fluid.' He has something of Mesmer's nature without his ability: in fact, Puységur and Deleuze have left no real successors. However, Du Potet has made Magnetism an institution. He holds public séances at the Provençal Brothers' Restaurant, close to the Palais Royal, and one hears of strange marvels occurring there. He boasts of his miracles in numerous publications—notably in '*La Magie Dévoilée*,' a work issued only for buyers who will consent to certain conditions imposed by the author, a singular method of dealing with the public! He is, of course, an evoker of spirits. I have not seen

him perform any remarkable feat, though I did once attend one of his demonstrations." Erdan devotes two or three pages to some lesser phenomena, and, without impugning Du Potet's own sincerity and honesty, insinuates that the "entranced subject" was really a well-trained actress.

We pass on to a more friendly critic, and one whose writings are considered by Mr. A. E. Waite to be "the most arresting, entertaining, and brilliant of all studies on this subject with which I am acquainted." Eliphas Lévi<sup>1</sup> declares: "Baron Du Potet is of an exceptional and highly intuitive nature. Like all our contemporaries he knows nothing of the Kabbalah and its mysteries, but magnetism has notwithstanding revealed to him the science of Magic, and he has concealed that which he has found. . . . We shall reserve his secret out of respect for the convictions of a hierophant. We do not regard his book as dangerous because the writer indicates forces without being precise as to their use. He is aware that we can do good or evil, can destroy or save by means of magnetic processes, but the nature of these is not clearly and practically put forward, on which we offer him our felicitations. . . . He establishes triumphantly the existence of that universal light wherein 'lucides' perceive all images and all reflections of thought. He assists the vital projection of this light by means of an absorbent apparatus which he calls the Magic Mirror—a circle or square covered with powdered charcoal, finely sifted. In this negative space the combined light projected by the magnetic subject and operator soon tinges and realizes the forms corresponding to their nervous impressions. The somnambulist sees

<sup>1</sup> *Nom de plume* of Alphonse Louis Constant (? 1810-75); "History of Magic," trans. A. E. Waite, 1913, p. 471.

manifested therein all the dreams of opium and hashish, and, if he were not distracted from the spectacle, convulsions would follow.

"The phenomena are analogous to those of hydromancy as practised by Cagliostro; the process of staring at water dazzles and troubles the sight; the fatigue of the eye, in its turn, favours hallucinations of the brain. Cagliostro sought to secure for his experiments virgin subjects in a state of perfect innocence, so as to set aside interference due to nervous divagations occasioned by erotic reminiscences. Du Potet's Magic Mirror is perhaps more fatiguing for the nervous system as a whole, but the dazzlements of hydromancy would have a more dangerous effect upon the brain. . . . M. Du Potet is one of those men with deep convictions who suffer bravely the disdain of science, repeating beneath his breath the profession of secret faith cherished by Galileo: *E pur si muove.*"

Mr. A. E. Waite, our chief living exponent of the Western occult and mystical schools of initiation, has delivered his judgment of our author as follows: "As regards France, there was in the field one man whose success was not less marvellous, not less well attested, and much more varied than Esdaile's.<sup>1</sup> He, as an original genius in his own field of experience, is of a different order to Elliotson,<sup>2</sup> and he had no less tenacity, no less courage, possibly because he had less to lose and had lost it less. This was Baron Du Potet. It was scarcely possible to place him among charlatans, and it was scarcely possible to ignore him. He filled all Paris with the noise and excite-

<sup>1</sup> Whose successful mesmeric operations on Hindu patients are recorded in the "Zoist."

<sup>2</sup> Founder and editor of the "Zoist," 1843-56.

ment of his experiences, his séances, his discoveries, his sensational claims. He was not a man of scientific attainments, but for all who had eyes to see he was in possession of an instrument by which he worked what passed for prodigies, and though the Academy of Medicine and the Academy of Sciences were pledged to possess no sight in the direction of such occurrences, it was much to be feared that the world would not long consent to be permanently blind or hoodwinked. Some at least of the elementary secrets previously reserved in the occult sanctuaries had been placed by him within the hands of the ordinary observer, and he directed the mind of research towards the hidden sciences of the past, as he held that all the phenomena of transcendentalism were to be explained by his particular art." <sup>1</sup> "Du Potet was perhaps the most successful operator who had yet appeared in France. Indeed, from Mesmer to Puységur, from Puységur to Deleuze, and from Deleuze to Du Potet there are three epochs, in so far as France is concerned, of that art which was said by the most devoted of its followers to have done more towards the explanation of man and the universe than any other discovery of the century to which it belongs." <sup>2</sup>

It may be admitted frankly that Du Potet was neither a profound nor original thinker: but the flamboyance of his prose need not blind us to the fact of his remarkable psychic achievements or to such light on nature's occult forces as we may gain from them. He himself is like some Moses, nearing the summit of Pisgah, yet still so beclouded by the materialism of the Egypt he has felt behind, that his eyes with difficulty discern the Promised Land below. Yet he sees it, even if, like Newton, he feels he is only picking

<sup>1</sup> "Studies in Mysticism," 1906, p. 197.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 90.

up pebbles on the shore of the vast unknown. He is like a brilliant and daring scout, pushing far ahead of the rest of the Magnetists, and yet timid of imparting the strange knowledge he had acquired lest it should be misused by knaves. He is one of "those who know, yet know not what they know": and his pages have therefore been illustrated by quotations from Mrs. Atwood's treatise: and if the magic marvels of our self-assertive author induce readers to a study of the more sober and "per-scrutinating" "Suggestive Inquiry," the translation of his book will not have been made in vain.

Du Potet was an idealist and a bold experimenter; the Danton of Magnetism. It has been remarked that but for him Magnetism would have been forgotten after Mesmer as it was after Van Helmont. Puységur considered that magnetizers would never be able to do more than "turn the handle," i.e. use the unknown "machine" mechanically and more or less ignorantly. Du Potet believed that he could to some extent understand and regulate the "machine." He could, and did, perform all that other magnetizers had accomplished: but he also, as the following pages show, produced effects quite different from any that they obtained: effects, indeed, which no hypnotist of the modern schools would dream of attempting, or believe possible. He did not consider it possible in his day to attempt strictly scientific explanations to Animal Magnetism. "Science knows the agents it employs; we do not know those we use. But our creations, the phenomena we produce, are facts."

He did not regard the "magnetic sleep" as necessary for cure, the magnetic medium itself containing curative virtue. Although he could, and did, perform cures, he was less interested in this side of the work than in his

experiments with the tremendous and as yet unknown power. Many of the phenomena he produced would now be labelled "hypnotic": but the real interest of his book lies in the peculiar explanation he gave of them.

"The agent (Magnetism) employed has its inherent properties: left to itself, i.e. when not impregnated with the properties added to it by the soul or spirit, it acts conformably to the laws of physics, and presents analogies with the magnet. We have to learn, first, what are its natural and fixed properties; secondly, to understand those that we can impart to it by our will."

The mechanical means (making "passes" or fixing the eye, etc.) used by ordinary magnetizers produced results according to the natural, fixed properties of the agent. But when the soul or spirit of the operator was infused into the Magnetism, Du Potet considered that almost any desired result might be obtained; not so much by the operation of the will as by another set of laws which govern the manifestation of the magnetic agent when it becomes magical.

His method of magnetizing seemed extremely simple, for he considered the complicated manipulations used by most magnetizers quite unnecessary. He used "passes" freely, regarding them as the mechanical equivalent to the will in directing the fluid. He noticed that the emission of the fluid was not even, and therefore rested now and again to allow his forces to recuperate. Occasionally he found it difficult to de-magnetize his subject, though the sleep produced by him does not seem to have been deeper than that produced by other magnetizers. During his magical operations he experienced (though he describes it vaguely) a curious sensation, referred to several times in the following pages.

"By an act of my understanding I separate from

myself a force—real, though invisible. Deposited upon anything, it fixes itself there as an essence: soon it influences its surroundings: magic begins: that is to say, extraordinary phenomena occur.”<sup>1</sup>

By this “magic telegraph” (as he called it) Du Potet could produce either physical or mental effects, and some description of these will be found in Part I. A common experiment practised by Du Potet and other magnetizers was to make some “passes” over one of several similar chairs in the absence of the subject: the latter, when called into the room, fell asleep when he came to the magnetized chair, the others producing no effect. Du Potet regarded this “putting magnetism into a chair” as a magical operation: a modern psychologist could scarcely explain it except by attributing it to mental suggestion. Du Potet, however, did not consider such phenomena as examples of the subject merely *believing* that he was seeing or hearing one thing, when he was in reality seeing or hearing something else. Du Potet held that the subject really experiences such sensations: but in a peculiar or “magical” way. The subject actually saw or heard by *using the operator’s sense-organs*. When such a subject was in complete *rapport* with himself, Du Potet claimed that he had “installed himself” in the subject, and could transform such an one, at will, into any personality he pleased. Dr. Charles Richet would probably call this “objectivation of types.”

Du Potet further practised what is now called “verbal suggestion,” but usually associated it with some physical act or object, which, on his theory, became a *vehicle* for the transmission of magnetic influence, the connecting link between soul and body, indeed the very agent by which soul acts on body.

<sup>1</sup> P. 78.

Those who do not believe in "soul" will be incredulous, but such a theory goes some way in explaining the enigma of "psycho-physical parallelism,"<sup>1</sup> which Du Bois Reymond and so many others find insoluble. Du Potet believed that a material sign can become a vehicle conveying magical power. Thus the sign of the cross or holy water may convey a real blessing, but only if the soul or spirit of the priest giving the benediction genuinely animates such objects. When priests lose this magical or magnetic knowledge and practice, their official acts become merely perfunctory and conventional expressions of good will scarcely distinguishable from secular salutations. Perhaps the present Bishop of Birmingham may unconsciously (and unwillingly) be the means of the revival of this forgotten "magic."

On p. 90 Du Potet says: "I take a man wide-awake, full of health and strength, put a cane into his hand and say, 'In a minute you will be drunk and behave like a drunken man.' He smiles incredulously, but hardly a minute passes before he staggers, his eyes grow bloodshot," etc.

To restore him, the believer in Suggestion would tell him he was quite sober again. But Du Potet, having in his own and his subject's mind *associated the drunkenness with the physical act of holding the cane*, had merely to remove the cane from the man's hand, and the latter became sober. So also, by some arbitrarily chosen talisman or "sign," he could turn his subjects into old people with every mark of decrepitude.

<sup>1</sup> "The sum of our knowledge of the connection of mind and body is this—that the mental modifications are dependent on certain corporeal conditions; but of the nature of these conditions we know nothing. . . . Whether the senses be instruments, media, or whether they be only partial outlets to the mind incarcerated in the body—on all this we can only conjecture" (Hamilton, "Metaphysics," vol. ii, p. 128).



"Suggestion," like "Telepathy," is an extremely elastic word: neither of them is yet fully understood: and Du Potet's experiments, backed by the later work of Colonel de Rochas and Dr. Baraduc, seem to show that he was often contacting some extraneous force, the nature and extent of which are still unknown. This "living force," he maintained, could be wielded and used by the soul or mental power of man. Such a "living force" will set in operation the "dead" (or merely mechanical) forces such as electricity and magnetism as known to orthodox science: but these are only two of an unknown number of forces which the soul can (presumably) set going; and the effects of such operations remain to be experimentally studied. Such was the "Higher Magnetism" which Du Potet regarded as having been known to the ancients and (later on) to men like Paracelsus and Mesmer. Again and again he claims that he has—at any rate, in part—rediscovered the mysterious force with which the ancient Magic worked and concerning which the Alchemists wove their strange parables. It would be very much against the grain of modern science to countenance such conceptions; they would be regarded as mere "animism": for they attribute life to everything and regard the soul of man as having the ability to imbue the "brute" forces of Nature with a vitality sufficient for the carrying out of certain purposes. To study botany only in a herbarium is a different matter from approaching Nature's secrets by the living and growing plant. Vitalism and Creative Evolution are, however, slowly displacing the older Darwinism and "circumstantial selection." The future of Science belongs to those who agree with Lorenz Oken that the Holy Ghost is the most wonderful of all the hard facts of life.

Mesmer considered that the magnetizer puts in motion currents of the ether or universal medium, which he then directs and distributes according to his ability. By repeated passes the fluid or flame spreads like a spark, setting fire to combustible material.<sup>1</sup> With a single match a whole city might be burned: even so the will or soul "igniting" certain natural forces may do either great good or great mischief. When a natural force is thus set going, *psychically* instead of physically, the soul imparts to it a kind of intelligence. No further effort is required: but the operator must be always ready to control or arrest it, or the result may be disaster. The "magic" of Du Potet lay entirely in the strong, unwavering, clearly conceived intention: a weapon as yet unknown to official Science. The mechanical methods of Science generate these forces by persuasion: Du Potet's method might be called that of compulsion. We talk of taming and harnessing the forces of Nature, but it requires constant exertion, and we tend to regard them as entirely non-moral and unresponsive to anything but mechanical pressure: the idea that the human soul, apart from intellect, could constrain them, is treated as a chimæra.

Modern Science is now concentrating on what may prove to be Nature's greatest secret. Sir Ernest Rutherford, regarding the atom as a kind of minute solar system, is attempting to upset the balance between the positive nucleus and the outer negative electrons, and by so doing to release the electrical energy locked therein. Sir Oliver Lodge, in "Atoms and Rays," suggests that this energy is already being used to

<sup>1</sup> Thus Magnetism may be described as an effect rather than as a substance; and were Mesmer living now, he would probably describe his operation as causing magnetic "vibrations" in the universal ether.

maintain the heat of the sun and other stars, though it is not yet tractable by any human device. At present an electrical or "alpha" particle discharged into an atom would be just as unlikely to hit its nucleus as a huge projectile hurled into the solar system would be to hit a planet or the sun. Sir Oliver hopes that we shall not discover too many secrets of this kind before our knowledge and wisdom have increased sufficiently to guard against the inherent danger. Perhaps the next great advance in this direction will only come when some researcher can combine the untiring industry of a Rutherford with the magical intention of a Du Potet. No one by searching into his own will alone can find out the Almighty to perfection: yet by obedience to the Divine Will man may recover the Divine Science and Sacred Art so long buried in oblivion.

"La Magie Dévoilée, ou Principes de Science Occulte," was first published in 1852 by the Imprimerie de Pommeret et Moreau, 17, Quai des Augustins, at the price of 100 francs, with the following warning: "Cet ouvrage n'est *dé livré* que sur un engagement pris envers l'auteur." This condition would seem to have been exacted until the author's death; after which it seems to have been published in the ordinary way, passing in 1893 into a third, in 1907 into its fourth and present edition, its publishers being Vigot Frères, 23, Place de l'École de Médecine. An English translation was announced by Mr. J. S. Farmer in 1886, but did not appear. In the present volume perhaps nearly one-half of the original has been omitted, to spare readers Du Potet's numerous reflections and reveries, which lead nowhere, and his denunciations of sceptical scientists: for all these things distract attention from the true subject.

The "Journal du Magnétisme" ran on till 1861, and is a treasury of well-collated facts and curious occult experiments. Through Du Potet's magnetized subjects were evolved clairvoyance, trance-speaking, stigmata, elevation of somnambules in the air, and insensibility to fire, injury, or touch. Sometimes the "lucides" described scenes in the spirit-world, found lost property, or spoke in foreign tongues. In December 1861 Du Potet announces the cessation of the "Journal" and of his public demonstrations, but is about to publish "*La Thérapeutique Magnétique*"—of which, if it appeared, the British Museum Library does not contain a copy. Being now sixty-five years old he looked for a younger man to take up the work. In 1879 the "Theosophist" notes the birth of a new journal, "*La Chaîne Magnétique*," and remarks that, in spite of his eighty-four years, the Baron's intellect is as clear and his devotion to Magnetism as ardent as when he vindicated it in 1826 before the Academy of Medicine. In the same year he had a fall on a staircase, which must have caused some internal injury; in 1880 he went to Nice, and, in spite of his own condition, performed some remarkable cures. Returning to Paris in April 1881, his condition grew worse, and on July 1st he passed peacefully away at his house in the Rue du Dragon. On July 3rd he was buried at Montmartre.

The editor of Larousse's "*Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIX Siècle*" cannot see in Du Potet anything more than "one who abandoned himself to reveries and fancied he was reviving occult science." This is the kind of epitaph often written by the children of Time on those of Eternity; the reader must judge for himself whether it be correct.

# MAGNETISM AND MAGIC

## I

### EXPERIMENTS

[Du Potet begins with the usual warnings against rashness and imprudence. No one is to be magnetized against his will. The author is dealing with facts, not fancies. He leaves Deleuze and Puységur behind. Nature alone has been his teacher.]

WHAT is the Somnambulic Sleep? An effect of magical power. What is Magnetism at a distance, i.e. as exercised by thought without (physical) contact, unless it be a secret power similar to that exercised by lovers, magicians, and others? Such effects can be produced upon animals as well as on men. What is it which causes those attractions, sudden impulses, antipathies, and convulsive crises which can become so lasting and perilous, if it be not the same principle at work, the Agent known to men of past time? What is now known as the nervous fluid, magnetism, somnambulism, or ecstasy was called by the ancients the occult power of the soul, subjection (of one soul by another), and magical charm. The Agent is the same in all these phenomena, useful or hurtful, just as it is the same sun which destroys or gives life. But the sun's power is blind and unconscious, whereas ours obeys our will and can be used to elevate or degrade man.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Terrestrial Mercury, or Astral Light, is fatal to those who excite, without knowing how to direct. The experiments of the

Electricity under all its variations remains the me: so also does the action of the loadstone. But Thought fixes itself according to our will; it is a jet of invisible flame, subtler than any aroma, traversing space with unimpeded action, bearing our desire and even the rudiments of our being. How assimilate this magical element with other natural faculties revealed to man? What has it in common with them? At first we can only co-relate them in words, and our language is imperfect: but we shall presently give Animal Magnetism its due.

Ancient Mythology covered magical operations with a dense veil. Harmonious but enigmatic poetry was used to describe all the labours of "the Wise" and the assistance of the gods in ensuring their success. We, children of a later day, no longer understand the ancient truths whereby men beheld the mysteries of creation. Time has destroyed a vast edifice: only patience can enable our descendants to reconstruct it. . . let my readers therefore try and grasp the principle underlying the phenomena to be described: the rules are not yet fully known.

I proceed to transcribe certain experiments already published in the "*Journal du Magnétisme*," 1846-48; they were performed on six persons in the presence of

Nancy and Paris Schools of hypnotic and mesmeric direction are unrighteous: because unless the operator knows the whole process—how to unseal, how to close, how the whole is arranged, how to arrange and place (each whole or body) in the same exact order—he is breaking the superface as a burglar and not as a doctor who knows how things were and how they should be. Hermetic Sealing is a special process and exact knowledge is requisite. Mesmerism can be and is an Art of arts, divine and Christlike or deadly and devilish. The deep trance is a sacred sleep, and the utmost care and knowledge should be used lest the sin of the "passive" should be passed to the "active." (From private notes by M. A. Atwood, many of which it is inexpedient to publish owing to the possibility of abuse by experimenters who fail to appreciate the sanctity and perils of the subject.)

numerous audiences, and are recorded in the chronological order of discovery. Such facts could be multiplied, but would add nothing to the value of what is here recorded.

### MAGIC LINES <sup>1</sup>

#### *First Experiment.*

Two lines are traced in chalk on the floor with magnetic intention <sup>2</sup> :—



These lines represent a crooked road, AB, separated by a space, C, beyond which is the conventional figure of a precipice, D.

A young and robust male patient is placed, wide-awake, at point A, one foot on each line. Du Potet has ascertained him to be a "sensitive," but does not magnetize him. He is left free to obey or resist such impulses as he may feel. He resists. Soon there is a convulsive trembling in his limbs: his eyes become glassy and fixed: his movements jerky. He shows impatience, begins to walk along the lines, and cannot leave them. An indescribable expression appears in his features. Some fascinating power draws him to the end of the fatal road, where the magnetizer has *willed* a precipice to exist. It is only

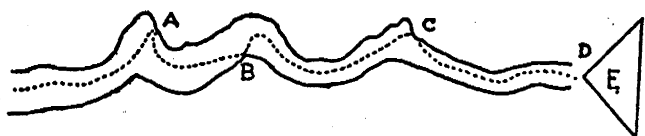
<sup>1</sup> "The signs published in Du Potet's 'La Magie Dévoilée' are, in analogy, if not absolutely identical, with pretended diabolical signatures found in old editions of the Grand Grimoire" (Eliphas Lévi, "History of Magic," trans. by A. E. Waite, 1913, p. 130).

<sup>2</sup> I.e. by Du Potet's magical operation.

an idea, a desire magnetically formulated, yet it is so powerful that, as he approaches the "abyss," he crouches at point B, with despair in his face. His breathing becomes stertorous, he trembles as with vertigo. Many of the audience, while staring at him, seem to share his feelings. He utters agonized cries. Du Potet now puts an end to this drama of "imitative magic" by lifting the patient up and releasing him from his terror, which he speedily forgets.

*Second Experiment.*

Two lines are drawn with chalk similar to those in the first experiment, but of a more sinuous nature, on the floor :—



the apex of triangle E pointing to one end.

Again the subject is young, robust, and awake. His feet are placed between the two lines starting from the left. The space between is wide enough for him to walk between without touching them, yet he is drawn from one side to the other, as it were, against walls which he cannot pass. He reaches A, tries to continue, but is unable, and swerves across to B, is again arrested, swerves again to C, finally reaches D, and in vain tries to pass to E. Despair and fear are shown by his involuntary movements: he is fixed to the ground.

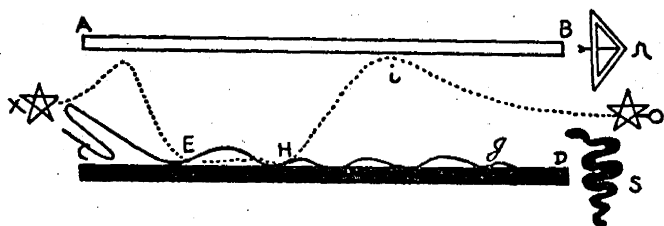
Four other persons, placed in the same condition, obey in the same manner, with a difference of intensity only.



The difference between these phenomena and those of ordinary magnetism lies in the fact that the magnetizer himself remains inactive; herein magic begins. Something more than mere inertia must be overcome to release the subjects from their labyrinth. Several persons must assist to "unsolder" them; and they still gravitate towards the lines until removed from their vicinity. On recovering their senses they retain no exact knowledge of their ordeal. The feet are tired, and there is a sense of heat and attraction, as if all the leg muscles had been strained. It is impossible to describe precisely the abnormal element in these occurrences.

### *Third Experiment.*

Du Potet, with chalk in one hand and carbon in the other, traces on the floor two parallel straight lines, one white, AB, the other black, CD, at a distance of just over three feet in width. No one else is aware of his scheme, or plan.



The triangle N, the serpent S, and the two five-pointed stars XO are drawn *without* magnetic intention, at an equal distance from the two lines. Du Potet proposes to investigate whether there are, as ancient philosophers believed, two opposite principles governing us—one inciting to good, the other to evil.

What will be the path of the human traveller placed between these symbols? On the black line Du Potet has impressed, by will-power, everything characteristic of evil: on the white, everything characteristic of virtue. Their respective influence is to be tried on persons sensitive to magnetism, but not actually magnetized. Du Potet himself will remain passive during the experiment.

A young man of twenty-four, with robust and decided nature, never hitherto magnetized, is placed on the star X. His will is free: no one sees any change in his demeanour, he smiles and is sceptical about the issue of this experiment. Du Potet stands at the opposite star, O. Everyone is asked to keep silence. A violent movement agitates the patient, he becomes restless, fixes his eyes alternately on either line and never looks away. After more shocks he advances a step towards the black line, returns to his first position, turns again in the same direction as at first. He touches the black line with his toes at E, quits it, but again something draws him and his body moves laterally towards it. This continues till he reaches point G, near the end of the road. Here he turns a little upon himself, his body so bent as almost to form a semi-circle, his head inclined to the white line. In this curved position he advances laterally towards the extremity D, showing anxiety about its end. His eyes seem to dart fire: every movement is jerky: the muscles of his face illustrate the battle in his soul. His chest expands: he pants. All hesitation vanishes and he turns to the serpent symbol and leans over the ominous sign, stretching out his hands as if to grasp it. He is now firmly withdrawn from this cruel position: unconscious and perspiring, he comes slowly to his senses. When

questioned about his sensations he can only recall his first movements: his first three steps were accompanied by some indefinable pleasure: then came despair, and he heard an interior voice saying, "Where are you going? Retrace your steps." After that he remembers nothing of where he was led. He is certain that at first he believed in no such influence, and was resolved to resist it with all his might.

On the spectators each movement of this patient produced an effect as it were of an electric shock, a sort of vibrant contagion: their breasts swelled, and as the patient bent towards the symbol of evil their mouths opened as if to protest.

When all is quiet another patient is placed upon the star X: also a vigorous man, wide-awake, and confident of being able to resist the influence. But before two minutes have passed convulsive movements appear: he hesitates, bends first to the right, then to the left, at length takes his first step towards the white line AB. Then he throws himself back to the point E, where the previous patient had touched, advances forward to point H: tears come into his eyes. Desperately he turns away and touches point I (on the white line) with his foot: quits it, and in a kind of rapture reaches the star O, where Du Potet receives him in his arms, bathed in tears.

Thus each patient seems to be dominated by the two forces—one pushing towards the abyss, the other trying to check such action.

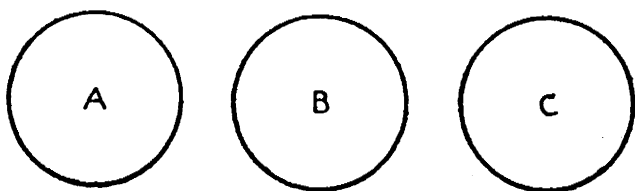
A third patient is placed on the star X. Soon an agitation appears in his limbs, his face changes, he starts. Suddenly a door violently opens and chairs are overturned. A medical student, hitherto unnoticed, strides rapidly to the lines, upsetting everything in his way. He reaches them: his eyes are

haggard, arms extended and fingers clenched. He seems to wish to take the place of the patient: the assembly rise in panic. Du Potet approaches, passes his hand over the intruder's forehead, and the latter becomes calm. When conducted to another room he explains that some unseen power compelled him to act thus. Some of the audience also assert that they felt some abnormal influence while gazing at or approaching the symbols.

Du Potet now requests the audience not to draw any hasty conclusions. In this case Matter, more obedient than Spirit, has been overcome by the vital essences of life. The soul, finding its organs paralysed, could not put forth all its powers. Such experiments should only be repeated with great reserve, and with clear understanding and confidence. "Be astonished at nothing." Should the Magnetizer feel any strong emotion, or let himself be perturbed by such facts, the result will be disorder. "Only by a sequence of this type of experiment can we throw light on the Magnetic method and art. We must progress from known to unknown, never forgetting practical rules or losing sight of the properties of the Magnetic agent."

#### *Fourth Experiment.*

Du Potet traces on the floor three circles, each about a foot in diameter:—



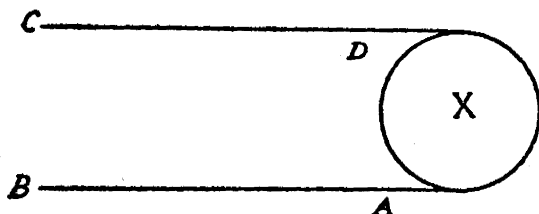
The intention here is not to try and influence the morals of the patient, but to investigate the physical effect of the Magnetic principle, when the latter is linked with these three circular lines: to see if the fluid could be felt and its action determined by a series of nervous effects worth examination. A strong, thick-set man of twenty-four is placed in circle A, and told to resist any influence trying to displace him. He smiles at this: but we soon notice a shakiness in his voice: in speaking to anyone he turns as if on a pivot: presently, dominated by the influence, he begins to spin round like a top. Suddenly his movement is arrested by an order to be still: but he still remains pirouetting for some ten minutes, compelled to obey by a power he despises but cannot control. Meanwhile another youth has been placed in circle B, after which the Magnetizer withdraws to a little distance. The eyes of this second subject soon close: his head begins to turn round, more and more rapidly, his feet remaining fixed to the centre. The whole of his body is soon affected, and, as he is about to lose his centre of gravity, Du Potet asks someone to support him. Nevertheless, he falls, and when carried off remembers nothing of what has happened in the circle. These experiments having been performed on young people only, Du Potet requests the aged Comte de Beaumont<sup>\*</sup> to stand in the third circle, C. After about a minute the Comte's lower limbs become agitated and begin to lurch. His whole body is affected: ready to sink, he cries, "Oh! Oh!"—and is released from the circle. Far from complaining, he seems transported: a sweet warmth penetrated him, and his arm, hitherto stiff from rheumatism, is now free from all pain.

<sup>\*</sup> An acquaintance of Mesmer and Marie Antoinette.

During all these experiments Du Potet has remained entirely passive, lest the imagination of the patient should be credited with the motive power which is due to the Magnetic agent.

*Fifth Experiment.*

Du Potet traces a circle with two parallel lines, one, AB, drawn *from*, the other, CD, drawn *to*, the circle X.



Both lines and circle are magnetic: Du Potet's will and desire are expressed powerfully on the tracings, with a force capable of influencing any person placed between the lines.

Three persons in succession are placed at the centre of the circle X. Wandering and turning from side to side, they quickly touch the lines. The lower side, AB, strongly attracts them to the circle: the upper, CD, as strongly repels them from it. The body inclines towards the line AB: their feet have not left the two lines. At length they reach again the centre of the circle, all apparently in some sort of suffocation.

Du Potet points out that, in tracing the lines, he did not start from the same point—one line being drawn *to* the circle, from a point C, outside to point D; the other *from* point A in the circle outwardly to B. Hence the contrary movements exhibited by the

patient. The Magnetic agent employed contains its own properties, and acts freely. When not invested with qualities impressed upon it by the soul or spirit, it conforms to its physical nature, and is analogous to the loadstone. The Magnetic art consists in recognizing and adapting these unalterable qualities by impressing the human will upon them. This particular experiment will help us to understand phenomena to be mentioned later.

*Sixth Experiment.*

Du Potet requests two persons (patients in previous experiments) to stand on a straight line

A—————B,

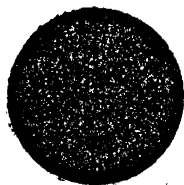
one remaining motionless just beyond B, the other at A. The latter is to start from A, attracted by the Magnetic agent, though nothing at B is apparent to the spectator. As soon, however, as the attraction begins to operate and the subject begins to approach B, the person stationed near B shows a nervous trembling. When they touch one another, the power is so strong that they cannot separate themselves: others must do it for them. From which we recognize the more lively action of one person on another, and the powerful atmosphere apparent in those who are drawn to penetrate the nerve-system of those stationed in the sphere of (magnetic) activity.

THE MAGIC MIRROR

[Du Potet insists that a fact common to many beliefs, found in many places, and testified by many historians, cannot be dismissed by mere denial. . . . The phenomena displayed by the following experiments are the result of a single cause.]

*First Experiment.*

With a piece of live coal we trace a circular disc on the floor, taking care that it is entirely blackened. Our magnetic intention is fully and unhesitatingly formulated, and we *will* that the *animal spirits* be fixed and enclosed within this little space : while others, of a similar kind, are attracted thither, so that communication may be established between them, and an "alliance" result between the animal spirits in the "Mirror" and those in the human subject gazing



into it. By this means he will behold things and events which concern him, as if he were in an ecstasy or in the somnambulic sleep. He must be free and untrammelled in mind and body. The operator keeps at a distance, passive. The experiment needs silence and attention on the part of the audience. The floor has not been specially prepared, nor anything laid on it. The coal used for tracing the disc is placed on the chimney-piece for inspection by anyone. No perfume or words are necessary. The work of actual tracing takes about four minutes, during which the operator concentrates the rays of his intelligence, helped by others, so as to form an invisible but real focus. In doing so his whole being trembles strangely and he loses some vital force.

We now pass to the actual experiment.

A man of twenty-five, full of self-confidence, and entirely sceptical about magic, approaches and observes the disc. Noticing its lines, for it is unevenly drawn, he looks up for a moment at the audience, then down to his feet. The process begins. He lowers his head further, becomes restless, looks all



round the black circle, never losing sight of it. He bends still further, raises himself, retreats a few steps, advances again, puckers his eyelids, becomes melancholy, and breathes loudly. He is beginning to see images in the "Mirror." His emotions, inimitable movements, sighs, tears, despair, and fury all depict the agitation in his soul. Before him are unfolded a series of events represented figuratively by the marks he notices. Sadness and joy follow one another in proportion as some part of the future passes before his eyes. Soon he becomes almost delirious with transport : he tries to seize the "Mirror," fixing a terrified look upon it, then kicks it with his feet until the dust rises. The operator rises to put an end to the scene : the subject seizes him forcibly by the head, but a few affectionate words, with magnetic passes, appease and pacify him : the disordered vital forces return to their proper place. In a neighbouring room he comes to his senses. For some time he feels a heaviness in the upper part of the head, which passes away in half an hour. He is still vague, preoccupied, and can remember nothing. Numerous questions elicit no revelation.

### *Second Experiment.*

The black circle, having been partially effaced, is restored. The operator looks round for an apt "sensitive" to the occult influence of the "Mirror." A young man of twenty who has been watching him steps forward. Silent and pale he approaches—contemplates the "Mirror"—steps back—then leans forward again. What does he see? He laughs sardonically, becomes serious, trembles all over, calms down. Not anger (as in the previous subject) but curiosity seems to dominate him : his look is fixed

on the Mirror. His gestures become indescribable: the audience seem to share his emotions. He remains thus for some ten minutes, murmuring to himself. Now the operator intervenes and with some difficulty draws him away. As in the former case he retains no memory of what has occurred.

So the priests of Isis were not mere impostors, they understood the magnetic principle and used it in their initiations, but wisely attributed to the gods that which proceeds from man himself, and so were able to sway the multitudes by fear. The Academies of Science have still to learn that hashish, opium, and ether by themselves will not reveal what God has hidden in our own being.

### MAGIC ATTRACTION

#### *First Experiment.*

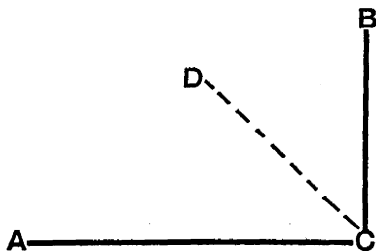
Operator and subject stand face to face, a few feet apart. The former turns slowly round. The latter, instead of being drawn into the operator's sphere of activity and following him, makes a similar movement, but in the *reverse* direction: they resemble two cylinders, one turning the other. At first they move with equal speed: but soon the subject ceases his rotatory motion and begins to deviate, as if describing a curve.<sup>1</sup>

#### *Second Experiment.*

The purpose is to confirm the first. Two Magnetizers, being placed respectively at the points A

<sup>1</sup> Du Potet quotes a letter (unsigned) from a scientific member of the audience to the effect that these phenomena had convinced him of a similar rotation in the planetary system. See "La Magie Dévoilée," p. 96,

and B, endeavour to attract with equal intensity (as far as possible) the subject placed at point C. Lured by these two "perpendicular" influences, the subject starting from C reels, totters, and finally escapes, diagonally, to point D. Should either Mag-



netizer operate with greater power than the other, the subject will only reach point A or B by describing a curve.

### MAGIC SYMPATHIES AND ANTIPATHIES

What is the secret of attraction and repulsion, as manifested between human beings? Where neither judgment nor reason can answer these questions Magnetism may afford some explanation.

[Du Potet here enlarges on the universality of "sympathy" and "antipathy" and their occult nature.]

The "philosophes sympathistes" \* maintain that this influence emanates incessantly from the corpuscles of the whole body: that these corpuscles contact our organs and cause brain-impressions, sympathetic or the opposite, as the case may be.

Now from the principles we have already established

\* Du Potet does not mention any names.

we deduce that fluid-currents enter and leave every person, and that, by affinities whose nature is still unknown, these very fluids, even when undirected by thought, intention or will, yet pass out as if with intelligence, and alight on the organism (of some other person) of their choosing: and, having reached it, cause a series of good or evil happenings. Let us try to grasp this law. Nature works according to rule. "Chance" is a word invented by ignorance to assist fools.

*First Experiment.*

If I trace two parallel lines, AB and A<sup>1</sup> B<sup>1</sup> starting from the same point, the subjects who follow them

A—————B

D—————C

A<sup>1</sup>—————B<sup>1</sup>

exhibit no change of course, and neither elbow nor clash with each other. No sympathy or antipathy occurs. But if I trace a third line from the opposite direction, C to D, and if two persons walk simultaneously, one on the line AB, and the other on CD, so as to meet, a curious antagonism and antipathy occurs. On reaching BD they look at each other, become excited, grow pale or red, then delirious: threats follow disdain, and, like athletes, they prepare to fight. It is then time to separate them: yet an hour before they regarded one another with indifference. I maintain, further, that given a natural and pre-existent sympathy (between the two subjects) the result would be the same, as we have ascertained on several occasions in experimenting.

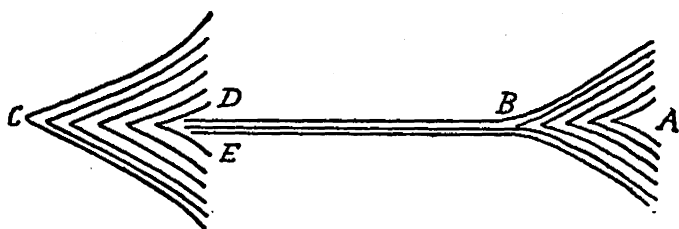
*Second Experiment.*

An equally curious result follows from the arrangement of these lines. Place someone at the extremity of one of them, say B, and let him stand still. A second person traversing the line from A will show every sign of sympathy for the person on his path (at B)—his gestures will be full of tenderness. Presently, however, seeing no response and finding the other cold, he withdraws brusquely and disdainfully and shrugs his shoulders. No description can adequately render these phenomena. The pen cannot translate movements of the soul. All these results are caused by a power operating by contrary currents.

## MAGIC ARROW

If the direction in which the lines are traced influences the result of the experiment ; if the method of drawing them has a bearing on what follows ; then indeed we have made some progress. New lines must be drawn, and, to avoid any doubt in the matter, let them all start from a given point.

A figure is drawn in which every line from A,



converging at B, is prolonged to C, where lines D and E likewise meet. Here we shall find two distinct influences—one drawing subjects from A to C, the other hindering their passage from C to A.

*First Experiment.*

A subject is asked to stand at point B and to analyse his feelings as calmly as possible. Presently he shows signs of weakness. Something seems to draw his strength through his feet. "My head feels empty," he says. Unable to retain a vertical position, he has to be supported. His whole being seems crushed. He seems about to swoon: his breathing is short and scarcely perceptible. We lift and place him at point C; vitality at once returns and his weakness vanishes. He distinctly feels the fluidic currents passing from the arrow-point into his being. His sensations have completely changed, he is delighted, and would like to remain for some time in his present position.

*Second Experiment.*

To prevent anyone explaining this as being merely due to imagination, Du Potet selects a young man who has just arrived and knows nothing of what has happened, or of the purpose of the experiment. Placed on point C, he breathes strongly and exhibits signs of a feverish excitement: his eyes glitter and he is full of life. Asked to advance, he takes one step on the tracing and can go no further. His muscles swell, he grows angry, his efforts are indescribable. We urge him on, but some immovable force repels him. In anger he lowers his head and tries to advance. It is useless: he cannot go half the length of the arrow-head. He is like a man standing on smooth glass, tied to a post with skates on his feet, and trying to move on. He perspires freely, and, after bending down numbers of times without falling, he asks to be released. He complains

of sensations like those of his predecessor. A fluid passed through his body causing a vigorous arousing of his vitality, noticed by all, at first. He felt as if the intensity of his life were doubled, without knowing why. Yet a few minutes after the end of the experiment his arms and feet felt as weary as those of a man after a long struggle.<sup>1</sup>

### *Third Experiment.*

This was less convincing, being a repetition with less potency of the preceding experiments. Possibly the power was less, on account of the third subject not being so sensitive, and because the lines were becoming effaced. Perhaps they should be retraced, with magnetic intention, after each trial.

To sum up. These phenomena are related to Mesmer's theory of the polarity of the human body. The effects produced through his instruments, the "Baquet" and the iron wands, were sometimes positive, sometimes negative. The convulsive crises which he induced in his patients were the results of misdirected magnetization. Convinced as we are of the magnetic origin of these marvels, it is unnecessary to attribute them to either diabolic or divine intervention. . . . But Reason itself can accomplish little so far as it is only supported by abstractions, and has no power<sup>2</sup> to command belief. . . . Nature, if we question her, will answer our queries as to this mysterious principle that ever eludes the senses: but we do not understand her language.

<sup>1</sup> The influence converging from A narrows down at B, and chokes the vital force of the patient placed on B in the first experiment. Placed on C, he receives a fresh influx of the "A to C" current. The subject placed on C in the second experiment seems to be facing towards A, and thus is opposed by the full blast of the "A to C" current.

<sup>2</sup> Magnetic.

## SUPPLEMENTARY OPERATIONS

By an intellectual act I disengage and emit an influence from myself. I could make it felt by an expression which will be intelligible to every reader. This influence (or force) is actual though not yet visible. Lighting upon and entering some body, it soon begins to show signs of its presence in the locality. Magic begins: that is to say, surprising and unexpected results occur. In the Magnetic sleep<sup>\*</sup> all the vital forces are drawn to the nerve-centres: no sensibility remains on the surface. The body is as it were abandoned and breath comes by the labour of the soul, thrown back on itself. Communication with the outer world cannot take place without *rappport*: and such *rappport* must be induced from outside. In this the magnetizer is the principal agent; the patient cannot act by himself.

Nothing of all this occurs in our method of working. The vital forces are summoned to the periphery, there is no isolation, extreme sensibility, or brain excitation. The eyes remain open and shining, the face does not assume the corpse-like appearance of sleep: the heart beats vigorously. There can be no mistaking the one state for the other.

Under our method of working the subject shows a new aspect of human nature: a kind of luminous incandescence, as of the ecstasies or prophets under inspiration. The occurrences of these séances are singularly fascinating, though no one has yet been able to find terms in which to express them. There is no monotony, they differ one from another. Leave the soul to itself and it will reveal its characteristics and surprise you when you see what the ordinary con-

\* Of Puységur and his school.



ventions of life hide. Nature speaks *through the organs*. The animal spirits are loosed ; the members of the body, so far from being weighed down, as in the case of intoxication by wine, move easily and freely, even the weight of the body seems considerably lessened.

[Du Potet here expatiates on various mysterious forces known to exist, and speculates on the possibility of one day rendering visible true pictures of bodies no longer in existence.]

The following is a quotation from the *Journal du Magnétisme*, 1849-51 :—

#### MAGIC MIRROR

I trace a disc with charcoal on the floor, with magnetic intention. It must be covered over until proceedings are ready to commence. Smells and other sensations must be avoided. The operator should be prompt, alert, and ready for emergencies ; he should also avoid contact with strangers. The subject should be left plenty of space. An opaque lid or cover should be at hand for placing over the Symbol (the disc in this case), if the emotions aroused are too violent. The seer will not always behold pleasant visions, and the operator must be calm and self-contained.

#### *First Experiment.*

All these precautions being taken, things now take their course. The seer begins to lose consciousness. His eyes never leave the magic circle. A whirlwind seems to seize him : the light of the immortals penetrates his soul. He feels rude shocks. These correspond to the allegorical combats of ancient fable. Hitherto there have only been movements. A subterranean

fire is disturbing the rocks and crevasses of his nature. Now, like the Pythoness of old, he will begin to speak in oracles. He weeps—he has seen his mother: he is transported—he has felt her embrace, and heard her voice. The *shadow* smiles and seems to beckon him by look and sign. But at this point I break the link forming between the living and the dead, and all is gone.

Whether it were dream or vision matters not: it is my secret. The seer perspires freely, and all his body shakes and trembles. Removed some distance from the Symbol, he still gazes yearningly after it and exclaims, "How happy I felt"! He complains that we have withdrawn him and still longs for the vision of his mother. At length his impressions fade, and he wonders where he is and why he is here.

### *Second Experiment.*

During my absence two members of the audience have been impressed by the Symbol. They rise at first with an effort, then more easily, and approach it. Face to face they look at each other curiously. Each desires to contemplate, alone, the images becoming visible in the "mirror." My assistant approaches to prevent a quarrel. He is repelled several paces by a movement of the arms of one of them which seems to exhibit no violence, yet its force astonishes us. I myself intervene, and the seers are pacified. One of them kneels down and gazes at the Symbol, his head swaying from side to side. He laughs weirdly. He sees tiny fairies dancing in a circle, arms enlaced and inviting him to join their dance. He gets up laughing and saying, "How small they are"! Soon he begins to dance, slowly at first, then, warming up to it, he dances furiously, laughing all the time. His mirth

is infectious ; the audience begin to laugh too, and I have never seen joy passing so quickly from one person to another.

### *Third Experiment.*

All this time the other seer has not been laughing, but gazing seriously on the symbol. He moves convulsively, he sees the hideous head of a human monster rising gradually: he is terrified, his teeth chatter, he recoils: but, still attracted, he approaches again: his fears were not purely imaginary.

I restore both seers to quiet. A vague memory remains to them, and the audience settle down as before. I have only recorded the more startling facts; it is impossible to describe the soul-expression on their faces and the *finesse* of their movements in mere words.

Everything happens in full daylight and without the help of opium or drugs. Nor were the subjects sickly or feverish, or addicted to occult ideas and practices. Nor were their visions in my thought beforehand: \* in fact, I was as astonished as my assistants at the results. We have constructed mirrors to reflect the outer body: why cannot we also do the same for souls and spirits? Has not everybody of mature age had some presentiment or vision?

### *Fourth Experiment.*

The magic symbol is uncovered. Immediately a young girl, who has not before assisted at any of my séances, is seized with a twitching of the limbs, and is drawn to the magnetic centre. She makes tremen-

\* Though, of course, the fifth and sixth experiments (with dust from the Druidic tomb) might be explained by telepathy—if that be an explanation.

dous efforts to resist : in vain. Trembling, she bends forward, shudders, cries, laughs, laments. Seeing that she is weary, I place a chair for her. Without turning she sits on it, and then turns quickly, whilst still seated : the chair, a kind of solid wooden cube, turns with her : and this movement is not caused by ordinary strength or agility. When withdrawn, she bursts into convulsive laughter, but refuses to say what she saw. " I will never tell you ; it is too funny," and at each recollection she repeats, " How funny ! Oh, how funny ! "

#### *Fifth Experiment.*

Wishing for further proofs, and covering the Magic symbol from view, I reduced to fine powder some earth I had taken from a Druidic tomb some years before : the tomb held some human bones at least two thousand years old. I had preserved the earth without any preconceived idea, and at the time of the experiment I did not attach any importance to it. I used it as one might use any cinders or wood-ash. Some days before the experiment I laid it on the mirror. No one was privy to the fact, and I did not speak of it in conversation.

On this particular day, after some experiments in ordinary magnetism, I uncovered the magic sign with the powder in question on it before my audience. The result was speedy and partly terrible. A man of thirty, employed at the National Printing Works, an entire stranger to magnetic research, was present for the first time. He looked carefully at the yellow dust. Soon he became agitated, rose, approached trembling, and cried, " I see blood—corpses—with the entrails torn out ! " He tried to escape, but a secret force restrained him. At once we took him away : he

became unconscious for several minutes. Restored to his senses, he remembered nothing.

*Sixth Experiment.*

A young woman is attracted. Terrified in the same way at the sight of blood, she beheld the entrails as in a kind of tub; the corpses swayed before her. She became ill and we bore her away unconscious. She, likewise, could remember nothing of what she had seen. NOTE: The Druidic tomb, whence the earth was taken, held five skeletons: one of the seers saw five corpses. No one, except myself, knew this, nor, so far as I was concerned, had this dust any special quality or power.

RÉSUMÉ

The reader will note that I insist on none of those auxiliary methods in my experiments which were considered necessary in ancient times: the silence of subterranean passages, the cave of Trophonius,<sup>1</sup> forest gloom, the sound of wind and storm, thunder-claps, sepulchral lamps—nothing, in short, calculated artificially to increase the sensitivity or activity of the soul. I use no grimoire, consecrated emblems, vervain, or magic wand. I do not make invocations, or prayer. My room contains no human relics, or "hand of glory," drug or perfume. Those who use such instruments, in my opinion, are learned in words, but not in realities, and can only influence people with diseased imaginations. Nor am I served by familiar spirits—though one magnetizer has gratuitously made the suggestion. I have never made any

<sup>1</sup> See Pausanias, "Description of Greece," ix. 39. 1-14. For a modern interpretation of such places, see Rudolf Otto, "Idea of the Holy," p. 131.

such claim ; if there were any truth in such a statement I would confess it. I do, undoubtedly, feel a certain shock<sup>1</sup> throughout all my being:<sup>2</sup> I experience an unusual sensation. When these experiments are succeeding I share somehow in the process: my organism seems under some restraint. No doubt this is essential and even indispensable for the operations of magnetic magic. That is all. As for the rest, all depends on the previous preparations. I banish from my mind everything not related to my subject, and have only the end in view—a matter needing great prudence and attention.

Thus I voluntarily become an instrument and seek only its perfection as far as may be. Finding what a human machine can produce under certain conditions, I try to fulfil them. I know very little, but, had I been better instructed at the start, I should have been the first of all magnetizers. Reader, pardon my self-esteem ! As I am introducing a new art to you, I must make you understand me : I claim to be a *sorcerer*, a *magician*. Have I a secret ? Certainly, but I am not bound to reveal it at the start. Besides, how could I give a name to that which is nameless. I can only suggest it by figures and comparisons.<sup>3</sup> . . .

The hall where my experiments are made is not large enough to hold my audiences. The part reserved

<sup>1</sup> "Ébranlement."

<sup>2</sup> "Organisation."

<sup>3</sup> "Magic is the connection of natural Agents and Patients, answerable each to other, wrought by a Wise man to the bringing forth of such effects as are wonderful to those who know not their causes. Paracelsus called it a most secret and hidden science of supernatural things in the earth, that whatsoever is impossible to be found out by man's Reason may be found out by this Art. It is in itself most pure and undefiled by ceremonies or conjuration, such as Necromancy. The philosopher strengthens the seeds of Nature and quickens them so that they hasten the work of generation"—(Elias Ashmole, "Theatrum Chemicum Britannicum," p. 445).

for my operations measures about ten square feet. The diameter of the magic sign, which varies according to circumstances, measures some five inches. Covered over beforehand, it does not attract attention till the cover is withdrawn. When this is done, every eye is drawn to it. Everyone asks wherein lies its potency : some doubt if it has any. But magical potency is independent of belief. Meanwhile I withdraw, keeping on the alert. It is easy to see whom the charm affects. Faces alter : there is restlessness, distraction : eyes brighten : heads and bodies bend and tremble. As a rule after three or four minutes those under the influence lean forward, rise, bend almost down to the mirror. Sometimes even, by a quick motion, they throw themselves on the ground and clasp the circumference of the sign with their arms.

The fact of their vision is shown by their pantomimic expressions. A kind of interior monologue goes on. Dumb at first, they soon begin to utter disjointed remarks. Thus during one experiment we caught the words, "The stain" . . . "You are wrong" . . . "Not signed." I asked, "What do you mean?" A journalist answered, "It is—it is in his desk : he receives an anonymous letter : a shameful accusation, etc." Another seer beholds a man and a girl playing music. The song ends : he grows impatient. We are astonished at hearing him singing with a superb voice a song quite unknown to any of us, to which the singer believed he had just listened. Again he listens : nothing happens. He exclaims eagerly, "Sing again, sing again." But, as all is silent, he repeats his own performance and quite ravishes us, for he possesses a voice of great compass and perfect intonation : its effect is almost superhuman. Another sees, and scrutinizes for some time in silence, a young woman.

He grows impatient, "I cannot see her foot." He turns, leans forward, gazes this way and that, but the foot of the fair apparition remains invisible, and he kicks the floor in his vexation.

[Du Potet speculates on the subjective or objective origin of these visions, on the potential affinity between these "spiritual essences" and the subtler parts of our own souls; and confesses his inability to solve these problems.]

I behold extraordinary phenomena; they are the result of a force or agent emerging from my own personality. Does not the power of beings that have life and force emerge from the same source? Life gives life: what matters it which organ is used? Is nature restricted to one method or channel?

Here I am verging on the secrets of magic: and my readers must "divine" where I cannot speak openly. The vital principle which animates us—has it no body of its own? Though invisible, is not its form very real? Does not the oak exist unseen in the acorn? Must we only believe what we can see with the eyes? Are we not influenced every moment by imperceptible agents? That which ever escapes our sight is exactly that which makes us what we are: life is extended throughout all Nature, but we are only conscious of its more material aspects.<sup>1</sup>

Do we understand the reason of sudden panic terrors? I have watched animals disturbed without any apparent

<sup>1</sup> "The Matter of all things is One and proved simple in the experience; throughout all her various manifestations—as agent, patient, hot, cold, dry, moist; by whatever colour, quality, or species designated—whether singular or plural in manifestation, Nature remains one and the same Unknown Identity through all. . . . Nature eludes all tests except those of her own ethereally wise construction" (M. A. Atwood, "Suggestive Inquiry into the Hermetic Mystery," 1918 ed., pp. 404, 405).



cause. I have seen their fur rise, while they fly or cower between the legs of their owners, and this not behind closed doors, but in the open air wherein they seem to smell the approach of some enemy.

[Du Potet here enlarges on records of supernormal appearances, of the dead, of angels, of spirits, of genies, and argues that all these beliefs cannot be baseless.]

It is man's task to lift the veil of Nature and copy her operations. The elements of the material world are under his control. But these are trifling compared with their correspondences in the spiritual order. Magnetism proves the error of sceptical savants: it links us with the infinite by its affinity with pure essences.

I do not love the marvellous for its own sake: Magnetism contains too much of it, but one cannot ignore these amazing facts. No atheism can destroy that light which is immortal and hidden. Here is another case. A strong-minded lady, present at some of our proceedings, remained incredulous. I felt that she looked upon me as a dupe. Placed near a window, she suddenly became agitated and began to push her way through the audience. Her brother-in-law, not understanding, tried to prevent her and received two sharp blows delivered with extraordinary smartness. Rushing forward and hurting three other people who were already gazing at the magic sign, she fixed burning eyes upon it, but did not describe what she saw. With difficulty we brought her to a neighbouring room, whence she still ardently wished to return to the hall: once she did so, but her disordered nerves prevented our submitting her to further experiments. Thus was incredulity overcome. I had paid no attention to this lady, and did not even suspect her

sensitiveness. This is no exceptional occurrence : hence magnetizers should attend to, and try to comprehend, the agents at work in their service. It is waste of time to try and overcome the invincible stupidity of "savants."

### MAGIC HARMONIES

The following is a report drawn up by M. Chocarne, who has regularly attended my weekly séances :—

"In these experiments we are not concerned with the inferior (magnetic) influence which acts on the material and organic part of the body and produces attraction, repulsion, insensibility, paralysis of the senses, and other physical phenomena. We propose to illustrate the psychic links existing between Operator and subject, i.e. those resulting from the Operator's will strongly directing the action of the magnetic agent on the will of another person, ruling and guiding it and communicating thoughts and feelings thereto.

#### *First Experiment.*

"M. Du Potet proposed to awaken, or rather bring to birth, in the heart of one subject antipathy and anger against another. Placing them about six feet apart from one another : Du Potet seated himself in the middle of the Hall and gazed steadily on the principal subject, a young man of twenty, with a sensitive personality. The latter gradually became animated and lively. Du Potet then transferred his gaze to the other subject. At once the former subject began to stare alternately at the Operator and the second subject. His nostrils dilated with contempt and he showed every sign of a furious outburst. Du Potet now invited the second subject to pretend to

threaten him<sup>1</sup> with a cane. At once the other, in a transport of rage, started up to attack the adversary. Two men stationed beside him had to use all their strength to restrain him: his whole bearing was that of a ferocious beast seizing his prey. With difficulty the Operator dissolved the spell and restored the young man to his normal condition.

"It is to be noted that no 'passes' were made, and the principal subject was most active when the Operator was not looking at him, nor was he, at the commencement, influenced by any such feelings as those which developed later. It seems as if by this strange expansive power one man can intrude forcibly into the soul of another, fix himself therein, and impress, according to his wish, any of those human passions which are most opposed, such as benevolence and anger. Further, he can change that personality into another and cause him to resemble Cæsar, Napoleon, or a young modest girl.<sup>2</sup>

### *Second Experiment.*

"This was of quite a different kind: it was merry and unimpassioned. The Mesmeric magic only touched the organs of motion. Soul and senses showed no signs of perception. Nevertheless, the soul was dominated by mesmeric power, but only for the purpose of some simple movements. Other faculties remained dormant.

<sup>1</sup> I.e. Du Potet.

<sup>2</sup> "Suppose I have a will that wishes to loosen your will, or rather the will that binds your individuality. I throw its purpose into your mind, and so ferment the whole including spirit of your life that it, the former, opens, corrupts, dissolves, and so lets loose the light of which the latter was begot, i.e. the light which comes into every soul born into the world. When this light is let loose, it shines forth with a sudden coruscation feeding on the surrounding ether which constitutes the atmosphere of the life, as is described in the 'midnight sun' seen by Apuleius when he was initiated by the Goddess Isis (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 587)."

"A young man, very sensitive to magnetic action, was placed upright before the Operator. Gazing for a few moments at the latter, he then imitated all the latter's movements, such as kicking, lifting his arms, posing as a pugilist, waving one arm over the other. So quick was his action, that sometimes we could hardly tell which of the two moved first, or whether both were not following a higher agent. After a little the Operator extended his arms horizontally and began to walk round and round. His subject followed suit. Another youth, attracted by the mesmeric irradiation, started up, stepped between the other two, and exactly imitated all their steps, gestures, and movements. Their identity of action formed a living equilateral triangle: it might be compared to a kaleidoscope which, by means of two mirrors, duplicates and triplicates a simple picture, or to the electric telegraph. . . .

"In man's natural state (we cannot say his normal state, for that only belongs perhaps to the pure soul, stripped of its material cover) the soul is aware of all phases of sensitivity, all forms of understanding, all will-power. Consciousness bears witness that here we find the base of our internal life, made up of thought, feeling, and will. But in the peculiar phenomena now under consideration all these principles are shaken and new facts become the necessary elements of a new synthesis."

### MAGIC INTOXICATION

I now proceed to a further series of my records.

#### *First Example.*

I take a thoroughly healthy man, full of vigour, fully awake, put a cane (not my own) into his hand,

and say to him : " In a moment you will become intoxicated and you will show every symptom of your condition." He smiles, doubting, not my sincerity, but my power. Yet after a minute his face changes, his eyes are clouded, he begins to stagger : his limbs cannot sustain him, he looks ridiculous : he talks wildly, sometimes merrily, sometimes gravely. It is obvious that he is under a spell. He grows worse, becomes angry, waves the cane, and is in a pugnacious mood. His metamorphosis is beyond all power of irritation. I remove the cane : the spell ceases, the drunkenness vanishes, reason returns to the brain so upset by—wine ?

*Second Example.*

A blonde young man who had enjoyed this scene is also infected in the same way. He cries, laughs, sings, walks hesitatingly, tries to pull out his handkerchief and cannot : starts a drinking-song, tries to pick up a notebook which he has dropped, talks disconnectedly, tumbles down and rises.

The first subject was sad and morose. The second one is merry. His hiccup warns me that it is time to bring him to his senses. The audience is not prepared for a further display of such power : nor can my pen describe such scenes.

MAGICAL OLD AGE

The object is to produce the weakness of senile decay in a vigorous subject.

*First Example.*

Here is a lively and frisky youth. At the sound of my voice his spine becomes bent, his voice weak,

his brow wrinkled and his eyes dim. He leans on the cane given to him. His talk is that of a sprightly greybeard. His mouth gapes, his nose drips. He seems ripe for the grave. But stay! He thinks himself still young and darts killing glances—vain fellow!—at a young lady. I must revive his youth. What amuses the audience saddens me, and I dare not rob him of the spring-time of life. Have I indeed a fairy wand wherewith to perform the feats of Circe and other enchantresses? Nature works slowly: Art accelerates her operations.

*Second Example.*

Will a child, scarcely twelve years old, submit to the same metamorphosis? I place it in the midst of the hall, as in the first case, it becomes bent, it resembles the dwarf Stanislas in his thirties. In a minute it succumbs to the weight of years. Poor child! I remove the spell: it would be inhuman to continue such an artifice. Man must not interfere with the Creator's work. What will man do when this magnetic power is better known by him?

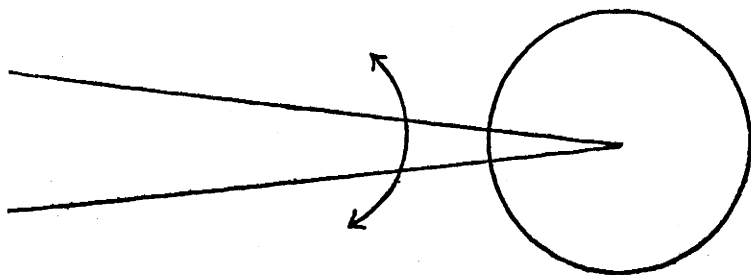
Is life merely electricity mingled with that uncreated force which the ancients called "astral spirit"? Is this a pure light or flame able to affect and give shape to matter? I cannot yet fathom these mysteries.<sup>1</sup>

Life enters us by a more or less active ray, bearing with it the rudiments of the being whence it emerged. Thus separated, free and independent, it rules the domain it has created. The vital force can be divorced from its fleshly shell in several ways: in the way of nature, i.e. by disease, poison, etc. But there is

<sup>1</sup> The fire of the natural life entering into and fermenting the natural fire—the same life in another—opens the last, and develops and excites and sets free the celestial Life and Light (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 567).

another mode which I will try to describe. By magic, in utter simplicity, by certain signs and a certain "traction,"<sup>1</sup> I can isolate and dislodge this vital force from its human abode. Everyone can see this peculiar operation: but it will terrify those who do not know how things can be re-integrated into their primal condition. Ebb and flow? Tides rise and fall by a twofold power. Attraction, repulsion, sympathy, and antipathy—explain it as you will. Nor am I anxious to explain it for you.

I trace with coal on the floor the following magic sign:—<sup>2</sup>



On this figure<sup>3</sup> I place a young, healthy man, fully awake and decidedly sceptical. The spectators are warned not to interfere, whatever happens. In two minutes his face begins to change, he feels a throbbing in his forehead, his ears tingle, his eyes close, he grows giddy. His limbs begin to give way, his head is bowed, for his muscles cannot hold it up. Another minute and his body will be an inert mass. All present, himself included, foresee this. His movements show an

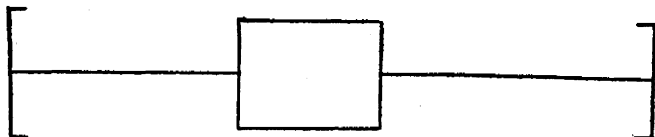
<sup>1</sup> "Quelques traits."

<sup>2</sup> This and the following figure are taken from the first (1852) edition. The figures in later editions are different in certain respects.

<sup>3</sup> Precisely on which part of the figure our author (intentionally?) does not say, and the reader must be left to guess.

agony which points to syncope. A cold sweat breaks out over him. It is done: he is succumbing. We lift his body while it is still warm. Instinctively his terrified parent approaches: step by step he has followed this weird experiment: but his courage saves him from losing self-control. I am absolute master of his son's life: another moment and my power of imitating Nature's dread operation will have dissipated the last spark of life.

Quickly changing the young man's position we lift him on to a new figure different from the first:—



Slowly he revives: but I cannot describe the characteristics of this "resurrection." It is enough to say he is no longer sceptical. Let me assure my readers that only to a "double" of myself would I submit myself to such an ordeal. *I only run risks when I know that I risk nothing.*

And now, what is this peculiar power of whose operation I have given a specimen? I breathe on a candle—I extinguish it: the fact is plain enough. But I breathe a thought, and it will extinguish whatever (thoughts or forces) are contrary and opposed to it, in spite of the resistance of a being like myself. I rule his life: it is no longer his, but mine. Poor human race! I could laugh at your ignorance, yet it is you who scorn me and my power.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Eliphas Lévi attributes Du Potet's extraordinary feat to the fact that life can be destroyed by the sudden congestion or withdrawal of the "Astral Light" ("History of Magic," 1913, p. 71).



The following quotation will show why the genuine Alchemists were, naturally enough, severely reticent and obscure in their references to "Philosophic" Separation :—

" In the Philosophical Dissolution the body, soul, and spirit are separate : the body lies without any breath : the other two are united to it as by a thread, and this continues until the re-fixation takes place. Through every stage of the process of regeneration, through every stage of progress, the same principles are maintained in operation until the assimilation is perfected and the Divine Will is all (1 Corinthians, xv. 54). There is no defection then : the selfhood has nothing to deface, nothing to deform " (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 576). " Alchemy is the transmutation of Life ; that which is the medium between soul and body is changed, and the soul freed from the chains of corporeity, while the body is left as a mere husk. These people put on their bodies as coats : the principle of body is preserved in what they call the ashes or *Caput mortuum*, and that one principle being saved, the whole life is restored from it " (*ibid.*, p. 564). Elsewhere Mrs. Atwood suggests that the Hermetic process is as if someone beginning at the top of an artificial edifice should decompose it, stone by stone, setting aside the dirt and rubbish, and at last coming to the earth at the foundation—and then should rebuild the edifice anew.

## HISTORICAL RESEARCHES

THE term " Magic " designates an attractive force or energy bringing into operation the supernatural or natural or sub-natural : a hidden power acting on spirits or bodies and consequently also on every " stratum " <sup>1</sup> of air from the most energetic (and most subtle) to the least subtle and heaviest kind. " Mages " or " Magi " were known to Persia, Egypt, and the Orient in general. The Latin " i-mago " derives its origin thus, suggesting the prophetic or oracular " images," created by Magi.

Magic is of five kinds :—(1) The holy and divine " tractive " force of the Word of God, working through Faith and purely spiritual : " I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will *draw* all men unto me " <sup>2</sup> ; (2) Natural and physical magic : the reciprocal attraction of bodies to one another in accordance with Isaac Newton's calculations <sup>3</sup> ; (3) Carnal magic, deriving

<sup>1</sup> " Couches."

<sup>2</sup> St. John xii. 32.

<sup>3</sup> " Let me add a few words respecting a very subtle spirit pervading and indwelling solid bodies : by its power and action the particles of bodies mutually attract each other at very slight distances, and, becoming contiguous, cohere : and electrical bodies act at longer distances, both repelling and attracting the neighbouring small bodies : it is emitted from these, is reflected, repelled, inflected, and it heats bodies : every kind of sensation is aroused : and the voluntary movement of animals' limbs is produced by the vibrations of this subtle spirit propagated through the solid fibrils of the nerves from the external sense-organs to the brain and from the brain to the muscles. However, a few words cannot suffice to explain this subject : nor are we as yet in possession of sufficient data to determine and demonstrate precisely the laws governing this subtle spirit " (Isaac Newton, " Principia," concluding sentences).

from the lower appetites and passions of humanity ; (4) Angelic magic, holy and spotless ; (5) Diabolic magic, the cause of countless human blood-sacrifices.

The result of the Fall, according to Christian philosophers, was that man, losing the Divine Spirit, blindly and hungrily descended into his inferior faculties (imagination, memory, the senses), and substituted union with them for his previous union with the Divine. The Divine light, being lost, was replaced by a less pure and subtle fire called *astral spirit* or fire, in analogy with starlight : a quintessence of fire corresponding to material fire, but very inferior to the Divine Flame. This astral spirit, however, is at all times superior to what is called the *spirit of nature*, and possesses all the powers, virtues, and correspondences of the latter. And herein lies the principle of magical workings.

[Du Potet proceeds to quote the opinions of Stoics, Pythagoreans, Orpheus, Cicero, St. Augustine, St. John Evangelist, Zoroaster, Simon Magus, Phœnician theologists, Hermes Trismegistus, Manes, Iamblichus, to the general effect of distinguishing Divine from common light or fire. He then emphasizes the secrecy enjoined by these sages with regard to such mysteries ; his own fears lest they should be betrayed to the unworthy ; and indulges in some general reflections.]

Thus there exists around us in space an agent differing from all known forces, whose properties and qualities have little in common with the "dead" forces discovered by our scientists. This agent provides the substance of our life, sustains it for a time and receives it back again when disengaged from its material shell. We gain from it our inspiration, knowledge, and

understanding. It has a constant attraction for us, yet is an unknown ally, and we have ceased to use it. This, and no other, is the magic element used by thaumaturgists. Hence came the genies which have been imagined as filling space. An illusion arising from heated imagination? Yes, often. Men have attributed to God and the genies what was caused by regular laws. The wise have allowed the foolish to continue ignorant. He who first magnetized the point of a knife, and attracted steel needles with it, passed for a sorcerer. But magic ever remains the same: and I defy any modern sorcerer to grasp the true meaning of those figures and emblems which fill *grimoires*. The key may be lost: but from the extant facts the ancient science can be reconstructed. "Seek and ye shall find: ask and it shall be given: knock and it shall be opened to you." Everywhere and at all times an unknown element tosses men about, as the wind sways the reed. This truth has been demonstrated clearly to myself. *I have felt* the strokes<sup>1</sup> of this formidable agent. One day in a crowd of people I made some experiments to obtain news on a matter of personal concern. The force evoked shook the whole of my being: I seemed to be in a void, surrounded by a kind of light vapour. My sense-activity seemed doubled, my feet bent in a painful manner, my body seemed enclosed in a whirlwind and, in spite of myself, had to bow and submit. Other vigorous persons intruding on the sphere of my magical operation received violent shocks and fell down and struggled as if for life. Thus the bond and pact were consummated: an occult power was conjoined to me, welding itself with my own strength, and I was allowed to behold *the light*. This was, of course, only

<sup>1</sup> "Atteintes."

my starting-point.<sup>1</sup> To make progress in magic demands a strong soul and an unshakable determination. One must wrestle with the unknown force, break every fetter, restrain one's passions and move in a supernal world. This is the first degree of initiation, and here some time should be spent, before going further.

Now science has some inkling of these mysterious workings, but only according to the physical order: and only arrives at her results by destroying the affinity between bodies and separating their elements: by seizing this one or that, she interferes with Nature's law in a few instants.<sup>2</sup> Thus science is in danger of becoming "the blind leading the blind (forces)." It may be true that she understands her agents better than we understand ours. Yet our phenomena are real and cannot be explained by "imagination." I know that I have gone beyond the limits of official

\* Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,  
Atque metus omnes et inexorabile fatum  
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari!  
VIRGIL, *Georgic ii.*

Du Potet tells us little about this vital point in his magical development, but it seems as if he succeeded, somewhat spasmodically, in accomplishing the work called by Alchemists "volatilizing the fixed (soul-coherence)." Mrs. Atwood calls it "dissolution of the first medial life," and declares that nothing previously can be done radically to meliorate the Vital Spirit (*op. cit.*, p. 294). The whirlwind ("tourbillon") which appeared to enclose Du Potet at the moment is called "strepitus Acherontis" by Virgil; while Thomas Vaughan describes it in further detail in his "Letter from the Brothers of R.C." ("Lumen de Lumine," 1910 ed., p. 26). The "light" Du Potet mentions is Lévi's "Astral Light," "Universal Agent," "Aour," "Great Arcanum," and has other names.

<sup>2</sup> Meaning that by such violence scientists lose sight of the very secret which Nature has suggested through the cohering of these elements. "Every attempt of the unassisted reason terminates negatively, as the Subject Identity slides ever more behind the regardant mind: it is only able, therefore, to maintain a counter ground, whereby to prove the shifting evidence of its own and other earthly phenomena" (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 165).

science and move in regions she never knew, unbounded save by God and Infinity. Science inoculates everyone with doubts, sophisms, contempt for truth and false morals, and so clears the path for the tyrant. This is also magic—of an evil kind, for it turns God's handiwork into something unrecognizable and base. The transformations we see going on before our eyes do not spring from matter and dead forces: spirits and intelligences are the real agents: matter assumes passively the shape imposed upon it and is not the cause of our troubles and woes.

We cannot see the flame that emanates from our eyes and directs our own passions to other folk. We cannot see our thoughts: or how, after silently forming themselves, they are revealed to other minds. Nature has her secrets and God leaves their unveiling to our penetration.

[Du Potet further criticizes science for seeking the living among the dead; mentions some of the darker forms of magic; and invokes the true Magi who were enabled to distinguish phantasy from reality.]

The Magi obeyed none of the baser instincts: they purged their souls from the alloys deposited by Nature: sifted the "gold" from "copper" and "arsenic": and thus pure light shone in the void left by the expulsion of the lower agents. Their gifts, thus acquired, included power to foretell events, a sound knowledge of humanity, a calm interior life, "detachment," disdain of death, memory of the past; nor could any secret be hid from them. Further privileges allowed to them included the power to influence everyone, the reduction of material needs to a minimum quite impossible for the rest of us: ability to walk on water and break steel as if it had no cohesion: to heal the

most terrible diseases ; and lastly, co-operation with God, and the privilege of becoming His living image.

[Further quotations are added from Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Avicenna, Pomponatius, Tertullian, and a lengthy quotation from an unnamed source.]

The true magic agent is—*the soul* ! You can only grasp it because it is welded to matter : AND IT IS ONLY SO THAT THE NATURAL LIFE ENERGIZES SUPER-NATURALLY AND BECOMES AN ANIMATED INVISIBLE.<sup>1</sup> Learn to understand the operations proper to it, and you will do well to remember that all this contains a sacred mystery which must not be revealed to the first casual inquirer.<sup>2</sup>

#### ANCIENT WISDOM

The soul of man consists of understanding, reason, and imagination. The first illumines the second, the second operates on the third. If the second is not illumined by the first, it is fallible : but understanding itself can only give, if it also receive, light from the Father of lights. When this happens, reason becomes truly rational, and light can enter into thought. When reason can so light up the image-making faculty of

<sup>1</sup> " Imperceptibilité mouvante."

<sup>2</sup> " It is, says the ancient book of Synesius, a clear Light, which fills with true virtue every mind that has once perceived it ; it is the nucleus and bond of all the elements which are contained in it, and the spirit nourishing all things, and by means of which Nature operates universally ; it is the virtue, true beginning, and end of the whole world ; in plain terms, *the quintessence is no other than our viscous celestial and glorious soul drawn from its minera by our magistry*. Nature alone engenders it ; it is not possible to *make* it by art : for to create is proper to God alone ; but to make things that are not perceived, but which lie in the shadow, to appear, and to take from them their veil, is granted to an intelligent philosopher by God, through Nature " (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 89, 90).

soul it does not corporealize the latter : but when the latter passes into the ethereal soul-vehicle it begins at that point to become corporeal : but is not sensibly manifested till it passes into the elementary body, whether the latter be merely aerial or composite. Thus the Chaldean philosophers have said much of soul-potency ; the soul fixating itself with all its strength on Divinity, and, being filled with light therefrom, can extend such rays through each of the media down into the shadowy and mortal body of natural man, surround him with brilliant star-like radiance, and even transport him from one place to another as in the case of Philip the Evangelist (Acts viii. 39) and others. Such power is latent in all, but varies according to the divine natures of men. Whoever is aware of the secret can unite his imaginative power to that universal force which Alchindus, Bacon, and William of Paris called "the sense of nature," Virgil "the ethereal sense," and Plato "the sense of watchfulness." Such knowledge will become the more powerful in proportion as it penetrates that ethereal and supreme Virtue which can fortify and expand scientific perceptions and enable the user to enter into the souls and aspirations of other men far away. Such gifts are not for all. . . . The faces of Moses, Socrates, and Zoroaster shone as if transfigured. Enoch "walked with God" : Elijah ascended to heaven accompanied by a chariot of fire : S. Paul was transported to the third heaven. That our bodies might so be ravished and shine like the sun or moon was the belief of Avicbron, Avicenna, Hippocrates, and the Chaldeans. Such power belongs not only to man, but also to the animal creation ; for Providence has placed the (higher) understanding above Fate, so that it is subject neither to the influence of heavenly bodies



nor to that of natural qualities. Religion only can move it. But the soul's image-making faculty is under the domination which Fate exercises over that nature which links body and soul. Hence it is subject to change.

The image-making faculty of the soul gives life to, and rules, bodies. From it derive the senses the soul displays, those sense-forms, which it experiences bodily as bodily objects, by which it moves the body, which it rules and feeds, as one body within another. Two powerful faculties predominate in the image-making faculty: the first is called "phantasy" or imaginative energy, mentioned in connection with soul-passions: the second is called "the sense of nature," mentioned in connection with soothsaying. Man, as far as his natural body is concerned, is ruled by Fate. Man's soul (through its image-making faculty) moves Nature in Fate: but by her (higher) understanding is above Fate in the Providential order: hence is free and independent. By reason she ascends to the (higher) understanding and is filled with divine light: sometimes she descends to her image-making faculty and is influenced by the heavenly bodies and qualities of natural objects: sometimes she descends by reason seeking certain things mentally or meditating on herself. Finally, reason has only her own realm, and this means that every time anything is presented, either to the (higher) understanding or to the image-making faculty, or to nature, or to the body, it cannot reach the soul without the cognizance of reason. Thus the soul cannot be in touch with the external senses of sight, hearing, etc., until reason first conceives and is aware, and reason, in order to conceive, must be unoccupied with aught else. Neither higher influences nor natural affections, nor passions, nor any sensible object, can

operate on the soul without passing reason's judgment-bar. Hence the spirit can only be reached and troubled by its own act, and not by mere outward violence (done to the body). Thus when Anasarchus, the philosopher of Abdera, was thrown into the hollow of a rock by order of the King of Cyprus and beaten with an iron hammer, he felt no pain and said, "Strike the poor vehicle of Anasarchus as much as you like, you cannot terrify the real man." When the tyrant commanded his tongue to be cut out, the philosopher severed it with his own teeth and spat it into his face.

Democritus, Orpheus, and other Pythagoreans declared that everything was full of "the gods." To them "the gods" were the divine "Virtues" scattered through all things. Zoroaster called them "virtues," "attracting powers," Synesius "allurements": others called them "lives," others "souls," or a "matter thrown by the over-soul on others." Thus a man who extends his (higher) understanding over intelligibles and his imagination over things imaged can pass in soul from one being to another, and help or hinder their doings. The soul is the primary mobile thing: it can act and move of itself and by itself at will: it can move the body whose matter is unfit and unable to move of itself. As if by bodily means the soul can join itself to the body, and so is formed the world-soul in that *milieu* called the "quintessence": the latter does not spring from the four elements but is a kind of fifth element, beyond them, but subsisting in them. By its means heavenly souls can descend and communicate wonderful qualities to gross bodies. As our souls spiritually communicate energy to our bodily members, so does the world-soul extend over all things by this "quintessence," since nothing entirely lacks its rays or force. But it influences more powerfully

those bodies which have received more of and are more harmonious with the "quintessence," especially by the beams emanating from stars. By this "quintessence" magical qualities inhere in herbs, stones, metals, and animals, through the influence of sun, moon, and the nearer or further stars. The quintessence will be useful to us in proportion to our knowledge of how it may be separated from other elements: for it is all-powerful in producing and engendering itself.

[The section entitled "Ancient Wisdom" is selected from a lengthy Appendix to "*La Magie Dévoilée*" (pp. 307-315), and has been placed here as it seems more appropriate to this part of Du Potet's work. It is evidently a quotation, but no authority is named.]

### III

## PRINCIPLES AND SECRETS

I SHALL now explain principles upon which I have so far kept silence: I shall reveal the mechanism of all magical working.<sup>1</sup>

Every magnetic sign is also magical, for it contains within itself a germ which can bring light to others. Every magnetic sleep is magical: but nowadays those who can cause it do not know its real meaning. Indeed, we ought to substitute the word "Magism" for "Magnetism."<sup>2</sup> The presence of magic can soon be detected. During experiments we have only to notice the results of the first *rappports* set up between two nervous systems; it is clear that thoughts have begun to travel and can bear commands invisibly through clothes and flesh, and traverse walls and spaces. All healing without the usual medicines is due to a quickening force acting on matter: its mechanism has already been described. The discovery during sleep (or in the waking state, when magically aroused) of hidden objects is a result of the same power possessed by the soul acting from an external impulse. Seeing through opaque bodies or at a long distance can only be achieved by momentarily breaking the close relationship of spirit and matter: magical operation. Insensibility (to pain, etc.) is in the same category;

<sup>1</sup> The reader must accept this with the usual grain of salt.

<sup>2</sup> There is the same difficulty to-day as when Du Potet wrote. The word "Mesmerism" has been replaced by "Hypnotism," which does not cover the true ground. "Magnetism" does not fully express the mystery. "Magism" is the best word, but is "caviare to the general."

produced magnetically, it differs entirely from anæsthesia (caused by drugs or other material). Thought transference, so far as it is known, belongs to Magic. Many magnetizers used Magic unconsciously. Freemasonry contains this knowledge, but is powerless, retaining nothing but the words, and so is ineffective.<sup>1</sup> There are other "magicians" who are mere ignoramuses, perhaps rogues as well: their confections of white of eggs, toads, etc., are useless. Our famous philosophers understand only the spoken word, whereas the first condition of magical operation is silence.<sup>2</sup> Our priesthoods can perform no miracle, though they believe in God: they can pray, and that is all. Doctors, similarly, cannot ensure the efficacy of drugs: they can produce no sleep save by drugs. Those of ancient days were diviners and seers: those of to-day are mechanics. Nature cannot answer those who do not know how to summon her.

[Similar judgment is passed on governors, magistrates, professors, etc.]

And, for myself, I feel like a wandering traveller: I ask for, but no one except Nature can point out, the true path. But Nature has no mouth: her only language is to be found in the significance of her works.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The outward form of Masonry is too absurd to be perpetuated, were it not for a certain secret response of common sense to the original mystery; so with the acceptance of all religious systems: it is based on faith, and faith looks to the invisible. The Initiated moved one another on by words of power. The Masons have lost the Magic Key to open the door into the Hermetic "Garden": the true words can only be found by seeking them in the subjective, fundamental life. The true tools may also be found on the way in: they will be given as they are wanted, i.e. the double Triangle, triple Tau, etc." (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 578, 579).

<sup>2</sup> While the word is held in the thought, it is like the Unity (the indivisible point, or Hebrew Yod): when it passes outside (into speech) it is like the Binary (second principle, or line).

<sup>3</sup> "Nature is not moved but by sagacious Handicraft and human assistance" (Thomas Vaughan, "Cælum Terræ").

She places her fire in a pebble and leaves it to rest there until some unforeseen shock reveals its presence. She gives to another stone a kind of animation, of sympathy and repulsion: we call it the loadstone. Every one of her products is endowed with a peculiar and significant quality. But we are here only concerned with human faculties.

The human eye not only receives light from without, but in its turn emits light, of another sort, which sometimes penetrates by a glance the soul of the person on whom it is cast. Sometimes when two people look at each other simultaneously the two rays clash, and a warning may be thus conveyed.

The human hand, extended and pointed to another's face, covers it entirely with the light, as would a mirror reflecting sunlight on some surface. Sunlight can be seen with the eye. The presence of the other light can only be detected by the phenomena which it causes, and has no connection with heat-rays.

Whenever two human beings draw near one another their atmospheres<sup>1</sup> sensibly interpenetrate: each feels his own strength relatively to that of the other. This is demonstrated most clearly in magnetism, for then each can operate more freely and powerfully, and feel himself unlimited by walls or distance. We are astonished when someone expresses a thought we were just about to utter. "Presentiments" spring from the same source: we feel somehow on entering a street that we shall meet such-and-such a person before it happens. Why? What is it that vibrates

"Nature cannot of herself enter into the dissolution because she has no Hands" ("Filum Ariadne"). "The preparation of the Philosophic Subject is performed by the operation of the Hands, that some real effect may be produced" (Basil Valentine, "The Triumphant Chariot of Antimony").

<sup>1</sup> The present day expression is "Aura."

a certain cord of my being? How explain the old saying, "Speak of an angel and you will see his wings?"

[Du Potet enlarges on the manner in which men can inoculate others with their own faith or emotion, e.g. the military commander, the duellist, the actor, etc.]

Thought is wrapped up in some (occult) power which causes these phenomena. Body and spirit are alike affected: the latter commands the former: before reason takes any part. Sympathy and antipathy clearly indicate this. I knew a lucky tradesman who owed his fortune to this intuition latent in his wife who unvaryingly was able to tell an honest man from a rascal: in other respects she was an ordinary woman. Such cases are frequent, but unexplained. So far I have dealt with the material aspect of magic, that which works unconsciously and independently of the will. The soul is only moved by her own forces. We pass on to more important facts. We shall see a soul dominating a body not its own: a soul *penetrating and subduing* or forming an alliance with another soul, whence will emerge a spiritual offspring, belonging to both, and gifted with a certain power. We all know the ordinary marriage contracted before a registrar and producing children as the result of union. But in the other case the result will be felt, not seen: and its nourishment will be, not matter, but life itself. Herein is high magic indeed: but shall I be able to make my readers understand?

### SOUL IDENTIFICATION<sup>1</sup>

Let us deal first with magic telegraphy. I am thinking in the presence of a sleeper: he understands and repeats the words I utter internally. He expresses

<sup>1</sup> "Identification Animiques."

my idea, he has seen its formulating itself and the process is repeated in himself. I make a sign or gesture, he repeats it with precision often so rapidly that we seem spontaneous. I drink, he drinks: I sing, he sings in the same tone and time. I cough and spit, he does likewise. I suffer some pain, he suffers in the same way and complains in the same words. I have seen a magnetized woman in contact with another who was *enceinte*, experiencing the same symptoms: the abdomen swelled enormously in a few minutes, and fastenings were broken: hardly believing my eyes, I touched, to make sure I was not deceived. This artificial swelling lasted as long as the two were in contact—about three-quarters of an hour—and only gradually disappeared. Present-day magnetizers find no difficulty in depriving their subjects of hearing, touch, and sight by merely willing it, using no words. We can communicate to the dreamer the oddest visions, such as headless beings or beings with bears' heads, etc., and he is convinced of their reality.

### SPIRITUAL CREATIONS

I take a glass of water. I will it to be no longer water, but wine, eau-de-vie, or even medicine, and it will produce the same effects as any of these agents would. Alas! one can poison people thus. Let evil-minded magnetists be warned that we know all they can do. Need the magnetized person sleep for the production of these results? Not at all: he may be wide-awake, in possession of his reason, and yet unable to resist this creation which people call "imaginary." I light a fire, and make a cold object hot, or make my subject hold a hot coal in his hands without any harm:



or, if I wish, I cause a cold object to burn him, and all the while he appears in full possession of his senses. He shivers if I think of ice : will be seasick if I take him, mentally, on the sea. The effects of powerful magnetism will often last for several days in spite of the magnetizer's efforts to the contrary. Truly this is a marvellous and dangerous matter. It is easy to bring evil passions to birth (magically) : there is no necessity for love-philtres. It cannot be done, perhaps, at the first attempt. But so many people are sensitive and easily influenced to receive effluvia that we cannot be too careful.<sup>1</sup> No one is safe because he is a "strong" character, or possesses intelligence and culture. We only ascertain after trial who will yield and who will resist : all depends on the soul. The matter is worth study.

### THOUGHT POTENCY <sup>2</sup>

The power which we are describing acts of itself like Nature or God. It can plant the germs of its influence in bodies and say to them : " You will only develop under certain conditions, you will appear at such-and-such a day or time." A human thought, more subtle than flower-pollen, but implanted in the same way, in a metal or pebble, will remain enclosed therein until the proper time, and will then make itself felt as the operating thinker has decided. Hence the origin of amulets and blessed tokens. Talismans, ancient figures, Druidic stones, altars dedicated to gods, everything of this kind, depend on this mysterious fact, which has been forgotten : but were not imposture or priestcraft.

<sup>1</sup> A reference to those " obsessions " familiar to many advanced psychologists.

<sup>2</sup> " Virtualité de pensée."

I write the word " God " on a piece of paper. My thought pictures the Lord of the Universe, and those who read grasp the same idea. There is no miracle here ; a conventional sign translates my thought. But if mentally I trace some characters on the first object to hand, will it not be as potent in transmitting my feeling ? You think this impossible ! Well, my spirit conceives a certain thing, my thoughts dwell for a moment on this still spiritual creation : immediately, invested with a semi-material " envelope," my thoughts are borne to the tips of my hand by the unknown fluid passing from the brain, and transporting those thoughts as a messenger bears a letter. They arrive and are faithfully delivered according to order. You are astonished : yet all your muscular efforts, your locomotion are the result of the same occult power. The same serving-agent carries the order, and the whole machine obeys. A kind of electricity, if you like, follows its leader and carries the news. This force is one and the same : it is *living*. It moves the dial-plate of ideas and marks the sign which the soul must seize. We do not fully understand : but even an ignorant magnetist knows this much. He takes a glass plate or a coin, no matter what, and says mentally, while handling it : " I will that such-and-such a person shall fall asleep at such-and-such an hour "—and so it happens, when the object is presented to that person. One chair amongst others is magnetized ; a sensitive will sit and fall asleep only on that chair. So with a glass of water or a coin.

[Reflections follow on holy water, gifts or relics of the departed, and the grains of corn lying two thousand years in a mummy-case in Egypt, which prove that time cannot destroy the *thought of nature*.]

## OPERATIVE METHODS

So far we have studied the Magnetic agent operating without losing the spiritual and physical rudiments which were present at its birth. Like a babe still attached by the umbilical cord to its mother it drew nourishment and strength from our own flesh: it was our "double." Let us now see it completely abandoned and left "in the air." What will it do, then? Mentally we purify it, so that, like essence divided from flower, it may become spiritual. The ancients considered purgation<sup>1</sup> the natural path to transcendental knowledge, and that only by this means could Nature's highest secrets be found. Perhaps I gained such truth as I have found by being poor, simple, and unprejudiced: and I am still only a traveller on the path.

Now instead of leaving the magic agent free, we will partially fix it. Saltpetre and charcoal, spread over a sparkling surface, emit sparks; so also, fire remains imprisoned until we set it free. When I trace the following figure with chalk or coal, a fire or light appears at once fixed therein:—



This fire, emerging from myself, spreads quickly along the tracing and writes itself through my fingers with the substance used. At first it is inactive, but soon

<sup>1</sup> Aristotle's "Katharsis."

it attracts, fascinates, and sends to sleep anyone who comes near. In vain will he try to break from the circle, a magic power forces him to remain : his will and his limbs become passive : in a few moments he succumbs, sobbing. Yet I did not order him to do so : the cause is to be found in the cabalistic tracing. In vain will anyone try to tear him away : a mysterious power prevents his escape. Every new subject furnishes me with additional evidence, for he is not aware of previous experiments.<sup>1</sup> Everyone exhibited terror, haggard eyes, downcast faces, tongues cleaving to palates, perspiration rolling off them. What they saw, who knows ? Something of another world, or perhaps dreams.

Presently our subject seems to breathe an unaccustomed air and to be suffocated : his soul seems about to depart. I destroy the magic circle : but its effects do not disappear at once : the subject retains traces of his dread experiences. More rarely, the visions are pleasant and tranquillizing, and sometimes are followed by fits of a peculiar laughter, as if new muscles were called into operation. Nothing like it is to be seen in normal life : it differs from common frenzy as night from day. One can see how belief in the devil originated.

I now trace a perfectly straight line :

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and the same fire-element fixes itself therein. I place the subject at the point whence I started to trace it, and his feet grow hot : he becomes nervous, pants,

<sup>1</sup> : Our author's enthusiasm occasionally outruns his judgment. These séances were public, and "expectant attention" would account for a proportion of these phenomena.

and advances towards the further end of the line. Now, if at that end I trace the following figure,—



he halts and can go no further, and sinks, exhausted. You must then scatter the chalk or coal and rub out every trace of it, unless you wish to see a strange drama. If you draw a crooked instead of a straight line the subject will follow every curve, without the slightest deviation. If, after drawing a straight line, you compel the subject to remain at its starting-point, after a few moments his life seems to be flowing away along it and to be in its power. He is nearing death, his pulse scarcely beats: and he must be taken at once to the other end of the line and stationed there. Life and animation then return. Sometimes a circle or line will attract several people spontaneously: and a curious complication follows: my own mind has sometimes recoiled when I realized these phenomena. And if "imagination," as science would maintain, causes them, why not investigate it, in view of its stupendous powers? But imagination does not cause them, any more than it helps the electric fluid running through a metal line to produce shocks in any opposing body.

#### PREPARATION OF THE MIRROR

Not in the glass, nor in its metallic cover, does the soul perceive "the invisibles": nor in the clear water

contained in a crystal vessel transparent as daylight. This peculiar vision in no way resembles common seeing. Eyes are as useless here as in dreaming—and yet we see. Magnetized subjects and somnambules do not see as ordinary people see: they are *conscious* of reality of quite another kind: a fact which has often misled their magnetizers. Serious complaints<sup>1</sup> (“affections”) sometimes develop this interior vision, and the pit of the stomach, nape of the neck, and other parts function as eyes: while objects are perceived with wonderful clarity.<sup>2</sup> It would seem as if all the senses can serve as sentinels for the soul and convey messages instantaneously; but the soul is independent of them and can rectify their mistakes. At a great crisis all her palace-doors lie open and she emerges, radiant and majestic: and the senses no longer function.<sup>2</sup> We use “enchantment” to gain this vision, because our own will is powerless: it must be shaken and wounded by our magic agent, even as fire reflected on our eyelids wakes us with a start. Something is needed to draw the will from its stagnation. Though I knew where to look for the agent, I have often been unskilful in my search for it. Yet those who have failed to follow me so far will scarcely grasp what cannot be put into words. Let them remember the cases already quoted of magnetized objects: things in themselves helpless, and yet—in a moment—invested with amazing properties. Why? Because the soul has concurred with these acts. Increase this wondrous “fire,” extend its rays across a wider surface,

<sup>1</sup> See Du Prel, “Philosophy of Mysticism,” 1889, l. v. “Dream as Physician.”

<sup>2</sup> “The wonderful part of the process is that the spirit becoming freed from the body carries on the perfection and purification of her own vehicle—the soul: and works by her own law.” “Azoth and fire suffice thee” (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, pp. 562, 588).

multiply its jets as you would those of electricity, or as if you were charging a Leyden jar. You will see nothing, but persevere. Doubt not your success : you will accomplish nothing if your soul and hands are " cold." And, before all, something must happen in your mental intention.<sup>1</sup> A bell cannot sound unless it is struck : a sponge does not drop water unless it be squeezed. Scrutinize what happens when a man's boiling passion is about to surge out, though no superficial signs appear. He burns, freezes or quivers, all is tumult within, the internal energy reaches his skin, while the heart beats like a drum. A volcano erupts over the human landscape, as if it were emitting lava and sulphur. Did the Pythoness of Delphi remain unmoved on her prophetic tripod ? She was in an ecstasy, and in that condition became a seer.

Trace a disc, three or four inches wide, with a piece of soft coal. It need not be perfectly formed, but must be well spread and blackened. Do not draw it mechanically or absent-mindedly : do not relax for a moment the (internal) " fire." Three minutes should suffice. Think of stagnant water warmed by the sun : it will exhale poisonous miasma which may kill you. Think of ground disturbed by the spade, which may let loose some subtle pestilence into the atmosphere. A labourer's senses will often tell you more than medical science can. Your " Mirror " prepared, you will see nothing, but a genuine force soon germinates therein. It could not lift a bit of straw : but it can *upset* and torture the human frame and shake it

<sup>1</sup> " That which in the hands of fools is nothing, in those of a philosopher becomes to be all in all : all depends on the willing and intention : the end depends and hangs on the beginning. The difficulty is to find the intention : for the rational ferment, the pure aurific seed of Light, is hidden in our common life " (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 566).

irresistibly like a banner in the wind. In a frenzy the subject will stamp on the disc before he faints. Is this caused by a purely spiritual being? The old Alchemists<sup>1</sup> thought so, and, without fully accepting their ideas, I admit I have felt a "void" in myself, a weakness utterly unlike that which is due to ordinary causes.

### VISIONS

Our subjects are now round the Magic Mirror. Are their souls merely the victims of illusion? I would I could think so. Shadow and light mingle, images false and true are presented to them: they can read the history of the past therein, and the future inspires cold fear. What they see troubles them and their souls wish to flee, for they think they see the immortals. While they can only learn these things by slow degrees, do not leave their souls too long in this liberated condition: shake and seize them, wrench them (from their clairvoyance) while there is yet time: then destroy all trace of the "Mirror." Only madness would venture further: though such an experiment *could* be continued: but everyone would regret such rashness. Many would-be magicians failed, not understanding that everything is caused by magical force: Nature does not choose the means, but follows an unchanging law. When Jesus said, "Who touched me? for I perceive that virtue has gone out of me?" was it not implied that that "virtue" was a force? By it those miracles were effected.<sup>2</sup> To seek elsewhere than in the way so prescribed for an agent equally powerful would be to copy the Alchemists who thought

<sup>1</sup> Of whom our author does not display any special or intimate knowledge.

<sup>2</sup> St. Luke viii. 46. The Greek word translated as "virtue" is "dunamis" (= force, or energy).



they could change the laws of Nature to suit their caprices. Have we not discovered the secret of the ancient initiations? Candidates were submitted to rigorous tests, for the strength of their souls had to be ascertained ere it was safe to entrust the "fire of Prometheus" to their hands.

I see clearly now that magnetism is the necessary link between the soul and matter, the transmitting agent between one and the other. It moves the soul and causes impulses in the body: yet it is neither soul nor matter, and must scatter itself so as to return what it has borrowed from electricity and to restore to Nature in her entirety her fairest and best gifts. It can disentangle the soul from bodily limitations by a double movement: it accompanies the immortal spirit on the latter's travels, and is a compulsory escort until the time when God recalls the heavenly flame to Himself. Even then it guards the material part for a long time; is attached to the body and seeks to preserve it from the inevitable corruption. In magnetizing a corpse it seems possible to save some remnant of life, for some sensible movement can still be perceived, and sometimes even hope is aroused. Alas! two can do nothing without the third: and the third does not respond.\* Yet in some cases a true resurrection can be achieved and life can be restored, not miraculously but by natural law. Some day, in cases where death is not absolutely certain, magnetism will be the touchstone used: it is perhaps the only method of rebinding what has been loosed, and of recalling by a final effort soul to body.

[Reflections follow on the folly of excessive grief at a death; it is not mourners, but blind scientists, who should weep.]

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\* The "two" would seem to be the physical body and the magnetic fluid or force; the third, the immortal spirit.

Such a digression casts some shadow over the picture I have shown you : it is a material and painful reality by the side of a psychic and consoling truth. How brightly this truth shines on us when we picture the soul lighting up bodies and giving them this transparency ! Let us see what they include. By fire I cause a change in the condition of cold metal : it becomes liquid, its component molecules are disunited, it is no longer like itself. The human body will undergo nearly the same transformation when submitted to the action of that " fire " which Nature gives me. The soul will be forced to reveal herself, for I shall have disunited the fibres which hold her back,<sup>1</sup> and shall have made all her tissues transparent. She will be visible and she will behold herself through her disguise. If this be not magic, let someone tell me what is.

### PREPARATION

Put aside all prejudice, be firm and resolute. Choose a space wide enough for quick and sudden movements : a road or a lawn is better than a closed room. I have experimented in the open country with complete success.

### THE VISIBLE CIRCLE AND MIRROR

The Ancients sometimes called their " Mirror " the " Mystic Sea," sometimes it was a circle, or a circle enclosing a triangle.

Draw a circle about four or five feet wide without any pause or hesitation, yet slowly and reflectively, so as to afford time for your nervous influence to flow forth into it : therein lies the first link of your work. Then trace another and smaller circle about the size

<sup>1</sup> The alchemical phrase was " dissolving the fixed."

of a plate in the centre of the first with the same precautions. Take in your right hand some earth or crushed charcoal (preferably of a deep colour). Hold it for some moments and give all your being a sort of vibration which I can only compare to what one observes, without understanding it, in an animal at the moment when it is trying to get rid of superfluous electricity. Then lay the dust or charcoal in the centre of the smaller circle: pass your hand several times lineally over this surface: finger the dust so as to extend and unify it. Withdraw: and let your subject pass over the outer circle without breaking it. Tell him to gaze fixedly at the inner circle, watch him yourself, at the same time having an eye on that circle. When he shows the least sign of nervous disturbance, be ready to support him, yet leaving him freedom to move, and only assisting him thus. Listen to what he says, remember his words, interrogate him: but if he falls, as almost always happens, break both circles with your feet and hands, unless you want to see him nearly die. Five or six minutes should suffice: the operation begins and the precursory signs of the crisis appear: I can only describe what happens in this way. If the first subject fails to show any sign, try another. If you have followed the directions given, nothing more is needed to provide you with a genuine and living image of true magic.

I cannot think that God has spoken to men in any other tongue than that which Nature uses to teach us. Nature speaks to our senses, God to our intellect. To suppose that God has a mouth (like ours) would be absurd. No ear has heard the sound of the divine Voice: our watching soul, lifted as it were by deep slumber, always formulates a language of her own.

During visions, when we have placed a person on

the threshold of the unseen, his body becomes like a lyre exposed to the breeze whose strings vibrate. But it is not sound-waves, but surrounding spirits, which play noiselessly on the chords of the soul. She listens, understands, and perceives: but to translate her impressions she must use her organism. When we do not grasp this wonderful mechanism we blunder. In magic, things are quite different: the senses can retain their activity; sometimes it is even increased. Apparitions taking form become visible and tangible, not only to the subject of the experiment, but even occasionally to other spectators present. This is the most advanced form of magical working and the strongest proof possible of its reality. Suppose, for example, that chance sends me a man whose life is set down in the book of Fate and who is destined for a tragic end: suppose I place him for a moment in a condition enabling him to foresee coming events, his assassin or poisoner: he will recognize him unmistakably if he has already come into touch with him. If not, he will be able to describe him accurately, for the person beheld will perform an exact phantasy of what is to happen. His clothes and his weapon will be visible. If the victim is to die, the funeral and the sorrow of his friends (genuine or pretended) will appear.

No, it is no dream. Unassisted Nature often causes such magic for us, as if she wished to give us warning, and those heedless folk who disregard such favours go blindly to their doom. Everyone knows of "presentiments," and what are they but the beginning of such warnings, an interior sight? Now by Art magic these things are rendered perceptible because their germs hatch out and receive form and design, so that the soul grasps them at once. I mean that beings

appear, not in flesh and blood, nor yet in mere images, but in some indescribable manner. Conceive a sort of "double," a copy of beings no longer existing, impalpable, intangible, and yet very real, forms. Suppose a shadow detaches itself from ourselves and acts independently, coming and going, as if some living breath animated it, as if it were the reflection of our own soul. That is not far from the truth. We can grasp this nameless thing: mysteriously summoned, it will appear and depart by enchantment. In this case it is not the mingled influence<sup>1</sup> of which we have already spoken, potent even towards its creator and parent: but something gentler and more peaceful, a kind of spiritual reflection of the embodiment of beings.<sup>2</sup>

Such marvels cannot possibly be seen in the glare of daylight. The latter is necessary for magnetic physical phenomena, and even for such magic as is connected with mirrors and lines: but the higher phenomena require the shaded tints and colours of twilight, gentle and subdued, for these only will permit vision, and will not obliterate the shadow projected by this kind of spectre which in turn mirrors itself, as if it had some corporal solidity. Yet it has none. Suppose that instead of actors successively stepping to their places and remaining motionless on the stage you have active and mobile shadows changing position and exhibiting all their feelings to the spectators—that is something like what actually happens.<sup>3</sup> In one you have an optical effect or the combination of colour and light, in the other you have tombs, open

<sup>1</sup> I.e. the spirits of Operator and Subject.

<sup>2</sup> "Corporéité des êtres."

<sup>3</sup> Perhaps a physical analogy may be found in the cinematographic film.

sepulchres, and ghosts. And, as if this were not enough to surprise and crush reason, you can take part in a drama by no means imaginary, but one which, through the terror it inspires, might make you ask if you yourself were not a shadow. Samuel's ghost proved the witch's power, through her charms, over the dead.<sup>1</sup> I know it will be difficult for anyone to follow my meaning—and I myself am marching through the night ; I can only make signals.

All sorts of nations have experienced and believed in such apparitions. Either magnetism is a lie, or these things happen. What gives the subject in his " crisis " <sup>2</sup> the power of clairvoyantly seeing things happening far away ? How is it that he can behold in our thoughts something which only exists as a germ therein ? And I have seen still more wonderful things. What means that condition in the magnetic sleep when we foresee the death of the flesh, and often the momentary exile of the soul ? A somnambule said to the magnetizer, " I see so-and-so writing to me to tell me such-and-such a thing.—I see myself falling down on such-and-such a day.—I see that I shall go to Italy and visit Florence "—though this person in the normal waking state had no intention of doing any such thing. A capable army officer foretold in his sleep that he would be pierced by a bullet, with details as to the exact place and the circumstances—several years after, this occurred as described, in the Italian War : and so forth. Everything points to a mysterious agency ever near and within us, able to operate and assume a shape, coming and going at

<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel xxviii. 8-14.

<sup>2</sup> " Crisiaque," a favourite expression in the earlier years of the movement, meaning the patient at the height of mesmeric power and ecstasy, artificially and purposely induced. Later on this practice was more or less abandoned.

will. May there not be living beings in a drop of water?

"Death" is a meaningless word. Nothing is destroyed. The matter of our physical form is no sooner demobilized, than it begins to re-integrate in other bodies: our understanding, our very soul (which the savants call "nothing") re-vives after another manner, but without disintegrating: wandering through space, more subtle than light, passing through various bodies and influencing them en route. I think the so-called "dead" can see and hear distinctly what goes on around them: it is a kind of advanced somnambulism, but without the possibility of returning into flesh and blood. Hence the common notion that graveyards are haunted by ghosts, and the instinctive dread of approaching the resting-place of a corpse, the fear and awe inspired by such spots, and by battlefields where the cries of the dying seem still audible.

Everyone has at one time or another stumbled across some strange and incomprehensible fact.<sup>1</sup> Yes, there is a life-spirit passing and re-passing from one to another and forming an indissoluble link. My magnet attracts all the filings near it: cannot such a quality exist in the spirit and soul? Why may not the soul magnetize things of her own kind and cause them to become visible by reclothing them with the covering which she herself still retains? Do I not experience my own soul magically invading another's body and compelling both his soul and body to do my will?

<sup>1</sup> "Which of those who say they disbelieve, Your clever people, but has dreamed his dream, Caught his coincidence, stumbled on his fact He can't explain?"—GERALD MASSEY.

## THE SECRET CIRCLE AND MIRROR

In magical operations, never choose a time when the soul is preoccupied with other interests—or indolent from excess of eating and drinking and the consequent benumbing of the body. Your whole being *must be vitally energetic and alive* and zealous, your thought free and untrammelled and having your object clearly in view: you must be fully awake in every sense. A fire, a kind of uprising, must be aroused in you,<sup>1</sup> enabling you to send out a brain-utterance from your personality. Your Hand must conduct this animated essence, the living magnet moving over a chosen surface: and it must at once form a spiritual *rapport*, "tractive" according to its nature. No sexual organ can receive such an essence, nor is it gathered like the perfume of flowers by air and wind, but by subtler and more potent elements than those perceived by the senses. And this offspring of your magic working, invisible as yet, will recognize his potency, just as the infant Hercules knew his. His heels will be winged, like those of Mercury: he will be elusive and move as he will, he can flee away, except from a circle magically arranged to confine him: he can use his strength against you, destroy your own powers, make you his plaything, and finally depart as the soul from a dying man, without leaving a trace of his route.

<sup>1</sup> "The fire of life in us is capable of burning erect, it becomes a magnet! Wonderful! If, in us, the Divine line were stronger than the transverse line, we should be no longer in sense. The Divine or celestial life would be established over it in us, and we should be conscious in it, and placed in a transcendental relation. As the sky appears to us concave and, when cloudless, blue in colour, or the Upper Ether, where the Ideas are, appears to the exalted spirit, i.e. in the medial life, as its azure sky. N.B.—The brain is to this outward life what the spiritual head is to the spirit" (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 563).



Sometimes he can be imprisoned and held fast in a crystal. Thence he can bring about clairvoyant vision: like a messenger, he can summon the dead or the living at your command and compel them to appear.

Magnetizers have some inkling of these things: but they do not guess the secret mechanism which assists and fructifies their wishes: they cannot perceive all that happens in the body of the somnambule as it were externally to the latter and his magnetizer.<sup>1</sup> They think their magnetization a simple and natural matter, entirely physical. If the more subtle-minded of them would study more carefully they would understand the true basis behind all the scaffolding. They would know that they possess a key capable of opening every lock in Nature's workshop. I cannot make the matter any plainer, for I have no better words to express the mystery.<sup>2</sup>

### THE CONTROL OF DESTINY

Every human being (by this means) can foresee his future, in a moment: yet so rapidly does the *tableau* appear and fade that his mind can only grasp

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix C.

<sup>2</sup> This section ("La Magie Dévoilée," pp. 253, 254) is in many ways the high-water mark of Du Potet's own vision. Amidst much useless verbiage he here reaches the heart of his "matter." What he calls the "offspring of magic working," and likens to the infant Hercules and winged Mercury, is indeed the Vital Spirit or Subject Identity known to all the genuine Alchemists and the "sola Res" or "One Thing" of their Art. Du Potet resembles a child who, having accidentally, as it were, stumbled on a piece of shining gold, would use it as a plaything. Mrs. Atwood, who also, intellectually, and it would seem experimentally as well, knew this "gold," knew as well its real purpose. Where Du Potet, by his own confession, is a mere apprentice, she is something of a Master. Hence the frequent quotations in this volume from the last and greatest modern English exposition of the Hermetic Art, the "Suggestive Inquiry."

the principal features. The electric telegraph could not transcribe what the spirit perceives. Memory may retain some fragments, but they are weak and pass like a dream. Yet the impressions at the time may be forcible enough: the agitated body, the voice, the working of the facial muscles are clear indications. Alas! the most joyful impressions are the least numerous and most fleeting. Even so, the results of such vision are not absolutely lost; we sometimes remember that this or that event *was* foreknown by us. We often seek to recall it, but in vain; the light is extinguished, the crack made in our living tomb has closed again, and only death reopens it.<sup>1</sup> Usually people cannot believe such predictions at the time, because they seem incredible. The time itself is but a moment, yet it suffices to carve or engrave such ideas (as come in visions), on returning to the normal condition, by a powerful impression of the *Will* on the brain. But what we do in the case of fused metal we cannot always do here, and life might become unbearable to some people by such knowledge. Man-kind seems to be weighed down by unconquerable Fate. God only can teach its purpose. To understand it we must transcend the lower reason and cherish that mysterious lamp<sup>2</sup> whose rays will at last grow sufficiently bright to enable us to discern Him.

<sup>1</sup> "I think that the soul comes into this body with the dream of its whole after-life presented to it. That is its destiny. This would involve us in a fatalism, if it were not that we may rise above this *evestrum*, as Paracelsus calls it. The will is always above it, but then it influences the will that does not see beyond it, by giving that will motive; we are moved very often by it, nay, seldom pass beyond it, unless moved by God's grace (the Divine *evestrum*, relatively to man), and so are enabled to overcome it. The real mystery is so very wonderful, great and close, that one cannot venture to speak of it in ordinary language" (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 569).

<sup>2</sup> The symbol of which was carried by the Kerux (herald) before the candidate in the ancient Mysteries. Cp. St. John i. 5-7.

## VIRGINAL VISIONS

Alchemical Sages were wont to say : " One and one make one : then one and one make three." A hard saying, but entirely true.<sup>1</sup> For two beings, reciprocating and absorbing one another, can so mutually " identify," that they end by being only one. And such an union, without too narrow an identification, can result in the formation of a third. Magnetizers can easily follow this reasoning, concealed by ancient initiates in sacred oracles. For such truths, like virginity, must not be profaned by an idle passer-by or sensualist : men who only seek truth to stain and debauch her by their hate, and, if rejected, will threaten outrage. It is easy to see why the ancients often chose for their instruments children of tender years, whose vision was not spoilt by vice, and whose finer senses were not blunted. Even to-day let him beware who would lift the veil of mystery before the common crowd.<sup>2</sup> Moral truths cannot be sold for precious metals ; they are given to the deserving. Traffic in things divine should never be tolerated.

However surprising these visions in the magic mirror may appear, they are not really more wonderful than those in dreams. Nature tries to enlighten us in a

<sup>1</sup> " The Proto-chemic artifice is completely comprehended in three terms—Solution, Sublimation, Fixation ; but these processes must be reiterated many times " (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 366). See also pp. 383–85.

<sup>2</sup> " So this science must ever secret be,  
The cause whereof is this, as ye may see,  
If one evil man had hereof all his will  
All Christian peace he might easily spill,  
And with his hands he might pull down  
Rightful kings and princes of renown,  
Whereof the sentence of peril and jeopardy  
Upon the teacher resteth dreadfully."

Norton's " Ordinall of Alchymie."

thousand divers ways, sometimes by strange presentiments, sometimes by objects which awaken our speculative thought and supply a sort of pre-vision; in certain diseases this is not possible, but sound health never prevents it. The secret messenger can reach us by unknown doors or channels. We are, indeed, the toys of unseen intelligence. Our body is an inn where many a traveller stops or halts for a brief space: the inn is full of tumult, even night brings no peace; one rouses another and we confuse cause and effect: we are stricken, we die, or we kill. Magic ever operates in and round us, and yet people deny its existence. Forward, then! for we shall discover things that no *savant* has ever known.

#### IV

### COROLLARIES

#### RE-BIRTH

CERTAIN philosophers<sup>1</sup> of preceding centuries performed the following curious experiments. Taking a flower or plant in full bloom, they burned it entire and collected all the ashes. These they placed in a transparent vessel and, when they so willed, the phantasm of the flower or plant appeared in all its former glow of colour, and lasted for a certain time. I do not know their secret, but am convinced that such a feat is possible. So also is the appearance of a dead person, for here we have not an empty illusion or image, but something more real—a moving figure that can be recognized, as in the case of Samuel when evoked at Endor. This is why such a magical operation is dangerous: for the shadow so evoked can fasten itself upon us, haunt us, and otherwise influence us till we appease it. Hence the ancient custom of appeasing the “Manes” (souls of the dead).<sup>2</sup>

A drop of water, evaporated by the sun and carried off by the breeze, returns in due time. Nothing perishes. Everything reproduces itself according to its form: but material elements only operate on matter: the soul of everything that has lived preserves its own mould. The earth of to-day probably contains no more beings than it contained ten thousand years ago. The sites which now bear flourishing

<sup>1</sup> Not named, but probably Paracelsus and Cornelius Agrippa.

<sup>2</sup> Usually by sacrifice at the tomb.

cities were once the haunt of foul beasts. Perhaps this will be the ultimate fate of our own beloved city. Some day historians may have forgotten our very existence. Everything dies, to be reborn.

To compel the dead to appear, to disturb their condition, is perhaps a crime.<sup>1</sup> He who undertakes it feels instinctively its evil character, and a violation of Nature's law cannot pass without punishment. It resembles that of cutting short anyone's life by our own hands and will.

That which robs man of heavenly vision and soul-energy is his inward corruption.<sup>2</sup> So blunted has his interior faculty become, that he sees only with the eyes of an animal. Instead of looking upwards he concentrates only on the body's nourishment, ignoring that of the soul. Ranking himself amongst the beasts, he yet lacks their more primitive instincts (as safeguards) and supplies the deficiency by certain instruments (such as the microscope): an artificial superiority of which he boasts. Yet the tiniest insect at liberty is, in its way, happier than man. . . .

Place salts in dissolution in a vase, and by a reactive you can obtain crystals. No human eye could detect this operation before seeing it. We human beings possess a still more potent reactive which can act on the spirits of the body and instantaneously separate them from it. This invisible (reactive) can produce a true image of the being, its form without its matter. We act on a mere shred of that which formerly integrated such a being in his living condition. We know already our resources: the mingled self-operating

<sup>1</sup> See F. Huntley's "The Great Psychological Crime" (Indo-American Book Co., Chicago, 1915).

<sup>2</sup> "The defilements and imaginative impressures, which by the birth into sense have become implanted in the Vital Spirit, obscuring its intelligence" (M. A. Atwood, *op. cit.*, p. 188).

power which attracts the spirit of a body towards itself. However time may alter human beings, they still retain the rudimentary fire which animates them. A leaf long since separated from its branch still retains some essence characteristic of the mother tree. I fancy the whole earth lives,<sup>1</sup> and that the air contains essences capable of spontaneous creations over the whole globe-surface. Nature herself evokes and summons every past species to return: she would eternalize what appears to us transitory. Her law is visible in each being, whose growth, change and every metamorphosis<sup>2</sup> she foresees. Art can discover some of her secrets: can say to the dead man "Arise," just as we can mentally command a living, walking person, "Turn round," and he will obey, feeling our summons within himself. So also the remnant of vitality in a corpse will attempt to break its bonds and become visible to us. Yet it is not enough in this case to command and will, as we do in order to make living people obey. The rays of the soul must be concentrated by a powerful energizing of the spirit<sup>3</sup> and directed towards those of the being whose reappearance is desired. The "evoker" must feel within himself that his own vitality is passing out, and following where his thought leads it so as to form a secret *rapport* which will unite the two substances.<sup>4</sup> In return for the vitality he has lent the "evoker" will experience a freezing coldness. It is only a passing sensation, necessary to make the operation successful. In one word, there must be union, for a moment; it

<sup>1</sup> This theory was entertained by Kepler the astronomer, and is ably stated in G. T. Fechner's little treatise "On Life after Death" (Kegan Paul, 1906).

<sup>2</sup> I.e. of the Vital Principle.

<sup>3</sup> "Rassemblées par une grande contention de l'esprit."

<sup>4</sup> I.e. the soul-rays of "evoker" and "evoked."

may be termed a marriage or rather a rape of Nature : but without this causal connection nothing will happen. The ceremonials, sacrifices, circles, etc., of the magicians and necromancers were only of secondary importance : their aim was so to prepare body and spirit as to rouse the soul, and gain therefrom the assistance that would ensure success. At the critical moment the magician himself altered in appearance, his features became agitated, he became deathly. He had yielded at least half of his vital strength to the dead person who, on his part, filled up the void. Even afterwards the magician was for some time stupefied and feeble.\*

The knowledge on which all this is based is the science of the ancients, and it is the final grade of Initiation. But all men are by no means ready for it—it would mean madness for many of them. Nor did the sages consider such knowledge safe in certain hands. A kind of semi-initiation was given to the strong-minded and ambitious, even to atheists : though knowledge, fully conferred, makes men believers and resigned to their lot. Moreover, it is so long in coming, that the more impetuous kind of man will not wait—and yet they consider themselves quite capable of ruling a nation. Whether it is better so, who can say ? Magic, at any rate, is not for all, and only a few will understand me.

### SPIRITS

Belief in the reality of incorporeal beings, or spirits, is not only rational but is confirmed by JESUS CHRIST, who teaches us their divers character and their influence

\* Further information on this subject may be gathered from A. E. Waite's translation of the works of Eliphas Lévi.



on man. We give a summary of Gospel references to the subject :—

[Du Potet quotes at length the following passages :  
St. Mark i. 23-26 ; St. Luke viii. 2, 3, 54, 55 ; St. John  
iii. 7, 8 ; viii. 43, 44, 47, 58 ; xv. 27 ; xvii. 6.]

The more notable feats of Magnetism have, unfortunately, caused many weak-minded folk to imagine that they had secured the key to all mysteries, and could build their paradise instanter. Some of its practitioners preached a sort of new Church. The base is real enough, but such an edifice is quite fantastic. Control is impossible when facts come from heaven : one can only believe and wonder. And as there is something divinely true (in Magnetism), a beginning of detachment from the world, people imagine that error is impossible. I can neither approve nor share in such blind faith. Our seers<sup>1</sup> undoubtedly behold a limitless horizon : but why do not their accounts agree, and why are they so changeable ?<sup>2</sup>

Now with magical creations this is not the case. . . .

There exists in us a force as powerful as it is intelligent, and entirely independent of matter : it is the veil thrown over the angel or demon. And as we can compel certain animals to leave their hole or shell, so Art can compel this spirit to leave its cover and appear bare and stripped. It will not alter in conduct, will be vain, proud, etc. : but if you know the Art, you will have the whip-hand. You have sealed fast its dwelling-place : it cannot enter without your leave. You are armed by the flesh : it has no such protection. Before it is aware of itself or its

<sup>1</sup> And somnambules.

<sup>2</sup> As pointed out in the Introduction, Spiritualism developed from visions beheld by certain somnambules.

power over you, you have plenty of time to gain certain services from it. But you must have no fear.

### DEATH

It was believed by the ancients that the approach of a murderer to the body of his victim caused a curious result: the wounds re-opened and blood flowed forth.<sup>1</sup> Nothing of the sort happened if an innocent person came near. "Manes" of the dead were thought to linger near the tomb, sometimes becoming visible, as if they had not completed their earthly pilgrimage: like a sword without a scabbard, they were seeking to recover their body.

[Reflections follow on certain degrading effects of modern civilization and the lowering of man's soul-life.]

Alas! we can no longer behold man as God created him, resplendent in glorious light, vitalizing his surroundings by his very gaze, shooting forth a mysterious flame into other bodies, as a fire emits sparks—a furnace blazing continually with Nature's most complete handicraft: capable by his power and will of giving forth life like his Creator: his very look imposing respect on all that is animal: crushing, by a sort of electricity, everything that hinders his progress. He needed no doctor to protect his health, or priest to point the way to heaven. He himself possessed

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Genesis iv. 10. When the blood of an animal has been freshly shed on the ground, any other member of the herd passing over the fatal spot will be arrested and entranced, seemingly by some exhalation from the vital fluid. The animal stares, with a rapt and distracted expression, moaning and pawing the ground, as if in remonstrance, though apparently "more in sorrow than in anger." Any noise or intrusion, that would ordinarily call attention, will break the spell.

all the knowledge necessary. With such remnants of these primitive faculties as remain we shall try to convince man that he is not a lonely unit in an incomprehensible world, that his life is not utterly lost at death, that by spiritual intermediaries<sup>1</sup> he may get into touch with higher powers and so reforge the link that bound him to God.<sup>2</sup> This, at least, is our hope.

[A quotation from an unnamed source follows, concerning the supersensual language of spirits and dæmons, in particular that of the dæmon of Socrates.]

### SORCERY

Sorcery is a bond or charm passing from the sorcerer's spirit through the eyes of the victim to his soul: the instrument used is a pure, shining, subtle vapour emanating from the blood engendered by the heart's warmth: itself reflecting perpetually similar rays through the eyes. These rays convey a vapour, and the vapour conveys the blood. In the case of people with bleared or red eyes the ray carries this vapour of corrupt blood and tends to infect others with the complaint. To quote from Apuleius: "Your eyes entering by my own into my personality arouse a mighty conflagration at the foundation of my physical body and into the very marrow of my bones." Hence passionate love can arise through a single glance.<sup>3</sup> The spirit and blood of the lover is

<sup>1</sup> Not, of course, the souls of the dead.

<sup>2</sup> Re-ligion implies the binding back to its primal Source of that which has been broken off. The "ligamentum" (bandage) of natural generation binds man to the sense-life commencing at birth. Re-generation is the application of a new "ligamentum" to connect him with the original spirit-life. The processes of physical birth are analogies or types of the "new birth."

<sup>3</sup> Cp. the "Look" and "Isolde's Magic" themes in "Tristan und Isolde," Prelude to Act I.

wounded as in sorcery (though not in such a sinister way).

[This last paragraph is a quotation from some unnamed source.]

### CONCLUSION

Of the reality of magic my own achievements, not those of others, have convinced me. I am still an apprentice: but not one of those who think they can perform the Great Work apart from Nature, apart from the principle of life. This is the essential—all else is secondary. You cannot be deceived if you follow this path. I fix no boundaries. I have written all that it is necessary to know at starting. But I must confess I have not unveiled some of the mysteries which Nature hides: to do so would be beyond my power. Every discovery of these days is incomplete without that of which I have spoken. What is this material electricity, of which science is so proud, compared with the pure essence whose existence I have demonstrated? Electricity cannot pass beyond our atmosphere: the more perfect agent of Magnetism opens infinity to the view: one obeys, the other orders. The first is death, the second life. Yet as all can be of use in man's service, electricity can carry its fiery rays from end to end of the world. Our "fire" will act on all intelligences, and increase their power, a power that can surpass the miracles of old. Man will then have all forces at his disposal: the scales balancing them will finally reach an equilibrium: and the point where the needle halts will be

GOD.

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## APPENDIX A

### THE "HAND OF GLORY"

"THE hand of glory is cut off from a dead man hanged for murder and dried very nice in the smoke of juniper wood" (Scott, "The Antiquary").

The quality of directly curing diseases and of protection has long been attributed to a cadaver. Tumours, eruptions, and gout are thought to be dispelled if the afflicted member be stroked with a dead hand. Toothache is removed by contact with the finger of a dead child. Burns, carbuncles, and other skin complaints are cured by contact with some part of a corpse. In Pomerania the "cold corpse hand" is a protection against fire, and Russian peasants believe that a dead hand protects from steel or bullet wounds.

It was once the custom to lead sufferers in mind as well as body to the Old Bailey scaffold, when, after the execution, the executioner (for a small fee) stroked the affected part with the dead man's hands backwards and forwards for several minutes. Thomas Hardy uses this theme in "The Withered Arm" (Wessex Tales). The "Folk-Lore Record" recently quoted the practice of stroking by the hand of a suicide nine times from east to west and then nine times from west to east.

### TOUCHING TO HEAL

The power to heal attributed to the gods was afterwards associated with kings who ruled as viceroys of the King of Heaven. As Edward the Confessor lay dying, sufferers from scrofula or tuberculous glands were brought to him to be touched. The practice is mentioned by Peter of Blois in the twelfth century, and it was perpetuated by Henry III and the three Edwards. Sir John Fortescue,

in his defence of the house of Lancaster against that of York, argues that the crown could not descend to a female, because the queen is not qualified by the form of anointing her, used at the coronation, to cure the disease called "the King's Evil." Aubrey refers to "the king's evil, from the king curing of it with his touch." This miraculous gift was almost reserved for the Stuarts to claim. Dr. Ralph Bathurst, one of the chaplains to King Charles I, "no superstitious man," says Aubrey, protested to him that "the curing of the king's evil by the touch of the king doth puzzle his philosophie; for when they were of the House of Yorke or Lancaster, it did." The solemn words, "I touch, but God healeth," were always pronounced by the sovereign when he "touched" or administered "the sovereign salve," as Bulwer calls it. Then we read of vervain root and baked toads being worn in silken bags around the neck, as charms for the evil. The practice of touching was at its height in the reign of Charles II; and in the first four years after his restoration he "touched" nearly twenty-four thousand persons. Pepys, in his "Diary," June 23, 1666, records how he waited at Whitehall "to see the king touch people for the king's evil. He did not come, but kept the poor persons waiting all the morning in the rain in the garden: afterward he touched them in the banqueting-house." The practice was continued by Charles's successors. The Hon. Daines Barrington tells of an old man who was witness in a cause, and averred that when Queen Anne was at Oxford, she touched him, then a child, for the evil: the old man added, that he did not believe himself to have had the evil, but "his parents were poor, and he had no objection to a bit of gold." Again, Dr. Johnson, when a boy, was taken by his father from Lichfield to London, to be touched for the evil by Queen Anne, in 1712. Mrs. Bray speaks of a "Queen Anne's farthing" being a charm for curing the king's evil in Devonshire.

At a late period, the use of certain coins was in common vogue, which, being touched by the king, were supposed



to have the power, and were called Royal Touch-pieces, several of which are preserved in the British Museum.

The practice was supposed to have expired with the Stuarts; but, the point being disputed, reference was made to the library of the Duke of Sussex, and four several Oxford editions of the Book of Common Prayer were found, all printed after the accession of the House of Hanover, and all containing as an integral part of the service "the office for the healing."

## APPENDIX B

### METHOD OF MAKING MAGNETIC PASSES

1. MESMER.—The Agent places his hands on the Patient's shoulders, brings them down the arms to the extremities of the fingers, and holds the thumbs for a moment. The process is repeated two or three times. He also touches the seat of the pain with fingers or palm of hand, following as far as possible the direction of the nerves.

2. ESDAILE.—The Patient, in bed and in a darkened room, is directed to close his eyes and try to sleep. The Agent makes passes without contact over the whole body; and from time to time breathes gently on the head and eyes. The process continues usually for an hour, after which many patients were able to undergo painless operations.

3. DU POTET.—The Patient sits at a little distance. The Agent places four fingers of both hands on his shoulders, runs his thumbs along the inside of the shoulder-blades, letting his fingers follow loosely. The thumbs rest a moment or two under the edge of the scapula, about one inch from the end. When the Patient falls back, the Agent reverses the passes. The Patient sits with knees uncovered, right hand on knee and left hand holding a disc at which he must gaze steadily.

4. For the method of Braid, Liébeault, and Bernheim, see Milne Bramwell's "Hypnotism," 1903.

5. "Another method of producing sleepiness is the use of monotonous rhythmical passes with or without contact. We may smoothe the forehead at a definite slow rate, or, again, we may make passes down the subject's body without any contact. This latter method was much used

by Mesmer and seems to have a peculiar effect in certain cases. I have met with patients who resisted other methods, but were readily hypnotized by this method " (William Brown, " Suggestion and Mental Analysis," 1923, p. 95).

## APPENDIX C

J. J. A. RICARD's "sensitive," Adèle Lefrey, when magnetized, said to him in a singular tone: "You are asleep while I am awake." (Ricard protested that, on the contrary, he himself was fully awake and was holding her in command by magnetic influence.) "You do not understand, monsieur. I am as completely awake as we shall all be some day in the future. All that you see is gross, material; you distinguish apparent forms: the real beauties escape you. Your spirit is cramped, obscured by the exterior impressions that your material senses give you. It can only reach out feebly, while my corporeal sensations are actually annihilated, while my soul is almost disintegrated from its ordinary fetters. I see what is invisible to your eyes. I hear what your ears cannot hear, I understand what for you is invisible. For example, you do not see what emanates from yourself and comes to me when you magnetize me: I, on the contrary, see it very clearly: at each pass you direct towards me, I see a little column of fiery dust which comes from the end of your fingers and seems to incorporate itself in me. Then, when you isolate me, I seem surrounded by an atmosphere of this fiery dust, which is often the reason why objects of which I seek to distinguish the forms take a ruddy tinge for me. I hear, when I desire it, a sound made at a distance, sounds which may arise a hundred leagues away. I am not obliged to wait till things come to me, I can go to them wherever they are, and appreciate them more correctly than anyone could who is not in a similar state to that in which I find myself! ("Traité théorique et pratique du Magnétisme Animal," 1841).

## APPENDIX D

(From Iamblichus, "On the Mysteries," Pt. iii, Sect. ii.)

It is usual for the divinations of which you speak to occur in dreams of human origin, in those set in action from the soul, or by some of our thoughts, or such as arise from phantasies, or certain daily cares. These, indeed, are sometimes true and sometimes false.

But the dreams which we call God-sent do not originate thus; but, either when sleep is leaving us and we are just beginning to awake, it is permitted to hear a brief utterance indicating things about to be done; or the voices are heard during the period between waking and complete repose, or when we have become entirely awake. Sometimes also an unseen and unbodied spirit comes round the recumbent individuals in a circle, so as not to be present to the sight, but to come into consciousness by the other associate senses and results; making a rustling noise when entering, and diffusing itself about in every direction without any feeling of contact, and accomplishing wonderful results in the way of deliverance from the passions both of soul and body. Sometimes, however, a light beaming forth, bright and gentle, the sight of the eyes is restrained and remains so, when before that they had been wide open. But the other senses continue watchful, and in some way are conscious of the light in which the gods are becoming visible: and the individuals hear what they say and know by diligent attention what they are doing. More perfectly, however, is this witnessed when the sight beholds and the captivated mind understands what is being done, and the beholders act in full co-operation.

These are like no dreams usually occurring to human beings.

## APPENDIX E

### EXPERIENCES OF MR. WRIGHT

APART from paralysis of the face I am in good health. When the Baron Du Potet magnetized me for the first time, I felt physically affected by a stream of coldness as soon as his "passes" commenced. Having seen the effects produced on other patients, I was fully prepared to experience the same results, to which I attached notions of pleasure rather than apprehension. The real effect was completely different from what I expected. The passes do not induce any feeling of *ennui*. The first marked physical sensation is an irritation of the diseased muscles of the face, and, almost at the same time, a convulsive closing of the eyes. Nearly the same results follow when my feet are magnetized. During the operation an influence independent of all such "passes" seems to sensibly affect me. The coldness previously mentioned quickly operates to the expulsion of heat from the interior: after being magnetized for some time, and everything being quiet, this heat is accompanied by great perspiration at all the extremities, such as hands and feet. I am nearly as conscious of my surroundings as a man usually is with his eyes closed. I cannot speak. Once or twice my consciousness has been largely confined to myself and the magnetizer, being abstracted from all other objects. I can for the most part see, though dimly, the magnetizer's hand, this sight being rather that of *feeling*. I am not sensible of any intellectual exaltation. I am quieted, and the longer the influence is continued the calmer I become. When the Baron magnetizes me at a distance of six to twelve feet, or through a screen, the effect produced is equal in intensity to that which I experience at close quarters with him. I cannot speak, nor when very powerfully influenced, can I move: this

is due to the physical influence. Intellectually, I do not feel the magnetizer more powerful than myself. Morally or emotionally, I am conscious of a sympathetic *peacefulness* being controlled, but not *forcefully*. An involuntary assent to the propriety of a suggestion, if transferred from the intellectual to the physical or to the moral, perhaps describes the kind of power exerted by the magnetizer. There is a physical and moral passivity to a physical and moral actor. Fascination aptly describes the magnetizer's influence; with myself it is not intellectual but only physical and moral fascination. I have, on occasion, tried by a determined effort of will to resist the operation. The result was very painful, a great exhaustion and prostration of the energies. The breathing was painfully affected; a clammy sweat, quite different from normal perspiration, ejected from the extremities; I felt considerable agitation and loss of self-control. I have been magnetized about sixteen times. The influence perceptibly increases, affecting me now more *radically*, while at first my face was really pained by external contortions. The muscles are now more moved, but less apparently on the surface. I am not sensible of any difference in my general health: my friends have remarked a degree of nervous irritation, not altogether natural to me. Apparently the magnetic treatment has made but little difference in the paralytic affection of my face. I seem to think there is a little more vitality in it. After the operation I am usually affected with a most comfortable perspiration. I am pleased to be magnetized rather than otherwise.

(Communicated by a doctor who submitted a number of questions to Mr. Wright, and printed, without alteration, by Du Potet in his "Introduction to Animal Magnetism," pp. 52-57.)

## APPENDIX F

### SOME MODERN TESTIMONY

(a) "I do not know if mental suggestion exists ; for my part I have never succeeded in provoking this phenomenon, except under the form of sending to sleep and awaking by a simple mental command ; but if mental suggestion exists, it is not a phenomenon of suggestion, it is a phenomenon of magnetism."

"We believe with Durand de Gros that Suggestion and Mesmerism are two distinct agents, equally real, each existing independently of the other : each can take the other's place and counterfeit it, as they can also combine for the production of common effects. We may have Suggestion without Mesmerism and Mesmerism without Suggestion : better still, we can have a pseudo-suggestion which is only Mesmerism and a pseudo-Mesmerism which is only Suggestion ; finally, we can have, simultaneously and indivisibly, Mesmerism and Suggestion, Suggestive Mesmerism, or, if we prefer the term, Mesmeric Suggestion " (" Psychic Science," by Emile Boirac, Rector of Dijon Academy, English trans., 1918, pp. 192, 218).

In Chapter VII of the same book Dr. Boirac gives a careful account of the personal experiment in 1893 which convinced him of the actual existence of "Magnetic or Nervous Radiation," and maintains that anyone who experiments as he did, and exercises a little patience, can verify this for himself. The following sentences (p. 171) are worth quoting : "The misfortune of such facts, which are almost impossible to reproduce experimentally, is that we prefer to imagine anything rather than believe in their reality and admit the consequences they imply. *A few hours after seeing them we doubt the evidence of our senses and memory.*"

(b) "I have proved to my entire satisfaction that all of



us emanate rays beside the caloric ones: I had written and spoken of this long before Blondlot proved it scientifically. The vital question remains, Do these rays possess curative powers? It is boldly claimed by many intelligent people outside the (medical) profession that the 'laying on of hands' is as potent now as ever it was. . . . I have found the practice of 'Magnetism' a useful adjunct in the so-called 'suggestion' treatment" (J. Stenson Hooker, M.D., "The Trend of Modern Medicine," 1905).

(c) Referring to Animal Magnetism, Prof. Pierre Janet says: "Methods of treatment based on the utilization of mysterious remedies have not quite lost their vogue. It is extremely probable that part, at least, of the admitted efficacy of electrical treatment, treatment by radium, and even serum treatment, may be the outcome of kindred psychological phenomena. Consider, for instance, what is known as osteopathy, a therapeutic method widely celebrated in the United States. The mechanism of the method resembles that of treatment by animal magnetism. . . . Whatever the cause of these cures or apparent cures, it is improbable that the massage of the spinal column has much to do with the matter. We may presume that here, likewise, forces are at work of which both the patient and osteopath are unaware. The prestige of anatomical science plays its part, just as the prestige of astronomy functioned in Mesmer's practice, and just as the prestige of the physical science of electricity functioned in magnetic treatment. Despite the claim of osteopathy to be scientific, we have to do with one of these methods of treatment which belong to the realm of magic. Its success shows that magic still plays a part in medicine."

("Psychological Healing," 1925, i. pp. 41-43.)



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