



### ANIMAL MAGNETISM AS A CURATIVE FORCE.

I DO not like the term "hypnotism," and hence use the old name. I will relate an experience in my own family, in which this marvellous force, used for a holy purpose, with faith in its wholesomeness, all in the strong tide of maternal affection, worked its wonderful efficiency. Here, let me say, that inasmuch as it is a power for good, it is doubtless also a power for evil when exercised for an evil purpose. Simple-hearted Frederika Bremer, in her story of Nina, makes the strong, observant Edna detect an evil exercise of the kind upon the gentle, innocent Nina, and she drives the guilty, traitorous man from her presence as a reptile that he was. Hundreds of impressionable girls succumb to an influence they are powerless to resist.

My son Alvin, something like twelve years old, was rejoicing in the din of powder, so dear to the boy on the Fourth of July. He had made what he designed for a burning mountain of wet powder, and having applied a match to ignite it without effect, he poured dry powder from a flask he held in his hand, but some little spark was latent in the heap, which exploded, and ignited the flask as well. The result was terrible, and the hand was dreadfully shattered. I lifted him upon the bed, and while waiting for a physician in the neighborhood, cast aside all my distressed selfism

and proceeded to make the magnetic passes. Soon Dr. Livingston appeared, and examined the hand. "I must remove one, if not two of the fingers," he said. "No—no, doctor," I cried, "don't do it; splinter them up, they can be saved; I am sure they can."

The doctor, examined the patient, eyes and pulse, and asked, "Is he asleep?"

"Oh, yes, he will not cry or move; do not fear."

"Can you keep him as he is?"

"Certainly, all his pain is soothed as you see."

The doctor, proceeded to dress the wounded hand, more than once commenting on his apparent freedom from pain, and with tender thoughtfulness helped me put him into bed.

I prepared myself for long nights of watching. The weather was very hot, and the good, faithful doctor, by his gentle, unremitting attention, suggested a fear of the worst. I never left the poor boy, not even an hour. I soothed the restlessness of pain and fever, by repeating the magnetic power which never failed of their effect. The tips of the fingers were just visible under the bandages, and I resorted to a process of my own to avoid gangrene, by many times in an hour touching them with a solution of salt and vinegar. At first my heart sank within me to see them black and puffed,

but at length this grew to be less apparent.

In all my care and watching I was faithfully attended by my good, devoted Bridget, who could hardly be persuaded to leave me to my anxious watching. Ah! there is nothing finer or sweeter than an Irish heart. No sacrifice is too great to be made where its affections are enlisted.

One night Alvin was more restless than ordinary, his head burning hot, and his throat dry from thirst, and the feet grew cold. Bridget seeing this took them in her warm, generous, Irish hands while I soothed him with magnetism, when, to my utter horror, in that dark midnight, I saw her fall upon the floor in strong convulsions. I made no outcry, but simply laid my hand upon her head, and with impulsive prayers to God, and tender words to her, soon saw her open her eyes, and recover.

We are wonderfully and mysteriously made. After long, long effort, of days if not weeks, the black tips of the wounded fingers put on a faint tinge of red—and the discolored blood escaped by the bandages. This was followed by the first signs of amendment.

I shall never forget the pleasure the doctor evinced, as the case tended to recovery, and his joy when, upon removing the bandage, the hand, presented little blemish—no stiffness of joint, or loss of function.

Then comes of course, a bill for such faithful, tender service, which bill was never presented; and when I named it, the reply was in character with the preceding goodness:

“There is no bill, madam—I have been learning. This is the first exhibition of magnetic force I ever witnessed, and I am more than repaid.”

This subtle force is a help and blessing to every rightly constituted mother. A child, restless from teething may be soothed to sleep by it—and in its unconscious struggle for life, and growth and comfort, many a period of irritation is involved, which may be banished by

this simple process. Much of the discordant and tiresome experiences of the nursery may be made to give way to this healing process, provided the mother has the self-control requisite for the purpose.

My heart has ached to see a child screaming—purple in the face, under the ill-magnetic nervousness of a mother who had not learned this divine process. Many and many a time has such a mother brought her child to me, saying, “Just lay your hand upon it, and it will be still,” and assuredly it would settle down to infantile sweetness.

Mothers do not half understand the full functions of maternity, if they do not spontaneously resort to this healing process. A gentle pressure over the eyes, a soft, warm hand passed down the spinal column, the little foot or hand tenderly held are of magic power. Often what is called “temper,” a violent and unnatural shrieking about little hindrances may be allayed by this almost marvellous force, and thus the child be saved from many an after year of violence.

Every person has more or less of this magnetism—not always wholesome in kind; and much of the experience in households may be traced to the good or ill magnetic quality of its inmates; hence, the propriety of separate beds, and the reasons why some persons, can never be together without a quarrel.

Many of the charges of sorcery and witchcraft may be traced to this, at the time, unknown element. Pitiful as the history of the Salem witchcraft is it was not all fraud, nor all a delusion; the unhappy Paris children, bred in the gloom of a pathless wilderness, were without doubt most sensitive to what seemed malignant influence to them, and in the presence of certain persons felt as if pins and needles were being thrust into them. I am sensitive in the same way; but fortunately have been able to master it. Mrs. Horace Greeley, who held conventional rules in con-

tempt, was known more than once to spring from her seat and take one the opposite site of the room, exclaiming as she did so, "I can't sit near you—your sphere is disagreeable to me."

Women of large brain are apt to be suspected of a malign power, by their weaker and more superstitious neighbors. It is well-known that some persons go out of the body, as it were, and become visible to persons at a distance; and so well-established is this fact, that a theory of a stellar body has gained ground. I am strongly leaning toward what is known as spiritualism, and but for a certain cowardice and reverence should give some considerable time to it. It may be that those of a decided magnetic organization are gifted, also, with the power of "discussing spirits."

Not long since, after going to my room, locking the door as usual, I saw one of my sons, whom I had left reading in a room below, enter my room, and turn to the open door leading to the room in which his daughters slept. "They are asleep—and D. is better," I said, supposing he was uneasy at a slight indisposition of the latter. He made no reply, but went across the room and looked out of the window. Surprised at this silence I jumped out of bed, and laid my hand on his arm. There was nothing tangible there.

Going to the hall the door was locked. Then I went down the stairs to find him reading as I had left him early in the evening.

This is not an unusual experience, I apprehend, and the appearance of this *Stimulacrum* or stellar body may have given rise to many a tragedy of sorcery and witchcraft.

It is well-known that Kepler, in the midst of his profound studies and discoveries, was for seven years using all the influence which his character and his great learning commanded to save his nobly endowed mother from being burned at the stake as a witch. Great

intellect has its magnetism—as witness the power of Iago over the credulous Moor; and again that of the cruel Philip II. over poor, sinister, wicked Mary of England.

Some persons have so strong and sullen a magnetism of the earth earthly, that they gather the atoms of earth about them and "walk" when they ought to be quietly sleeping in their graves. Now such persons are strongly magnetic—but not of a wholesome kind. Let those of an ill-regulated life and strong passions forbear to use this Divine force of magnetism—and those who possess this power accept it with reverence, if not with a holy fear; for they do, for the time being, absorb the soul of another into themselves; they hold the issues of life in abeyance, and are as it were, gods.

What newspaper reporters and inferior novelists dignify with the name of love, is nothing less than this animal force misdirected. Were my subject one to justify a moral, I would warn my sex against an influence which may be Divine and may be devilish.

ELIZABETH OAKES SMITH.

THE INHERITANCE OF BLINDNESS. — In the *British Medical Journal* a contributor, Mr. Snell, gives the result of certain investigations undertaken to ascertain the influence upon offspring of the marriage of blind people. In every instance, to inquiries as to sight and the formation of the eyes of the children, he was assured that the vision was perfect and the ocular condition normal. A similar answer was returned to questions respecting hearing and bodily deformities. The latter were absent and hearing was always stated to be good.

These results are somewhat at variance with those recorded by other observers. Magnus investigated fourteen instances of married couples in whom one or both were born blind, or became