

**MESMERISM, WITH
HINTS FOR
BEGINNERS**

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Mesmerism, with Hints for Beginners by John James

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JOHN JAMES

**MESMERISM, WITH
HINTS FOR
BEGINNERS**

H. C. Hoskier

MESMERISM,

WITH

HINTS FOR BEGINNERS.

BY

JOHN JAMES,

FORMERLY CAPTAIN, NINETIETH LIGHT INFANTRY.

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J. M.

P R E F A C E.

THERE being a demand at the present time for a Text-Book for beginners who are inquiring into Mesmerism, I asked Captain James to allow me to republish, in book form, some articles he had written on the subject for a newspaper of mine. He was diffident. He said that, as a soldier, his literary experience had been small; he had been in the habit only of writing brief notices of *séances*, in which he said what he had to say in the plainest words, and then laid down his pen. I replied that that was exactly what the public wanted; there was too much book-making nowadays, and that if a few soldiers would but take up the pen, and briefly popularise scientific subjects in plain words, so much the better would it be for everybody. Finally he gave way, and this useful little work, which is a great enlargement of his previous articles, is the result.

WILLIAM H. HARRISON.

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Called into
P
Psychometry

MESMERISM,

WITH HINTS FOR BEGINNERS.

CHAPTER I.

HINTS FOR BEGINNERS.

MANY English and French writers have given valuable instructions for beginners, but as most of their works are out of print and difficult to obtain, it possibly may not be considered a work of supererogation to offer the experiences of one who has devoted many years to a study of the subject. It may, however, be useful to inquirers to draw their attention to two books lately republished, viz., the invaluable work of Dr. Gregory, late Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh University, and the lectures of Dr. J. Bovee Dods.

In the following observations on some of the methods used by practitioners for the production of the mesmeric sleep, it should be understood that the writer merely gives the results of his own experience when he recommends any particular procedure.

Other methods, used by other mesmerisers, have been found equally successful, and it is probable that the real *desiderata* or requisites for a successful operator are patience, perseverance, and an earnest desire to succeed; the best frame of mind on the part of the patient is, if possible, a state of perfect passivity.

The beginner will probably soon find that he must occasionally vary his method of mesmerising, according to the habit or idiosyncrasy of each patient, and that any particular formula, however efficacious in the generality of cases, sometimes requires to be supplemented by other methods.

It is recommended that the mesmeriser should direct his patient either to place himself in an easy-chair, or to lie down on a couch, so that he may be perfectly at ease. The mesmeriser then, either standing or seated opposite his patient, should place his hand, with extended fingers, over the head, and make passes slowly down to the extremities, as near as possible to the face and body without touching the patient, taking care at the end of each pass to close his hand until he returns to the head, when he should again extend his fingers and proceed as before. It is also useful after making several of these passes to point the fingers close to the patient's eyes, which procedure, in many cases, has more effect than the passes. This simple process should be continued for about twenty minutes at the first *séances*, and may be expected to produce more or less effect according to the susceptibility of the

patient. Should the operator perceive any signs of approaching sleep, he should persevere with the passes until the eyes close, and should he then observe a quivering of the eyelids, he may be pretty certain that his efforts will be successful.

Many experienced mesmerisers have come to the conclusion that the will plays an important part in the production of the sleep and in relief of pain. Whether this be the case or not, it is recommended that the operator should concentrate his energies, and earnestly will, or wish, that his patient should derive benefit from his exertions. Some very susceptible subjects, in the course of ten minutes, or even less time, will suddenly fall back, apparently insensible, in which case the following tests will prove whether or no the real mesmeric coma has been produced. Raise the patient's hand, and should it fall immediately as a dead weight, it is a good sign; then raise one of the eyelids, and should the eyeball be observed to be turned upwards and wandering in its orbit, there can be little doubt of the operator's success. In some rare cases the eyeball will be found in its natural position but with the pupil much dilated, no contraction taking place on the approach of a lighted candle. Even at this early stage the patient may bear the prick of a pin on the back of his hand without betraying any symptom of pain.

Sometimes slow breathing, or placing the hand on the forehead, will deepen the sleep, but the beginner should, as a rule, avoid concentrating the mesmeric