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THE PIONEERS  
OF THE  
SPIRITUAL REFORMATION.



THE PIONEERS OF THE SPIRITUAL REFORMATION.

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LIFE AND WORKS  
OF  
DR. JUSTINUS KERNER

(ADAPTED FROM THE GERMAN.)

WILLIAM HOWITT  
AND  
HIS WORK FOR SPIRITUALISM.

*Biographical Sketches.*

By ANNA MARY HOWITT WATTS.

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## P R E F A C E .

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THE two Pioneers of new science, whose lives and labours in the direction of Psychology form the subject-matter of this volume, will be found to bear a strong similarity to each other in other directions than the one which now links together their names, lives, and labours.

Both were ardent lovers of Nature as well as of Supernature,—and both were poets. The bias of both was distinctly and absolutely Christian; an unsectarian Christianity in which the philosophy was Spirituality, and the sentiment Love. Both were endowed with entire singleness and guilelessness of nature, and with a directness of intuitive perception which penetrated the essential, underlying truth of many things in many directions; revealing it often in very unexpected places to the incredulous, and not always well-pleased gaze of the onlooker. Having once satisfied themselves that it was the countenance of Truth herself which they had thus clearly, albeit fitfully discerned, they, openly and for ever, avowed themselves her champions; and both, even into their advanced old age, retained that glow of enthusiasm for the true, the lofty, and the spiritually beautiful, which is one of the special endowments of a healthful imaginative temperament, and one of the surest prognostics possessed by humanity of the eternal nature of the spirit enshrined in man.

It has been observed by Aimé Reinhard, in his valuable sketch of the life of Kerner, "that the peculiar work of blending the revelations of Swedenborg and Mesmer, and bringing them, combined with additional confirmatory facts, before the world, in a strangely novel and romantic form, was reserved for Justinus Kerner."

Similarly to blend with the discoveries of Modern Spiritualism, by analogous and independent investigation, the revealments of Kerner was the work of Howitt and other workers.

In association with this work, mention is due of Mrs. Catherine Crowe, the translator of Kerner's *Seherin von Prevorst*, and the author of *The Night Side of Nature*, which paved the way in candid minds for the reception of the startling revelation of the Rochester Knockings; and of the Fox family in America, by whom the discovery was made of the intelligence of the "knockers," and of the means of establishing communication with them by pre-concerted signals.

A. M. H. W.

19 CHEYNE WALK, CHELSEA.  
*St. Michael's Day, 1883.*



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## ERRATA.

- Page 8, line 5, for "Schubart" read Schubert.  
 ,, 15, ,, 5, for "Fouquè" read Fonqué.  
 ,, 28, ,, 14, for "Niebelungen" read Nibelungen.  
 ,, 43, ,, 26, for "were" read was.  
 ,, 46, ,, 28, for "sint" read sind.  
 ,, 170, ,, 16, for "repairs" read repair.  
 ,, 311, in the heading for "His Portrait of Mr. Heaphy" read His Portrait  
 by Mr. Heaphy.  
 ,, 318, line 14, for "fills" read fill.

# LIFE OF DR. JUSTINUS KERNER,

AUTHOR OF

“*The Two Sonnambules*,” “*The Seeress of Prevorst*,”  
“*History of Modern Cases of Possession*,”  
“*Researches after Memorials of Franz Anton Mesmer*,” &c.

WITH

## SPECIMENS OF HIS WRITINGS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN

BY

ANNA MARY HOWITT WATTS.

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“The peculiar work of blending the Revelations of SWEDENBORG and MESMER, and bringing them, combined with additional confirmatory facts, before the world in a strangely novel and romantic form, was reserved for JUSTINUS KERNER.”—*Aimé Reinhard*.

TO  
"L. M."  
A SEERESS OF ENGLISH BIRTH,  
WHOSE INSIGHT INTO  
THE MYSTERIES OF THE INNER LIFE,  
NOT LESS REMARKABLE THAN THAT POSSESSED BY  
THE SEERESS OF PREVORST,  
HAS GIVEN  
ILLUMINATION AND SUSTAINMENT  
TO MANY EARNEST SEEKERS AFTER TRUTH,  
THESE PAGES  
ARE INSCRIBED AFFECTIONATELY  
BY HER FRIEND,  
A. M. H. W.



# LIFE OF DR. JUSTINUS KERNER.

## CHAPTER I.

“I know him by that ample brow,  
Of sense and wit a mighty world ;  
That hair which yet defies the snow,  
In ringlets o'er his shoulders curled.

“Those classic traits, that noble mien,  
That mantle, grace in every fold,  
Suggesting that it hides within  
A form robust, of oak-like mould.”

*(Lines written by Captain Medwin in 1849, underneath a Portrait of Justinus Kerner, drawn by the daughter-in-law of the latter.)*

“The most prominent figure in the spiritual circle of Germany is Dr. Justinus Kerner.”—*Howitt's History of the Supernatural.*

### BIRTH AND PARENTAGE.

THE labours of DR. JUSTINUS KERNER in the investigation of Psychology are of so important and varied a character, that a sketch of his career cannot fail to be acceptable.

The following pages are condensed from a work which, in 1862, appeared in Germany.\* Although they will not in every instance be found exclusively to refer to “spiritual experience,” they have nevertheless an important bearing upon Psychology, in so far as they detail the circumstances and describe the culture which led a most distinguished scientific man and poet to become an investigator of Animal-Magnetism, a student of the Science of Mind, and the author of a series of important works, which have become the

\* “*Justinus Kerner und das Kernerhaus zu Weinsberg,*” von Aimé Reinhard. Tübingen, 1862.

“hand-books,” more or less, of all who at the present day study Pneumatology.

Justinus Kerner was descended from a family of some importance in Carinthia. His father was an *Oberamtmann* (senior magistrate), residing in Ludwigsburg in Württemberg, and his mother the daughter of another *Amtmann*, of Lauffen-am-Neckar. *Oberamtmann* Kerner was a thoroughly educated government-official, exact in his office, and in his household full of affection for his family, loving intercourse with intellectual people, and highly esteemed both by his Prince and his fellow-citizens. The mother appears to have been of a very gentle and nervous temperament, filled with a deep love of her children, which amounted to a life-long anxiety, and from her, Kerner probably inherited his poetical temperament. Six children were born to this married pair; four sons and two daughters, all richly endowed with gifts of heart and of mind. Justinus was the youngest child; he was born at Ludwigsburg, on the 18th of September, 1786. His father being somewhat puzzled as to the choice of a name for the child, examined his family pictures, which extended back as far as the Reformation. His glance fell upon the portrait of his ancestor, Justinus Andreas, and after him the infant was called Justinus.

The first impressions which the child received of the external world, were those of splendour and festivity. Ludwigsburg, during the reign of “Duke Karl,” as he was called, was filled with a certain stately gaiety, and the house of the worthy and popular *Oberamtmann* appears to have been frequented by persons of social and intellectual distinction; amongst these we find mentioned the father of the poet Schiller.

Upon the sudden death of “Duke Karl,” young Justinus composed his first poem. In 1795 a great change occurred in the child’s life. *Oberamtmann* Kerner growing weary of the melancholy and monotony which had fallen upon Ludwigsburg after the Duke’s death, in spite of the entreaties of his friends and fellow-officials that he would remain amongst them,

determined to remove from thence to the Abbey of Maulbronn, of which well-endowed domain he had become the bailiff.

This change of residence from the modern Ludwigsburg, with its straight, broad regular streets and avenues, its stately castle and busy town life, to the secluded valley where, surrounded by woods, vineyards and waters, lay within the enclosure of the Abbey walls, the medieval Cistercian Monastery, made naturally a deep impression on the susceptible nature of the child, and probably moulded it into certain marked forms which we shall recognise in the mature years of the Poet, Antiquarian, and Psychologist.

His education was carefully conducted during this period, the Abbey school affording excellent opportunities for the prosecution of his studies; but neither languages, geography, nor arithmetic, appear specially to have appealed to his intellect.

Nature alone absorbed his attention, and proffered him the food suited to his mental digestion. Working with his father in the garden, an intense desire for knowledge regarding the life of plants and animals awoke within him and became an unappeasable longing. The yards and gardens of the farm were gradually filled with animals, birds, insects and plants, which the young student had collected from the neighbourhood, and the life and growth of which provided him with an inexhaustible field of study. In many other directions were his keen powers of observation called forth. He is said, whilst placed by his father in a dark corner, as punishment for some boyish misdemeanour, to have discovered the principle of the *Camera Obscura*, with which, in later years, he delighted to experimentalise; and even in his childish sports to have approached the great discovery of the century—locomotion by steam. The phenomena of electricity, with which at this period he became acquainted, called forth, also, his deepest interest.

Together with this yearning after a knowledge of the kingdom of nature, awoke within him the power of poetical perception and expression. Forth from the mysterious

twilight of the Abbey's halls and cloisters, where he was accustomed frequently to sit with his book for hours dreaming, rather than reading, would present themselves the romantic forms of long-forgotten days, coming forth into the golden light of his imagination, and evoking from the depth of his young poetical soul, the magical language of song. In these early verses, where we hear an ardent desire expressed that the writer might behold with the eyes of the body, as well as with those of the soul, visions of monks in their black and white garments, we recognise an anticipation of that belief in the reality of ghosts, which in later years became a portion of the creed of Justinus Kerner, the Seer of Weinsberg.

This charming season of self-development was not, however, destined to continue long. In order that he might receive more regular instruction, the young Justinus was removed into the house of a very strict tutor residing in the neighbourhood, where he was educated with the sons of his teacher.

French troops, however, marching from the Rhine to the frontiers of Würtemberg arrived in the town, and young Kerner was suddenly sent for home by his easily alarmed mother.

Within a short period, he was, upon the eve of his removal to a larger town, seized with a severe illness. This illness was attributed to his having out-grown his strength. It produced an extraordinary excitability of the nerves of the stomach which lasted almost an entire year. During this period he made great progress in his knowledge of the ancient languages and of natural history; but, strange to relate, he could not in botany accustom himself to the scientific classification and names of plants. He was in the habit of giving the names of his acquaintance and friends to flowers, and it is related of him, that even upon his examination at the University, he occasionally confused these self-given names with those of the Linnean system. It was at this time, that studying the metamorphoses of beetles and butterflies, the idea occurred to Kerner that as the chrysalis state exists between the grub and

butterfly condition, a similar "middle-state" must also exist for man after death.

Throughout his illness, young Kerner, although treated according to the prescription of a physician of repute, rejected as much as possible, with an intense repugnance, the pills and mixtures ordered for him: no good results following this treatment Kerner's mother took him to Heilbronn for the advice of a very celebrated Russian doctor resident there, who prescribed a northern elixir of life, called "*Hopelpobel*," which was infallibly to cure him. The Kerner family attributed the youth's recovery to this wonderful draught, but he himself ascribed it to the celebrated magnetiser, Gmelin of Heilbronn, who meeting him one day upon the Wartberg made\* several "passes" over him, after which he speedily recovered. Possibly, the excitability of the nerves of Kerner's stomach, the marked symptom of his ailment, not only rendered him peculiarly susceptible to these magnetic "passes," but in fact required magnetic treatment for its cure.

One thing is, however, certain; these "passes" given by this powerful and celebrated magnetiser awoke the magnetic life within young Justinus, and from that time forth he experienced presentiments and prophetic dreams; and out of this magnetic life proceeded his interests in, and love of the "night-side of nature," of Magnetism and Pneumatology. These dreams, which, according to his own belief, proceeded from the pit of his stomach, he was henceforth subject to throughout his life, and at times they became a perfect torment to him. It appears that his grandmother upon the father's side had, in advanced age, when she became blind, similar dreams. The first of these prophetic dreams which young Kerner experienced almost immediately after having been magnetised by Gmelin, has been preserved by him in one of his most popular works of fancy—his *Picture Book*. Amongst the figures of future friends beheld by him in this dream, was one which attracted him above all others, and in this figure

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\* Vide *Spiritual Magazine*, December, 1865, p. 545.

he in course of years recognised his faithful life's companion, his beloved wife, "Riekele." And it is a noteworthy circumstance, that immediately upon his return to Maulbronn, new pupils arrived from the Abbey School of Denkendorf under the guidance of Professor Ehemann of that place—this Professor Ehemann was the father of "Riekele." This was the only time that Kerner beheld the father of his future wife—"Riekele" being an orphan when, in after years, he made her acquaintance.

About this period a great sorrow befell the Kerner family. The father died—expressing upon his death-bed deep anxiety regarding the future of his youngest son, whose education was as yet incomplete. The mother, whose means appear to have been very narrow after the death of her husband, removed with her younger children, Wilhelmine and Justinus, to Ludwigsburg, where they took up their abode in a very humble lodging. And now commenced for our future Poet-Physician experience in the school of adversity. It was suggested by one of the elder brothers, George, who had been drawn into the vortex of revolutionary excitement in Paris, and who was imbued with revolutionary ideas, that as it was good for every man to possess "a trade at his fingers' ends," it might be as well for Justinus to learn the handicraft of a carpenter; consequently with a carpenter he was placed, where he soon became very expert in the use of plane and saw, and was employed in the construction of ordinary furniture—especially, also, in the construction of *coffins*.

His brother, George, instructed him upon his last visit to his family, in another art—that of playing upon the jew's-harp, a little instrument over which Justinus attained a most marvellous power, drawing forth from it, even in his old age, the most ravishing and fairy-like strains.

The family do not, however, appear to have remained satisfied with the prospects of Justinus as a carpenter; for in 1802 we find that after he had been confirmed, a family council was held as to his future career, and it was proposed that, as the

youth could draw, paint, and make rhymes, he should become a *confectioner*, seeing that thus already he was prepared to design and colour the sweetmeats, and also to write verses and mottoes for them! Kerner, however, thought otherwise; and through an appeal to one of his father's old friends and one of his old tutors, Professor Conz, of Tübingen, he was enabled to escape becoming a confectioner. Finally, it was arranged that he should become a merchant; and in order to commence his mercantile life, he was placed in the cloth-manufactory at Ludwigsburg.

This cloth factory was one of those fiscal experiments not uncommon in the time of the "Holy Roman Empire," and which, under the pretence of making money for the State, cost it instead a great deal. It was connected with an orphan house, a house-of-correction, and a mad-house.

Kerner already had learned to endure material privation; now he had to endure privation of the mind, heart, and soul. His first employment in the factory was to cut out linen bags, and then to sew up the cloth in them. Occasionally, as a variation in his occupation, he had to prepare pattern-cards, and to copy letters. Later came the measuring and packing of the cloth, and the marking the bales with the factory mark, to which, with his power of design, he usually added some ornament. He had also to clean out the indigo tubs, during which operation the blue dust coloured his face and hands, and even penetrated his clothes.

All these labours had to be performed amidst the degrading and unseemly gossip of the work-people with whom Justinus boarded and took his meals; whilst the screaming, cursing, and raging of the insane people confined near his chamber, robbed him of his rest at night.

The remarkable power which Kerner in later years evinced in his treatment of the insane, and the peculiar attraction which he always felt towards the subject of insanity, probably sprang from his innate genius; since we find him, whilst in the factory, visiting, through compassion, the mad people in their cells, and soothing them in a marvellous manner by his

affectionate words, as well as by his performance upon the jew's-harp; whilst, on the contrary, he always felt a repugnance to intercourse with the criminals, from whom, in course of time, he learned the cloth-weaving.

His sole recreations during this weariful period were his Sunday's country walks, with friends older than himself, and with whom he pursued ever more ardently the study of natural history, whether in books or in the open fields; and the pursuit of poetry which he cultivated with intense devotion. He, indeed, at this period composed many volumes of verse, satirical as well as romantic in its character, all of which he destroyed in later years. He even began writing political poems in the vain hope of being condemned like Schubart to ten years' imprisonment; time to be at leisure to write poetry, though within the walls of a prison, appeared to him a perfectly heavenly life.

At length, after a two years' martyrdom, the time of his release arrived. His friends gave him no encouragement in his aspiration after a scientific career, but turning once more for assistance to his old friend at Tübingen, the excellent professor removed all difficulties from his path, by offering to receive him into his own house, and procuring for him one of the numerous scholarships of the Tübingen University.

In the autumn of 1804, on foot, and carrying his small possessions of books, and clothes upon his back, our young poet arrived one night at the gates of the little old-fashioned university town of Tübingen.

The moon was shining brightly, and the night was balmy, and feeling weary after his long day's tramp, he sat down to rest without the gates, and fell asleep. He dreamed whilst thus sleeping a singular prophetic-dream, which he has thus recorded in one of his beautiful romantic tales, entitled "The Homeless One" (*Die Heimathlosen*).

"Once," he writes, "with conscientious anxiety, I imposed upon myself the study of opinions and systems: but in order to awaken my better self, there soon appeared to me, each night for a long period, a stag with stork's feet, which placed



itself before me, and commanded me with imperious, scornful expressions to classify him according to Linnæus. Then I turned over, each time, greatly terrified in my dream, my compendiums and manuscripts, whilst the terrific monster stood before me: but still I could assign him no name. Not until I shook off from me the dust of the schools, and like a child, laid myself down in the lap of nature, did this loathsome apparition leave me."

In this account, Kerner represents the dream as being repeated. It probably symbolised the perplexing studies awaiting him in his university career. When young Kerner awoke out of his strange sleep, he found that the soft night-breeze had wafted towards him, from an open window of the adjacent hospital, a prescription in the handwriting of the head-physician, Dr. Uhland, an uncle of the well-known poet, Ludwig Uhland. Until that moment Kerner had been undecided as to which branch of natural science he should devote himself. This prescription was received by him as a sign of guidance, and, full of fresh confidence, he entered the university-town, saying to himself, "Thou must become a physician."

## CHAPTER II.

## AT COLLEGE.

WITH Kerner's arrival at Tübingen commences a fresh chapter in his life. He was then eighteen, and remained four years at Tübingen, studying, besides his own special calling, medicine, in all its branches, various branches of natural science, classical literature, philology and *belles lettres*.

It might almost be regarded as a foreshadowing of Kerner's future career of usefulness, that the first patient confided to his exclusive care was an unfortunate poet, Frederick Hölderlin. Already become thoroughly insane, after his dismissal from the infirmary, he had been received by an excellent cabinet-maker, of the name of Zimmer, and lived in an old tower belonging to Zimmer upon the bank of the river Neckar. In this tower he dwelt above thirty years. This insane poet inhabiting his tower is strongly suggestive of a still more familiar city tower connected with Kerner's later life, in which a still more celebrated poet frequently dwelt, and upon whom also fell the night of madness—we mean the poet Lenau. It is as though, in some occult manner, this first tower had been in Kerner's life a foreshadowing of the second.

The insanity of Hölderlin was, with but rare exceptions, of an entirely harmless nature; and, although the unhappy man had but few thoroughly clear moments, intercourse was freely carried on by the students with him without danger, and indeed was even interesting. Thus once more in his youth did Kerner meet with an opportunity of familiarising himself with that mysterious malady, upon which he was destined in later life to bestow so much attention, and upon the origin of which he has thrown so much light.

Justinus encountered amongst the Tübingen students—amongst “the sons of the Muses,” as the German students delight to designate themselves—two youths, who, in the present instance, truly deserved the appellation, and with whom he became linked in a life-long friendship; these students were Ludwig Uhland and Gustav Schwab. Soon other youths associated themselves with the poetical trio, and formed a Round Table of Knights of the Intellect, who ere long dealt for the benefit of German literature mighty strokes against the last remaining monster of the so-called “Pigtail School.” Kerner and Uhland wrote at this time some of their most popular songs and ballads, and their names soon became famous throughout Germany.

In the autumn of 1808, Kerner completed his four years of study, but still remained a few months longer in Tübingen, to compose his *Doctor's Thesis*.

Karl August Varnhagen von Ense has given us an interesting description of Kerner in his student-days. Speaking of some special night when Kerner and he had been reading together Jung Stilling's *Theory of Spiritual Communication*, he says—“This Würtemberg is rightly the home of haunting and ghost-like doings, of the marvels of the soul-life, and of the dream-world. The imagination of the Swabians has an especial sensitiveness. Their nerves are peculiarly excitable in this direction. Kerner in this particular is a true representative of his land, and of his people, only raised into a higher region where scientific perception and poetic fancy have mingled with the national peculiarities.

“In his presence the sensitiveness of others appears to increase through the force of his peculiar nature. . . . But I must tell you many things about Kerner,” he observes in another place, “He does not possess our Northern cultivation and talkativeness, but approaches you sympathetically and opens out his thoughts to you. It is a comfort to me to have some one near to me—we lodge in the same house—who is so agreeable and sympathising, and I always rejoice when the good, dear fellow enters my room in the evening and sits

down to my table to work at his *Thesis*, whilst I busy myself about my own affairs as though no one were present. Later on, he watches with astonishment how I drink tea instead of a measure of wine which people here like so well, and then we converse freely about all manner of things. He possesses the most lively perception of art, and of all that is comical, and has a sort of passion for bringing all such characteristics to light. . . . He has employed his four years of study most industriously, but without over exertion; has learnt an immensity, and already has treated the sick with skill. So soon as he has taken his degree of Doctor he will travel. He has been making experiments on various animals with reference to their sense of hearing, in preparation for his *Thesis*. He has living together with him in his room in the most perfect friendship, dogs, cats, fowls, geese, owls, squirrels, toads, lizards, mice, and who can say how many beasts besides; and he has no need to shut his doors except it be to keep the creatures from running off. Whether his books or his clothes are in danger, or a beast snorts in its sleep, or suddenly aroused, snaps at him, he is perfectly unconcerned. His experiments are subtle and full of thought, and in making them he endeavours to avoid all torture. Unquestionably he stands in a very near relationship to nature, and especially to 'its night-side.' His eyes have something peculiarly spiritual and pious in their glance—all that is magically magnetic is to be met in him to an extraordinary degree. He has a something somnambule which accompanies even his merriment and laughter.

“For a long time together he will be sunk in thought and dreams, and then suddenly start forth from his trance-like state, making a joke of the terror of those about him. He can simulate madness until one shudders, and although he may begin this in joke, he is in no jovial mood if he continue his simulated madness any length of time. In poetry, the marvellous of the folk-lore, and the simple, rough strength of the songs of the people, are most in accordance with his nature. Poetry of a higher and more refined character he

recognises, but he does not require it. For the same reason he prefers to speak his rough dialect, will not lay it aside, and even opposes himself to the language of literature. In music he has taken possession of the jew's-harp, and possesses the art of drawing forth from that insignificant but wonderful little instrument, the tenderest and most heart-touching tunes. Picture to yourself a youth of the simplest and most thoroughly negligent attire, possessed of the most entire indifference towards things which usually trouble people, with a stooping bearing, an irregular gait, a constant inclination to lean upon a chair rather than comfortably to sit upon it—and yet withal a slender, well-grown, well looking youth—and then you will have a complete picture of my Kerner.”

In 1808 Kerner obtained his doctor's diploma, and quitted Tübingen to set forth upon his travels. Before, however, leaving the university, in the autumn of 1807, an event of deepest import to our poet-physician occurred. Upon an excursion to the ruins of Achalm, near Reutlingen, with a numerous and merry company, as he was ascending the hill, he observed a young girl who lingered solitarily somewhat behind the rest of the party, and who, by her grave and sorrowful air, attracted his observation and deeply interested him. Stepping up to her, he said, quoting *Göethe's* lines :—

“How comes it, then, that thou art grave,  
 When each thing gay appears?  
 Alas! one sees that thy sad eyes  
 No strangers are to tears!”

The young girl, touched by this heartfelt sympathy of the stranger, walked on with him in a confidential manner, and confided to him that she was an orphan and very unhappily situated. Kerner, himself oppressed with melancholy, thought that as they had both of them been early trained in the school of affliction, they might be able the more completely to console and sympathise with each other, and believed that he now beheld his God-given life's companion—and such proved to be the case! This was that gentle, highly-gifted, and most

amiable Fredrica, whom, as "Rickele," Kerner throughout a long and most happy married life, celebrated in his poetry as his household angel.

His betrothal at the age of one-and-twenty with a fortuneless girl, appeared to all Kerner's friends an act of folly, but "Wisdom justifieth her children."

## CHAPTER III.

## IN THE BLACK FOREST AND IN THE WELZHEIM FOREST.

IN the spring of 1809, Kerner having taken his degree as Doctor of Medicine, set forth upon his journey, through Germany, where in Hamburg, Berlin, Dresden, and Vienna, he became personally acquainted with his celebrated compatriots, Amalia Schoppe, Adelbert von Chamisso, De la Motte Fouquè, Frederik Schlegel, and Beethoven. In Vienna, he spent the winters engaged in the prosecution of his medical studies, and in the course of the following year, after a short abode in Dürrmenz—which he found afforded him too narrow a scope for practice—he settled down at Wildbad, in the midst of the Black Forest. At Wildbad he remained a year, and there commenced his career, both as a physician and a literary man. It was at Wildbad, that he completed his first work entitled *Shadows of Travel, by the Shadow-player, Lachs*, a series of fantastic, poetical, and humorous sketches, which embodied his experience of travel, and became very popular, although calling down upon itself much abuse from the critics; and where he wrote “*The Homeless Ones*,” an exquisite poetical tale, overflowing with beauty in many forms, and in which the artistically contrasted dramatis personæ—each one a typical figure, distinctive through its individual development of the magnetic or somnambulic life—stand forth, as if traced out in brilliant sunset light, against the sombre and melancholy back-ground of the Black Forest, with its swart pine trees, rushing waters, and profound sylvan solitudes. In Lambert, the physician whom he describes in this tale, as pursuing his investigations into the laws of nature, irrespective of all preconceived scientific prejudices, and who, in the solitude of his

forest-home, has solved some of the occult mysteries of the soul's life,—we evidently recognise a picturesque sketch of the author's own experiences. Indeed, this singular little prose-poem may be regarded as a figurative prophecy of Kerner's future career. At the same period, Kerner contributed many poems to the yearly *Almanachs*, at that time in their first popularity in Germany, and also wrote a valuable work both medical and typographical, with reference to the bath at Wildbad, entitled *Wildbad, in the Kingdom of Württemberg*—a work which passed through various editions, and drew, for the first time, attention both at home and abroad to the remarkable medicinal properties of the bath, which since then has become a fashionable resort.

By the time that this work was in the press, its author had quitted Wildbad, and taken up his abode in Welzheim, where a more considerable practice presented itself, and where he was soon destined to find a new field of usefulness.

It was in Welzheim that Kerner had the unspeakable happiness of bringing home "Riekele" as his wife, and with her his life's good angel entered beneath his roof. Within the same year was born to them a little daughter who was called, after Varnhagen's sister, Rosa Maria, and whose birth was gracefully celebrated in verse by Uhland.

The Forest of Welzheim, a remarkable district, both with reference to its physical condition and to its inhabitants, was, at the beginning of this century, almost entirely cut off from the rest of the world. Nevertheless, this remote district offered numerous objects of interest to Kerner's poetical and observing mind. Even congenial acquaintance — amongst these may be mentioned two clergymen of archæological and literary tastes and reputation; a rural poet, a poor linen-weaver, Johannes Lämmerer, a small selection of whose verses Kerner prepared for the press, and to whom he addressed a sonnet, comparing him to Hans Sachs; and blind Melchior Lang, who was endowed with the natural gift of healing—the first example of this peculiar occult power which had come under our poet-physician's observation.



To Kerner's sympathetic mind, which seized upon the poetical under whatsoever form it presented itself, the cultivation of flax—a marked feature of the district—suggested not only several poems, but excited his benevolent interest, and he materially assisted in spreading the consumption of Welzheim flax, thereby greatly promoting the comfort of the poor peasants.

In his capacity of physician, our clear-sighted Justinus discovered a field in Welzheim of curious scientific research; one which occupied him subsequently, almost unceasingly, during a series of years. It was an extraordinary local sickness amongst the ill-fed country people, occasioned through poisoning by sour and corrupt sausages. This disease, until Kerner drew attention to it, had never been scientifically investigated. Through his unwearied researches it was, however, ere long displayed in the whole of its extent and fearful power. He first made his discoveries on this subject known to the world through the *Tübingen Gazette of Natural Science*, and called upon the physicians of the neighbouring districts to institute similar observations.

Upon Kerner's appointment, three years subsequently, as district-physician of the neighbouring town of Gaildorf,—where again this peculiar disease presented itself,—he was through his official position enabled to bring the consideration of it before the Medical College. Not only was his report approved of by the Government, but it attracted the attention of King William of Würtemberg, who provided him with grants of money, thereby enabling him to prosecute upon a much wider scale his experiments connected with the "sausage poison." The results of these protracted investigations, which were pursued by Kerner during the earlier years of his abode at Weinsberg,—where subsequently upon his removal to that town he again encountered the disease,—were published in 1820 under the title of *New Observations regarding the frequent Deadly Poisonings in Würtemberg through the Consumption of Smoked Sausages*. In this book Kerner refers to seventy-six cases of the poisoning which had come under his own

observation. He also added a careful report of the cretinism which he had met with in various valleys of the Gaildorf district. He remarks how, in the middle ages, the Kings of France possessed the gift of healing *gôitre* through "laying on of hands" and pronouncing the well-known words, "*Le Roi touche, Dieu te guérisse!*" By a bold and poetical adaptation of this fact, he calls upon the sovereigns of our own time to remember, that within them dwells the power to deliver their subjects from both physical and spiritual misery, by making use of the formula changed to *Le Roi te délivre, Dieu te guérisse!*—at the same time freeing them from all remaining bonds of existing serfdom, in order that through free-labour they may attain to external well-being and to external self-respect.

But to return to the year 1817, which was marked in the life of our poet-physician by a singular concatenation of domestic events, more or less distressing. About the middle of June, Kerner set out in a carriage from Gailsdorf, with his daughter Maria, who was four years old, to visit his mother who resided at Ilsfeld, with her daughter Wilhelmina, and her son-in-law, who was pastor of that place. Unfortunately, whilst descending a very steep road, near the little town of Löwenstein, Kerner walking beside the carriage, in which his little daughter sat, the usually sure-footed horse stumbled, and fell with the carriage down the precipice. The little girl's arm was broken. In this condition her deeply-distressed father was obliged, walking for two hours through the woods, to carry her in his arms to Ilsfeld, where he found his mother suffering from illness. The terrible news of the accident so painfully affected Kerner's wife, that she prematurely brought into the world, on the 14th of June, their son Theobald, who was of so delicate a constitution that it was long a question with his parents whether they should ever rear him. Within a few days of this event Kerner's mother departed this life. With truth might the poet Uhland, writing to his friend at once to congratulate him upon the birth of a son, and to condole with him upon the

loss of his mother, observe—"Such is the progressive life! whilst you extend one hand in joy to the newly-born generation, you must in grief withdraw your other hand from the grasp of the departing one!"

Possibly the painful experience of these events following each other with such strange rapidity, gave rise in Kerner's susceptible mind, to a melancholy foreboding which frequently tortured him throughout the remainder of his life, and which expressed itself in an observation not unfrequently falling from his lips, "that misfortunes rarely come alone."

## CHAPTER IV.

## AT WEINSBERG.

IN January, 1819, Justinus Kerner settled in Weinsberg, as district-physician appointed by the Government; and with this event commences a new and important chapter in his life. Fully three years elapsed before Kerner became reconciled to his change of abode, and tenderly did he regret the densely-wooded districts which he had lately quitted. Weinsberg, at the time when Kerner settled there, was scarcely more than a village of vine-growers, and was much less accessible than at present. William Howitt visiting Weinsberg in 1840 says, "The situation of Weinsberg is very charming. It is in the middle of a wide open and well-cultivated plain, with a clear, rapid stream running through it. All around, at the distance of a mile or two, rise up the woody and winding hills so peculiar to this part of Southern Germany, the sides of which are all covered with vineyards. Here and there open out, between the hills, vales running far away, in which you discern the white walls of villages. Weinsberg is a compact little town and one of the neatest in the neighbourhood. Just by it stands a high and conical hill clad on all sides with vines; and on its summit the ruins of the old Castle of Weinsberg, still popularly called, '*Die Weibertreu,*' or *Woman's Fidelity*, from this circumstance. When the Emperor Conrad, in 1140, besieged the castle into which the people had fled, and summoned them to surrender, he would give no promise of quarter to the men: but he pledged himself to allow the women to go out carrying with them what they liked best. These terms were accepted, and to the astonishment of the Emperor, he beheld the women

coming forth in a train, carrying each her husband, her brother, or near relative. This incident has furnished the subject of one of Bürger's most spirited ballads, and was made popular with the English readers by Addison in the *Spectator*. But the castle and town of Weinsberg acquired a most fearful notoriety in the celebrated Peasants' War, in 1525. Weinsberg, which had thus its full share of horrors, is as smart and quiet as if it had never known an outrage. Nature has covered the old towers with her healing boughs and blossoms; man has clothed the whole hill with vines; and all the country between it and the picturesque old Heilbronn is one great garden and vineyard."

It was at the foot of the hill of the "Weibertreu" that, in 1822, Kerner built himself a house upon a piece of ground, formerly a portion of the town-moat, and which was presented to him by the corporation. Here Kerner was destined to spend the remainder of his life, the forty most important years of his useful career. Shortly after the Kerners' entrance into this happy home, their third and last child was born. Soon after Kerner was settled in his house, he began, during his leisure time, to occupy himself in searching out the past history of the town. Amongst the town archives he found certain unpublished documents and memoranda connected with the "Peasants' War," and published from these a little book written in the old style, entitled *The Storming of the Town of Weinsberg in Würtemberg by the pure Christian Troops in 1525, and its consequences to the Town*.

The historical incident connected with the Weibertreu, also called forth his sympathies, and finding upon his arrival that the ruins of this interesting castle lay half buried in dust and rubbish, and were apparently hastening towards a speedy dissolution, Kerner brought all the force of his influence and of his poetical enthusiasm into play, to excite a general interest in its preservation. He was so fortunate as to meet, in the chief magistrate of Weinsberg, with a fellow-labourer in this work of love. A Weinsberg "Ladies' Society"—the Queen of Würtemberg herself at its head—was speedily

organised, by means of which, throughout Germany, funds were raised for the preservation and embellishment of this interesting historical monument; and the same year, it being purchased by King William and presented by him to the Society of Weinsberg Ladies, the ancient walls were soon repaired, the towers rendered accessible, and the whole interior converted into one of the most charming of pleasure gardens. Upon this occasion Kerner for about the first and last time in his life, exhibited germs of a mercantile genius; for he caused small pieces of stone from the old castle to be set in simple rings of gold, which were disposed of by many hundreds throughout Germany as "Weibertreu rings."

Kerner had a huge Æolian-harp suspended in one of the towers of the castle, which throughout a space of thirty years was wont to send down into the valley below, its wild streams of plaintive music.

It was in 1826 that Kerner published the first of his remarkable series of works connected with the inner-life of man. It is entitled *The History of Two Somnambulists: together with certain other Notable Things from the Realms of Magical Cure and Psychology*. This book is in fact the diary kept by Kerner, with reference to two very remarkable patients of his; one, a young girl of a very pious disposition, the daughter of a vine-grower in Weinsberg; the other a young woman born at Stuttgart, and living in service in Weinsberg. Both exhibited the most marvellous phenomena, and were treated magnetically by Dr. Kerner—both were ultimately restored to health.

Truly, as Varnhagen von Ense observed, "this Württemberg is rightly the home of haunting and ghost-like doings of the marvellous; of the soul-life and the dream-world." No sooner had Kerner commenced his operations as a magnetiser, than Weinsberg and the districts around teemed with patients seeking his assistance; and somnambulist symptoms, possession and hauntings were everywhere discovered. There lay unsealed before Kerner, so to speak, the magical volume of the soul of man, and his eyes, touched by the hand of Divine-

wisdom, were made clear to read and to decipher to the world its mystical hieroglyphics. Kerner's house was soon filled with patients who came to benefit by his magnetic treatment.

The most remarkable of these was the singularly endowed Frederika Hauffé, to whom such frequent reference has been made by writers on psychological subjects both on the Continent, as well as in England and America; and who was brought from Prevorst to Weinsberg on the 25th November, 1826, to be under Dr. Kerner's medical care. She ultimately was received by her physician beneath his own roof, where she remained for some considerable time. The chronicle which Kerner kept of her treatment and experiences—one of the most remarkable books ever penned—was published in 1829, after the death of Madame Hauffé, and was entitled *The Seeress of Prevorst; or, Openings-up into the Inner Life of Man, and Mergings of a Spirit-World into the World of Matter*. In the *Spiritual Magazine* for June, 1862, appeared a short resumé of "The Seeress of Prevorst" from the pen of Mr. Thomas Shorter, as rendered into English by Mrs. Crowe. In the years 1832, '38 and '46 it passed through three enlarged editions. This work is known to the English reader through the admirable translation—so far as it goes, for unfortunately it is somewhat abridged—of Mrs. Crowe. Margaret Fuller Ossoli has remarked, "He would be dull who could see no meaning or beauty in the forester's daughter of Prevorst. She lived but nine and twenty years, yet in that time had traversed a larger portion of the field of thought than all her race before in their many and long lives."

Kerner, regarding it to be his duty to permit the Seeress of Prevorst to be visited by all such persons as were earnestly inclined to investigate her peculiar psychological condition, his home was soon thronged by numbers of visitors. Amongst these may be named David Strauss, the author of the *Life of Jesus*, at that time orthodox in his religious views; and Professor Eschenmayer of Tübingen, who became Kerner's fellow-labourer in a minute investigation of the phenomena exhibiting themselves in Madame Hauffé, the philosophic-

mystico nature of whose mind exercised a marked influence over Kerner himself, and who originally appears to have been inclined to regard the seeress's unfolding of the spirit-world rather in a poetical than in a dogmatic light.

In 1831, Kerner established a periodical under the title of *Leaves from Prevorst; or, Original Literary Fruits for Lovers of the Inner Life*. The chief co-workers were Eschenmayer, Friederik von Mayer of Frankfort, Gotthelf, Heinrich von Schubert, Guido Görres, and Franz von Baader. Twelve volumes of this periodical appeared before 1839.

As an appendix to the eighth volume, he published in 1835, from the original French document, *The Vision of France and her Future, as seen in 1816, by Thomas Ignace Martin, Peasant of Gallardon*.

Various unquestionable cases of demoniac possession having come under the observation of Kerner, he composed a singular and learned little volume, entitled *History of Modern Cases of Possession, together with Observations made in the Realm of Koko-demoniac, Magnetic Appearances*, published in 1834, by Braun, of Karlsruhe. An abridged translation of the most typical case of possession contained in this remarkable and valuable little volume, *The History of the Maid of Orlach*, will subsequently be introduced to the reader. This volume was followed in 1836 by a *Letter to the Superior-Medical-Counsellor Schelling, concerning the Appearance of Possession: Demoniacal, Magnetic Suffering and its Cure through Magnetic Treatment as known to the Ancients*.

In the same year, 1836, appeared the book, of all others from Kerner's pen, which provoked the strongest opposition. It is entitled, *An Appearance from the Night-Realms of Nature; proved Legally by a Series of Witnesses, and communicated to Searchers into Nature for their careful consideration*. It is the account of an apparition of an evil and noisy spirit in the prison at Weinsberg. This spirit was beheld and recognised there: not alone by a peasant-woman, imprisoned for searching for buried treasure—to which misdemeanor, according to her account, she in the first instance



had been instigated by the communications of this very spirit,—but by Kerner himself and a considerable number of most trustworthy witnesses.\*

Kerner's attitude with reference to the attacks made upon him, especially connected with the last mentioned work, was chiefly passive. His reply being the continued publication of fresh works upon these unpopular subjects; possibly, however, this in truth may appear an *active* rather than *passive* attitude. Occasionally he would retaliate, it must be confessed, when the abuse of the critics assumed too decidedly personal a character, by sending forth the keen arrows of his wit against his critics, and thereby turning the laughter of the public against his assailants.

It was about this period that a work was published, known by Kerner's friends to have chiefly proceeded from his pen, although bearing upon its title-page the name of Prince Alexander von Hohenlohe Waldenburg-Schillingfürst, celebrated for his miraculous cures of the sick, performed through prayer. Kerner, by means of his writings upon the subject of possession, had been brought into correspondence with this remarkable personage, who requested him to write a series of Lent-sermons for him upon the Seven Deadly Sins. These sermons were in 1836 published under the title, *The Image of God in Man defaced through Sin*. With the exception of the sermon upon Anger, and certain additions to the other sermons, they were virtually the composition of Kerner, though bearing the name of the Prince, and are noteworthy, not alone for their practical rendering of truth, but as being acceptable to the Roman Catholic world, although the product of a mind educated in Protestantism.

During this thirty years of special literary activity, various new editions of Kerner's poems were occasionally making their appearance; and our poet-physician was brought into agreeable intercourse, both personal and by letter, with his contemporary poets; at the same time that his psychological

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\* Condensed account of this most remarkable case of haunting by an earth-bound spirit will be found in Mrs. Crowe's "Night-side of Nature," chap. xv.

writings attracted around him persons of all classes from the lowest to the highest in the land, and the friendly house at the foot of the Weibertreu stood as freely open to visitors as though it had been an inn. To the hospitality exercised in this happy home, we shall refer in the conclusion of this biographical sketch. We will now in brief sum up Kerner's literary labours, touching slightly upon the domestic incidents of the autumn of this great and good man's life.

The year 1840 brought with it a deep grief for Kerner. In it died his beloved brother Karl, who resided at Stuttgart. The most affectionate intercourse had for many years subsisted between the brothers, who were bound together by the tenderest ties of sympathy. The deep religious bias of General Karl Kerner's mind had led him to associate himself with his brother in his researches into the inner life of humanity, with not only equal,—but, it might be said, with even greater enthusiasm,—than that displayed by Dr. Kerner himself. When Justinus was depressed by the false judgments passed upon his works by the world, it was Karl who encouraged him to persevere in his labours, by his mild sympathetic words, or by his soldierly courage. The correspondence between Kerner and his brother is perhaps the most extensive of any carried on by him. During twenty years scarcely a day passed in which the brothers did not make an interchange of their thoughts. Shortly after the decease of this beloved brother, Kerner became painfully conscious of a marked decrease in his powers of vision. After a careful examination of his eyes, his friend Schelling announced the sad intelligence that in both eyes he had discovered symptoms of the commencement of the grey-cataract; the first signs, indeed, of that blindness, which, although it never became complete, nevertheless cast the shadow of night over the last years of the poet-physician's life. Kerner himself attributed this affliction to the many tears which he had shed in the long sleepless nights of anxiety, preceding, and following the death of his brother Karl. Whilst prosecuting his investigations into the nature of the sausage poisons already referred to,

Kerner had observed that both poisons produced in himself a drying up of the glands of his eyes. May not this poison, therefore, possibly, have laid the seeds of the malady, developed into activity at this later period, through Kerner's excessive and continuous weeping?

The prospect of future blindness in no way destroyed Kerner's mental activity or moral courage. He pursued his scientific and poetical studies with his wonted ardour. He was assisted in his medical practice by his son Theobald, who resided at Weinsberg from 1842, until Kerner, seven years later, was pensioned by the King of Würtemberg, and gave up his practice.

In 1839, *Leaves from Prevorst* being completed, Kerner established another periodical of a larger size, entitled *Magikon, or Archives for Observations concerning the Realms of the Spirit-World and of Magnetic Life*. This periodical was continued until 1853.

The charming autobiography of the poet's early years, entitled *Picture Book of my Childhood, or Memoirs of the Years, from 1786 to 1840*, having been dictated to his daughter-in-law, made its appearance in 1849.

In 1851, although Kerner's increasing blindness and age induced him to give up his medical practice as district-physician, he still exhibited his unwearied literary powers by publishing a new poetical volume, principally consisting of political and occasional pieces, and called *The Last Nosegay*. With reference to this volume, the author observes, "All my poems have originated in the occurrences of my own life, or in the lives of my friends, whose existence I have never been able to dis sever from my own. Joy and still more sorrow have given rise to them." To these words of the poet we may add, that although suggested by individual life, the universal spirit of poetry has made them her own, and may be discovered dwelling within each, as within a shrine.

We now have to chronicle the two last of Kerner's publications, both connected with Psychology. In 1853, the subject of "table-turning" being much discussed in Germany, he

published *Somnambule Tables; or, the History and Explanation of that Phenomenon*. In this pamphlet Kerner ascribes the "turning of tables" to the operation of an hitherto unrecognised fluid, neither magnetic, electric, nor galvanic—although kindred to them—but which by the Secress of Prevorst was considered to proceed from the "spirit of the nerves."

Three years later appeared Kerner's last literary production, one of his most charmingly written works, *Franz Anton Mesmer, the Discoverer of Animal Magnetism, with Recollections of Him, etc.* This little book was suggested to its author by a visit which he paid during the summer of 1855 to his friend the Baron Joseph von Lassberg, known to the public as the editor of the *Niebelungen Lied, etc.*, and as a collector of medieval manuscripts. Kerner visited him at his romantic residence, the old castle of Meersburg, upon Lake Constance. To this visit in his book on Mesmer he refers very gracefully.

In the course of this visit, Kerner became acquainted with relatives of Mesmer residing in the neighbourhood, who had inherited his property, a portrait, and various of his manuscripts. Kerner also visited with deep interest the birth-place and grave of Mesmer, on the shores of the lake.

Between the publication of these last two works a heavy blow had fallen upon Kerner, the heaviest which it was possible for him to endure—the loss of his tenderly-beloved wife. Riekele, after a short illness, departed this life on the 16th of April, 1854, and with her, vanished her husband's last tie to earth. His mental activity still remained, as a solace to him during the remaining eight years of his earthly existence; but his yearning heart led him constantly to contemplate the approaching change into life-eternal.

After "Riekele's" departure, the poet was tended with the most affectionate care by his children and grandchildren. His son Theobald, when obliged to remove to Stuttgart and Cannstadt, visited him from those places, usually each week; and during the last three years of his life wrote daily to him.

Kerner's two daughters in marrying had never moved far from him, but settled at Heilbronn which is only three English miles from Weinsberg. The eldest daughter, after her husband's death in 1847, returned to Weinsberg, where she and her children became unwearied scribes and readers to the blind poet.

Kerner's last years were rendered care-free through the thoughtfulness of two sovereigns, who had highly appreciated his usefulness to the world. In 1848, Ludwig, of Bavaria,\* had bestowed upon him a small pension of four hundred florins, which was continued to him, after King Ludwig's abdication by his son, the late King Max; whilst in 1858 he received another small pension of five hundred florins from the King of Würtemberg. His pension as district-physician was three hundred florins. In the year 1848, King Frederick William IV., of Prussia, expressed his admiration of Kerner's genius by sending him the gold medal of art and science: together with his pension from the King of Würtemberg, he received the crown order, and was made by the late King of Bavaria one of the first knights of the newly instituted Maximilian Order of Science and Art.

Kerner was also member of various learned societies and honorary member of various poetical societies (Sänger-Vereine). With the close of the year 1858 he celebrated his fifty years' jubilee as Doctor of Medicine, receiving from the Faculty of Tübingen University an honorary diploma, in which he is styled "*The Consolation of the Sick—The Scourge of Demons—The Joy of the Muses—The Ornament of Home.*"

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\* Celebrated for his munificent patronage of art, and himself a poet. He evinced lively interest in the psychological investigations pursued by Kerner.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE LAST DAYS OF JUSTINUS KERNER.

DURING the last few years of Kerner's life, he suffered not alone from blindness, but also from a general nervous prostration and discomfort—probably resulting from loss of much vital fluid during those years in which he mesmerised the crowds of patients resorting to his house for magnetic treatment. This nervous suffering gradually reduced his strength, and rendered him—accustomed to take a considerable amount of out-door exercise—unable to walk, or even to stand for any length of time. Thus, during the course of the last summer of his life, he was frequently not able to spend more than a very few hours of each day in his garden. With the beginning of the winter, which confined him to his room, he was troubled with an incessant sleeplessness which, robbing him of his rest at night, and rendering his days devoid of comfort, became a severe torment to him. Thus he longed ever more and more for the time of his departure into the new life. Amidst all his physical sufferings, his strong vital power continued to manifest itself in mental activity: also in the lively interest, always evinced by him, toward intellectual matters, whether of literature, science or art, and which rendered intercourse with his friends, far and near, one of the daily necessities of his life. Thus, even during his hours of most severe suffering, he delighted to receive his friends: and a day seldom passed without his dictation of several letters. During the last few months of his existence, an even stronger impression of his approaching departure expressed itself in his correspondence.

About the middle of January, 1862, Kerner, through losing

hold for a moment of the friendly arm which guided him, met in his room with a severe fall. Within a few days, however, the effects of the accident passing away, he appeared to have regained his usual state of health, and hopes were entertained that he might safely pass through the remainder of the winter. He appeared so well, that his daughter, Maria, was enabled in February to hasten to Cannstadt to nurse her sister-in-law, Theobald's wife, who was then dangerously ill; and who, indeed, was not destined long to survive her beloved father-in-law. Upon the 5th of February, when Kerner's daughter returned home, she found her father in one of his most cheerful moods. He had invited all his Weinsberg friends to come that evening to him to partake of certain Munich-beer, which had shortly before arrived as a present from Prince Adelbert, of Bavaria. The day closed amidst lively conversation. Thus terminated Kerner's forty years of hospitality in Weinsberg.

On Monday, the 10th of February, the aged poet-physician was seized with severe influenza — which, associated with continuous fever, assumed a dangerous character, and caused his son Theobald to be summoned. By the time that he arrived on Monday, the unfavourable symptoms had, however, decreased so decidedly, that Dr. Theobald was enabled to return to Cannstadt. The following day he again visited his father, and on Wednesday, as satisfactory symptoms of amendment had shown themselves, set off home to his sick wife.

It is probable, however, that Justinus Kerner, who had always lived in such close connection with the Spiritual World, was aware of the proximity of the great change awaiting him. Already, on Tuesday evening the 18th, he had been heard quietly repeating to himself a stanza of a favourite poet, which may be thus translated:—

Strengthen Thou me through Thy dear wounds, O God!  
Thou, who as man, this dreary earth hast trod,  
When near my death-bed, solemnly shall glide,  
Life's crowning hour, with Judgment at her side.

On Thursday the 20th, in the afternoon, the attack of

influenza returned with such violence, that in all haste, his son was twice telegraphed for. He was, however, unable to reach Weinsberg before early on Friday morning.

There were assembled around the poet's death-bed, his son Theobald, his eldest daughter, Maria, with her two sons, her youngest daughter, and her eldest daughter's husband. Kerner's second daughter, Emma, being taken ill, had been removed by her husband previously to Kerner's passing away. One of the mournful group in the chamber of death was a sister of Rickele.

The aged poet was heard in a low voice to utter the words, "I am dying," and calmly folded his hands. About noon the struggle of death set in. At first he appeared to suffer much, especially through the difficulty which he experienced in making himself understood. One after another he summoned his beloved ones to him by name, and alternately took their hands. As day declined he became ever calmer, and his last words were, "Lord, Thy work is accomplished!" then, "Good night! Good night! may you all sleep well."

During the first hours of the night a gentle breathing was still perceptible. At about half-past eleven this entirely ceased, and the noble heart of the Poet of Weinsberg was at rest for ever.

The tidings of Justinus Kerner's decease quickly spread. On Sunday, 23rd of February, 1862, throughout the neighbourhood, and at Heilbronn and elsewhere, people prepared on all sides, far and near, to pay him the last honours with deep love and respect. Early upon the Sunday morning a black flag floated from the ruins of the Weibertreu, announcing to the inhabitants of the Sulm-Valley that the town of Weinsberg had lost its most note-worthy citizen. A deputation from the corporation of the town waited upon the family with an expression of condolence; and the musical societies of Weinsberg and Heilbronn desired to accompany to the grave the corpse of one who had enriched his country with so many beautiful songs, and honour him by singing around his grave. But Kerner, who revered only the soul, and not the perishable



body,—who had always been averse to funereal parade,—and who, as he has shown in his “Picture Book,” had always taken pleasure in the simplicity of his father’s funeral, already, on the 27th March, 1850, had arranged the plan of his interment, which we here give in his own words:—

“My body shall be buried in all stillness, without song or parade: even as my father’s body was buried. My body shall alone be attended by my son and his wife, by a clergyman, and a friend. There shall no oration be held, nor yet shall there be any singing at the grave.” To these directions, in 1857, Kerner also added, that a flat stone should be placed between his wife’s grave and his own, upon which should be inscribed, “Frederika Kerner and her Justinus, 1854—18—.” No other words should be added, not even “Here lies.”

Kerner’s family endeavoured religiously to carry out the wishes of their beloved father. Consequently no invitations to the funeral were issued. The ceremony of interment was to take place upon the Monday morning at nine o’clock. It was impossible, however, to prevent persons following the corpse. Each individual who went, thought, apparently, that he might appear as the “one friend.” First of all there were the early college friends of Justinus, Uhland and Mayer; and then the sons of the “faithful Alexander,” the Counts Eberhard and Alexander of Württemberg; General von Baur from Ludwigsburg, Kerner’s nephew-in-law, the husband of General Karl Kerner’s only daughter, etc., etc. Thus many friends stood that morning around the coffin in which the corpse of Justinus Kerner lay. According to his last wish, the venerable poet reposed upon a house-coat which had been made for him in former years by his beloved “Rickele.” His body was wrapt in the long folds of the brown, monk-like robe worn by him during the last years of his life, and in which his revered form is still, in memory and in his picture, familiar to his friends. His noble countenance, in its marble placidity, surrounded by its dark locks, appeared as the face of one transfigured.

Citizens of Weinsberg bore his coffin, richly covered with garlands of flowers and of laurel, made by the Ladies' Society and the Musical-societies of Weinsberg and Heilbronn and Stuttgart; and all who followed the coffin walked. Thus proceeded the procession—such a procession as Weinsberg will not readily see again—along the High-street, and out of the lower town into the grave-yard, lying in the middle of the valley, and opposite the Weibertreu. From the Weibertreu, and from the gates of the grave-yard, floated black banners. The procession wound its way across the grave-yard towards its south-eastern corner, where is situated the burial place of the Kerner family, an open space shaded by several trees. Here was the spot chosen by Justinus himself: and here was his mortal husk interred, between the remains of his beloved wife and of a little grandchild.

There stood around the grave of Kerner his own family, his son with his two children, the widowed daughter with her three children, his son-in-law, his nephew-in-law, and the husband of his eldest grand-daughter, Pastor Bauer, of Sonnenstein. It was a deeply affecting moment when this gentleman, having exchanged a pastoral greeting with all present, announced the last wishes of the deceased, and all the great company stood bare-headed around the grave, and, in fulfilment of the departed Poet's desire, silently repeated the Lord's prayer. Then, the clergyman having spoken the words of benediction over the sinking coffin, a gentleman of Weinsberg stepped forth, and, in the name of all his fellow-citizens, spoke a farewell. One of the corporation returned thanks in the name of the town for all the services which the departed had rendered, and cast a laurel-wreath upon the coffin. Lastly, the crape-covered banner of the Weinsberg Musical-society was lowered and waved over the open grave, each person present flinging earth upon the coffin. All the ceremony now being ended, the bells of the church began to toll for the service of the day, for it was the festival of St. Matthew.

Upon the newly covered-in grave was placed a laurel gar-

land, received from the Swabian Musical-society, of which Kerner had been a member.

It is now marked by the simple inscription :—

“FREDERIKA KERNER AND HER JUSTINUS.”

Fully to complete the portrait of our poet we must introduce, as its background, a sketch of his picturesque and original home and home-life.\*

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\* Amongst the frequent visitors to Dr. Kerner, was Captain Medwin, the friend of Byron and Shelley. In the possession of this gentleman was a very interesting volume—a “Kerner Album,” in which sketches, poems and reliques of the poet-physician, collected by him upon these visits, have been tastefully arranged. This album came, upon the decease of Captain Medwin, into the possession of the translator of this life of Kerner.

## CHAPTER VI.

## KERNER'S HOUSE.

FEW are the homes of poets possessed of a more marked individuality than is the house of Justinus Kerner at the foot of the "Weibertreu."

We have already mentioned that this house was built by the poet upon a piece of ground presented to him by the Corporation of Weinsberg. According to time-honoured custom, there was a grand celebration of the laying of the first stone. By the hand of his little son Theobald, aged five years, the poet caused a parchment document to be placed beneath the stone, the contents of which ran as follows:—

"This house was built, through the blessing of God, by Justinus Kerner, the physician who sang songs: and by his wife Frederika, in the year 1828; at a time when the sun shone down upon hill and dale with heat seldom known; but when Europe's Rulers, turning away from heaven, stood cold and watched the infernal murder of Hellas."

By the autumn, this little house, consisting of but one story above the ground floor, was ready to be inhabited. The remaining portion of land which, as we have before observed, was a portion of the old town-moat, was laid out by Kerner as a garden: it extended as far as the wall of the town. In 1827, behind the original domicile was erected the so-called "Swiss House." Subsequently the poet purchased from the Corporation the old tower, formerly a prison, but at that time offered for sale as building material, and which formed the corner of the town wall. Kerner fitted up a quaint room in this tower, and henceforth regarded it as the chief ornament of his little territory. In time also he

procured a still larger garden opposite to his house. Originally the land had been a disused grave-yard. Out of the little "Dead-house," Kerner formed a quaint abode for the living, furnishing it in a simple rustic manner; and in this strange abode various of his most honoured guests were subsequently lodged.

Kerner's house proper stands at the commencement of the road which leads to the castle. It fronts to the east, looking over an open space; on the south and west it is surrounded by its garden; on the north it is open to the public pleasure-ground, which extends from this point along the northern wall of the town as far as the church at the opposite end. The ground-floor of the house—beneath which extends a light, vaulted, and capacious cellar the entire length and breadth of the dwelling—has, to the left, the entrance-hall; to the right, a door into the stables and outbuildings. Between these two is a single room, which was the apartment once occupied by the Seeress of Prevorst. The upper story contains the abode of the poet, the four modest apartments of which are adorned with interesting works of art, and souvenirs of his various friends. In the middle room, the visitor's attention is first arrested by a half-length portrait (life size) of Justinus himself, with his jew's-harp in one hand. It is by an Italian artist, Ottavio d'Albruzzi, who came to Weinsberg in 1851, and who died in 1855 at Nice. Besides the portrait is seen a modelled relievo-likeness of the poet, by the painter, Edward Herdte, of Stuttgart, and which renders the ideal expression of Kerner's features more truthfully than any other of the numerous portraits taken at various periods of his life. Regarding portraits of himself Kerner was wont to make merry, giving some humorous title to each likeness, indicative to his mind of its peculiar expression—as for instance, "the robber," "the soap-boiler," "the pumpkin head," etc., etc. Another plaster-medallion exhibits the intellectual features of Alexander of Würtemberg. Equally interesting are Breslau's bust and statuette, and the likeness of the Seeress. As a worthy companion to Kerner's portrait, we find

attracting the observer, with an almost magnetic power, an extraordinary picture of the "Poet Lenau in a Storm upon a desolate Heath," painted by Karl Ruhl, of Vienna. To the south lies a great chamber called "Mary's Room," from its chief ornament, a large medieval group, in alabaster, of the Madonna and Child. This singular work of art had once stood in a place of pilgrimage, a church near Gaildorf, but subsequently lay broken for a long time in the Record Office of Obersantheim, until Kerner fortunately becoming its possessor, had it repaired by a sculptor of Frankfort, and brought to his own house.

To the north lies the room in which Kerner used to sleep, and in which he expired. Out of this room opened his study. As we have already observed, the limits of this small house were considerably extended by the addition to the back. The Swiss house, supported upon pillars, formed beneath, a species of covered court; whilst it contained above, in its principal story, a charming, many-windowed, sunny reception room, surrounded on three sides by an open gallery; in the middle of which, as its sole adornment, hung a wooden crucifix. Along the broad cornice ran the pious motto—"In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world."

In the half-circular gable of the Swiss-house, which has a balcony, is a curiously constructed little coffin-shaped chamber.

At the back of the house-garden rises the old Watch Tower, hung with a luxuriant growth of ivy. The lower room of the tower is made use of for various domestic purposes. Above is a vaulted apartment, in which, during the Peasants' War, Count von Helfenstein was imprisoned. At present its three arched windows are fitted with ancient painted glass, which casts a glowing light upon all within. Two curious wooden statues of a monk and a nun, from the cloisters at Heilbronn, stand there in grim solemnity, whilst an ancient figure in stone of a court-fool, or of a dwarf, guards the entrance.

Above, on the leads of the tower, a wooden canopy has been placed, supported by posts, at the feet of which young acacia trees have sprung up. From this spot a charming prospect across the Weinsberg Valley bursts upon the view, overlooked to the west and close at hand by the ruins of the Weibertreu upon its round hill-top; to the east on the distant horizon by the castle ruins of Waldenburg and Marienfels. For a length of time upon the leads of the tower there used to stand a telescope, turned in the direction of the elevated church-yard of Löwenstein, through which could be seen the gilt cross glittering upon the grave of the Seeress of Prevorst, erected there by Count Maldeghem\* and Professor Eschenmayer.

Opposite to Kerner's house, in the large garden, nearly two acres in extent, stands the so-called "Alexander's House," the age of which is marked by the date of 1610 placed above its entrance. Its upper story contains a sitting-room and two smaller chambers. In this little house is preserved the table made by Kerner when a boy, and to which we have referred.

Thus, in imagination, having visited the dwelling of the Weinsberg Poet, we will now take a retrospective glance at the long line of guests, who between the years 1822 and 1862, have sojourned for longer or shorter periods beneath these hospitable roofs.

Amongst these must be first named Kerner's Swabian poet-friends of his early youth—Uhland, Schwabe, Mayer, etc.

In the autumn of 1827, the author of *Grecian Poems*, Wilhelm Müller,† arrived in Weinsberg, and Kerner himself relates in a note to his poem, written to celebrate the visit of this guest, that he had the Grecian colours, white and blue, displayed from the tower in order to do him honour. It seems, however, that Wilhelm Müller looking forth from his window on the morrow, was no longer greeted by the flag of white and blue, but by an ominous black cross upon a white

\*The Countess Maldeghem through the clairvoyance and prayer of the Seeress had been restored to health after years of great mental suffering. *Vide*—"Seeress of Prevorst." Mrs Crowe's Translation.

† Father of Professor Max Müller.

ground! The white and blue had been painted for the occasion over the black cross, but during the storm and rain of the night the bright Grecian colours had vanished! Wilhelm Müller dying within a few days of his visit to Kerner's home, this circumstance of the black cross was regarded by Justinus as having been a prognostic of his guest's impending death.

Shortly after the death of the Seeress, one of Kerner's most distinguished and beloved friends made his first appearance at Weinsberg, where his place as a poet at the "round table" of poets must not be forgotten—and this was the handsome and chivalrous Count Alexander von Württemberg. A bond of intimate friendship united this member of the princely house with the poet-physician and his wife, by whom he was always received as a member of the family circle. Every year the Count appears to have visited his friends for a longer or shorter period, sometimes for a few days, sometimes for weeks together. Upon such visits he was lodged in the little house in the large garden, which thus received its name, "Alexander's House." Kerner's affection for the Count has expressed itself in various poems.

Two years later, another noble poet presented himself at Weinsberg. In the summer of 1831, the son of an Hungarian nobleman, Nikolaus Hiembisch, of Strellenau, introduced himself to Gustav Schwab, at Stuttgart, in order, like many another aspiring young writer, to be ushered by him into literature. Speedily, under the name of Lenau, his fame spread throughout Germany. Schwab made his young friend first acquainted with Uhland and Mayer; later introduced him to Kerner, with whom he became very intimate, and in whose house he spent the happiest days of the last stormy thirteen years of his life.

It was in "Alexander's House" that Lenau, in 1833, prepared for his American journey, a circumstance which led Kerner to assert that it was from beneath his roof that Lenau had embarked for America. Immediately upon Lenau's return from "that perfectly strange land," as he termed it—"that land with its burnt-out human beings, in their burnt-



out forests—the true land of the sunset—the very west of humanity,” he once more presented himself, and poured forth to his friend Kerner, in sarcastic words, his dislike to America and the Americans.

Lenau generally, however, used to inhabit the tower. There, in the early spring of 1834, he composed a considerable portion of his *Faust*. A brotherly friendship existed between Lenau and Count Alexander, and occasionally they would visit Kerner together. As if he foresaw that a dark fate awaited this remarkable young poet, Kerner entertained a peculiarly tender regard for him. Indeed, it appears as though Kerner, possessed of the eye of the seer, had once beheld, in very truth, the spirits combating for the possession of Lenau's soul, as Lenau himself has described in his *Faust*, *Sarconarola* and the *Albigenses*.

The most brilliant period of Weinsberg hospitality closes in 1844, when, within two months, Count Alexander suddenly died in Wildbad, and the night of Lenau's mental affliction fell upon him at Stuttgart: a night destined to continue six years, until death at length arrived to lead the unhappy poet's soul into everlasting day. And again, in the same year, within two months, died another of Kerner's cherished poet-friends and frequent guests, Gustav Schwab.

It would be impossible to enumerate the crowds of visitors who, both before and after this period, thronged to Weinsberg, high and low, princes and men of the people, military and learned men, diplomatists and poets, and also many ladies—all being received with hospitable welcome. From 1839, and during the following fifteen years, Kerner was accustomed each day to enter the names of his visitors, with occasional remarks, in his pocket-book. Polish refugees were guests who received much honour at the hands of the poet. He had sympathised deeply with the struggle of Greece for independence, nor were his sympathies less strongly called forth by the struggle of Poland. During the winter of 1831-32, for weeks together, he entertained fugitives from Poland, who in great numbers passed through Weinsberg.

In the following spring the Generalissimo of the Polish army, Rubinski, visited Kerner, whose Seeress of Prevorst had in former years deeply interested him. Rubinski lodged in Alexander's House, and in it Kerner suspended, as a memorial of the presence of this distinguished guest, the laurel-crown, which the inhabitants of Weinsberg presented to the General; but which he, as being vanquished, had declined to receive.

A royal fugitive also once reposed in Kerner's house. The dethroned Gustav IV., of Sweden, who—under the name of Gustavson, was wandering in poverty through Germany in 1826, his knapsack upon his back—entered the poet-physician's hospitable house, and there found a temporary resting place.

Strauss, in one of his friendly papers when making the *amende honorable* to Kerner for his severe criticism upon the *Seeress of Prevorst*, gives the following agreeable description of life beneath Kerner's roof.

“A more beautiful or refined hospitality it would be difficult to encounter in any dwelling. Amongst the numerous strangers who each year visit Kerner's home, there is not one whose peculiarities are not recognised and to whom especial attention is not paid. Is any friend of the poet staying at Weinsberg, Kerner is never satisfied—be it possible to accommodate him in the house—until he has broken bread and slept beneath his roof. The invitation is seconded also in such a hearty and graceful manner by the poet's wife, that it is difficult to withstand it. The fear of being intrusive and burdensome, is lightened to the guest by the recognition of his presence in no way disturbing, or changing the daily household routine; he perceives that all things pursue their simple, ordinary course. . . . No wonder is it that here persons tormented by evil spirits seek for aid and healing! The good spirit must infallibly drive away the evil demons. An Angel of Peace appears to brood over this household. A sense of order, of quiet gaiety and benevolence beams forth from all countenances, is felt in all that is beheld and heard. . . . Kerner must be seen in his own home before a proper idea of him can be either formed or imparted.”

Emma Meindorf, one of Kerner's literary lady-friends and occasional guests, in her *Villegiatura in Weinsberg*, observes, "Kerner is an appearance which, in its pure originality, we cannot sufficiently seek to preserve. . . . Possibly there may arise such poor, desolate times, that it will be difficult for mankind to believe that such a man really ever existed, and he will be regarded as a myth. He belongs to those beings who, their life's labours set aside, one ought to be grateful to, because they are, as it were, an assurance to our faith. Should any one fear that the German poetic nature should depart from earth without a trace, let him only knock at the door of the little house at the foot of the 'Weibertreu!'"

Until within a few years of his death, Kerner was accustomed to act as guide to his friends throughout his house and gardens and to the Weibertreu. He not unfrequently would take his friends with him upon his professional drives, in order to show the beauties of the neighbourhood to them, or perhaps to introduce them to some remarkable person. Did you not chance to encounter any interesting guest in the house, there were many objects to remind you of their frequent presence. For instance, there was the drinking glass, presented by Lenau to his host, upon his departure to America, in 1832, which had been celebrated in verse, and which Kerner was accustomed to use daily until his death, thirty years afterwards. Then, there were the poet's correspondence with his friends, of which most probably you were granted many a pleasant glimpse. This correspondence from 1805 to 1825, was contained in a row of black volumes; whilst the correspondence, extending over the later years of Kerner's life, formed a complete library, which was stored up in the tower-chamber.

A charming recreation in Kerner's house was his performance upon the jew's-harp, which possessed a magic charm impossible to convey in words. The tones drawn forth by the poet from his simple instrument resembled those from an Æolian harp. Kerner was endowed with a high musical

genius, although he was no educated musician. Alternately using two jew's-harps, he was accustomed to improvise wonderful melodies. Especially did he love to surprise his friends in the twilight with this unusual musical gift of his. This simple instrument was a source of great delight and solace to Kerner, and it was with deep regret that towards the close of his career, he was, through the increasing weakness of age, forced to abandon the use of his "little bit of iron," as he used affectionately to call his jew's-harp.\*

A scarcely less peculiar accomplishment unfolded itself in Kerner during the years of his increasing blindness, and which he playfully called *Klecksographien*, which may be translated as *Blotto-graphs*; these were the fantastic duplicate shapes produced in the folds of papers from ink blots. This amusement became a source of poetical inspiration to him, he creating out of them whimsical forms, all manner of figures from the spirit-world, and giving to each a poetic description of a grave or humorous turn, according to the bent of his genius. A number of those *Klecksographien* were collected together by Kerner, and arranged in a scrap-book by him in 1857. The poetical descriptions illustrative of the designs being from his own hand, together with a preface describing their origin; thus, the whole was prepared for publication. The difficulty of re-producing the *Klecksographien*, however, obliged the idea of their presentation to the public to be abandoned. An illustrated paper, *Ueber Land und Meer*, in its number for May 25th, 1862, has given a paragraph from Theobald Kerner relating to the *Klecksographien*, together with several specimens engraved on wood. Amongst those is a subject, frequently repeated by Kerner to his friends, the representation of a butterfly, accompanied by the following little verse:—

Aus Dintenflecken ganz gering,  
Entstand der schöne Schmetterling.  
Zu solcher Wandlung ich empfehle  
Gott meine fleckenvolle Seele.

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\* It has been suggested by Captain Medwin to the writer that probably the word should be *jew's*-harp, not jew's-harp—a harp to be placed between the *juws*.

Which may be thus freely rendered—

From blots of ink, ere they were dry,  
Arose this lovely butterfly ;  
To God do I commend my mind  
For transformation of like kind.

Increasing blindness in the latest period of his life, deprived Kerner of his enjoyment in his *Klecksographien*.

Various were the humorous scenes and incidents blending themselves with the graver and more poetical interests of the Poet's daily life. A trifling circumstance must not be omitted as a touch in the picture, namely, that for a considerable period, the Sexton of Weinsberg acted as the doctor's coachman. Kerner was as fully alive to the humorous in his daily life, as in his writings. Once when his children were quite young—as a joke—he fastened them up in a barred box, at the Weibertreu, which usually contained the Æolian harp, at that particular moment removed for repair. The parents withdrew quietly, and left the visitors ascending to the ruins, to discover with astonishment the three odd birds in their cage.

In one of Kerner's gardens stood an arm-chair made of oak, in which each poet-guest of celebrity was requested to seat himself; after which his name was carved by Theobald upon the arm. On a certain occasion a German student read his poems aloud to Kerner, and exclaimed, "And I? Am not *I* a poet?" Kerner quietly returned, "Oh, certainly! But why has that chair near to you been making such odd movements all the time that you have been reading, as though it wanted to run away?"

When Kerner, Count Alexander, and Lenau were once seated together, reading aloud to each other their latest poems, the man-servant who had been waiting at table, entered with a piece of coarse paper in his hand, and somewhat bashfully remarked, that as they all were reading their verses he had brought his also, which were addressed "To the Doctor's Faithful Horse in the Yellow Chaise!"

Upon another occasion Kerner, taking a walk with his

friends in the neighbourhood, met a peasant-woman, who requested some medicine from the Doctor for her sick husband. Kerner, having no writing materials with him, called to an inhabitant of Weinsberg, whom he saw passing by, and wrote with a piece of chalk, which the latter chanced to have in his pocket, a prescription in large letters upon his back. Whereupon the Weinsberg inhabitant, carefully watched by the anxious wife, proceeded to the apothecary's shop in the town; the apothecary as he read the singular prescription remarking that he had never seen the Doctor write so well before.

One day a travelling journeyman passed Kerner's house, and observing a carriage standing before the door, a table in the garden spread for dinner, and a going in and out of the guests, not unnaturally imagined that the house was an inn. He ascended the steps therefore, entered the Swiss room, made himself quite at home, and called out, "Landlady, something to drink here!" Frau Kerner waited immediately upon him, and when he was about to pay his "reckoning" he learned with astonishment there was *nothing to pay!* On the contrary he received an alms bestowed upon him towards his further wanderings.

Thus moved on the beautiful idyllic life of Justinus Kerner, in the harmonious accord of mind, heart, and humour until, with the death of his beloved wife, grief became the key-note of the music of his latter days. Under a portrait of him taken at this period, are, accordingly, written from one of his own poems these lines:—

Fort, fort sint meine Rosen ;  
Fort ist mein schöner Traum !

"Gone are my roses; gone is my beautiful dream!" But his beautiful dream has now changed to the beautiful reality!

The "Good Spirit," the "Angel of Peace," as Strauss called it, which worked so many miracles in Kerner's house, and which so magically attracted all hearts, was LOVE; the love towards all men which the poet had sown throughout his life as seed-corn, and which as the grain of love from all

men, he was enabled to garner in. Michael Castle, a phrenologist, in his analysis of the poet-physician's character, has indicated this peculiar development, when he observes that Justinus Kerner "was endowed with one of the highest moral and intellectual natures, and that therefore he always relied upon the progress of mankind, or in other words believed and felt that man by his nature was a better and more sublime being than he in reality shows himself to be." Indeed, Kerner only beheld the good side of men, and possessed the rare gift of setting free within each soul its noblest nature. Thus considering men better than the world considered them, they in very truth felt themselves *to be nobler beings*, and *were so* in his presence. Therefore, in the eyes of many persons, Kerner's house became a church in which a High Priest of Faith and Love consecrated each one unconsciously to themselves upon entering beneath its roof.

Unquestionably one of the greatest blessings bestowed by Justinus Kerner upon his friends and humanity at large, was the realisation of an ideally beautiful human life.

## CHAPTER VII.

## SPECIMENS FROM THE WORKS ON PSYCHOLOGY

BY DR. KERNER.

THE first of Dr. Kerner's remarkable series of works connected with the inner life of man appeared in the year 1826. It is entitled "*The History of two Somnambules, together with certain Notable Things from the Realms of Magical Cure and Psychology.*"\* It is a book entirely unknown to the English reader, never having been translated, and now scarce in Germany. It is a diary kept by Kerner with reference to two remarkable patients of his; the one the daughter of a vine-grower at Weinsberg, the other a young woman born at Stuttgart and living in service at Weinsberg. Both patients exhibited, as already stated in the memoir, marvellous phenomena, and, treated magnetically by their physician, both were ultimately restored to perfect health.

This curious book—the forerunner of the far more famous one, "The Seeress of Prevorst"—will well repay the careful study of students of Psychology. The reader cannot fail to read with interest the following extracts.

"*The History of the two Somnambules*" thus commences—

"The following history relates to a thoroughly respectable girl, a true child of nature, the daughter of an honest citizen and vine-grower of Weinsberg, a girl whose occupations consisted in cultivation of the vineyard and garden during the week, and on Sundays in reading her Bible and hymn book.

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\* "*Geschichte Zweier Somnambulen, nebst einigen andern Denkwürdigkeiten aus dem Gebiete der Magischen Heilkunde und Psychologie, von Dr. Justinus Kerner, Oberamtsarzt Zu Weinsberg.* Karlsruhe, 1824. Gottlieb Braun.



Her innate talent was, however, such that together with the thorough instruction she had received at school she could, especially in writing her mother-tongue, vie with young ladies educated at celebrated academies. Possibly her father, who in his youth had been well educated, had cared for the improvement of his daughter.

“The education manifests itself in the following account drawn up by him of the singular origin of the sickness of his children.

“‘In the year 1816 on the 6th of July,’ he writes, ‘my son named Frederick was seized with indisposition. It showed itself in the following manner. On the previous morning he stepped before the looking-glass—a thing quite unusual with him—and contemplated his reflection. Upon this he burst forth into the most immoderate laughter which seemed to convulse his whole body. He was reprovèd by me severely for this. He replied that he felt himself impelled to this laughter in spite of himself. He went that day to school and also the following morning, but returned in about an hour, complaining of a severe pain in his head and eyes. A doctor was summoned who advised baths and various medicines, but the boy declared that it was quite fruitless to administer them, because he must surely die. However, through obedience and love, he submitted to the treatment prescribed, declaring, however, continually, that “all was all in vain.” The schoolmaster came to see the poor fellow as he lay apparently dead, stiff and cold, and took his hand, saying, “Good night, Fritz!” Immediately that the hand of his schoolmaster touched him, he recognised him and exclaimed, “I shall have no more good nights. This will not last long.” Thus he fell asleep at the age of eleven years, one month, and fourteen days, after twenty-four hours’ illness.

“‘Although we all,’ continues the father, ‘felt the death of this good boy with much sorrow, the one who was most inconsolable was my daughter Christiana, thirteen years of age. From this period she experienced so strong a yearning after her dead brother that she frequently would hide herself in a room

beneath the roof of our house, from whence she could gaze into the churchyard where he was interred, and would there spend hours weeping; thus gradually through this excessive yearning after her brother, and through her many tears and lamentation, did this poor girl fall into a serious state of ill-health.’”

A second brother aged thirteen, four years later, was seized with a severe cough, and during his illness he burst forth into terrible weeping. Upon repeated inquiry as to the cause of this sudden grief, he cried aloud the name of Fritz, declaring that to him he must go; and then fell into a condition which threatened convulsions, his eyes having become fixed.

To see this poor boy Dr. Kerner was sent for. He was placed in bed, and fell into a sort of delirium, being possessed of such strength that it required three persons to keep him in bed. He repeatedly uttered loudly the name of his brother, and said that Fritz was present, and that he must embrace him. He said that his brother wore a long white robe, a yellow sash round his waist; upon his head a crown, and a golden cross upon his breast. He spoke to persons around him as though they were his brother, and said that at three o'clock the next morning Fritz would come to fetch him. After further magnetic treatment being employed by Dr. Kerner, the cough returned for a time, and he gradually became cured entirely.

But the condition of Christiana now grew one of anxiety; the yearning after her dead brother continued ever overwhelmingly. She fell into sudden trances, had clairvoyant, symbolical, and prophetic dreams. Certain persons she could not endure in her neighbourhood, anxiety and distress falling upon her in their presence without any assignable reason. Thus she occupied herself chiefly in the open air, and worked with extraordinary industry in the vineyard and garden. But even there she would frequently be overcome by the trance-condition, and be found asleep beneath a tree. At such times her countenance would be filled with an inexpressible gentleness and sweetness; she would speak of being

taken by a guide into an indescribably lovely region which she said was Paradise, and even yet higher into a region which appeared to her still more beautiful and glorious. Nevertheless, all that spring she complained of great weakness, and as summer wore on serious symptoms of ill-health supervened. Dr. Kerner was in October called in, and then commenced his systematic magnetic treatment of Christiana, the history of which forms the first portion of his "History of Two Somnambules." A diary was kept by him, and its contents are only second in interest to those in his later and more celebrated work, "The Secress of Prevorst." Christiana in her state of trance prescribed her own treatment, foretold her approaching crises, became a highly developed clairvoyante and a sensitive to whom the secrets of nature were revealed—as for instance the curative properties of herbs and trees, the properties of metals and minerals, etc.; also to her were presented beautiful visions of the world of spirits. Through the judicious treatment of Dr. Kerner, who availed himself wisely of the clear-seeing of his patient, this interesting girl was restored within the space of three years to entire health. The history is one well worth the labour of translation, since it is a store-house of facts relative to the employment of mesmerism as a curative agent.

The following passage is given as a specimen of the spiritual visions of Christiana:—

"October 26th, 1820. She complained of headache. Later, violent cramp in the stomach came on. After ten o'clock she was magnetised for a considerable time. She said, after a shiver had gone through her, 'There is something supernatural in the room.' I assured her that nothing was present except her father and myself. She said, 'But what is that beautiful music which I hear from the far distance? It is of a peculiar kind. Such tones I cannot bear.' Later she said, 'I look into an indescribably lovely valley. There upon the grass, beneath a green tree, are seated two rows of happy spirits. They are clothed in white, and one plays upon a harp. These are the sounds which I heard; they come from

the right hand. Oh! what happiness! Thither leads a dark and narrow path, but when once this is passed, one comes into a lovely open region. Oh! that I could only find amongst them my brother Frederick! Certainly he is there.' She wept bitterly. Soon she cheered up and said, 'Now is my brother near me to my right hand. I see the most beautiful trees and a mountain, more beautiful by far than our Weibertreu.\* Oh that I were only there! I see houses and huts beneath trees as if they belonged to hermits.' Again she said, and a shudder ran through her as before, 'There is something supernatural in the room! Something smiles upon me from above! What a smile! That must be an angel, or the Eye of God! Also, I behold very far off the fully Glorified; their splendour it would be impossible for me to endure except at a distance. Now all is closed again. Wake me up!' When she awoke she was very cheerful, and much strengthened.

"October 28th. After I had magnetised her about half an hour she had cramp in her mouth. She seized my hand and laid it upon her lips. By this means the cramp was lessened, but not entirely gone. She asked for magnetised water, and having drank it, the cramp had departed. Then came on sudden starting and shuddering. She said, 'I hear music, as the tone of an organ.' Then Frederick appeared, and she, in a low voice, said bit by bit as follows—'My Frederick is close to my bed, and tells me that through these magnetic passes I shall recover. I am difficult to bring into the sleep. I was once nearly, but too quickly, brought almost to the condition of trance. But my Frederick says it was dangerous.† It was as though my soul had been divided from my body. I see such clearness and so many objects around me that it is impossible to describe. It is as if heaven were opened. There smiles an Angel down upon me. He wears two crowns of

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\* A hill near Weinsberg.

† Cabagnet relates that one of his somnambules was so far gone, that he was in great terror lest he should be unable to recall her to life again. It was only with great difficulty that he brought her back.

flowers. And there above, far within, I dare not gaze, but I see a form whose countenance is surrounded by rays as of sunlight. Oh, that I could ascend thither! My Frederick says that when I sleep I may do so. Now I understand why I had that cramp. It was to prepare me to ascend on high! I asked how she knew this. 'My Frederick tells me so,' she replied. . . .

"November 2nd. She had cramps in the head and eyes, and her voice failed. I breathed into her mouth, and the cramp departed. She said immediately, 'There stands Frederick again. He carries in his hand a spray of apple-blossom. That causes me awe, for I know that now it is not the spring. I behold a number of beautiful trees, and a pear-tree of unusual size in blossom. Why am I so full of awe? I know that it really is the autumn—this is all to me so preternatural. I hover between waking and sleeping! My body is not here—my soul wishes to go forth. It is as though I had no home.' She added, 'Alone through magnetic treatment shall I regain my health.' Then she beheld a valley of exquisite beauty where was a clear, bright fountain from which she drank. Then a cornfield where three angels were reaping corn, etc."

In this "*History of Two Somnambules*," amongst other noteworthy passages are, at

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35	Remarkable cure of a swelling.
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94	They do so come away.
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388	Means of causing a clairvoyante to recollect when awake what she describes in the other state.
401	Boy bitten by a mad dog cured by magnetism.

In 1829 was published by Kerner one of the most remarkable works ever written, namely—

### THE SEERESS OF PREVORST.\*

#### HER EARLY YOUTH.

In Wirtemberg, near the town of Löwenstein, on mountains the highest point of which is raised 1879 feet above the level of the sea, in a romantic seclusion surrounded on all sides by hill and valley, lies the little village of Prevorst. Its inhabitants maintain themselves by wood-cutting, coal-burning, and collecting the productions of the forest. These mountaineers are peculiarly sensible to magnetic influences, amongst the evidences of which are their susceptibility to sympathetic remedies and their power of discovering springs by means of the divining-rod.

In the year 1801, in the village of Prevorst was born Frederica Hauffé,† commonly called the *Scherin* (Seeress) of Prevorst, whose father held the situation of District-Forester.

\* "DIE SEHERIN VON PREVORST: Eröffnungen über das innere Leben des Menschen und über das Hereinragen einer Geisterwelt in die unsere," appeared in 1829 and went through three large editions in 1832, 1836 and 1838: again in 1846 with portrait of Seeress. STUTTGART UND TÜBINGEN. COTTASCHEN Verlag.

† Pronounced Hauffé.

In the keen mountain air, inured to the long winters, unenfeebled by luxurious clothing or warm beds, she grew up a blooming, joyous child, and whilst her sisters, whose rearing was of the same description, were afflicted in their childhood with gout, nothing of that sort was observed in her. But to counterbalance this immunity, there was disclosed, at a very early age, a too evident faculty of preternatural presentiment, which was chiefly exhibited in prophetic dreams. If she suffered reproof, or felt annoyance in any way that irritated her mind or affected her feelings, she was always, during her nocturnal repose, conducted into those depths, in which she was visited by instructive, premonitory, or prophetic visions.

Thus on one occasion, when her father had lost some object of value, and threw the blame on her,—who was innocent,—her feelings being thereby aroused in the night, the place where the things were, appeared to her in a dream. In her hands, at a very early age, the hazel wand pointed out metals and water.

At a later period, as few opportunities of mental cultivation are accessible in this retired spot, her parents gladly resigned her to the care of her grandfather, Johann Schmidgall, who resided at Löwenstein, not far distant.

However beneficial the life of simplicity, purity, and temperance of her pious grandparents was to this easily-governed child, yet without any fault of theirs, but to their extreme regret, she became early acquainted with spiritual and supernatural matters. There was something in her nature that could no more be kept back, than could the growth of her body be retarded.

Old Schmidgall soon observed that when the child accompanied him in his walks through solitary places, though she were skipping ever so gaily by his side, at certain spots a kind of seriousness and shuddering seemed to seize upon her, which, for a long time he could not comprehend. He also observed that she experienced the same sensations in churchyards and in churches. She would never remain in them below, but was obliged to ascend to the galleries.

To the grandfather, however, a still more curious circumstance than this sensibility to the neighbourhood of dead bodies, metals, etc., was the fact, that simultaneously she was conscious of the presence of spirits. (Schmidgall was himself a spirit-seer.) Thus there was an apartment in the Castle of Löwenstein—an old kitchen—which she could never enter or look into without being much disturbed. In the very same place some years later, the spectre of a woman was, to her great horror, seen by a lady, who had never been informed of the sensations experienced by the child.

The first appearance of an apparition to the young girl was in her grandfather's house. There, in a passage at midnight, she beheld a tall, dark form, which passed her with a sigh, stood still at the end of the vestibule, turning towards her, features that in her riper years she well remembered. This first apparition, as was generally the case with those she saw in after life, occasioned her no apprehension. Her grandfather had seen a similar spectre in the same place, though he never mentioned it. He did all that he could to persuade his grand-daughter, however, that she was mistaken. These serious endowments made no difference in the child-like life of the young girl. She was the most joyous amongst her companions, though a remarkable sensibility in the nerves of the eye (without the least inflammation), which continued for a whole year, and was perhaps the preparation for seeing things invisible to the ordinary eye,—a development of the spiritual eye, within the fleshly — confined her to her room for a considerable time.

As she grew older, we find her again in the home of her parents at Oberstenfeld, for a period, the official residence of her father.

In her nineteenth year, in compliance with the wishes of her parents, an engagement was formed between her and Herrn Hautfe, a man of rectitude, and connected with the family of one of her uncles. Whether from a presentiment of the years of sickness and suffering awaiting her—or from some cause which she concealed—she sank at the time into a



state of depression, for which her friends could in no way account.

It happened that upon the day of her marriage the funeral took place of the minister of Oberstenfeld, a most worthy man, whose preaching, learning, and personal intercourse, had exercised much influence over her life. She followed the beloved remains to the grave-yard, where she became at once serene and calm. She could scarcely be induced to quit the grave. But from this moment she appeared indifferent to everything that happened in the world. Here began her proper inner-life.

At a later period, in her somnambulist state, she alluded to this occurrence, at a time when the deceased minister of Oberstenfeld was wont to appear to her as a form of light, to cheer her and protect her from the influence of a dark spirit.

#### RETIRED INTO THE INNER-LIFE.

On the borders of Württemberg, towards Baden, belonging partly to that duchy, and partly to that of Hesse, lies a place called Kürnbach, in a low and gloomy situation, surrounded by mountains, and in its geognostic and atmospherical relations, exactly the reverse of Prevorst and Oberstenfeld.

Persons very susceptible to electrical influences are often cured of their maladies by a change of residence; whilst others, frequently from a like cause fall into sickness. After her marriage this susceptible being lived at Kürnbach, and it cannot be ascertained what sinister influences were operating upon her through her removal to a place so entirely different to her former home. It was at a later period remarked, that the lower the situation she was in, the more was she afflicted with spasms,—whilst, on the contrary, on the mountains her magnetic condition was augmented.

It is not possible to follow this touching history, step by step, in this mere sketch of the life and experiences of the Seeress of Prevorst. The curious reader must turn to the original German editions of this work, or to Mrs. Crowe's able, although abridged translation, for further detail; suffice here

to say that "already having ceased to exist—for the external world, her duties as the wife of a man engaged in business, continually called her to it, and were thus in constant contradiction to her inner life." Prophetic dreams, foretelling sorrow and suffering, assailed her continually, and already she became a prey to the malign magnetic influence of persons in her neighbourhood. During a severe illness, a peasant's wife, uncalled for, came to the village, and, seating herself beside her, said—"She needs no physician—they cannot help her;" and laid her hands on her forehead. Immediately she was seized with the most direful spasms, and her forehead was as cold as if she were dead. During the whole night she cried deliriously that that woman had exercised a demoniacal influence upon her; and whenever the woman returned, she was always attacked by spasms. On the third day a physician was sent for; and being then in a magnetic condition, she cried to him when he entered, although she had never seen him—"If you are a physician you must help me!" He, well understanding her malady, laid his hands on her head; and it was remarked that as long as he remained in the room, she saw and heard him alone, being unconscious of the presence of all other persons. After he had laid his hands on her, she became calm and slept some hours. But the spasms returned in the night, and, for eighteen weeks, she was attacked by them from twice to five or six times a-day.

Whilst she was thus attacked by these spasms, her grandmother of Löwenstein, appeared to her at night, standing at her bedside, and silently looking at her. Three days after she was informed of the death of her grandmother, who had expired that very night. From that time, she frequently in her sleep alluded to the presence of her grandmother, and she recognised her as her protecting-spirit.

It was at this period, also, that in a dream she described some machine, and the mode of its construction, which was to be the instrument of her restoration; she drew the figure of it upon paper, but no attention was paid to this intimation. This machine is depicted in the German edition, and appears

to partake of the character of the *baquet* of Mesmer. It is of elaborate construction.

About this time she paid a visit to her parents, and took a great many baths at Löwenstein, which appeared to strengthen her. In the month of February, 1823, after much suffering, she was delivered of a child. Her confinement was followed by a long, severe illness; the woman who, on a former occasion, had produced so injurious an effect upon her, having brought the infant some milk, and insisted upon administering it herself, the child was seized with spasms, and from that time was affected by periodical convulsions of the limbs until its death, which took place in August; after which the mother again visited the baths of Löwenstein, but returned home little benefited.

In February, 1824, she was thrown into a still more peculiar condition. She became as cold and stiff as a corpse. For a long time no respiration was perceptible; at length there was a rattling in her throat. Baths and other remedies were applied, and she revived, but only to continued suffering. She always lay as in a dream.

At one time she spoke for three days only in verse; she also for the first time saw her own image (or double). She saw it clad in white, seated on a chair, whilst she was lying in bed. She contemplated this image for some time, and would have cried out, but could not. At length she made herself heard, and upon the entrance of her husband it disappeared.

The physician prescribed magnetic-passes and medicines; but she fell into the magnetic sleep and prescribed for herself. She was extremely susceptible to all sorts of spiritual influence: prophetic dreams, divinations, visions in glass or mirrors, and frequently gave information of events about to happen. The gift of ghost-seeing was constantly developing.

A second confinement took place on the 28th of December. "It is remarkable that her infant, especially during the first week of his life, always slept in the attitude she assumed in her magnetic sleep—namely, with his arms and feet crossed. He was endowed with the gift of ghost-seeing."

Her mysterious condition continued to deepen and increase, and became yet more perplexed through the influence of persons dwelling around her; especially through that of a man who was called in to aid her, by endeavouring to perform a cure through what was termed "sympathetic means."

At length, whilst staying with her uncle at Löwenstein, Dr. Kerner was called in to prescribe for her. He says, "I had never (until then) seen her, but I had heard many false and perverted accounts of her, and I must confess I credited the world's lies. I desired that everything should be done to draw her out of the magnetic condition—that she should be treated carefully, but by ordinary medical means. My friend Dr. Off, of Löwenstein agreed with me, and recommended a regular course of treatment; but we were disappointed." The results were a frightful aggravation of her physical sufferings.

#### AT WEINSBERG.

Madame Hauffe arrived at Weinsberg on the 25th of November, 1826, a picture of death, wasted to a skeleton, and unable to rise or lie down without assistance. She had many frightful symptoms, and fell into a magnetic trance every evening at seven o'clock. This used to begin with prayer and crossing her arms. Then she would stretch them out; and when she afterwards laid them on the bed, began to talk, her eyes being shut and her face lighted up.

On the evening of her arrival, when thus asleep, "she asked for me (says Dr. Kerner), but I sent her word that I could only see her when she was awake. When she awoke I went to her and declared, shortly and seriously, that I was determined to take no notice of what she said in her sleep, nor would I be even informed of it; and that this somnambulic state which had caused her friends so much unhappiness must come to an end."

Dr. Kerner continued this mode of treatment, ignoring her magnetic condition entirely, and commenced a regular course of homœopathic remedies. But the very smallest doses of medicine produced in her effects the reverse of that which

he expected. Her end appeared approaching. It was too late for the plan Dr. Kerner had proposed. He adds, "Owing to the operation of so many different kinds of magnetic influence, her nervous system was brought into so unusual and abnormal a condition that she could no longer exist by her own nervous energy, but only by that borrowed from other people; as in a short time it became evident was the case. It was affecting to see with what earnestness, when asleep, she sought the means of her own cure; and the physician might blush to see how much more efficacious means she prescribed for herself than he and his pharmacopœia could furnish."

In her sleep she prescribed a gentle course of magnetism, pursued for seven days. Dr. Kerner, desiring to have nothing to do with her magnetic relations, employed a friend to make the magnetic "passes." "The consequence," says Dr. Kerner, "of these first seven 'passes' was, that, to her own astonishment—for she in her waking state remembered nothing that had been done—she could sit up in bed on the following morning, and felt stronger than she had done during the whole of my medical attendance. For twenty-seven days, therefore, a regular course of magnetism was followed up, and her own sleep-waking directions strictly attended to, all others being laid aside; and although restoration to health was no longer possible, yet by these means this unfortunate sufferer was as much relieved as the nature of her case rendered possible. But the shock she received through the death of her father entirely counteracted this beneficial influence, and for the future, all that remained to her was the life of a sylph. The events of this incorporeal life, many intimations respecting the inner life of man, and of the existence of a world of spirits amongst us—form the contents of Dr. Kerner's extraordinary work, entitled "The Seeress of Prevorst."

"There have," says the author, "been numerous theories advanced to account for these phenomena. They are all known to me; but I must be allowed to accept none of them. I shall only seek to show, by various examples of similar apparitions, that the revelations of this sleep-waking patient

discovered nothing but what is founded in nature, and had frequently been observed before. But such visions rarely pierce the thick envelope of ordinary life, and are but lightning glimpses of a higher region."

#### A DESCRIPTION OF MADAME HAUFFE.

"Long before the commencement of my magnetic treatment of Madame Hauffe," says Dr. Kerner, "she was so entirely somnambule that, as we were afterwards convinced, her waking state was only apparent. Doubtless, she was much more *really* awake than other people; for this condition, although it is not called so, is that of the most perfect vigilance.

"In this state she had no organic strength, but depended wholly on that of other people, which she received chiefly through the eyes and the ends of the fingers. She said that she drew her life wholly from the air, and from the nervous emanations of others, by which they lost nothing; but it is not superfluous to mention that many persons said that they did lose strength by being long in proximity to her; were sensible of a weakness in the eyes and at the pit of the stomach, even to fainting; and she admitted that she gained most strength from the eyes of powerful men.

"From her own relations she extracted more vigour than from others; and as she grew weaker, from them alone she derived benefit. By the proximity of weak and sickly people, she grew weaker; just as flowers lose their beauty and perish under the same circumstances. She also drew nourishment from the air, unquestionably, and, even in the coldest weather, could not live without an open window. She was sensible of the spiritual essences of all things, of which mankind in general has no perception, especially of metals, plants, men, and animals. All imponderable matters; even the different colours of the prism, produced on her sensible effects. She was susceptible of electric influences, of which most persons are unconscious. She had a preternatural consciousness in connection with human hand-writing.

"From her eyes there shone a really spiritual light, of

which all who saw her became immediately aware. Whilst in this sleep-waking state, she was more a spirit than of mortal mould. *Should we compare her to a human being, we should say that she was in the state of one who, hovering between life and death, belonged rather to the world he was about to visit than to the one he was going to leave. This is not a poetical expression, but literally true.*

“We know that men in the moment of death, have often glimpses of the other world, and evince their knowledge of it. We see that a spirit partially leaves the body before it has wholly shaken off its earthly husk. Could we maintain any one for years in the condition of a dying person, we should have the exact representation of Madame Hauffe’s condition.”

Reference already has been made to her having seen herself out of the body. She frequently thus beheld herself, and sometimes double. She said, “It often appears to me that I am out of my body, and then I hover over it; but this is not a pleasant feeling, because I recognise my body. But if my soul were bound more closely to my nerve-spirit, then would this be in closer union with my nerves; but the bonds of my nerve-spirit are become daily weaker.”

“It appeared, indeed, as if her nerve spirit was so loosely connected with her nerves, that on the slightest movement it set itself free, whence she saw herself out of her body, or double, and her body had lost all feeling of weight.

“Madame Hauffe had neither accomplishments nor artificial cultivation. She had been taught no foreign language, and knew nothing of history, geography, natural history, nor had any of the ordinary acquirements of educated ladies. Her only studies during her long years of suffering were her Bible and Prayer-Book. She was pious without hypocrisy. Even her long suffering and its strange nature she regarded as proceeding from the grace of God, and frequently expressed these feelings in verse. Because,” says Dr. Kerner, “I sometimes made verses, people chose to say that I communicated this talent to her by my magnetic influence, but she spoke in verse before I attended her. It was not without a deep significance that Apollo was called the god of the physician, of the poet,

and the prophet. Sleep-waking gives the powers to prophesy, to heal, and to compose verse. How well did the ancients understand the magnetic state!"

Her external nervous system is described, and its connection with the physical world. The deduction arrived at by Dr. Kerner in the chapter devoted to this subject being that "the magnetic-life shows us many phenomena that prove the reality of much that we have been accustomed to regard as dreams of the poet;" as for instance in the power of stones as talismans, a belief still firmly held in the East. Many singular experiments with metals, stones, plants brought into contact with the Seeress are given at considerable length in the German original, but omitted in Mrs. Crowe's translation.

Another chapter relates to the effects of water upon this extraordinary "sensitive." When she was placed in a bath in her "sleep-waking state, or state of magnetic vigilance," many extraordinary phenomena were exhibited, her body appearing to be possessed of a strange elasticity, and involuntarily emerging from the water. This recalls the "water-test," as applied in the old times to suspected "witches." In the case of the Seeress, the ordinary laws of gravity appeared to be set at defiance. She declared that she was *conscious of weight irrespective of matter*. There was such a thing, she maintained, as "*moral weight*." If Dr. Kerner placed his fingers against hers, they were attracted as by a magnet, and he could thus lift her from the ground. She could distinguish the magnetic passes that he had made over a glass of water, they appearing darker to her than the water. She could thus in her clairvoyant state tell how many "passes" he had made over the water.

This leads Dr. Kerner to make an extremely interesting remark regarding the use of homœopathic medicines. He says, "Doubtless, our insensibility to external influences is much increased by the habit of taking foods and liquids of an exciting nature. When the ancients desired to subject a patient to these hidden powers of nature, they prepared him for the operation by a course of extreme temperance. The modern practice of medicine, denominated homœopathic, acts in two



ways—first by the removal of all excitements, and secondly by the repetition of medicines, whose extreme subdivision reminds us of the experiments of Robert Brown, who having reduced the particles of the body to the smallest atoms, perceived in them what seemed to be a spontaneous and independent animal-motion. It would appear that these substances, when mixed with water, have an electrical action upon the cuticle, as was the case with the Seeress; instead of acting, as do ordinary medicines, by assimilation, through the intestinal canal. As long as the atoms are combined in a mass, they merely obey the law of cohesion; their extreme subdivision, by exposing them to electrical influences, gave them this motion, which the delicate microscope discovered.

“The effects of imponderable substances on the Seeress were extraordinary. Sunlight and moonlight had each their peculiar effect upon her. As may be supposed, electricity in all its forms affected her.

“As already observed, she could not exist without an open window. She was of opinion that the opening of a window at the moment of a soul’s departure is not a mere superstition\*, but that it actually facilitates its escape; and that there is some substance in the air which spirits make use of to render themselves audible and visible to mortals.†

“She was affected by wind, especially when gusty, and could, though shut up in a room, tell from what quarter it blew.

\* In illustration of this, *vide* Mrs. De Morgan’s “From Matter to Spirit,” page 183, chapter x., “Daybreak,” in which is given an account of a child, who dying, said to his father, “*Do pray take out the window. Don’t you see that the glass prevents my getting away; you see how I am trying and cannot get away!*” Another writer says: “The moment a spirit has left its body a window should be opened to facilitate its departure, otherwise in many cases this may be delayed for so long a time as to cause much inconvenience and possibly some suffering, either to the new born spirit or its anxious spirit friends. This question of the necessity of providing means of egress had been discussed at different times at our meetings.”—“Spirit World and Its Inhabitants,” by Dr. Eugene Crowell. Boston: Colby & Rich, 9 Montgomery Place, 1879.

† Frequently asserted by the spirits when questioned at *séances* by what means they render themselves audible and visible.

“Music frequently threw Madame Hauffe into a somnambule state; she became clearer, and spoke in rhythm. She would make me magnetise the water she drank by sounds from the jew’s-harp; and when I had done this unknown to her, on drinking the water so prepared, she involuntarily began to sing.”

Two curious chapters relate to her experiences with regard to the human eye, which was to her as a magic mirror, in which she read strange things relative to the persons into whose eyes she looked. The eyes of some persons immediately threw the Seeress into the sleep-waking state. She declared that it was always with her own inner *spiritual* eye, not with the eye of flesh, that she saw things of the spirit. Soap-bubbles, glass, and mirrors excited her spiritual eye. A child happening to blow soap-bubbles, she exclaimed, “Ah, my God! I behold in the bubbles everything I think of, although it be distant, not in little, but as large as life, but it frightens me!” “I then,” says Dr. Kerner, “made a soap-bubble, and bade her look for her child that was far away. She said she saw him in his bed, and it gave her great pleasure.”

“At another time she saw my wife, who was in another house, and described the situation she was in at the moment, a point I took care immediately to ascertain. She was, however, with difficulty induced to look into these soap-bubbles; she seemed to shudder, and she was afraid that she should see something that would alarm her.”

Seeing with the pit of the stomach was also remarkable in her case, and numerous are the curious experiments recorded by Dr. Kerner in connection with this phenomenon.

In common with all somnambules and persons who have developed this inner-life, Madame Hauffe believed herself under the guidance of a protecting-spirit. Her grandmother Schmidgall appeared to be this guardian, and of this guardianship Madame Hauffe could not speak without being much affected. She was always disinclined to speak of the apparitions which appeared to her, and of the communications which she received from the world of spirits unless pressed to do so.

*At such times as the faculty of ghost-seeing was active in her, she believed herself to be awake, but she was then in that peculiar state we have denominated as the inner-life.\**

Many extraordinary cases of *second-sight* are recorded of the Seeress. “People,” says Dr. Kerner, “who have the second-sight are said to possess a piercing gaze, a look which I also observed in Madame Hauffe, when she was beholding spirits or her own ‘double.’ At the moment that this faculty is being exercised, the body of the Seer becomes rigid; his eyelids are up-raised, and he is blind and deaf to all besides. So was it with Madame Hauffe. If the Seer, in a moment of second-sight, touches another person or animal, that person or animal becomes endowed for the time with the same faculty. A horse will break into a sweat, and refuse to advance when his rider sees a vision.” Here is one of the instances given of

#### THE SECOND-SIGHT OF THE SEERESS.

“On the 13th of January, 1827, Madame Hauffe, being seized with spasms at a very unusual hour, I endeavoured to learn from her the cause of the accident; and when she was in a sleep-waking state, she told me that she had seen a bier, and on it a person very dear to her. It was her brother, over whom a great danger impended. He would be shot on the 18th of the month. She pointed out how he should escape the danger, and described the assassin. It happened as she had foretold; but the shot missed him. Sometime after she had another warning respecting her brother: several times in her magnetic sleep she saw a fox, and she became aware that in chasing the animal he would be in imminent danger from the charge of his gun. Her brother, being warned, examined his weapon, and found that some unfriendly hand had overcharged it, and he thus escaped the danger. She was supposed to be much

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\* It is supposed by some Psychologists that probably no ghosts are ever beheld by any seer unless that seer be in the first stage of the inner-life. Possibly it may require the spirit to have, to a certain extent, materialised itself, to be visible to persons who have not passed (it may be unconsciously) into the first stage of the inner-sight.—A. M. H. W.

*en rapport* with this brother, he having frequently magnetised her.”

An extraordinary account of the going-forth of the spirit of Madame Hauffé is recorded.

On the morning of the 2nd May, 1827, came the news of the illness of her father. On the same evening he died. She in her sleep was much distressed, and intimated that she saw something grievous, which she would not tell in order that she might not know it when she was awake; on the next day arrived the news of his death. On the 2nd of May, about nine o'clock in the evening, she exclaimed in her sleep, “Ah, God!” She awoke, as if aroused by the exclamation, and said that she had heard two voices proceeding from herself.

At the same hour that this happened, Dr. Föhr, who attended the deceased, being with an uncle of Madame Hauffé's, in a chamber next to that in which the body lay—in which last there was only the corpse—heard the words, “Ah, God!” so distinctly, that he went to see who was there, but found only the corpse.

Dr. Föhr wrote thus to Dr. Kerner:—“After my arrival at Oberstenfeld, where I found Herr W—— dead, I distinctly heard from the adjoining room where the body lay the words, ‘*Ach Gott!*’ I thought it proceeded from the coffin, and that Herr W——'s death had only been apparent. I watched him for an hour until I was satisfied that he was really gone.” It appears that there was no one in that part of the house from whom the voice could have proceeded. She accounted for this by saying, that her intense anxiety to know how her father was, had enabled her soul to accompany her nerve-spirit to the place where he lay, and that Dr. Föhr heard the exclamation made over the coffin by her soul, and which it repeated upon its return.

#### KNOCKINGS

also were frequently heard in her presence. Dr. Kerner says that he had been told by her parents that at the period of her early magnetic state, she was able to make herself heard by her friends as they lay in bed at night in the same village,

but in other houses, by a knocking, as is said, of the dead. “I asked her in her sleep, whether she was able to do so now, and at what distance. She replied that she would endeavour to show something of the kind to us. To a spirit, she said, space was nothing.”

“Sometime after this,” writes Kerner, “as we were going to bed, the children and servants already being asleep, we heard a knocking as if in the air, over our heads. There were six knocks at intervals of half a minute. It was a hollow, yet clear sound; soft, but distant. We were certain there was no one near us, nor over us, from whom it could proceed: our house stands by itself. On the following evening, when she was asleep—when we had mentioned the knocking to no one whatsoever—she asked me whether she should soon knock to us again, which, as she said it was hurtful to her, I declined. She told us afterwards that this knocking was made by the spirit on the air: not by the soul. But she said that the voice heard by her father’s coffin was when the soul, through grief and longing, had quitted the body with the nerve-spirit.” We need not be surprised at these phenomena when we remember that dying persons—when the soul is yet in the body, but the spirit is free—have it in their power to appear, in their own image, to distant friends.

On the approach of diseased persons, even though she did not touch them—and still more if she did—Madame Hauffé became conscious of their disease, and felt their sensations before they described them, often much to their astonishment. She was not alone sensible of their physical state, but also of the temporary conditions of their minds. The former she felt, she said, with her body; the latter with her soul.

One of the most interesting and touching narratives in Dr. Kerner’s book, is the account of the cure of the Countess von Maldeghem through means prescribed by the Secress in her sleep-waking state. This interesting young lady, who resided at a considerable distance from Weinsberg, and who for some years had suffered from a mysterious and perplexing magnetic condition herself, was entirely restored to her right mind and

to a condition of greatly improved physical health. The cure was chiefly conducted to this happy issue through prayer. The Seeress prayed for the Countess at a distance, in her "sleep-waking state"—the Countess also praying at the same hour. The Countess suddenly came into a new condition as if a cloud of bewilderment and disease had fallen off her like a cloak. After the lapse of a number of years there appeared, happily in the Countess, no return of the affliction.

#### THE FOUR DEGREES OF THE MAGNETIC CONDITION

of Madam Hauffe are noteworthy. They are thus described :

1st, That in which she ordinarily existed, wherein she appeared to be awake, although she was not so; but, on the contrary, in the first stage of her inner-life. She declared that many persons were in this state, of whom it was not suspected, and who were not aware of it themselves.

2nd, The Magnetic Dream. She believed many persons to be in this condition who were considered insane.

3rd, In the half-waking state, which exhibited itself more especially by its writing and speaking the inner-language (to which reference is repeatedly made in the later portion of the volume). She said she spoke this language when her spirit was in intimate conjunction with her soul.

4th. The sleep-waking state when she was clairvoyante and prescribed.

Dr. Kerner observes that there appeared to him to be an intermediate state between the half-waking state and the sleep-waking state,—a cataleptic state in which she lay torpid and cold. She said that with her half-waking state she thought only with the cerebellum; of the cerebrum she felt nothing—it was asleep. In this state she thought more with her soul; her thoughts were clearer, and her spirit had more power over her than in her waking state. In the perfect sleep-waking state the spirit had the supremacy; and when she was perfectly clairvoyante, she said that her thoughts proceeded wholly from the spirit and the epigastric region. In her sleep-waking state she averred that "In our natural state

of vigilance we feel little or nothing of the spirit. But man as he is situated in this world must be governed by the soul.\* If the spirit† had free-play, what would this world be? It can penetrate into things above; and in his present life man must not know the future."

She said that the magnetic-dream had some resemblance to the sleep-waking state; but it proceeded more from the brain. When awaking from this state she remembered what she had dreamed, which was not the case in the half-waking or clear-seeing state. She often related her dream whilst it was passing through her brain, sometimes in verse, and sometimes dramatically.

Madame Hauffé said that "the sleep-waking state is the life and act of the inner-man, and contains in itself a proof of a future existence. It is the internal activity of man which is unawakened in persons in their normal condition, and which is wholly asleep in those whose life is centred altogether in the brain, who, being unconscious of their sympathetic life, never listen to its voice; though, if man considered rightly, he would find this his true guide. The sleep-waking, produced by magnetic passes, is a sure remedy, for in clairvoyance the inner-man steps forward and inspects the outer, which is not the case either in sleep or dreaming. Clairvoyance is a state of the most perfect vigilance, because then the inner-spiritual man is disentangled and set free from the body. . . . In the normal condition the soul dwells chiefly in the brain, and the spirit in the epigastric region. In the magnetic state the soul approaches, more or less, the seat of the spirit. To those who only live their external life, the soul has the supremacy; the highest state of spiritual perfection is, when the spirit can free itself wholly from the soul."

Much of great curiosity, extremely mystical in its character,

\* By the soul (*Seele*) is meant throughout, by the Seeress, the abstract idea of the sum of all the intellectual and moral faculties.

† By the spirit (*Geist*) is indicated the pure reason, the conscience, the intuitive sense of the good, true, and beautiful—the *over-soul*; in one word, the *Holy Ghost*! all being synonymous.

is contained in this book concerning what the Seeress termed her

SUN-SPHERE AND LIFE-SPHERE,

and regarding the condition in herself when these spheres were developed within her for her own experience and comprehension. These spheres she sought to make clear by the drawing of diagrams, with signs and numbers; the sun-sphere, the sphere of the spirit—the life-sphere of the soul, or mental-life; they also denote different degrees of excellence. In close connection with these mysterious spheres was the “inner-language” which appeared to bear a resemblance to certain Eastern languages. Philologists discovered in it resemblance to Coptic, Arabic, and Hebrew. The written character of this language was always connected with numbers. She said that words with numbers had a much deeper significance than without. The names of things in this language, she said, expressed their properties and quality. She frequently in her sleep-waking state said that the ghosts spoke this language.

According to these disclosures of the Seeress in her sleep-waking state, it would appear that when the spirit of a clairvoyant enters into the centre of its being, all things within our solar system are unveiled to it. This clear-seeing of the spirit has become dark to man in proportion as his orbit has deviated from the centre. He no longer understands the language of nature, the internal significance of numbers, and the true natures or qualities of things are lost to him. Only through infinite mental labour can he now acquire a glimpse of their nature. Schubert and the Seeress agree in this, that what now is *learning* was formerly *intuitive knowledge*. Doubtless the philosophy of the early systems, especially that of Plato, was the offspring of this intuitive knowledge, and the system of Pythagoras, so far as it is known, had much similarity with that of the Seeress. Plato says, “The soul is immortal and has an arithmetical origin, as the body has a geometrical one. It is the picture or representation of a universal spirit; has motion, and penetrates into space, from the



centre of the body." That which Plato denominates "the motion of the soul," the Seeress calls the "life-sphere," and what he calls "the motion of the whole of the planets" is with her "the sun-sphere." "By this means," says Plato, "the soul is placed in connection with what is external, apprehends what exists and subsists harmoniously, because it has within itself the elements of harmony."

The Seeress never heard of Plato. Her system agrees also with the philosophical ideas of San Martin, Novalis, and Swedenborg, of whom Madame Hauffe knew nothing whatsoever. Swedenborg admits the existence of a "spiritual sun," (the "sun of grace" of the Seeress) from which shines a spiritual light, as from the other natural light.

For fuller details regarding this mystical philosophy of the "sun and life-spheres" of the Seeress, consult the admirable translation of Mrs. Crowe, or the yet fuller text of the original. It is impossible in this sketch to give more than reference to any portion of this remarkable psychological book.

#### HER LAST EXPERIENCES AND DEATH.

Her sun and life-sphere diagrams might be termed the prophecy of her future, and the day-book of her past. In them she marked all that she saw awaiting her, and all that had befallen her.

On the 27th of January, 1829, Madame Hauffe having in her sleep-waking state said that she felt her seven "sun spheres" had fallen off; and that, had not the last been cut through, as it had been, that with this crisis, she should have recovered her health. The months of the sun-sphere in which she then was, would last only to the 2nd of May, instead of to the 27th of December, as they should have done. She believed that she was about to die, since these four months were all that were left. On the 2nd of May she fell into a magnetic-dream, in which she spoke of beholding strange and portentous visions regarding herself. She was now in a new magnetic-life, in which she described her inner faculty of seeing as deeper than ever, although she should not

speak about what she saw, as before she had done. She said that her body was as if already dead—though appearing to live; but that her soul was more free and calm than ever. “Let my body,” she exclaimed, “be no more regarded; have no more care taken of it. It is a torn garment that I no longer value. Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commit my spirit!”

This was the presentiment of her approaching death; and from this time, she herself maintained the indifference which she recommended.

Although highly magnetic, and in a state of extreme debility, her sufferings had certainly been much alleviated during her residence at Weinsberg. She had more internal lucidity and calmness, and she had been cheered and consoled by the intercourse with many worthy persons. It was not in the power of her friends to defend her from the unfavourable circumstances which just at this period acted so prejudicially upon her health; reference is more specially made to the death of her father, and the sickness of her child.

On the 5th of May, 1829, she returned to Löwenstein there to fulfil her destiny.

During the first week of Madame Hauffé's residence at Löwenstein, she was sensible of another revolution in her sun-spheres, whereby the freedom of her soul was again lost and destroyed. She fell into a condition which resembled that of a dying person. Her respiratory organs were unequal to encounter the sharp mountain air; added to which was the prejudicial influence of smoke and vapours from the workshops and manufactories of vitriol in the neighbourhood. Vainly did she wish herself back again in the Weinsberg valley which she had left. On the 2nd of May, in her magnetic-dream she had foretold her fate, but contrary to all preceding occasions, she retained no recollection of her dream. Nevertheless a presentiment remained in her mind, for frequently she said when awake, “It is hard to know the moment of one's death.”

Three weeks before her death she had three times a second-

sight, which indicated the approaching catastrophe. There appeared to her a benign female form, taller than herself, enveloped in black; she beheld the feet alone; the rest of the form was draped in black, and stood in an open coffin, beside her a white cross. The apparition beckoned her, and she felt its cold breath. She said it was not a spirit, but a portentous second-sight. Well she knew what it foreboded. "I however," says Dr. Kerner, "interpreted the vision differently, for I believed her death still distant." Three days before she died she raised three of her fingers, as if taking an oath, and declared that her life could scarcely endure three days longer. She told Dr. Kerner that two spectres having shortly before been with her, they had answered her inquiry of why they came, by saying, "You are already of us." She also told Dr. Kerner upon his last visit, when she was fully aware of her approaching end, that her deceased father had lately been with her; and that having asked him why, since he had been dead a year, she had not seen him before, he answered that it had not been in his power to reveal himself to her earlier. At a later period, when she was incapable of any connected discourse, she was very desirous of communicating some revelations of her father respecting the world of spirits, as well as of speaking further of her sun-sphere and of her inner reckoning, but was unequal to it.

On the 5th of August, 1829, she became delirious, though she had still magnetic and lucid intervals. She was in a very pious state of mind, and requested that hymns might be sung to her. She often called loudly for Dr. Kerner; and once when she appeared dead, his name being uttered, she started into life again, and appeared unable to die—the magnetic relations between herself and her kind physician and friend had not yet been broken.

At ten o'clock her sister saw a tall, bright form enter the chamber, and at the same instant the dying woman uttered a loud cry of joy. She seemed to be set free.

After a short interval, her soul also departed, leaving behind it a totally irrecongnisable husk, not a single trace of her former

features remaining. During her life, her countenance was of that sort that is borrowed wholly from the spirit within. It is therefore not surprising that when the spirit had departed the face should no longer be the same. The body was found wasted to a skeleton. In the night succeeding her death, of which Dr. Kerner says he had no idea, he saw her in a dream with two other female forms, and apparently perfectly recovered.

After her decease, Madame Hauffe appeared seven times to her eldest sister, a very truthful and upright person, under such peculiar circumstances as well warranted the interference of a friendly spirit; but as this remarkable history, says Dr. Kerner, was connected with family affairs, the time had not yet arrived when it could with propriety be disclosed.

On the 8th of August, 1829, the remains of the Seeress of Prevorst were deposited in the romantic churchyard of Löwenstein, where lay the body of her grandfather, the worthy Schmidgall, whose spirit she had recognised as her guardian; and also the body of his wife.

#### THE REMARKABLE FACTS (THATSACHEN)

connected with the spirit-seeing of the Seeress of Prevorst, amounting to a considerable number and of varied length, form in the original one-third of the volume of 488 pages.

“Regarding the facts which I am about to relate,” says Dr. Kerner, “I have only to say, that, of the greater number, I myself was a witness; and that, what I took upon the credit of others, I most curiously investigated, and anxiously sought, if by any possibility, a natural explanation of them could be found; but in vain. I often,” he says, “represented to the Seeress the theory which considers the apparitions as mere phenomena of the magnetic state and imagination, which, by the physical-magnetic operation of the somnambule, may be communicated to a second or third person. But she maintained that, even if this transference were proved, it would imply nothing more than that these other persons were brought into a magnetic relation with her, and with everything with

which she was herself in relation (*rapport*), as she certainly was with spirits ; but that this would by no means prove that they were the offspring of her imagination ; besides, she alleged the instances in which persons, who were certainly not *en rapport* with her, and who had never heard of her ghost-seeing, had, nevertheless, seen them in the very same places.”

## OF HER GHOST-SEEING

she gives the following account :—“I see many with whom I come into no approximation, and others who come to me with whom I converse, and who remain near me for months ; I see them at various times by day and night, whether I am alone or in company. I am perfectly awake at the time,\* and am not sensible of any circumstance or sensation that calls them up. I see them alike whether I am strong or weak, fasting or having had food, glad or sorrowful, amused or otherwise ; and I cannot dismiss them. Not that they are always with me, but they come at their own pleasure, like mortal visitors, and equally, whether I am in a spiritual or corporeal state at the time. When I am in my calmest and most healthy sleep, they awaken me—I know not how, but I feel that I am awakened by them—and that I should have slept on had they not come to my bed-side. I observe frequently that when a ghost visits me by night, those who sleep in the same room with me are, by their dreams, made aware of their presence ; they speak afterwards of the apparition they saw in their dream, although I have not breathed a syllable on the subject to them. Whilst the ghosts are with me, I see and hear everything around me as usual, and can think of other subjects ; and though I can avert my eyes from them, it is difficult for me to do it. I feel in a sort of magnetic *rapport* with them. They appear to me like a thin cloud, that one could see through—which, however, I cannot do. I never observed that they threw any shadow. I see them more clearly by the sun or moon light than in the dark ; whether I could see them in absolute darkness I do not

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\* She believed herself awake. Dr. Kerner believed her at such times already entered in the first stage of her “inner-life,” or state of trance.—A. M. H. W.

know. If any object comes between me and them, they are hidden from me. I cannot see them with closed eyes, nor when I turn my face from them; but I am so sensible of their presence, that I could point out the exact spot upon which they are standing; and I can hear them speak, though I stop my ears. I cannot endure that they should approach me very near; they give me a feeling of debility. Other persons who do not see them are frequently sensible of the effect of their proximity when they are with me; they have a disposition to faintness, and feel an oppression of the nerves; even animals are not exempt from this effect. The appearance of the ghost is the same as when they were alive, but colourless—rather greyish; so is their attire—like a cloud. The brighter and happier spirits are differently clothed; they have a long, loose, shining robe with a girdle round the waist.

“The features of the spectres are as when alive; but mostly sad and gloomy. Their eyes are bright—often like flame. I have never seen any hair. All the female ghosts wear the same head-covering—even when over it, as is sometimes the case, they have that which they wore when alive. This consists of a sort of veil, which comes over the forehead, and covers the hair. The forms of the good spirits appear bright, those of the evil, dusky. Whether it is only under this form that my senses can perceive them, and whether to a more spiritualised being they would not thus appear, I cannot say; but I suspect it. Their gait is like the gait of the living, only that the better spirits seem to float, and the evil ones tread more heavily; so that their footsteps may sometimes be heard not by me alone, but by those who are with me.

“They have various ways of attracting attention by other sounds besides speech; and this faculty they exercise frequently on those who can neither see nor hear their voices. These sounds consist of sighing, knocking, noises as of the throwing of sand on gravel, rustling of paper, rolling of a ball, shuffling as in slippers, etc., etc. They are also able to move heavy articles, and to open and shut doors; although they can pass through these unopened, or through the walls. I observe

that the darker a spectre is, the stronger is his voice, and the more ghostly power of making noises, and so forth, he seems to possess. The sounds they produce are by means of the air, and of the nerve-spirit which they still retain. I never saw a ghost when in the act of producing any sound but speech, so that I conclude they cannot do this visibly; neither have I ever seen them in the act of opening or shutting a door, only directly afterwards. They move their mouths in speaking, and their voices are as various as those of the living. They cannot answer me all that I desire. Wicked spirits are more willing or able to do this,\* but I avoid conversing with them. These I can dismiss by a written word or an amulet.

“When I talk to them piously, I have seen the spirits, especially darker ones, draw in my words as though it were by these words that they became brighter; but I, myself, feel much weaker. The spirits of the happy invigorate me and give me a quite other feeling. I observe that the happy spirits have the same difficulty in answering questions regarding earthly matters, as the evil ones have in doing so, with respect to heavenly ones.† The first belong not to earth, nor the last to heaven.

“With the high and blessed spirits I am not in a condition to converse: I can only venture on a short interrogation. I am told that when asleep, I often spoke with my protecting spirit, who is amongst the blessed. I know not if this be so: if it were, it must have been in moments when my spirit was disjoined from my soul. When soul and spirit are united I cannot converse with the blessed.

“The spirits who come to me are mostly on the inferior stages of the mid-region, which is in our atmosphere. They are chiefly spirits of those who from the attraction of, and attachment to the external, would have remained below; or of those who have not believed in Christ, or who, in the moment of dying, have been troubled with an earthly thought

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\* A fact worthy of note by persons who expect “spirits” manifesting through the “mediums” of to-day to be all-wise and all-knowing.

† Additional explanation, most noteworthy for said persons.—A. M. H. W.

which has clung to them, and impeded their upward flight. Many who are neither condemned nor placed amongst the blessed immediately after death, are on different stages of this mid-region; some, where spirits have been purified, are very high.

“On the lowest degree, these spirits are still exposed to the temptation of the wicked; but not in the higher, where they already enjoy heavenly happiness and the purity of the blessed.

“But it must not be thought that improvement is easier there than here; it must originate with themselves. . . . . Those on the lower degree who are the heaviest, are in a continual twilight, with nothing to delight their eyes. This dimness does not belong to the place they are in, but belongs to their own soul. The orbit of the Sun [Spiritual Sun?] is no longer visible to them; and although they are in our atmosphere, they have no eyes for earthly objects. It is only by their inward improvement that they obtain light and the power of seeing. As soon as they have light in their souls, they can quit our atmosphere, and they can see light again. These are they who mostly come to me. They come to me that I may aid them through prayer, and give them a word of consolation. Others come in under the erroneous persuasion, that the avowal of some crime which weighs upon their spirit will bring them rest. Under the influence of this error, they are often more anxious about some single misdeed than about all the rest of their ill-spent lives; and others come to me to whom some earthly feeling or thought has clung in death which they cannot shake off. It were better that they addressed themselves to the Spirits of the Blessed; but their weight draws them more to men than to spirits. They come to me, and I see them independently of my own will.”\*

On being asked whether mankind could release spirits, she answered, “No; they must release themselves from the bonds

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\* The testimony borne to the truth of these words of the Seeress by the experiences of our modern Spiritual-manifestations is perfect indeed! It will be recognised, also, by the readers of the works of Böhme and Swedenborg, how entirely the Seeress is in accord with those great mystics.—A. M. H. W.



which hold them. They seek help from living men; and have the idea that we can help them, because they have no comprehension of the Great Redeemer. We can only be mediators, as I am. I always seek to persuade them from their error, that I or others can help them. I pray earnestly with them, and wean them more and more from the world; but it costs much labour before such souls are turned to the Lord. There are many instances in which the half-unblessed—there is a middle stage—could raise themselves higher, since it depends on themselves whether they will frequent the company of good spirits so as to be instructed by them. Their progress would then be more rapid than through the assistance of mortals.”

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It will naturally be asked by some readers,—“But what tests are given in this book of Dr. Kerner as to the truthfulness of the relations said to have existed between this remarkable somnambule and these ‘spectres’?”

Numerous are the “tests” given in the work itself; specially in the second portion, which contains the body of “*That-sachen*,” or “Facts,” between twenty and thirty in number. Space precludes the reader of this present sketch, however, from being presented with more than reference to this highly interesting portion of Dr. Kerner’s book, and with the following condensed “Narrative of

“A STRANGE OCCURRENCE AT WEINSBERG.”

This took place shortly after the 25th of November, 1826, when Madame Hauffé arrived at that place. She knew no one in Weinsberg. Dr. Kerner was himself almost a stranger to her. She was lodged in a small room on the ground floor, next to the house and over the wine-vaults of Herr F——. Herr F—— was an entire stranger to her, and was unaware that she was lodging in the neighbourhood. The following circumstances he only subsequently learned through Dr. Kerner.

“It is *possible*,” writes Dr. Kerner, “that Madame Hauffé may have heard that a certain K—— had conducted Mrs.

F——'s affairs in a very prejudicial manner; but if so, she had no recollection of it. This man (K——) had been dead some years; she had never seen him, nor had she any connection with anybody concerned with his or Mrs. F——'s affairs; of which the public had ceased to talk.

“On the first evening, when she fell into her magnetic trance, before I had magnetised her at all, she said there was a man near her with a very piteous countenance, who seemed to desire something of her, but she could not understand what. On the 24th of December, being in the magnetic sleep, she said, ‘That man is here again; he comes up from the vaults below at the hour of my sleep. Oh! that he would stay away, for he disturbs my sleep, and I cannot help him! I can point out where he sits in the vault; it is behind the fourth barrel, and he leaves the place at the hour of my sleep. Ah, how his right eye squints! He steps forward. Oh, do not! I cannot help you! Does no one see him but me? He keeps nodding to me and wishing to tell me something.’

“On the 25th, on which day for the first time Herr F—— was present, for I believed the spectre to have been a relation of his, she said, ‘He is there again, and disturbs me in my sleep. What is it he is showing me? A sheet of figures, not quite so large as a folio. The upper right corner is turned down; in the left there is a number. Under the first row of figures I see an 8 and a 0. I cannot read more; it begins with a J. This paper lies under many others, and is not observed. He wishes me to tell my physician, and thus give notice of it. He wished to have told it before his death, but did not expect to die so soon; and dying thus, it accompanied his soul like a piece of his body.’ ‘It is quite true,’ continues Dr. Kerner, ‘that the person died unexpectedly, for she described the figure so exactly from the squinting eye, that I recognised it to be the deceased K——.’ She said, ‘I must go away from him. I can bear him no more to-day.’

“On the 26th, being in a deep magnetic sleep, she tried to find the place where this paper was. She said, ‘It's in a building, which is sixty paces from my bed. (We must here

observe that Madame Hauffe had never seen this building.) In this I see a large and a smaller room. In the latter sits a tall gentleman at a table, at work. Now he goes out, and now he returns. Beyond these rooms there is one still larger, in which are some cupboards and a long table. There is one long chest, and a press stands in the entrance, the door of which is open. But these chests and cupboards do not concern the man. But on the table there is a wooden thing,—I do not know what to call it; and on this lie three heaps of paper; and in the middle one, a little below the centre, lies the sheet which so torments him.’

“I recognised the building to be the office,” says Dr. Kerner, “of the High Bailiff; and believing (as yet) what Madame Hauffe described to be merely a vision, I went to him, and requested him to let us search for the papers that thus we might undeceive her. The High Bailiff, who equally looked upon the whole as a dream, said that she was, however, right in declaring that he was at work at the time; and that it was true that he had gone into the next room. He had observed the door of the press open. But although struck with this coincidence, we were confirmed in our notion of the whole being a dream, when on searching the papers, too hastily, perhaps, which lay, indeed, as Madame Hauffe had described them, we could not find the one we sought. I, however, requested the High Bailiff to come and be a witness to the thing himself when next Madame Hauffe slept.

“After prescribing for herself, she again spoke of the man whom she called ‘the man who sits behind the fourth barrel;’ where she said she saw him every night. She blamed me for not seeking the paper more carefully, and besought me to find it; she described more particularly where it lay; added that it was folded in strong grey paper, a description which she would not give us before. I declared that there was no such thing; and that the whole was a dream. She answered gently that the paper must, and would be found. In order to quiet her, when she, on the 28th troubled herself about this subject, in her evening-sleep, I

placed in her hand an old sheet of paper covered with many figures, amongst which stood the number 80. 'No,' said she, '*that* is not the paper. That paper is still in its place, and the figures upon it are written much more regularly.'

"On the 31st she said: 'The man behind the barrel threatens to disturb me in Heaven, if I will not find the paper. But he cannot do that. He has died with this thought upon him; it binds him to Earth, and leaves him no peace. If the paper were found, he might, by prayer, obtain salvation. For God's sake seek it! Were I able to walk, it would soon be found.' When she awoke she was much agitated. It was evident that she so much troubled herself regarding the apparition that her magnetic sleep did her, in consequence, more harm than good.

"I therefore went once more to the High Bailiff and begged him to let us have another search. Here indeed we found enclosed, as the Seeress had described, a sheet of paper, with figures and words written, in the hand of this dead man; the first number on which was 80, and the first letter J, and that at the upper corner it had been doubled down—at the sight of which I felt a shudder. This sheet contained and indeed was the only proof that Herr K. had kept a private ledger,—which ledger had not been found after his death, in which probably much was entered that had never come to light. Already there existed a rumour—which however had never been confirmed—that he had, by an oath, bound his wife to appear to know nothing of the existence of this private ledger. This sheet of paper had not yet been put into evidence.

"The High Bailiff and I agreed to say nothing to any one about the discovery of this paper, and he promised to be present at the evening sleep of the Seeress. Although I did not request him so to do, I concluded he would bring the paper with him to show her. As usual she returned to the subject of the dead man. She said, 'There he stands again. He looks calmer. The paper must have been found. Fetch it.' I said (believing it to be in the Bailiff's pocket), 'If it be found, where is it?' She fell upon this into a cataleptic

condition, one of inward vision. She had the appearance of a person who was dead, but with a glorified countenance. After a while she said, 'The papers are not all there. The first heap is not there at all; and the other papers are not in their former order. But this surprises me! Here lies the very paper which the man usually holds in his hand—open! Now I can read more—"To be carried into my private book"! What is now to be done with this paper? Oh, I shudder to think what that poor woman will do! Let her be warned. Then he will get rest, and be allowed to approach his Redeemer.' These words, as he afterwards told me, surprised greatly the Bailiff, because, as an experiment, he had placed the paper just as she described.

"On the 1st of January, she said the man wished his wife to be advised to do something, or she would be more unhappy than himself."

The termination of this extraordinary history was, that after several more appearances of this unhappy spirit to the Seeress—henceforth seen attired in a *white* loose coat, *white* cap and slippers—the white, possibly sign and symbol of his more cleansed condition—the unhappy widow was warned of the discovery of the paper. She came to the Seeress, and was deeply affected by the revelations and communications made to her on this subject by Madame Hauffé in her sleep-waking condition. The widow promised to search for the missing private book.

The narrative closes with an attestation to its entire truthfulness from the High Bailiff himself, "Oberantsrichter Heyd."

In conclusion, it is worthy of notice that, on one occasion, a female spirit made so strong an impression upon the memory of the Seeress, that she in the morning executed a sketch from memory of the ghost. At the request of a friend of Dr. Kerner, Professor Carl August Eschenmayer, the sketch was lithographed. This female spirit is thus alluded to in "The Seeress of Prevorst," Fact 22nd (Mrs. Crowe's Translation Edition of 1845, page 306):—

"On Friday, March 20th, at nine o'clock at night, Madame

Hauffe, being awake, there suddenly appeared to her a female form in an ancient costume, holding a human heart in her hand. She was extremely frightened, and turned away her face till she felt the figure had disappeared. That apparition made so great an impression on her that, in the morning, she made a drawing of it. Four nights afterwards, she was awakened by a sound like the running down of a church clock, and looking up, she saw the same figure with the heart in her hand, whilst with the other she pointed to it and said, 'This was the larum.' She was supposed to have been an ancient canoness, wife to an ancient knight, living at Löwenstein, in the 16th century, who had appeared to the Seeress on previous occasions."

The original drawing is now in possession of the compiler of this memoir.

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PERIODICALS EDITED BY DR. KERNER.

Shortly after the publication of the "Seeress of Prevorst," Dr. Kerner issued a periodical relating to Psychological subjects, as already noticed in the foregoing memoirs, "*Leaves from Prevorst*," in which he was assisted by various distinguished writers—Professor Eschenmayer, Friederik von Mayer of Frankfort, Gotthelf, Henrich von Schubert, Guido Görres (author of "Christian Mysticism," etc.), and Franz von Baader; names well known in their own country. This periodical ceasing in 1839, was followed by another of larger size, entitled "*Magikon; Archives of observations in the realm of Spiritual Knowledge, and of the Magnetic and Magical Life*"—from 1840 it existed until 1852.

"*Blätter aus Prevorst*" and "*Magikon*"\* form a literature

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\* "*Blätter aus Prevorst; originalien und Lesefrüchte für Freunde des innern Lebens.*" Erste bis Siebente Sammlung bei Braun in Karlsruhe. Achte bis Elfte, bei Brodhag, Stuttgart, die Zwölfte bei Ebner und Seubert, Karlsruhe.—"*Magikon; Archiv für Beobachtungen aus dem Gebiete, der Geisterkunde, und des magnetischen und magischen Lebens.*" Ebner und Seubert in Stuttgart. 1840, 1842, 1846, 1850, 1852.

in themselves, and are a mine as yet scarcely opened up for England. Several of Mrs. Crowe's most remarkable narratives in "The Night Side of Nature" were probably drawn from these sources.

In 1836 appeared from Kerner's pen the book of all others which provoked the strongest opposition in the public mind. It is entitled, "*An Appearance from the Night Realms of Nature; proved legally by a series of Witnesses, and communicated to Searchers into Nature for their careful consideration.*" As already observed, his attitude regarding the ridicule and abuse which its publication called down upon him was passive.

The reader, for a summary of this book, is referred to Vol. II. of Mrs. Crowe's "Night Side of Nature" (3rd Edition. Routledge & Co., 1852, p. 385), where that lady says:—

"I will here relate a very remarkable case (of haunting by earth-bound evil spirits) which occurred in the prison at Weinsberg in the year 1835. Dr. Kerner, who has published a little volume containing a report of the circumstances, describes the place where the thing happened to be such an one as negatives at once all possibility of trick or imposture. It was in a sort of block-house or fortress—a prison within a prison—with no windows but what looked into the narrow court or passage, which passage was closed with several doors. It was on the second floor, the windows being high up, heavily barred with iron, and immoveable without considerable mechanical force. The external prison is surrounded by a high wall, and the gates are kept closed day and night. The prisoners in different apartments are, of course, never allowed to communicate with each other, and the deputy-governor of the prison and his family, consisting of a wife, niece, and one maid-servant, are described as people of unimpeachable respectability and veracity.

"The deposition of various of the prisoners was taken before three magistrates, and Dr. Kerner, in compliance with orders from the Supreme Court, as district-physician, examined the prisoner Elizabeth Eslinger, and found her of sound mind, but

possessed with one fixed idea, namely, that she had for a considerable time been troubled by an apparition, which left her no rest, coming chiefly at night, and requiring her prayers to release it; that it visited her before she came to the prison, and was the cause of the offence that brought her there. In compliance with further orders of the Supreme Court, Dr. Kerner watched this woman carefully for eleven weeks, and came to the conclusion that there was no deception in the case, and also that the persecution from which she suffered was no monomaniacal idea of her own: Dr. Kerner being confirmed by the testimony, not alone of her fellow-prisoners, but of the family of the deputy-governor, and also of persons dwelling at houses at a distance." The detail in the narrative is extraordinarily curious, and worth the careful study of all persons interested in the subject of "hauntings."

"HISTORY OF MODERN POSSESSION."

Amongst the valuable contributions made by Dr. Justinus Kerner to the literature of psychology, none is more important—though treating of the dark and terrible side of the inner-life of humanity—than a small volume published by him in 1834, and entitled, *Geschichten Besessener neuerer Zeit* (Histories of Modern Possession).\*

Profoundly acquainted with the mysterious phenomena exhibited both by the insane, by persons subjected to the treatment of mesmerism, and by natural somnambulists—through the entire series of which phenomena runs a marked relationship—Dr. Kerner discovered phenomena presented by persons proclaiming themselves possessed of evil spirits, manifesting special characteristics, which were of so distinct a nature

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\* *Geschichten Besessener neuerer Zeit*. 1834. Braun in Karlsruhe. For an instance of Demoniac Possession in modern times, see account of "Devils of Morzine," *Cornhill Magazine* for 1866 or 1865. An epidemic, as it would appear, of "possession" fallen simultaneously upon hundreds of persons—chiefly the young—and necessitating scientific research into its origin, to be made by physicians despatched from Paris for that purpose, by the late Emperor Louis Napoleon. Also "Demoniac Possession in the South of England," vol. i. p. 62 of *Spiritual Magazine*, last series, edited by Dr. Sexton.



as to warrant their division into a separate class. These he considered of so interesting a description as to demand the most serious consideration, not alone of the man of science, but of the student of theology.

Himself firmly convinced, through years of personal observation, of the constant, immediate, and frequently conscious operation of the world of disembodied spirit upon the world of spirit incarnate, the gospel theory of "Possession" presented to Dr. Kerner's mind no intellectual difficulties: on the contrary, it appeared to him at once the most simple and the most logical solution of this mysterious affliction, which, as Dr. Kerner's book proves, is still terrifically rife in the world. Probably has been rife, throughout the long vista of the past, extending in one vast, mournful line of uninterrupted succession, to our own time, from the days when our Lord yet walked on the earth, and laid his benign hands upon the "possessed," casting forth from their convulsed bodies their tormenting demons, by the presence and might of that Divine Power, which alone ever did, or ever will bid them depart.

Dr. Kerner, in an introduction to his volume, brings considerable amount of erudition to bear upon this much disputed fact of possession. He seeks to prove by the testimony of innumerable writers of the Middle-ages, of the Early Christian Fathers, of Jewish Rabbis, and Greek and Roman Poets and Historians, that these afflicted individuals, existing in all ages, under all circumstances, exhibit precisely the same phenomena, mental and physical; with common consent persistently proclaim the cause of their sufferings to proceed from possession of their bodies by the disembodied spirits of evil men; proclaim also, that these sufferings can alone be terminated by the expulsion of the evil through the medium of exorcism, prayer and laying on of hands.

The first continuous narrative to be met with in Dr. Kerner's volume may be entitled

#### THE MAID OF ORLACH.

It contains probably not only every known phase of demoniac

possession, but every known phase of haunting by earth-bound spirits. It is as follows:—

“In the small village of Orlach, in the Oberamt Hall, in Württemberg, lived a peasant named Grombach. He was a Lutheran Protestant, and much respected by his neighbours. The family was God-fearing, although by no means pietistic. Their life was that of all peasants—one of incessant labour, both in farm-yard and field. Grombach had four children, all occupied in agriculture; but his daughter Magdalene was his most industrious child. Threshing, hemp-beating, and mowing were her occupation from earliest dawn till late at night. Although labour of the hands came easily to her, school-learning came with difficulty, and she never acquired much skill in book learning. She had never during her whole life suffered from illness, but was a strong, healthy, happy child of nature.

“In February, 1831, strange things began to occur in the cow-house. A new cow purchased by Grombach was found repeatedly fastened to a part of the cow-house different from that to which Grombach had fastened her. Grombach was the more struck by this circumstance from having assured himself that none of his people had played a trick with the cow. Suddenly, the tails of the three cows would be plaited in the most artistic manner, as though a skilled lace-weaver had executed the work, and then fastened the three tails together. When the tails were unplaited, they would speedily be found woven together again by invisible hands, and this with the most incredible rapidity, three or four times in the course of the day.\* This marvel continued to occur for several weeks, four or five times in the day; neither, spite of the greatest watchfulness, could human agency be discovered.

“About this time the daughter Magdalene received, once when she was sitting milking, a box on the ear from an

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\* *Vide* p. 31 of *Encyclopædia Metropolitana, Occult Sciences* (cabinet edition), for information regarding plaiting of hair by Spirits; also passage in *Romeo and Juliet*—

“This is that very Mab  
That plats the manes of horses in the night.”

—A. M. H. W.

invisible hand, which struck her so violently that the cap flew off from her head against the wall, from whence it was picked up by her father, who entered the cow-house, attracted thither by the sudden cry which she had uttered. A mysterious cat and bird appeared and disappeared in the cow-house no one knew how. Similar spiritual freaks continued to occur throughout 1831. On the 8th of February, 1832, whilst Magdalene was busied with her brother cleaning out the cow-house, a clear fire was suddenly observed burning within it. These flames, which were seen by the neighbours, were speedily extinguished. The Grombach family were greatly perplexed by this burning, not knowing how it could have originated except through the agency of evil-disposed persons. This bursting forth of flame repeated itself on the 9th, 10th, and 11th of February, until at length, at the urgent request of Grombach, watchers were placed by the police day and night within the house; spite of which the flames burst forth in various parts of the cottage. Grombach now emptied the house of furniture, but the burning still continued to show itself, now here, now there, in the empty dwelling.

“A few days after the last burning, one morning at half-past six, when Magdalene entered the cow-house she heard the whimpering, as it were, of a child in the corner of the wall. Grombach’s cottage had in part a very old wall in its foundation. This she mentioned immediately to her father, who went into the cow-house, but heard nothing.

“About half-past eight on same day, the girl saw in the back of the cow-shed, upon a wall, a grey, shadowy form of a woman, whose head and body appeared closely swathed. This apparition motioned to the girl with her hand. An hour later, when she was foddering the cattle, the same figure appeared to her, and began to say to her as follows:—‘Remove the house, remove the house. If it be not removed before the 5th of March of next year, a misfortune will befall you. Return, however, for the present, at once into the house. If the house had been burnt, it would have happened through the evil wishes of an evil spirit. I have prevented this by protecting

you. But unless the house be destroyed before the 5th of March of the coming year, I cannot protect you from a misfortune. Now, promise me that the house shall be destroyed.' The girl gave her promise to that effect. Her father and brother were present, and heard the girl speaking, but otherwise neither heard nor saw anything. According to the girl's account, the voice was a female one, and the language High-German.

"After this the female spirit appeared at various times to her: once whilst she was in bed, and conversed freely with her, telling her that her name had been Anna Maria, that she had been born at Orlach on the 12th of September, 1412 (Magdalene was born on the 12th of September, 1812), that she had been put into a convent against her will when she was fourteen. She confessed, upon Magdalene's questioning her, that she had been guilty of sin, the particulars of which she could not reveal. The ghost always spoke in a religious manner, making use of texts which Magdalene would not herself have remembered, and usually praying the 112th Psalm. 'You will naturally suppose,' the ghost once observed, 'that being a nun, I know nothing about the Bible, but I know almost all that is in it.' She appeared to read the thoughts of the girl before they were expressed in words. Once, when Magdalene wished that she should manifest herself to other persons, the spirit sighed, exclaiming, 'O God, were I only released!' became very sorrowful, and vanished. Magdalene frequently questioned her as to the reason of her great suffering, and of her being bound to so evil a companion, and why the house must come down. To all which questions she returned only evasive answers, or sighed.

"From February till May, this spirit appeared at various times, always speaking in a religious manner, and referring with much distress to her connection with the Black-Spirit. At length she said she should not be able to present herself again for a considerable period, during which time Magdalene would be subjected to persecution from her evil companion, but that she must continue steadfast, and return him no

answer. Frequently the spirit foretold events which were about to occur, as that such and such a person would come on the morrow, etc.

“On St. John’s day, when all the family were at church except Magdalene, who was remaining at home to prepare the dinner, suddenly she heard, whilst standing at the hearth, the report of an explosion in the cow-house. She was rushing out to see what had occurred, when she beheld a heap of yellow frogs upon the hearth; she was on the point of lifting them up in her apron to keep this new kind of frog to show to her parents upon their return, when a voice seemed to call up out of the ground to her, ‘Magdalene, let the frogs go,’ when, behold, they had vanished.

“After this commenced a time of terrible persecution. Magdalene, going forth in the early dawn to the meadow with her father to mow, would now hear a voice, as though it were that of a neighbour, calling upon her to stop, and that he would go along with her; then followed scornful laughter, and she would perceive the apparitions of animals, now a black cat, dog, foal, and a black horse without a head—none, however, of which could be seen by her father. Once, at mid-day, whilst she was turning the hay, a black man came to her, walked beside her up and down the meadow, and said to her, ‘That’s a regular bag-of-bones that comes to thee, what does she want? Thou must return her no answer; she is a very bad person. But answer me; then I will give thee the key to the cellar beneath your house. There are lying in it eight firkins of the oldest wine, and many, many valuable things. Thy old father could make himself rich with that wine for a long time, it is worth something I can tell thee.’ Then he laughed contemptuously, and vanished. On the 4th of July, at three o’clock in the morning, a black man without a head appeared, and said, ‘Magdalene, help me to make hay to-day; I’ll give thee for every swath, a French dollar. If thou wouldst only see how beautiful my dollars are, thou wouldst certainly help me to make hay. If thou wilt only help me, I’ll give thee beer also, the next time I go into the cellar.’ The black man always

laughed contemptuously when he spoke such words as these, and in departing, said, 'Thou art just a bag-of-bones, like the one who comes to thee;' meaning the White-Spirit. Again, at five o'clock, he appeared to her, wishing to sharpen her scythe, and promising her money. At noon, also, walking behind her, and turning the hay with a rake which he carried in his hand, and endeavouring as usual to make Magdalene speak to him, saying, amongst other things, 'Thou must have a mass said, Magdalene; in order that the weather keep fine, thou must have a mass said.' Both Magdalene and the district were Protestant.

"The black man's dress reminded Magdalene of that of a monk, and a monk he later on declared himself to be. On the 5th and 6th of July, he again appeared to her in the hay-fields, imitating the voices of her neighbours, and endeavouring to induce her to speak to him, but in vain. He was full of jeers because Magdalene's father had taken a Bible with him as means of exorcism, constantly repeating that the mass was much better, much grander, etc. On the 8th of July he appeared in the house to her, whilst she was making a bed, and nearly succeeded in causing her to speak, through assuming the voice of a friend of hers, the servant of the inn at Orlach, but catching a glimpse of a black monk's figure, she in time avoided replying. On the 10th, whilst she was giving the cattle water, at a retired well in the woods, the Black-Spirit came to her and said to her in the voice of her neighbour Hansel, 'Thy father told me to come to thee here in the woods, fearing that the black monk should arrive and get an answer from thee, which might cause thee much ill-luck. Now, therefore, I am come, and the monk is not now with thee, is he? But now I will also say something to thee. Yesterday, when I was at your house—it was yesterday, was it not? or was it the day before?—and thou wast carrying my little lad in thy arms, and went into the garden. When we were alone, thy father spoke very angrily about thee, and said that he could never keep thee at home; that he must send thee away, either into a convent—was that not odd of thy father?—or get thee mar-

ried. This is what thy father said, and I cannot say that I think he is very wrong. Now what dost thou say to the convent? When I was a soldier I was once in a convent, and it's not so bad as people think. Now thy friend, the landlord's daughter, is thinking of going into a convent. Wilt thou do so likewise, or wilt thou marry? Speak and tell me. If thou art inclined to marry, I know the right fellow. Whom dost thou think? Then thou canst do what thou likest. But if thou goest into the convent, thou need'st do nothing. That is the reason the landlord's Catherine is going into a convent; she likes to do nothing. Well, whether thou wilt marry or go into a convent, thou shalt have no more hay to stack. Are you finished with your rick? Heh?—' The girl gave him no answer. Although the Black Spirit could disguise his voice, he could not entirely disguise his figure, and thus she recognised him. But as he had said, neighbour Hansel (in his own person) that evening helped her with the rick, without knowing the promise that had been made for him by the black monk at noon, in his name.

“About this time Magdalene and her sister discovered upon a beam in the cow-house, a small bag, which as it fell down jingled. She opened and found within it several *thalers* and smaller coin, altogether about eleven *gulden*. It was inexplicable how the money had come there. No one in the house had missed it, and no one else claimed it. Then appeared the Black-Spirit and said, ‘Magdalene! that is thine, that is for the box on the ear which I gave thee in the cow-house one day. That money I have taken from a gentleman in H——, who has cheated to the amount of six Carolines. Thank me for this, Magdalene!’ But neither did this make her speak to him. In the evening the White-Spirit appeared and said, ‘It is well that thou didst not reply to his speeches. And that money thou must not keep, but thou must give it to the poor.’ A third of the money was given to the Orphan House, in Stuttgart; a third to the Orphanage, at Hall; and the last third to the school-fund of Orlach. The White-Spirit further said, ‘The next time that thou art in Hall, walk

straight through the town, until some one calls thee; he will give thee a present of money, and with this purchase thyself a hymn book.' Soon after this Magdalene really went to Hall, and as she was passing along the street, a shop-keeper called her into his shop, and asked her whether she was the girl from Orlach, about whom he had heard; asked her to relate what had occurred to her, and then gave her a gulden, with which she immediately purchased herself a hymn book.

"On the 15th of July, early in the morning, when she was quite alone, the Black-Spirit appeared to her under the form of a bear, and said, 'Now I've hit it, finding thee alone! Give me an answer! I've given thee money enough! Why dost thou give that bag-of-bones an answer, and she promises thee no money? What is the worth of thy miserable life? Thou hast nothing but trouble from early in the morning till late at night—clearing out the stable, milking the cows, mowing, threshing! Only give me one answer, and thou shalt be rich all thy life, and need'st not worry thyself ever again! Only one answer, and I'll trouble thee no more, and that bag-of-bones, who only tells lies, and never gives thee anything, will come no more either. But if thou dost *not* answer me, then thou shalt see how I will plague thee!'

"From this time forth the Black-Spirit appeared under the threatening aspect of some abominable animal, as that of a bear, a serpent, or a crocodile. Now he promised her money; now he threatened her with torture. In her distress she many times held the Bible up towards him, upon which he would vanish.

"On the 21st August the spirit appeared to her in the form of a monster with his neck in the centre of his body. She was sitting upon a bench knitting. She fell into a swoon, only exclaiming, 'The Black One.' She lay unconscious several hours, and similar attacks followed each other throughout the course of the ensuing day. She struck at everything which approached her with the left arm and the left foot. Especially violent was the movement of the left side of her body when the Bible was brought near it.



“The parents sent for a clergyman and a doctor, this strange condition of their daughter being inexplicable to them. When the physician asked whether she had cramp, she replied, ‘No.’ ‘Art thou otherwise ill?’ ‘No.’ ‘What is then the matter?’ ‘The Black Spirit,’ she replied. ‘Where is he?’ ‘There,’ with this she struck her left side with her right hand.

“She was bled both with lancet and with leeches. She was in a magnetic, sleep-waking condition, and said to the physician, ‘This will do no good. I am not ill, you are giving yourselves needless trouble. No physician can help me.’ ‘Who, then, can help thee?’ was asked. Whereupon, she suddenly woke, and said joyfully, ‘I am helped!’ and when asked who had helped her, she replied, ‘The lady has helped me’ (the White Spirit).

“She now related that upon her fall, the Black Spirit in his horrible form had flown upon her, pressed her down, and endeavoured to throttle her, unless there and then she would answer him. That just as she was at the point of death, the Black Spirit still standing at her left, when it appeared to her that the two spirits contended together in an unknown tongue, speaking quite loud. At length the Black Spirit had given way to the White Spirit, and she came to herself. She knew nothing regarding the questions which been put to her while in this mysterious swoon.

“She now wept much, bewailing her strange condition, and especially because people said that she had attacks of gout. On the 23rd of August, whilst she was still unhappy regarding these things, the White Spirit appeared, and said, ‘God greet thee, Magdalene! Do not distress thyself. Thou art not ill. No one can understand this. However often thou mayest swoon, I will always protect thee, so that no harm shall happen to thee, and this shall be an example to unbelievers. People will say why does such a spirit come to a girl who knows nothing, who has learnt nothing, who is worth nothing? And the spirit was a nun, and nuns know nothing except about Maria and their little crosses. These people know that

it is written, "And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech, or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I am determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. And I was with you in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power; that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." Even when doctors and learned people come to see thee, they will not know all. Some of them will say, "she is crazed," others that "she is in a trance," others that "she is epileptic." But nothing of all this shall trouble thee, Magdalene, what thou hast, is none of these things, and upon the 5th of March next year thy sufferings will have an end.' Upon this, the spirit prayed the 112th Psalm, and vanished.

"From this time the girl's father made preparation to pull down his house and build up a new one, however strange his conduct might seem in the eyes of his neighbours.

"The White Spirit, appearing on another occasion, told Magdalene, in connection with many holy and comforting texts from Scripture, that soon the Black Spirit would gain full possession of her body, but that she should be consoled; for each time that this mysterious condition fell upon her, she, the White Spirit, would be there, and would conduct her soul into a place of safety, away from her body, possessed by the Black Spirit.

"From the 25th of August, her struggles with the Black Spirit became continually more violent, and he appeared to enter into her body and speak out of her mouth with his demoniac speech. The process was, from her account, as follows:—She would see, even when in the midst of her work, the figure of a man clothed in a monk's frock, formed, as it were, of black mist, the countenance she could never accurately describe. And this figure would approach her. Then she would hear him utter a few words, generally the following: 'Wilt thou still give me no answer? Take care, I shall plague

thee.' And as she steadfastly preserved silence, he would say, 'Now I will enter thy body in spite of thee.' Whereupon she would always feel him tread upon her left side, seize her with five cold fingers at the back of her neck, and with this seizure enter her. At this moment her consciousness appeared lost, even her individuality. She, Magdalene, no longer appeared to inhabit her body, but a bass voice spoke forth from her, not in her own character, but in that of the monk. The speeches uttered through her lips during these mysterious conditions of body were worthy of a demon.

"Magdalene lay during the whole time with her head sunk towards her left side, and her eyes firmly closed. If the eyelid were raised, the pupil would be discovered turned upwards. The left foot constantly moved up and down upon the ground throughout the attack, which frequently lasted four or five hours. The boards would be rubbed smooth by the friction of the bare foot, her shoes and stockings being removed, and occasionally blood would be discovered upon the sole, although not the slightest abrasure could be observed on the skin. The sole, as well as the whole foot, would remain cold as ice. Upon her awakening, she would feel nothing the matter with her foot, but would be able to walk a distance of many miles. Her right foot would remain warm. Her awakening was like that of a person out of a magnetic sleep. A struggle appeared to take place between the right and left side (between good and evil), the head would move itself from right to left until it fell upon the right side, at which movement the Black Spirit would depart out of her, and her own spirit return to her body. Upon awakening she would retain no recollection of what had occurred, nor of what the Spirit had spoken out of her lips. Usually it appeared to her that she had been to church, there having prayed and sung with the congregation. This was the fulfilment of the promise of the White Spirit to protect her soul whilst her body was inhabited by the Black Spirit. The Black Spirit, when with her, would answer to questions. Holy names out of the Bible—nay, the very word holy, the Spirit appeared unable to pronounce. A Bible held

near to the girl's body excited the greatest indignation of the Spirit; he would endeavour to spit upon it, but in vain, and his voice would sound like the hissing of a serpent. He would speak of God with a kind of terror, 'The worst of it,' he would say, 'is, that my master has also a master.' A wish, and even a hope, would at times gleam through his words, that he might perhaps be converted; and not so much his evil will appeared to withhold him from conversion, so much as the doubt in the possibility of his being pardoned and becoming happy.

"It was not surprising that physicians should regard the condition of the young girl as that produced by a natural sickness, considering the scepticism with which they regard even the scriptural accounts of demoniac possession."

#### DR. KERNER HIMSELF PRESCRIBES FOR THE GIRL.

"Neither did I myself in the least strengthen the parents of the girl in their belief in her demoniac possession," says Dr. Kerner, "when, at my request, after the condition had lasted five months, she was brought to my house, where she remained some weeks under my careful observation. I did not strengthen their belief, in order that thereby I might the more clearly investigate the case. I pronounced her sufferings, however, such as no ordinary medical means would suffice to relieve. I prescribed to the girl herself no other remedy beyond prayer and spare diet. The influence of magnetic passes, which I endeavoured a few times to make over her, was immediately neutralised by the demon himself, who made counter passes with the girl's hand. Thus mesmeric, and indeed every other mode of treatment, were unemployed by me, who recognised in her a demoniac-magnetic condition, and confided in the divination of the White Spirit, who foretold her recovery on the 5th of March. Thus believing, I allowed her, without any anxiety, to return again to her parent's house in Orlach, in precisely the same condition as that in which she had come to me. I had, however, thoroughly convinced myself, after long and careful observations, that there was not the least dissimulation, not the slightest willing exaggeration on the

part of the young girl in her attacks. I most earnestly advised the parents to make no exhibition of their daughter's condition; to keep her attacks as much as possible secret; to admit no strangers to witness them, nor yet to address questions to the demon; conditions which I myself, on account of the girl's health, had myself observed whilst she was with me. It was, however, owing to no negligence on the part of the girl's parents, to whom their daughter's condition was a great affliction, that these suggestions of mine were not followed, but owing to the curiosity of the outer world. Crowds of inquisitive people streamed to the otherwise unknown village of Orlach, to see and hear the miraculous girl in her paroxysms, which brought about this one good result, at all events, that many persons besides myself were convinced of the peculiarity of her condition. One called, amongst many uncalled witnesses, was Pastor Gerber, who saw Magdalene in her last attack, and printed his observations regarding her case in the *Dilaskalia*.

“On the 4th of March, at six o'clock in the morning, whilst the girl was in her chamber in her parents' house—preparations for the pulling down of which were already making—the White Spirit suddenly appeared to her. She presented so dazzlingly bright an appearance that Magdalene could not long gaze upon her. Her face and hands were covered with a glittering white veil. She wore a long glittering white robe, which fell around her in rich folds and concealed her feet. She said to the girl, ‘No human being can bring a soul into heaven, for that purpose did the Saviour appear and suffer in the world, but the earthly things which still cling to me and drag me downwards can be removed through thee, since the sins which weigh upon me I can confess to the world through thy lips. O let no one wait until the end, but confess all his sins before his departure from the earth.’ Having said this, she made through Magdalene's lips a confession of her sins and sorrows, the purport being that she had been seduced by a monk—the Black Spirit—who had been guilty of fearful crimes; had lived some years in sinful union with him, and

partially betraying his wickedness, had herself been murdered by him. Concluding her confession, she stretched forth her white hand towards the girl, who not daring to touch the hand itself, held out her pocket-handkerchief. She felt a pull at the handkerchief and saw it sparkle. The spirit thanked the girl for having obeyed her, and assured her that henceforth she was freed from earthly things. She then prayed—‘Jesus, receive us sinners,’ and Magdalene still heard her praying after she had ceased to behold her. Whilst the White Spirit stood before her, the girl saw always near her a black dog, which spit fire against the spirit, but which, however, did not seem to touch her. A large hole, as of the inside of a hand, was found on the handkerchief; above it five smaller ones, as of the thumb and fingers.\* There was no smell of burning about the holes, neither was any perceived by Magdalene when she saw the handkerchief sparkling. Almost helpless from terror, Magdalene was carried from her chamber into the house of a neighbour peasant—Bernhard Fischer, Grombach being anxious to accelerate the pulling down of his dwelling.

“Scarcely had Magdalene entered the neighbouring house, when the Black Spirit appeared to her. He now had a tuft, or tassel of white upon his head, whereas he had hitherto always appeared entirely black. He said, ‘Well, you see I’m here! Thou canst see something white now upon *me*.’ Having said this, he approached her, seized her with a cold hand in the back, of her neck, she lost consciousness, and he had entered her bodily frame. Her countenance, writes an eye-witness, was pale, and her eyes firmly closed. The pupils of the eyes were discovered turned upward and inward when

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\* Compare with this the burning touch of the hand of the ghost of Lord Tyrone on the wrist of Lady Beresford.—*Vide Appendix to Translation of Ennemoser’s History of Magic*, vol. ii. p. 367. Also: account given of the leaves of a Bible being burnt by touch of a Spirit’s hand at p. 248 of *Pneumatology*, by Jung Stilling, translated by Samuel Jackson. London: Longmans, 1834. These sparks of fire and burning of holes, will suggest the kinship, apparently, existing between the flaming bodies of Spirits and the flame of lightning and of the electric spark.

the lids were lifted. The whole eye appeared, also, to have sunk. The pulse beat as usual. The left side was perceptibly colder than the right, and the left foot moved incessantly. From Sunday night until Tuesday at noon, the girl took no food. Thus incessantly was she possessed by the spirit. At first the demon announced that he could not depart before half-past twelve o'clock on the following day (which took place). Then he said, 'Had I followed what is written in Peter, I should not now have been here: For even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when He was reviled, reviled not again: when He suffered, He threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously: who, in his own self, bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.'

"During the day an immense multitude assembled in Orlach to see the girl, and question the demon. According to the declaration of the questioners, he replied in a satisfactory manner, especially regarding castles, convents, and the anti-quinities of the neighbourhood. Several impertinent questions he put aside in jest, or with some witty reply. At night, when, according to the orders of the police, the press of staring people had diminished, the demon is said to have prayed, and observed with joy that he could speak the words, Jesus, the Bible, Heaven, and the Church; that he could pray, and hear the sound of church-bells. Had he only inclined himself, during the summer, to good, he said, that things would even have been better with him. Having made a full confession of his horrible crimes, he observed, 'My belief was, that it was with man after his death, even as with the beast when he is slain, that where the tree falls, there it lies. But—but it is—quite different—there comes the reckoning after death.' On the following day the demon expressed himself with perfect

correctness regarding the condition of the former Monastery of Krailsheim. He then once more appeared to fall into doubt regarding the mercy which would be vouchsafed him when he quitted the old spot and the girl. 'This evening,' he said, 'I must appear for the second time before the judgment-seat with the other one,' meaning the White Spirit. It was half-past eleven in the morning when the workmen came upon the last remains of a piece of the wall which formed the corner of the house, and which was of an entirely different construction to the rest of the building. It was evidently a piece of very ancient masonry. At the very moment when these last remains were pulled down, although this took place where it was invisible to Magdalene, with a movement of her head towards the right side, three times repeated, she suddenly opened her eyes. The demon had departed, and she had returned to her normal condition. Pastor Gerber thus describes, as an eye-witness, what occurred the moment after the demolition of the piece of old masonry. 'At this moment, turning her head towards the right, she opened her eyes, which were clear, and filled with an expression of astonishment upon beholding the number of persons who surrounded and gazed at her. In a moment, it occurred to her what had happened. She covered her face with her hands, as if to conceal her confusion, began to weep, rose up, staggering like a person still overpowered with heavy sleep, and went out. I looked at my watch, it was just half-past eleven. Never shall I forget the astonishing character of this spectacle. Never the astounding transformation from the disfigured, demoniac countenance of—what shall I say?—the sick girl, to the purely human, cheerful countenance of the newly-awakened one; from the hollow, repellant voice of the evil spirit, to the accustomed sounds of the maiden's voice; from the partially paralyzed, partially restless possessed body, to that of the beautiful, healthful young form, which, as if by a stroke of magic, stood before us. Every one rejoiced, every one congratulated the parents and the girl herself upon this release: for these good people fully believed that the Black Spirit had



now appeared for the last time. The father, after this, showed me the burnt handkerchief which his daughter had held in her hand when the White Spirit had taken her departure. It was evident that the holes in it had been produced by fire."

"Upon subsequent removal of the rubbish, a well-like hole was discovered, about twenty feet deep and ten feet wide. Within this, as also amongst the rubbish of the house, were discovered the brown remains of human bones, some of them bones of children (doubtless the remains of the victims of the monk's wickedness, and to whose murders he had fully confessed). Magdalene from henceforth remained in health, nor was ever again troubled by apparitions."

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In conclusion, the translator of this history would suggest certain inferences with which her mind has been startled whilst studying the above romantic, and other less romantic histories of demoniac possession, not only recorded in the pages of books, but on the page of real, every-day life.

Wherefore is it, that almost invariably, it is upon individuals of a religious, unworldly, guileless, and innocent nature, that this infestation of demons falls, usually upon youths, upon young girls, women, and even upon little children?

Wherefore is it, that neither crime, nor evil disposition, nor dissolute habits of life appear to exist as the attracting causes of the demoniac presence?

Wherefore is it, that the bodies thus ruthlessly tormented and racked, are singularly robust, unpre-disposed to disease, and frequently endowed, not only with health and strength, but with remarkable beauty? Thus, that the individuals afflicted by demoniac possession, are in their spiritual and physical natures apparently opposed to such affliction.

Wherefore is it, that the demons, as if impelled by an inscrutable doom, are ever seeking, not only to incarnate themselves in these pure, fleshly tabernacles, so unwillingly yielded

up by their rightful inmates, to the usurpation of demoniac uncleanness, but when once admitted into these dwellings, clean "swept and garnished," appear still ever impelled by their inscrutable doom, to make through innocent, borrowed lips, confession of monstrous crimes committed in far-off days, together with descriptions of their present purgatorial torments?

Wherefore is it, that after this confession has been wrung from the unclean self-accusers, through the pressure of this same inscrutable doom, they announce themselves as partially loosed from the weight of the anguish of recollection, from the weight of those mysterious chains which still bind them down to the scene of former crime, hinting in strange words of an approaching reappearance before the judgment-seat of God?

Wherefore is it, that another class of disembodied spirits, less debased than the tormentors, yet nevertheless earth-bound and in intimate connection with their fate; at once victims, fellow-sufferers, and instigators to higher life, appear upon the scene as protectors of the suffering, victimised human beings, whose robust, clean bodies appear to have been granted for a time as the mysterious combat-ground for a more than mortal conflict?

Wherefore is it, that if the body of the "possessed" be subjected to such violent ill-usage, the soul belonging to that body should be watched over, consoled, and kept from contact with impurity, in a manner so entirely superhuman?

Assuredly in all these facts the mind of an intelligent spectator must recognize a marvellous coherence of action, tending towards some sublime end, and the thrilling suggestion must occur, becoming ever stronger and clearer, that possibly the key to the solution of the direful mystery of possession, is nothing less than a new revelation of a truth, ancient as the most ancient mythology, and the central fact of the Christian Dispensation—*salvation wrought for the sinful, through sinless-suffering*. That, possibly, whilst witnessing the paroxysms of a "Maid of Orlach," the spectator has beheld the acts of an unutterably affecting "Divine Drama," planned by the Poet

of Poets, where the actors are disembodied spirits, where the stage is the fleshly body of humanity, and where the final act will be—progression of all the actors towards God—yes, progression—slow though it may be—even of the blackest Demons of the lowest hells.

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In 1856 appeared Dr. Kerner's last literary production, namely—

### SOME RESEARCHES

*After Memorials of Mesmer in the Place of his Birth,  
Meersburg, upon Lake Constance.\**

#### I.

EXPERIENCES OF MESMER IN HUNGARY, TOGETHER WITH THE  
TRANSLATION OF ONE OF THE DOCUMENTS DISCOVERED.

Near the ever-open entrance to the peaceful graveyard of Meersburg (writes Dr. Kerner, in 1856), which overlooks the restless waves of the broad Lake of Constance, is the grave of Franz Anton Mesmer, the discoverer of Animal Magnetism. With a much-moved heart, often did I, last summer, stand before this grave, which truly to me appeared the grave of a martyr. I was at that time so fortunate as to be sojourning at the old Meersburg (Castle of the Lake), the property and abode of that remarkable and amiable man, Herr von Lassberg, who has preserved into his old age his intellectual freshness and love of nature.

No protecting hand appears to tend the grave of Mesmer, though the remains of a monument raised to him in 1815 by

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\* Franz Anton Mesmer, aus Schwaben, Entdecker des Thierischen Magnetismus. Erinnerungen an denselben nebst Nachrichten von den letzten Jahren seines Lebens zu Meersburg an Bodensee von Dr. Justinus Kerner. Frankfurt am Main, Literarischen Anstalt. J. Rütten. 1856.

The volume contains 212 pages, full of matter of high importance to the student of Psychology, together with correspondence of Mesmer in connection with his discoveries.

admirers of his discovery from Berlin are still to be seen. This monument must have been thus injured either through malice or superstition.

Ascertaining from Herr von Lassberg that heirs and distant relatives of Mesmer were still to be met with at Meersburg, I sought amongst them for writings of Mesmer, and whatsoever else might be discovered which appeared of interest, with reference to his life.

Amongst numerous documents which I thus discovered, of greater or less importance—most of them in Mesmer's own handwriting—is a written report, containing the history of a blind young lady, named Paradis, and resident at Vienna—a history which gave rise, most unjustly, to many calumnies regarding Mesmer. This report appears to have been drawn up by the father of Madlle. Paradis, and to this remarkable document we shall shortly return.

What also greatly rejoiced me was, besides these papers, to procure in the same manner a portrait of Mesmer, painted in oil, and of the size of life. It represents this extraordinary man as he appeared in his seventy-sixth year, in 1810. The picture is extremely well preserved, and conveys the impression of a man possessed of both physical and intellectual strength, of great firmness of will, and gravity combined with benevolence. Upon the back of the picture is written, “Franz Anton Mesmer, *docteur en médecine, âgé 76 ans, auteur du Magnétisme Animal. 1810.*” The name of the painter has also been given, but is no longer legible. The picture is evidently the work of a Frenchman.

In an *Aufenthalts Karte* (license of residence granted by the police) which Mesmer received whilst in Paris, and which was also amongst the documents, and signed by his own hand, is the following description of his person:—“Age, 64; height, 1 *mètre 76 centimètres*; hair and eyebrows, brown; eyes, ditto chin, double; countenance, full; forehead, high; nose and mouth, medium.”

Herr von Lassberg had been personally acquainted with Mesmer, and pronounced this portrait—until then unknown

to him—extremely characteristic. After Mesmer's death, it had been destined for Mesmer's dearest friend, Dr. Hirzel, and had been despatched to him, but he in the meantime dying, it was returned to Mesmer's relatives. This portrait, in many particulars, is very unlike similar ones engraved upon copper, and which I also obtained from Mesmer's heirs, and one of which is prefixed to Mesmer's works, published by Wolfart. These engravings, according to the opinion of those who knew Mesmer personally, are very unlike him, and are, compared with this oil portrait, from which neither of them is engraved, monstrosities.

A few days prior to Herr von Lassberg becoming acquainted with this picture, he had exhibited his extensive cameo collection to me, and had presented me with a cameo as a *souvenir*, upon which was engraved a head of Plato. "This cameo" said he, "was brought to me by a Jew more than twenty years ago; he had broken it out of a ring which he had obtained I know not whence. The ring itself he had sold to a goldsmith, but to me he brought the cameo, knowing that I should pay him for it more highly than the goldsmith would do. You must not, however, consider it of great value, for it is cut by no ancient Greek artist; it is apparently of Italian workmanship." I willingly received this *souvenir* from its noble giver. Greatly, however, were we surprised when, made aware of the fact by my daughter, we recognised a ring upon the hand in Mesmer's portrait bearing the identical cameo which Herr von Lassberg had presented to me a few days previously. "That is the very cameo which I gave to you!" exclaimed Herr von Lassberg. "Then truly, it will be doubly valuable!" I returned. In order more fully to convince myself that Mesmer had possessed such a cameo, I repaired once more to his heirs, where I had already turned over the inventory of his possessions, and again carefully went through its contents; when under the head of "Gold," I read this item, "A gold ring with an antique cameo—Plato." An aged relative of Mesmer, also informed me, that her cousin, a Forest-ranger, had received this ring by lot, and had at once turned it into money. Thus came

this gem from the wonder-working hand of Mesmer to Herr von Lassberg, and from him to me.

With much propriety, Wolfart placed a sentence from Plato upon the title-page of Mesmer's works, and it was with reason that Mesmer, through the wearing of this ring, dedicated his hand to Plato. The belief, labours, and doctrine of Mesmer, even as the doctrine and belief of Plato, proceeded rather from the internal consciousness and innate life and knowledge of Nature, than from the struggles of the brain-life and book-knowledge. Mesmer himself has said, in his works published by Professor Wolfart, "I declare, at the beginning, that this work, with regard to which I have taken no one's opinion but my own, appears without any scientific equipment, and has alone originated out of my own experience and observations. I consider it, therefore, free from those prejudices and errors which are introduced by an artificial education. I have kept my labours free from that species of sophistry and pedantry; it remains for posterity to measure and adorn the pathway which I have thrown open."

When Herr von Lassberg beheld me thus enriched with so many of Mesmer's possessions, he said to me, "Now come once more with me into my vaults." The handsome veteran, in his eighty-fifth year, with his long white hair and long white beard, resembling a vision of the past ages of romance, preceded me, with a bunch of keys in his hand, as on many a previous occasion, along the galleries of his old castle of Meersburg, hung with the antlers of stags, and the horns of the mountain-goat. The oldest tower of this castle had been built by King Dagobert, and there is still shown a window from whence Conradin of Swabia gazed with delight upon the landscape when about to set forth on his momentous journey to Italy. Here Herr von Lassberg conducted me into the vaults, where are contained the most remarkable treasures, documents connected with the old German literature, and especially with the poetry of the middle ages, the most ancient codex of the *Nibelungenlied*, autographs of the *Meister* and *Minnesängers* (Troubadours), and many a rare volume and priceless manu-

script carefully arranged in rows of cabinets. Above these cabinets stand ancient drinking cups and jugs, urns, arms, and armorial bearings.

Here the noble old man opened a drawer, in which he preserved deeds and documents belonging to the last century, and said, "As you have come into possession of so much that belonged to, and was beloved by good old Mesmer, I am inclined to believe that it is his will that you should also possess his Doctor's diploma, and," added he, "I believe that here in Swabia it could fall into no other hands so deserving. I came into possession of it about twenty years ago in the same manner that I became possessed of the cameo."

Thus did I receive Mesmer's doctor's diploma, which, together with his portrait, his cameo once more set in a ring, and his manuscripts, I have carefully deposited in the Magnetic Institution, conducted by my son, in Stuttgart.

## II.

### SOMETHING ABOUT MESMER'S BIRTH-PLACE AND CHILDHOOD.

In the diploma, Mesmer is said to have been born at Meersburg, whilst Wolfart speaks of Weiler, near Stein, upon the Rhine, not far from Constance, as his birth-place. Both these statements are erroneous. Through the kindness of Herr von Lassberg, I have received a copy of an entry in the parish register of births at Iznang, at which place Mesmer was born, which is as follows:—"In the year 1734, on the 23rd of May, in Iznang, under the jurisdiction of the parish of Weiler, of the bailiwick of Rudolfzell, was born, and upon the same day baptized, Franciscus Antonius Mesmer, legitimate son of Antonius Mesmer and of Maria Ursula Michlin, of Iznang. The godparents were J. George Koller and Maria Bügelen.—Weiler, the 23rd of May, 1734.—Leonhardus Hoch."

His infancy and boyhood were passed by Mesmer amidst the glorious scenery of the Lake of Constance. Upon the banks of the Rhine and of the lake, in the fields and woods, he was left to wander about and play by himself. His father was a hunts-

man in the employment of the Bishop of Constance. The child Mesmer exhibited an especial affection for water, for living brooks and streams, which he always followed up to their springs, and thoroughly loved to investigate upon their courses. During Professor Wolfart's last visit to Mesmer, the aged man of wonders, referred to this, his youthful inclination, and he related how in his eighth year, when attending school, and his way lay along the banks of the Rhine, his desire to follow up the course of the streams which flowed into that great river, frequently caused him to neglect his school duties. In all places where waters flowed, he loved also to seek for stones and shells; and wind, storm, rain, hail, and snow had early attracted the boy's attention and become subjects for reflection to him, and he would, in order to study their nature, rush forth into their midst with joy.

Through this life, in the bosom of free nature, he appears even whilst still a child to have drawn towards himself a natural power unpossessed by the dwellers by the fire-side, a power which appears to delight to flow into those who maintain a many-sided intercourse and struggle with nature; as, for instance, in the case of sailors, hunters, shepherds, mountaineers, and tillers of the soil. In such persons is discovered the development of a special sense and of a special power which in his latter life continued to develop itself in Mesmer, and which he, as so-called Magnetism, first recognised, and as a means of healing carefully examined and made known; a power which is not inherent in all men, but markedly is not so in men of vitrified understanding and whose knowledge is alone that of the schools.

That this peculiar power dwelt within him, Mesmer observed in later years, especially through the fact, that whenever he was present whilst a person was being bled with a lancet, the blood flowing from the vein, as he approached or retired, changed its course in a marked manner. This he found by experiments to be invariably the case. I myself heard from an old man at Meersburg who had known him personally, that if Mesmer unintentionally with the palm of his hand stroked a



person over his face, even if he made this "pass" with his hand at some distance from the individual, peculiar sensations would be experienced by that person.

### III.

#### MESMER'S FIRST PRACTICAL CAREER AS A PHYSICIAN, TOGETHER WITH STRANGE EXPERIENCES IN HUNGARY.

His career as a physician commenced in Vienna. There he married a widow, who had one son, and who probably was an inhabitant of Vienna. Her name I never could discover, even the relatives of Mesmer residing at Meersburg were unacquainted with it. Probably she was possessed of property, as Mesmer owned a large house in Vienna, not otherwise accounted for. His marriage, however, appears to have been no source of comfort to him, as in a letter to a friend he refers to the unintellectual character of his wife, and also to her extravagance. He separated from her, and she died many years before him.

During his fifteen years' medical practice in Vienna he came upon his new art of healing through observing the origin, the form, and the career of diseases, in connection with the great changes in our solar system and the universe; in short, in connection with what he termed Universal Magnetism. He sought for this magnetism originally in electricity and subsequently in mineral magnetism. He made use of the magnet for healing at first in 1772, led to this discovery by the astronomer, Father Hel; using the magnet, however, simply as a conductor from his own organism through his hands; and by this means brought forth remarkable cures. A year subsequently, experience showed him that without touching the magnet, through his hands alone, he could operate much more powerfully upon the human organism, and thus originated through him the discovery of Animal Magnetism, which he developed into a science.

It was after this manner that Mesmer reasoned:—"There must exist a power which permeates the universe, and binds

together all the bodies upon earth, and it must be possible for man to bring this influence under his command." This power he first sought for in the magnet; he pondered upon it with regard to man, and immediately applied it to the cure of diseases. The remarkable operations which were produced, and the cure of the sick, would, in another investigator, have brought him to an end of his experiments. Mesmer, however, went forward. Ever accompanied by the idea of the primal power which must permeate the universe, and is ever active within it, the thought occurred to him that the influence must exist yet more powerfully in man himself than in the magnet; since, he argued, if the magnet communicates to the iron the same polarity which causes itself to be a magnet, an organised body must be able to produce similar conditions in another body. He thus perceived that he could not ascribe alone to the magnet, which he held in his hands, the effects which he had observed produced, since he also must in his turn influence the magnet. Upon this he cast aside his magnet, and with his hands alone, brought forth similar and unadulterated effects.

Herr Seyfert gives us a simple and truthful account of Mesmer's operations at the period when he assisted his own magnetic power by the use of the magnets and electricity. This gentleman's narrative leads us into Hungary, into the castle of a Baron whither Mesmer had been sent for to exercise his curative powers; and this narration proves to us that it may truly be said of Mesmer, "he performed more than he even promised."\* The narrator commences his story by observing that he was himself in the household of Baron Hareczky de Horka, and of his wife, a born Countess, Nyary de Bedegh, at Rohow, in Hungary, at the time when Mesmer's discovery and experiments, not only had excited much attention at Vienna, but when the fame of them had extended into Hungary. He himself appears—like most learned men—to

\* Vide p. 18 — "*Frau Anton Mesmer. Erinnerungen von Dr. Justinus Kerner.*" J. Rütten, Frankfort-am-Main. 1856.

have considered the whole mere *charlatanism*. However, in the end he was forced into the conviction that he was mistaken, and had done Mesmer a great injustice. The affair was as follows:—

“The Baron, who was still considerably under thirty years of age, frequently experienced spasms in the throat which threatened to choke him. Every remedy which he used was useless. He therefore had a medical consultation held in Vienna with regard to his sufferings, the result of which was the expression of an opinion already entertained by his physician Ungerhoffer, namely, that if his spasms were not alone purely of nervous origin, as it appeared to them, he would not die from their effect, and that the spasms, as years went on, would cease. As his symptoms still remained the same, he again had a medical consultation held in Vienna, and amongst the doctors were Van Swieten and Van Haen. The conclusion arrived at was precisely the same as upon the former occasion; but in order to satisfy the Baron a tea was prescribed, for the preparation of which, each physician present was to name a herb. This was done. When Van Swieten was alone with the patient, however, he drily observed that the tea could do him no good; nothing would be of service but time. Dissatisfied with this opinion, the Baron applied to Van Haen, who spoke much in the same strain; the Baron appearing little satisfied, Van Haen advised him—since the doctors apparently could discover no remedy for his complaint—to be magnetised by Mesmer, although Van Haen himself had little belief in the Wonder-worker. The Baron upon this, lost no time in communicating with Mesmer, who was invited to Rohow. These particulars I received from the Baron’s own lips; of the further events I was myself principally a witness.

“In the year 1775, one evening, in the most beautiful season of the year, Dr. Mesmer arrived at Rohow without my being aware of his arrival. No sooner did I learn that he was in the castle than I hastened to see and welcome this man of wonders. Upon my entrance into the room I found the Baron and Dr. Mesmer seated together upon the sofa. The conver-

sation lasted a considerable time, and turned upon a variety of topics. At length Mesmer quite unexpectedly exclaimed, 'Herr Baron, have you felt nothing?' 'No, nothing,' was the reply. 'Therefore,' replied Mesmer, 'your illness is simple imagination.'

"The following morning the barber from Senitz told me that whilst he had shaved Mesmer, Mesmer had questioned him regarding the Baron's spasms; and the barber being unable to give him any information, Mesmer had exclaimed, 'I maintain my belief; the Baron is only suffering in his imagination!' I must confess that these inquiries of Mesmer addressed to the barber, made me still more distrustful of him than ever; although I am equally obliged to confess that his repeated declaration of belief in the power of the Baron's imagination, was in his favour.

"For some time Mesmer was occupied in putting into order his needful magnetic apparatus, amongst which I observed simply variously shaped artificial magnets, and an electrical machine, which had been broken upon the journey and thereby rendered useless. I therefore lent him mine, which, although smaller and simpler of construction, nevertheless proved all that was necessary.

"The news of Mesmer's presence spread like lightning through the neighbourhood, and from all sides streamed towards the castle crowds, amongst whom were the noble and the learned. The numbers of sick who announced their presence at the castle—where a special room was prepared for them—daily increased.

"Amongst those who sought help from Mesmer, was a considerable proportion who, after careful examination, were regarded by him as suitable for the magnetic treatment: a much smaller number, not being nervously affected patients, he recommended to other doctors, or himself wrote prescriptions for them, did they desire it, without however accepting the readily offered fees.

"Owing to my suspicions of Mesmer, increased by the barber's words for some time, except when my duties required

me elsewhere, I scarcely quitted Mesmer's side. With suspicious eyes I watched not alone himself, but the behaviour and words both of the patients and of the domestics of the castle.

“ At first no remarkable effects were produced either by the movements of his hands or by the magnets and electricity. The very slight effects produced upon the sick people were attributed both by myself and the other spectators to the excited imaginations of the patients. And we still maintained this pre-conceived opinion, when, through Mesmer's continued exertions and the continued magnetic influence, certain of the doubting spectators were obliged to withdraw themselves through experiencing sensations of discomfort. In our eyes, all still remained either imagination or deception, or both combined. Thus did we struggle against the visible truth which pressed upon us! Illogically, we only calculated upon one possible means of deception, although under the circumstances this very deception must have been an impossibility, since Mesmer had previously seen not one of the sick persons, and the greater number had been confirmed invalids long before his arrival: add to which, the greater part of the sufferers were far too thoroughly unsophisticated children of nature to have been made use of in any—and especially in so artistically-managed a piece of deception as Mesmer's scheme must have been—had he been, in fact, carrying on any scheme of deception. Besides which, the greater number spoke and understood no other language than Slavonian; between these and Mesmer I acted the part of a very observant and cunning interpreter, frequently so clothing his German questions in Slavonian, or adding somewhat thereto, that he received ‘ No ’ when he expected ‘ Yes, ’ and was thus thrown into much perplexity by the appearance or actions of the persons addressed, until I, in German, explained what had been said. Whenever Mesmer chanced to be absent, I made use of my opportunity to question the magnetised patients, but never elicited any single admission which could in the slightest strengthen my suspicions; in fact, at length I was compelled to become suspicious of my own suspicions.

“Mesmer had not long been amongst us, busied with his magnets, before various members of the household began to complain of peculiar sensations of disease which they never previously had felt. Mesmer, perceiving that although I was the person most constantly with him, yet that I complained of nothing, observed that I must be the most healthy person in the castle. Nevertheless his magnetism, within the first four or five days, must have influenced me. The Baron—a passionate lover of music, and himself a performer on the violin—was accustomed each day to arrange a little concert, and, when visitors were at the castle, even more frequently. Upon such occasions I was accustomed to play the *alto-violin*. During Mesmer’s visits these concerts usually took place after dinner, and Mesmer would play his accompaniment upon the violoncello; and now something curious would occur, as, for instance, throughout the first part of a symphony I would continue to play as usual, but during the second part would become, contrary to my usual custom, each time so sleepy that I would drop asleep in the midst of my playing, through my incorrect accompaniment would disturb the music, and be forced to lay aside my instrument. After some time, my desire for sleep during these concerts began to abate, until at length I was able to play without interruption from beginning to end. When at length I was completely cured of my suspicion regarding Mesmer, and after I observed that he frequently operated upon the sick by his music when they were removed from him by the distance of two chambers, the doors of which were locked, the idea occurred to me that he might still more easily have brought this slumber over me by his playing upon the violoncello whilst I sat next to him.

“Mesmer himself was of opinion that upon occasions when people fall suddenly unwell during the performance of music, as is not unfrequently the case, both in the church and in the opera-house, some highly magnetic singer or musician is present, who, through his singing, or the vibrations of his instrument, circulates his magnetic atmosphere around him, and which thus acts upon the most nervously organised per-

sons present. It will not be superfluous to mention here the following circumstance:—It was the custom for two horn-players, belonging to the Baron's household, to perform upon their horns at uncertain times on a balcony of the castle. This music, it seems, was listened to by the sick people with pleasure. Upon one occasion, during the performance of various pieces of music by the horns, suddenly several of the sick people began to grumble, some even to curse, whilst others sighed and were seized with convulsive attacks. In order to inquire into the cause of this unexpected change, I passed out of the hall through two rooms, the doors of which were closed, when I came upon Mesmer, who was holding with his right hand the outermost rim of the mouth of one of the horns whilst it was being played. I related to him that the sick people were very uneasy; he smiled, but still continued to hold the horn firmly whilst the next piece of music was being performed. Then he let go of the horn, taking hold once more of it, however, in the same place, only with his left hand. At length he left entire hold of the instrument with the words 'Now, or soon, the sick folks will be quiet.' Immediately I returned to the hall, where the sick soon recovered themselves.

"The sister of a certain Herr Kolowratek—to whom reference will shortly be made—dwelt in the castle with her brother. She was an excellent singer. For the entertainment of the aristocratic visitors this young person was accustomed to sing, her brother upon his violin and other musicians giving a gentle accompaniment to her voice. In the hall, where this music was but feebly heard, the same phenomena occurred with the sick people as during the music of the horns. Initiated into the mystery by the former occurrence, I now carefully observed the musicians. Mesmer did nothing more than hold the right hand of the singer. This time I purposely said nothing to Mesmer about his patients. The music proceeded uninterruptedly. In the midst of an aria the singer became hoarse, and at length complained of a pain in her throat, which prevented her from continuing to sing. Mesmer

left hold of her hand and pointed, if I mistake not, with the finger of his left hand at the distance of a few inches from her throat. The pain had soon vanished and she was able to continue her singing. Perceiving that this was all that Mesmer did, I left the room and found that the people were quiet in the hall.

“Not less powerful was the projection of the magnetism by means of a mirror. Mesmer was once standing in an ante-room, surrounded by various guests and members of the family-circle, and conversing with them. It is true that the door of the hall was open, but we were all of us placed in such a position that neither could we see one of the patients, nor yet one of the patients see us. Suddenly and without premeditation Mesmer pointed with the finger of his right hand towards the reflection of the back of one of his magnetised patients, which was to be seen in a mirror hanging in the hall, where the patient himself could not observe Mesmer’s movements. Nevertheless, immediately the man was seized with convulsive movements, and the others who were in connection with him, though holding each other’s hands, were each one affected according to his or her nature, and thus remained until Mesmer, the to them invisible cause of their disturbance, directed the finger of his left hand towards the mirror. The same character of experiments was frequently repeated.

“But to return to Mesmer’s curative operations on the sick. There was a Hungarian resident at Rohow, who had lost, through frost and cold, the use of his right hand, and I do not know whether it was not the use of his left hand also. Mesmer ordered him to sit in a chair, and both during the forenoon and the afternoon manipulated him repeatedly, placed a magnet underneath his feet, and ordered him to join a circle of magnetised patients who took hold of him by the right and left hands. Already upon the first day, by sunset, the person in my presence was enabled to raise his right hand nearly to the height of his forehead; the second day he progressed, and on either the third or fourth was able—not how-



ever without some exertion—to remove and replace his hat. Mesmer throughout the time of his visit industriously magnetised him, and with such good effect that he daily pronounced himself better. After Mesmer's departure, he is said very shortly to have entirely recovered; but for this fact I will not answer, having had no intercourse with this man either before or after the period of Mesmer's sojourn at the castle.

“There was a youngish Jew who came from the little market-town of Sobotischt, a short German mile from Rohow, who both from his own account and that of various Christians of Sobotischt, had long suffered from a disease of the chest, and was in fact so weak as to have been brought to the castle in a carriage. Mesmer having inquired after the seat of the complaint, pointed with his finger towards this man's chest, standing at some little distance, when within a very short time the sick Jew, after a strong convulsion, in the presence of many witnesses, vomited a considerable quantity of matter. I myself was not present at the moment of this event's occurrence, but entering the hall shortly afterward, was told of it secretly by an acquaintance. To convince myself of its truth, I questioned the Jew who described what I had already heard. Various were the singular experiments which I tried upon this man, proving his extreme susceptibility to Mesmer's influence. The following year this Jew recognised me in the street at Sobotischt, hastily approached me, and inquired with much cordiality after Mesmer. He begged me when again I should see Dr. Mesmer, to thank him in his name, most sincerely, for the help which he had given him, for—to use his own expression—‘he had taken nothing, and yet now was always fresh, lively, and healthy as a fish.’

“A peasant from a neighbouring village complained that he suffered for a considerable time from an induration in the region of the stomach, which occasioned him great inconvenience as well as considerable pain. The peasant's account of his complaint I interpreted to Mesmer in words, as unscientific as those which he had employed. Mesmer examined the tumour, and then ordered the peasant to re-adjust his clothes,

and pointed, as was his custom from time to time, with his finger towards the affected part. He treated the peasant so far in a manner different to his other magnetic patients, that he placed him quite separated from them, upon a chair, and gave him a large square wine bottle filled with water to hold carefully upon his stomach. This bottle Mesmer had previously held in his own hands in order to magnetise its contents. The peasant was obedient, and began to experience—although not immediately—relief from his sufferings, which relief, according to his declaration, increased daily. Nothing especially curious in relation to this man's case did I observe, until Mesmer one day, whilst in the ante-room, the door of which was shut, charged the electrifying machine. Suddenly the peasant let fly the coarsest Selavonian oaths against Mesmer. I questioned him why he allowed himself to be thus carried away, when the man excused himself by saying, that he was experiencing such prickings as could only come from "that German man or the devil." Smiling at the peasant's simplicity, I entered the ante-chamber where I found that Mesmer, in the presence of various spectators, was attracting the sparks out of the electrical machine by the knuckles of his hand, at each repetition of the experiment the peasant sighing and compressing his teeth together, as I could both hear and see, standing as I did with one foot within the ante-chamber, the other within the hall.

"I observed the same thing happen to the peasant whenever Mesmer spread the magnetic influence around him by means of the mirror or by sound, either directly or indirectly. Spite of everything, the peasant held out bravely till the termination of Mesmer's visit at the castle. Entirely cured he did not return to his home; neither had I the opportunity of learning what subsequently befell him; nevertheless he gave a decided proof that spite of the hardened coarseness of his nature, he was not uninfluenced by magnetism, and this is sufficient to prove, and bring to light, the real existence of Animal-magnetism; since that which has no existence can have no influence.

“And now with reference to Baron Harezky himself. It is easy to suppose that Mesmer used every means to render the Baron susceptible to the influence of magnetism, he being the sole object of Mesmer's visit to Rohow. During the first five days all his magnetism, even assisted by electricity and magnets, was entirely without effect, so that the Baron observed several times to us that it must naturally trouble him no little, to find so many persons susceptible to the influence, and still that he himself should experience nothing. On the evening of the fifth day he said the same to Mesmer, who replied, ‘From this very circumstance you must perceive that you are not nervously diseased.’ On the sixth evening, for the first time, did Mesmer give him a little hope, when feeling his pulse, as he was accustomed to do whilst magnetising him, he observed, ‘Patience! you shall soon feel something assuredly!’ Nevertheless, during the following day, Mesmer's prophecy appeared likely to remain unfulfilled. Late in the evening, in the presence of various persons of the household, he endeavoured to fortify the mind of the Countess to bear the occurrences of the morrow, which was to be a day of so much anxiety for her. She appeared, however, not any longer to rely much upon Mesmer's words.

“Towards eight o'clock on the morrow, the chamber-maid came running to me, saying that I must leave everything, and go straight to the Countess, for that the Baron was very ill. I was just near the door of her sitting-room, when forth rushed the *Büchsenspanner* (Chasseur), a fine-looking strong man. He was pale as death, and swore frightfully at Mesmer, who, he told me, wanted to kill him, as well as the Baron. In the room I found the Countess running up and down, wringing her hands, and exclaiming when she saw me, ‘Ah, that cursed Mesmer will send my husband to the grave!’ She then bade me write, in all haste, a note to Dr. Ungerhoffer, saying that he should come as speedily as possible to see the Baron, who was in great danger; but before I wrote I had better witness the frightful scene myself. Much as I was shocked, I could not preserve myself from laughing, so

unexpected and extraordinary a spectacle did both magnetiser and magnetised present. Mesmer sat at the right side of the bed upon a chair, with his left arm turned towards the bed; he wore a grey gown, trimmed with gold-lace, and upon one leg a white silk stocking; his other foot, naked, was placed in a wooden wash-tub, about two feet in diameter, and filled with water. Whether the water was hot or cold, or whether it contained magnets, I did not observe. By the side of this tub sat the violinist Kolowratek, with his face turned towards the bed, from which the *Büchsenspanner*—suddenly feeling himself unwell—had removed. Kolowratek was completely dressed, but held in his hand a cane walking-stick, which was placed with its iron-sheathed tip in the tub of water. This cane he held with his right hand, and rubbed incessantly from the top downwards. Probably another person might have regarded the whole of these preparations as the jugglery of a *charlatan*, but I do not do so, being aware that friction and water are powerful agents in producing electricity. Both these personages were silent. It was only the Baron who spoke, whilst he lay in bed covered alone with his fur coat made of wolves' skins.

“He was suffering from cold, and yet spoke in a delirious manner, like a sick man in a fever. On account of writing the letter to Dr. Ungerhoffer, I was not able to remain long in the room; Mesmer, however, observed to me that I might write to the doctor that he need only bring with him two doses of *cremor tartari*, as the Baron was certain to be up and about before he arrived. My letter having been written, our hussar galloped with it to Holitsch, a little town distant about two German miles. He was followed by a coach with four horses. Curiosity led me again to the chamber of the sick man. Everything there remained unchanged. There was no end to the delirious talk, the curses, the lamentations, and whimperings of the poor Baron. Frequently he besought us to shoot him dead outright. We none of us were in a comfortable state of mind. Mesmer alone appeared grave and thoughtful. When the crisis of the disease appeared to Mes-

mer to have reached a sufficient height, he left hold of the Baron's hand, and in place of his hand, caught hold of him by the foot, when the violence of the paroxysms abated. We imagined that the whole was over, when suddenly Mesmer seized the Baron by his hand once more, and the paroxysms returned. For some time he thus exchanged his hold upon the Baron with the results ever the same in their alternation. The Countess, filled with distress, had meanwhile entered the chamber several times, reproaching Mesmer very severely. He only replied calmly, 'Did I not, last evening, tell you that you must not let yourself be alarmed by the severe attacks which the Baron would have this morning? But you shall speedily see him well again!' Mesmer, having continued his alternate magnetism for some time, until he perceived that the Baron had received sufficient of its influence, then desisted. He told the Baron to rise and be dressed, and, when his toilet was completed, led him into the presence of the Countess, who was greatly delighted once more to behold her husband, apparently, in his usual health. Mesmer meanwhile entered the hall to attend there to his patients: and I followed him. Whilst he was busied magnetising, various aristocratic guests had presented themselves to the Baron and Countess. Mesmer, being a stranger to several of these personages, was requested to make his appearance amongst them. I followed Mesmer as if I had been his shadow. The Baron, about whose mouth and cheeks a sort of blister-eruption had formed itself, began, according to his custom, to play various lively tunes upon his violin, at the same time dancing about merrily. Towards twelve o'clock, the earnestly-expected Dr. Ungerhoffler entered the room. His surprise was not little when he perceived the Baron—whom he imagined he should find dangerously ill—thus gaily occupied. The occurrence of the few previous hours was related to him. A struggle was perceived going on in his mind, between earnest consideration and doubt. He shook his head, felt the pulse of the Baron, and said to Mesmer, 'We must not permit the fever to return a second time; it has been too violent.' Mesmer, who desired to try

further experiments upon the Baron, was by no means satisfied with this answer. He would not allow that there was any danger incurred, because he considered that he kept the fever entirely in his own power. Dr. Ungerhoffer denied this; he had several similar fever-cases himself amongst his patients, at that very time, and these patients during their paroxysms had, like the Baron, complained of painful tearings in their limbs; therefore, according to him, the fever had probably some other origin than magnetism. Mesmer maintained, in support of his opinion, that the fever had not shown itself until he had begun to magnetise the Baron, when it increased or lessened, and finally ceased, according to his will; otherwise the Countess would have accused him wrongfully of being the cause of her husband's illness. Dr. Ungerhoffer attributed the simultaneous appearance of the fever with the magnetism to blind chance, and the rest to the excited state of the Baron's imagination. Mesmer controverted the theory of chance, by the fact that he had already several days previously announced the approach of the illness, and only the evening before had prepared the Countess for these violent paroxysms. Besides, imagination could not explain the rest; since during the continuance of the fever, the Baron had lost his consciousness and reason, as witnesses to which fact, he called the Baron himself, the Countess, and myself: and as witnesses to which fact many others might have been called. We could do no other than bear testimony to the truth of this statement. Certain of his position, Mesmer further added, he would lay a wager that the Baron would not be again attacked with fever until he was again magnetised, and also, that in case he was not again magnetised, he would not again be attacked at all by it. Time fully justified these assertions of Mesmer. Dr. Ungerhoffer departed in the afternoon.

“For a day or two, Mesmer did not attempt to magnetise the Baron again, and there was no return of the fever, although the Baron took no means to avoid an attack. Upon the third or fourth day, however, Mesmer was desirous to magnetise him once more early in the morning; but the Baron

would not at first hear of such a thing. After much resistance he, however, laid himself down upon his bed, about a quarter to eleven in the forenoon, three hours later than on the former occasion. The magnetism commenced as usual. The effects soon began to show themselves, but this time in a modified degree. The Baron, however, would not endure it ten minutes; and before he began to lose his consciousness, sprang out of bed, saying, 'Rather than endure such torment, a second time, he would keep his spasm forever!' Nothing could induce him to return to his bed. Within the space of a year or more, in fact, so long as I remained at Rohow, he was free from both fever and spasms.

"As the Baron continued to refuse to be further operated upon, Dr. Mesmer observed to the Countess, in the presence of myself and others, 'Had the Baron submitted thoroughly to the magnetic treatment, each attack would have become weaker, and would finally have ceased altogether: but now I am forced to confess that at some future time he will fall into the same condition in which he was in his first paroxysm. I am no longer of any use here.' The departure of Mesmer now took place.

"Upon the day when Mesmer was returning to Vienna, and when everything was ready for his journey, in order to take leave of him, as he stepped into the carriage, and wish him a good journey, I went down into the courtyard, expecting to there find him. As he did not appear, I re-ascended the steps, descending which I expected to see him approach. At the top of these steps I found a curious group assembled; that is to say, Mesmer, who was holding a young peasant-lad by both his ears, and a footman, who was acting as interpreter between the two. All three stood stock-still, and I also: having once more become all-observant. In the meantime the silence was broken by the sudden appearance of the Countess, who, after she had said something to Mesmer, inquired, in her usual tone of voice, of the peasant, 'Whose serf art thou?' 'Yours, great and mighty Countess!' returned the lad. 'And what is the matter with thee?' 'Six weeks ago, I lost my hearing in a

great wind, and this gentleman is giving it me back again.' The Countess once more took leave of Mesmer and withdrew. We four remained silent, until Mesmer ceased his operation; when he asked me to tell the peasant to procure some cotton-wool in the castle to stop his ears with, and to advise him, as much as possible, to avoid exposing himself to the wind.

"After this, I accompanied Mesmer to the carriage, and he took his leave of us all: not without emotion. The time needful for the magnetising of the deaf youth could not have been above half an hour; probably thus short a time was required through the disease being one of recent origin."

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We have to thank this narrative, continues Dr. Kerner, for giving us a faithful picture of Mesmer in the early time when, at the commencement of his discovery of animal-magnetism, he employed it still in combination with mineral-magnetism and electricity,—a practice which he afterwards abandoned.

He ascertained that the principal agent in his cures dwelt within himself, and that it was a directly operative agent, through the fact that its power increased by use. Nevertheless, the idea was never combated by Mesmer, that persons upon whom animal-magnetism exercises but a slight influence, are rendered more susceptible to this influence by the assistance of electricity and galvanism; and it is, as Wolfart has expressed his opinion, readily to be accepted, that all these natural powers are to be simply regarded as the lowest, earliest, and inorganic stages of Life-magnetism, which, however, aid in producing conditions conducive to the reception of the influence of the Life-magnetism.

Seyfert remarks that he had observed that Mesmer wore beneath his linen shirt, another of leather, lined with silk, and supposes that Mesmer sought by this means to prevent the escape of the magnetic fluid. He believes that Mesmer also wore natural and artificial magnets about his person, with the intention of strengthening the magnetic condition in himself.

At all events, it is certain that at a later period he employed



for the strengthening of the magnetic condition, an apparatus, the *Baquet*, or, as he called it, the Magnetic Basin or *Paropothus*—an apparatus which was rendered by others much more complicated in its construction. This receptacle, as it was originally formed by Mesmer, was a large pan or tub, filled with various magnetic substances, such as water, sand, stone, glass bottles filled with water, etc. It is a focus within which the magnetism finds itself concentrated, and out of which a number of conductors proceed; these conductors being bent, somewhat pointed, parallel iron wands, the one end of each wand being in the tub, whilst the other end could be applied to the seat of the disease. This arrangement might be made use of by a number of patients seated round the tub. Any suitably-sized receptacle for water—a pond or a fountain in a garden—would serve a patient as a *baquet*, so soon as the patient made use of an iron wand to conduct the magnetism towards him or herself.

May we be permitted still a few words regarding the foregoing strange narrative of Mesmer's proceedings at Rohow?

When reference is made to the evil impression produced upon the patients by Mesmer laying his hands on the metal musical instrument, unquestionably we must ascribe this effect to the influence of the *metal* of which these instruments were formed; since we are also informed, that tones produced by Mesmer upon a stringed instrument, the violoncello, called forth no unpleasant sensation, but soothed to sleep; even as Mesmer was accustomed to make use of the tones of a glass harmonica with beneficial effects as the bearers of the magnetic fluid in other cases of magnetic cure. Further; it is evident, that at this period, Mesmer employed a much more violent course of treatment than the mild one which he adopted subsequently. The calm holding forth of the finger's magnetic pole, especially at a distance, directed towards a seat of disease, almost always produces powerful convulsions. Through this means, at first, Mesmer wrought all his cures: and it is only to be accounted for by the strong operation of his will and his magnetic power, that he could govern these convulsions and

bring them to a beneficial crisis. He himself considered this mode of treatment, at a later period, somewhat dangerous.

It is evident, that at this time, Mesmer had evoked a power which he himself was scarcely able to hold in check. The dawn of the mild day of magnetic life appears to have been thus one of storm and terror. Wolfart, in reference to the narrative, suggests that "The *Büchsenspanner*, who rushed forth from the Baron's room exclaiming that Mesmer would kill both him and the Baron, was evidently magnetised, as well as Kolowratek, the musician, who had taken his place, through the closing of the magnetic-chain. The delirious words of the Baron which Mesmer could either call forth or cause to cease, were perhaps the most curious fact in the whole history. It is evident that here was the first sign of the lowest degree of the phenomenon of *sleep-waking and clear-seeing*, which was not discovered until later. Mesmer, unaware of this fact, naturally as any other physician would at that time have done, regarded them as belonging to the nervous attack, and simply delirium. The use of the magnet and too positive a treatment had prevented the development of an orderly condition."

#### IV.

STATEMENT MADE BY THE FATHER OF THE BLIND GIRL, FRAULEIN PARADIS, REGARDING WHOM MESMER SUFFERED VIOLENT PERSECUTION.

This young girl, who had become a famous and highly accomplished pianoforte player, and who was a *protégée* of the Empress Maria-Theresa, from her fourth year, according to the examination and belief of the most distinguished physicians in Vienna, had lost her eyesight from paralysis of the optic nerve.

Having experienced the treatment and mistreatment of numerous physicians, she was placed under the care of Mesmer, and recovered unquestionably—at least, for a short time—her eyesight through the use of his magnetic system.

"After a brief but powerful magnetic treatment from Dr.

Mesmer, Fraulein Paradis began to distinguish the outline of bodies and figures brought near to her. Her returning sense of vision was, however, so extremely sensitive, that she could only recognise these objects in a room darkened by window-shutters and curtains. If a lighted candle were placed before her eyes, although they were bound with a cloth doubled five times, she would fall to the ground like one struck by lightning. The first human figure which she recognised was that of Dr. Mesmer. She observed with much attention his person, and the various waving movements of his body which he made before her eyes, as a test of her powers of sight. She appeared somewhat alarmed, and said—‘That is terrible to behold! Is that the form of a human being?’ At her request, a large dog, which was very tame, and a favourite of hers, was brought before her. She observed him with great attention. ‘This dog,’ she said, ‘pleases me better than man—at least, his appearance is more endurable to me.’ Especially was the nose on the human countenance repugnant to her. She could not restrain her laughter on seeing this feature. She thus expressed herself regarding noses: ‘They seem to threaten me as though they would bore my eyes out.’ After seeing a greater number of human countenances, she became more reconciled to the nose. It cost her much trouble to distinguish colours and their names, and to calculate relative distances, her restored powers of vision being as inexperienced as that of a newly-born child.\* She was mistaken in the contrast existing between different colours, but she confused the names of the colours, and this especially when she was not led to draw a contrast between the colours with which she was already familiar. Looking at black, she observed that that

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\* Compare this with the experiences of a similar nature reported of Casper Hauser—that unfortunate youth, who, at length, in our own day, is openly acknowledged to have been the Hereditary Prince of Baden.—*Vide* “Casper Hauser: an Account of an individual kept in a Dungeon, separated from all communication with the World, from early childhood to about the age of seventeen. Drawn from Legal Documents. By Anselm von Feurbach, President of one of the Bavarian Courts of Appeal, etc. Translated from the German. London: Simpkin & Marshall.”

hue was the picture of her former state of blindness. The colour of black always excited in her a tendency towards melancholy—a condition, be it observed, to which she appeared predisposed during the course of her cure. She would frequently break forth into sudden weeping. Indeed, she was upon one occasion seized with so violent a fit of despair, that she flung herself upon a sofa, wrung her hands, tore off the bands from her eyes, drove every one from her presence, and, in fact, midst cries and sobs, comported herself in such a manner that any great actress might have taken her as a model of dire melancholy and mental anguish.

“Within a few moments all was over, and she had regained her usual cheerful, pleasant frame of mind; only, however, within a short space again to fall back into her melancholy. A great concourse of relations, friends, and people of fashion, having presented themselves, owing to the report of the recovery of her sight which had been spread abroad, she was much annoyed. She once expressed herself to me as follows, regarding this annoyance: ‘How comes it that I find myself much less happy now, than formerly? Everything that I see causes me an unpleasant agitation. Ah! I was much quieter in my blindness.’

“I consoled her with the representation that her present agitation was only occasioned by her sensitiveness to the new spheres into which she had entered. The new condition into which she must feel transported by the recovery of her eyesight, would necessarily occasion an agitation entirely novel to her. She would undoubtedly grow as calm and contented as other people, when she once became accustomed to her gift of sight. She replied that this was well, because, were she to experience continued agitation at the sight of fresh objects, she would rather have returned into the state of her blindness. She repeatedly fainted when relatives or intimate friends were presented to her. The same thing occurred upon beholding the pictures of her two uncles, officers in the Imperial army, and towards whom she had always entertained a warm affection. She stretched her hand over the picture, in order to feel

the features, but drew it back with surprise, her hand having glided over the smooth glass of the miniature. She imagined that the painted features would have stood forth like the features of a living person. The high head-dresses worn by the ladies here, especially those *à la Matignon*, are not at all to her taste, although formerly, during her blindness, she wore with pleasure her hair dressed in the same style.

“According to her fancy, the new-fashioned style of head-dress is out of proportion with the size of the face; in which opinion she is not far wrong. She asked a lady who was present to let her see her train, and how it appeared when she walked. But neither did she admire this fashion more than the head-dress. She says that this drapery sweeping behind is heavy. Thus strange are her remarks when she first observes objects. Her newly-awakened sensations place her in the first stage of natural-existence; she judges without prejudice, and names objects from the natural impression which they make upon her. She reads the characters of persons from their countenances with remarkable accuracy. The reflections in a mirror caused her great astonishment. She could not at all comprehend how the surface of a looking-glass should catch up objects and represent them to the eye. She was led into a splendid room where there was a very large mirror. She could not satisfy herself with looking into it at herself. She made the most extraordinary bends and attitudes before it. She laughed much, observing that the reflection of herself stepped towards her as she approached the mirror, and withdrew as she withdrew. All objects which she beholds at a certain distance, appear small to her, and they increase in size to her perceptions as they approach her. When with open eyes she dips a rusk in chocolate and lifts it towards her mouth, it appears to her so greatly increased in size, that she imagines that she cannot put it into her mouth.

“She was shown one evening, through the window, the star-bespangled heaven. She besought permission to go out into the garden, there freely to behold the sky. She was accompanied and led to the terrace of the garden. Here the

spectators beheld a touching sight. She raised her hands in deep silence towards the glorious, gleaming heavens, probably uttering from the depths of her heart an ardent, silent thanksgiving. After a few moments, she exclaimed, 'Oh, how earnestly do those stars gaze down upon me! Nothing in nature can be more glorious than this! If nowhere else, an ardent impulse of worship towards the Highest were felt by the human soul, here, where I stand, surely it must be felt, beneath this shining canopy!' She was then shown the reservoir, which she called 'a large soup-plate.' The trellis-walks appeared to walk along beside her, and upon her return to the house the building appeared to approach her. Its illuminated windows especially pleased her. On the following day, in order to satisfy her, she was again taken into the garden. She re-examined every object attentively, but not with so much pleasure as on the previous evening. She called the Danube, which flowed past the garden, a long, broad white stripe. She pointed out the places where she saw the river begin and end. She thought that with outstretched hands she could touch the trees growing in the so-called Prater-meadow, about a thousand steps on the other side of the river. It being a bright day she could not long endure looking around in the garden. She herself requested that her eyes might again be bound, as the sensation of light was too strong for her and occasioned dizziness. When she now has her eyes bandaged, she does not trust herself to walk a single step without guidance, although formerly, in her blindness, she was used to move about confidently, without the assistance of any one in her well-known chamber. This new disturbance of her senses occasions her now, to use reflection when playing the piano, whereas formerly she was accustomed to execute the most difficult pieces with the greatest accuracy, conversing at the same time with those who stood around her. With open eyes it is now difficult for her to play any piece. If her eyes are open she regards her fingers as they slip about over the piano, and misses, however, the greater number of the keys."

Here ends the fragment of the history written by the father of Fraülein Paradis.

Upon another page from Mesmer's papers I discovered the following observations which show his physiological and psychological views regarding the matter. He says, "In the case of those who are born blind, it is not sufficient to restore the eye to its healthful condition, and to shield its extraordinary excitability; the patient must be made aware that the origin of his new experience lies within himself; there must be acquaintance made with the absence, presence, and gradual intensification of light, the difference must be shown between colours and forms, distant and near objects, the intimate connection between sight and touch, etc. All these things we learn together mechanically in childhood, and this very circumstance, prevents us later from comprehending properly the unusual difficulties attaching to the acquirement of such knowledge.

A lengthened and uninterrupted magnetic treatment of this blind young lady's case, conducted in the thoughtful and rational spirit of Mesmer, would unquestionably have restored her power of vision for ever, and not have subjected her to a relapse into blindness. Envious and hostile persons, however, operated as an injurious and disturbing influence, both upon Mesmer and upon his patient; under any circumstances a young girl of extremely delicate nervous organisation. Nevertheless, sufficient proof is given by the above fragment of the power of magnetic influence upon the nerves of vision, especially upon the *ganglion ciliare*, which, as is the case with the entire ganglionic system, appears to be peculiarly susceptible to magnetism.

In Mesmer's *History of Magnetism* he refers to the fate of the poor blind girl, and to the misconception and maltreatment which he himself was subjected to on her account:—

"The blindness of the young girl named Paradis was undeniably proved. I procured her the power of sight. A thousand witnesses, and amongst them various physicians—Herr von Störk himself, in company with the second president

of the Faculty, at the head of the deputies of the Society—came, witnessed the fact, and did homage to the truth. The father of Fraülein Paradis then considered it his duty to exhibit his gratitude before the whole of Europe. He had the most important particulars of this case published in the papers. Who would have thought it possible to deny so publicly acknowledged an event? Nevertheless, Herr Barth, the Professor of Anatomy, who especially devoted himself to the study of the diseases of the eye, and to cataract, sought to pronounce the cure an invention, and succeeded in his scheme with the public. Twice in my house he had declared that Fraülein Paradis could see, and yet was not ashamed afterwards, in public, to maintain that ‘she was still quite blind, he had convinced himself of the fact; one proof of this being, that she often did not know the names of the things which lay before her; often mistook one for another;’ although he might easily have explained this simple and unavoidable occurrence, so frequently to be observed in the case of those who have been born or become blind in early infancy.

“Herr Ingenhaus and Father Hell had now an assistant in their intrigues against me. I did not trouble myself greatly, since the facts of the case showed, in the most striking manner, the extravagance of their pretences. But how little was I then aware of the inexhaustible means which envy has at its command. They united together in order to get Fraülein Paradis out of my hands, whilst her sight was still weak, in order to prevent her being presented to His Imperial Majesty; and thus their pretext was, that my whole pretentious cure had simply been a deception, in order to obtain entire faith. To attain their purposes, it was needful to excite the anger of Herr Paradis, through fear lest he should lose the pension which he received, on account of his blind daughter. Thus they advised him to remove his daughter out of my hands. He endeavoured to bring this object about, first of all, by himself, afterwards through concurrence with his wife. The daughter herself desired no such thing, and, through her resistance, drew evil treatment upon herself. Her father



wished to remove her by violence, and entered my house like a madman, sword in hand. Her raging father was disarmed, but mother and daughter fell fainting at my feet; the first from rage, the latter owing to her barbarous mother having kicked her head against the wall. I dismissed the mother after a few hours; but I remained in great anxiety regarding the daughter. Paralysis, vomiting, delirium, followed each other in rapid succession; yes, she even became once more blind. I was alarmed lest she should lose her life or her reason; I thought not of revenge for my own injuries; I neglected to avail myself of judicial redress; I only sought to save the unhappy one who had remained beneath my roof.

“Herr Paradis, supported by those who were his instigators, shrieked through all Vienna. I became the object of the most preposterous calumnies; even the good-natured Herr von Störk was so completely worked upon, that he commanded me to deliver Fraülein Paradis up to her parents. However, she was in no condition to be removed, and she remained still a month in my house. During the first fortnight of her stay, I was so fortunate as to be able to restore her sight to the condition in which it had been previous to this uproar; in the last fortnight I instructed her what to do in order to strengthen her health, and to perfect the use of her eyes.

“The excuses and warm thanks of Herr Paradis, which his wife brought to mine; the voluntary promise that they would send their daughter to my house whenever her health rendered that necessary: all this was—untruth! Nevertheless, I was deceived by the appearance of honesty. I was quite willing that Fraülein Paradis should enjoy the air of the country; but I had seen her for the last time.

“It was an important part in the system of these avaricious parents that their unfortunate child should become blind again, or, at all events, appear to be so; and to preserve this condition, they spared no trouble. It had been insinuated to the parents, that so soon as their daughter regained her sight, they would lose the pension which they yearly received from the Empress for her, and which had been granted on

account of her blindness. Thus it was that Herr Ingenhaus and his accomplices achieved their conquest."

## V.

### MESMER'S TWENTY-SEVEN APHORISMS CONTAINING, IN BRIEF, THE SUBSTANCE OF HIS DISCOVERIES.

In vain did Mesmer endeavour to convince his medical contemporaries of the truth and importance of his discovery; in vain was his announcement of it to the scientific academies. With but a single exception he received no answer from them. This exception was the Academy of Berlin, which passed the following judgment:—"It would in no wise enter upon an inquiry into a matter which rested upon such entirely unknown foundations."

Upon this Mesmer brought all his discoveries into the form of twenty-seven aphorisms, which he sent to the Scientific Academies in the year 1775. These aphorisms contain Mesmer's doctrine, clearly and briefly expressed. It is important to become acquainted with them, since his ideas are here given in his own words.

I found several pages of these aphorisms in Mesmer's handwriting amongst his papers, and thus present them to the reader:—

"I. There exists a reciprocal influence between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and all living beings.

"II. A fluid, which is spread everywhere, and which is so expanded that it permits of no vacuum; of a delicacy which can be compared to nothing beside itself, and which, through its nature, is enabled to receive movement, to spread and participate in it; is the medium of this influence.

"III. This reciprocal activity is subject to the operation of mechanical laws, which, until now, were quite unknown.

"IV. From this activity spring alternating operations, which may be compared to ebb and flow.

"V. This ebb and flow, are more or less general, more or less complex, according to the nature of the origin which has called them forth.

“VI. Through this active principle, which is far more universal than any other in nature, originates a relative activity between the heavenly bodies, the earth, and its component parts.

“VII. It immediately sets in movement—since it directly enters into the substance of the nerves—the properties of matter and of organised bodies, and the alternative operations of these active existences.

“VIII. In human bodies are discovered properties which correspond with those of the magnet. Also, opposite poles may be distinguished, which can be imparted, changed, disturbed, and strengthened.

“IX. The property of the animal body, which renders it susceptible to the influence of the heavenly bodies, and to the reciprocal operation of those bodies which surround it, verified by the magnet, has induced me to term this property, Animal-magnetism.

“X. This power and operation, thus designated as Animal-magnetism, can be communicated to animate and inanimate bodies; both, however, are more or less susceptible.

“XI. This power and operation can be increased and propagated through the instrumentality of these bodies.

“XII. Through experience, it is observed that an efflux of matter occurs, the volatility of which enables it to penetrate all bodies without perceptibly losing any of its activity.

“XIII. Its operation extends into the distance without an intermediate body.

“XIV. It can be increased and thrown back again, by means of a mirror, as well as by light.

“XV. It can be communicated, increased, and spread by means of sound.

“XVI. This magnetic power can be accumulated, increased, and spread.

“XVII. I have observed that animated bodies are not all equally fitted to receive this magnetic power. There are also bodies, although comparatively few, which possess such opposite qualities, that their presence destroys the operation of this magnetism in other bodies.

“XVIII. This opposing power permeates equally all bodies ; it can also be communicated, accumulated, and propagated ; it streams back from the surface of mirrors, and can be spread by means of sound. This is not alone occasioned by a deprivation of power, but is caused by an opposing and positive power.

“XIX. The natural and artificial magnet is equally, with other bodies, susceptible to Animal-magnetism, without, in either case, its operation upon vision, or upon the needle, suffering the slightest change.

“XX. This system will place in a clearer light the nature of fire and of light, as well as the doctrine of attraction, of ebb and flow, of the magnet, and of electricity.

“XXI. It will demonstrate that the magnet and artificial electricity, with regard to sickness, possess simple qualities, possessed in common with other active forces afforded by nature ; and that if any useful operation springs from their instrumentality, we have to thank Animal-magnetism for it.

XXII. From instances deduced from my firmly established and thoroughly proved rules, it will easily be perceived that this principle can immediately cure diseases of the nerves.

“XXIII. Through its assistance, the physician receives much light regarding the application of medicaments, whereby he can improve their operation, call forth more beneficial crises, and conduct them in such wise as to become master of them.

“XXIV. Through communication of my method, I shall, in unfolding a new doctrine of disease, prove the universal use of this active principle.

“XXV. Through this knowledge, the physician will be enabled to judge of the origin, the progress, and the nature even of the most intricate diseases. He will be enabled to prevent the increase of disease, and bring about the cure without exposing his patient to dangerous effects or painful consequences, whatever be the age, sex, or temperament of the patient.

“XXVI.—Women during pregnancy and childbirth receive advantage therefrom.

“XXVII. The doctrine will at length place the physician in such a position that he will be able to judge the degree of health possessed by any man, and be able to protect him from the disease to which he may be exposed. The Art of Healing will by this means attain to its greatest height of perfection.”

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Thus deeply convinced of the truth of his doctrine, it was natural that Mesmer should feel keenly pained by the misconception and contempt of men, for whom in other directions he entertained esteem. He expresses his bitter sorrow in various ways in the writings left behind him.

“This system, which led me to the discovery of Animal-magnetism,” he writes, “was not the fruit of a single day. By degrees, even as the hours of my life accumulated, were gathered together in my soul the observations which led to it. I have alone to thank my resolute steadfastness for the necessary boldness with which I met the condemnation of reason and worldly wisdom, without, according to my own judgment, being guilty of impertinence.

“The coldness with which my earliest promulgated ideas were met, filled me with astonishment, as though I had never foreseen such coldness. The learned—and physicians especially—laughed over my system, but quite out of place, however, for although unsupported by experiment, it must have appeared fully as reasonable as the greater portion of their systems, on which they bestow the grand name of principles.

“This unfavourable reception induced me again to examine my ideas. Instead, however, of losing through this, they gained a higher degree of manifestation. And in truth every thing convinced me that in science, besides the principles already accepted, there must be others, either neglected or not observed. I said to myself, so long as the principles of science are false or uncertain, so long will the endeavours of the most glorious genius remain unfruitful for the happiness and enlightenment of mankind. The learned tend with unwearied care the great Tree of Science ; but they alone occupy them-

selves with the outermost twigs, and neglect to attend to the stem. Frequently did I compare physicians to travellers, who once having lost their road, continue to wander away from it, because they do not turn back, but are ever hastening straight forward.

“A devouring fire filled my soul; I sought Truth no longer with a tender yearning, but filled with the extremest disquiet. Fields, woods, and the neighbouring wilderness alone still retained charms for me. There I felt myself nearer to Nature. In the most violent emotion at times I believed that she wildly drove my heart from her. Wearied by her vain enticements, ‘O, Nature!’ I exclaimed in such paroxysms, ‘what dost thou desire of me?’ Soon again, on the contrary, I believed that I tenderly embraced her, or filled with the wildest impatience, conjured her to fulfil my wishes. Fortunately, my excitement, amidst the silence of the woods, had no witness but the trees; since in truth I must have appeared greatly to resemble a madman. All other occupations were hateful to me. Every moment which I did not devote to my investigations appeared to me a theft committed upon Truth.

“I regretted, as a loss, the time in which I spent in seeking expression of my thoughts. I discovered that we are accustomed immediately, without long reflection, to clothe each thought in the language most familiar to us. Upon this discovery, I seized the extraordinary determination to free myself from this slavery. So mighty was the tension of my imagination, that I gave this abstract idea a clothing of realisation. *Three months I thought without words.*

“Having ended this deep contemplation, I looked around me with astonishment; my senses deceived me no longer as formerly: all objects possessed for me a new form. The most ordinary connection of thought appeared to me to necessitate a more exact examination: mankind appeared so extraordinarily inclined to error, that I experienced an entirely new delight, whenever I discovered an illumined truth amidst commonly received opinions; since this was to me a rare proof, that truth and human nature are not, of necessity, two incompatible existences.

“Imperceptibly peace returned into my soul, since my soul was now convinced of the true existence of Truth, which I had hitherto so ardently followed. Certainly I only perceived her in the distance, and ever veiled in a light cloud, but I clearly beheld the path which led to her, and did not again quit it. Thus did I win the capacity to prove, by experiment, the truth of my supposed theory.”

## VI.

## MESMER'S DEPARTURE FROM VIENNA, JOURNEY TO MUNICH, AND SOJOURN IN PARIS.

After Mesmer's persecution regarding the affair of Mdlle. Paradis, he no longer regarded Vienna as his home. In Munich the public mind appeared to be more favourably inclined for the reception of his discovery. Summoned thither, he exhibited his curative powers upon the sick with the best results; various of these sick people having in vain made use of other modes of healing, and one of them being a member of the Academy of Sciences. Thus his doctrine met with a general recognition, and he was himself received as a member of the Academy of Sciences.

In order to strengthen his own health, and also to spread a wider knowledge of his discovery, in 1778 he made a journey through Switzerland and France to Paris.

Encouraged by believers in his doctrine, and invited by Le Roi, the then directors of the Academy of Sciences at Paris, he laid his discovery in writing before that scientific body. The Academy held an especial sitting for the consideration of Mesmer's doctrine, at which Mesmer was present, quietly keeping in the background.

Then was enacted a scene which merited to have been immortalised by the pencil of a Hogarth. There arose an uproar amidst the wise assembly, whose learning was not equal to the comprehension of Mesmer's discovery, and they declared it, in spite of whatever might be urged in its favour, *to be the product of an excited imagination*, as the learned academicians have equally pronounced previously and subsequently other

natural truths. It must be remembered that the same Academy rejected Franklin's discovery of the lightning-conductor, and Jenner's discovery of the cow-pox. It is also known that when the first model of a steam-vessel was presented to the Emperor Napoleon, and he desired the Academy to examine and test this discovery, and pronounce a favourable opinion upon it, the wisdom of the academicians declared it to be an entirely untenable invention. Napoleon is known to have exclaimed at a later period, "How foolish was I, not to have relied upon my own simple understanding, rather than upon the wisdom of the Academy!"

We must pass over Mesmer's vain endeavours to bring his discovery under the favourable consideration of the Parisian Medical Society, as well as his repeated attempts with the Academy, and his contests and enmity with that body. Nevertheless, it must not be forgotten that in Lafayette, and through him in Washington, he possessed friends and believers. Subsequent offers from the government, which appear to have favoured Mesmer's views, he did not accept, as they did not appear to him calculated—owing to the conditions attached to them—to shield his discovery from false judgment.

Believers in the truth of Mesmer's views induced his most zealous friend, Bergasse, to issue an appeal with reference to Mesmer's discovery, in the French Provinces. A copy of the appeal was found amongst Mesmer's papers, and in it Bergasse observes, that he was compelled to put it forth, "in order to protect a shamefully persecuted man from the fate prepared for him by the blind hatred of his enemies." Bergasse called upon the believers in the discovery to form societies for the practical carrying out of the Mesmeric theory. This scheme was put into execution; and with such result, that, in the French Provinces, more than half-a-million of francs was subscribed. This money was applied by Mesmer to the establishment of places for magnetic healing.

The sick people, whose confidence led them into these establishments, received until their recovery all attention gratis. The intention of the establishment of these schools was, that



the managers of them, who had been instructed by Mesmer himself, should there exercise their power, and be enabled to watch its effects, and preserve it from extraneous influences. About twenty of such schools were soon established in the most important French towns. They termed themselves the Society of Harmony.

But all this was carried out amidst the most horrible outcries and enmity of the medical schools of the metropolis, which expelled any of their members who had dared to express themselves in any degree favourable to Mesmer's doctrine. Nevertheless, Mesmer was recompensed by the fact that during ten years he was enabled to work for the benefit of the suffering, and frequently with the most splendid success.

Soon, however, France was occupied with other interests. In that great political change which befell France, Mesmer beheld his scarcely germinating institutions destroyed. His dearest friends and followers were some of them outlawed, whilst others fell beneath the axe of the guillotine; and Mesmer himself was forced, in order to avoid a similar fate, to fly from Paris. He fled, at first, it appears to the frontier of Switzerland. To Paris, however, he again returned when the first storm had passed over, probably led thither for the purpose of gathering together the wreck of his considerable fortune.

## VII.

SOMETHING REGARDING MESMER'S FOLLOWERS AND OPPONENTS  
IN GERMANY, ALSO REGARDING THE GRADUAL DEVELOP-  
MENT OF ANIMAL - MAGNETISM AND THE PUBLICATION OF  
MESMER'S COLLECTED WRITINGS.

Through Puységur's investigations Animal - Magnetism assumed a new phase during the time of Mesmer's sojourn in France. Puységur resided at Strasburg, from whence his doctrine spread itself throughout Germany. Puységur was the first experimenter who, quitting the simple magnetic influence upon the patient, assumed that Somnambulism and its power of inward contemplation alone, constitutes its healing

power. A sick boy, his patient, in whom Somnambulism had unfolded the faculty of inward vision, had led him to these conclusions. In Somnambulism Puységur believed that he had discovered the veritable Magnetism; and in this spirit gave publicity to his own discovery.

Upon Mesmer's return to Germany he found that these new ideas had spread throughout the land, and this circumstance again greatly embittered his life. Regarding what he considered the dangers of Somnambulism and the somnambulic treatment, Mesmer has written many papers which betray a wounded and suffering nature.

Affecting is it thus to observe two great discoverers and benefactors of the human race, through the narrowness of vision inherent in humanity, or through its unconquered egotism, thus blinded to the relative importance of the truth of each other's system, and through this pitiable blindness retarding the calm development of universal truth, of which each possessed a portion, and of which each believed himself the devoted servant.

From Strasburg, where Puységur's sect had arrived, Mesmer's doctrine was brought to Bremen. Lavater, giving his allegiance to Puységur's system, had received Magnetism on the altogether mystical and religious side. Certain friends and imitators of his having exaggerated his views, the whole subject was exposed to the ridicule of the incredulous and of the utterly ignorant; and thus the very wildest ideas were entertained by the public of Magnetism and Magnetisers. Lavater, upon his appearance at Bremen, was greeted in the papers by would-be witty comic songs of a most disgusting and silly nature. That Lavater's own views regarding Magnetism, were clear, philosophical, and calm, various passages in his writings bear testimony.

The circulation through Germany of the unfavourable opinion passed upon Mesmer's discovery by the French Academy, damaged Mesmer's reputation immensely; for especially in that age did Germany, not alone as regards dress and manners, but also in matters of opinion, follow the French

nation with a pitifully servile imitation. Thus the opinion of a body of men, supposed by their learning and wisdom to be able to embrace and comprehend the whole of the laws of the world, was regarded by Germany as the utterance of an oracle. This feeling existed to so great an extent, that no one dared to defend Magnetism through the terror of being calumniated. The very name of Animal-magnetism was tabooed. Dr. Eberhard Gmelin, of Heilbronn, a contemporary of Mesmer, an intellectual investigator of his discovery, and to whom we owe the possession of six volumes of conscientiously recorded experiences; and much valuable theoretical matter, regarding Magnetism, already, in the year 1787, has said in one of his volumes, that he would willingly entitle his magnetic researches, "Experiments in the Power possessed by Human Nature through the Means of Living Human Touch," owing to the unconquerable objection in the public mind to the term "Animal-magnetism." In fact, by calling one of his works, *Materials for Anthropology*, he thus gave way to the public prejudice against Mesmer's nomenclature. In the same work he thus excellently sketches the opponents to the newest truth of his day:—

"They step forth under the venerable forms of a bombastic orator, of a highly-enlightened and warning teacher, of a dogmatic critic, of an envious colleague, of an exasperated preacher, of a merry comedian, of a flying traveller, of a comic romance-writer, of a would-be witty writer of travesties, of a cheap and rapid annotator of almanack pictures, of a defamatory pressman, of a begging anecdote hunter, of a malicious backbiter, of a haggling pettifogger. With such weapons, and under such forms, has the endeavour been made to fling Mesmerism to the earth."

Gmelin was a man in whom no qualification failed to render him a thoroughly competent observer of this subtle power of nature. His observations succeeded in awaking a lively interest in the subject; and that he was an enlightened and thoroughly experienced physician, as well as a clear-seeing psychologist, not even the most prejudiced opponent could

deny. His works were full of instruction, even for the unbeliever, and although they might not always work conviction, they prepared the way for it. Before Reil and Humboldt's experiments, in 1778, Dr. Gmelin wrote about a fluid within, or rather upon, the nerves, bearing much relation to electricity, and which he termed *nerve juice*, or *nerve aether*; and, in 1793, after the publication of Reil's excellent writings and Humboldt's galvanic experiments, he published other important observations.

Neither did Wienholt in Bremen fare much better than Gmelin, in the opposition which he encountered from the learned world. He, in the years 1803 and 1806, wrote upon the subject of Animal-magnetism, at great length, in a sober, searching, and philosophical spirit, and proved it to be a special power of nature, and an extraordinary healing medium. But he also, for a certain time, bore reproaches and was utterly misunderstood. Within fifteen years, however, Wienholt treated, either directly himself or through others, eighty sick persons. The greater number of these, were cases which he either beheld abandoned by medical art, or which could only hope for a protracted cure: cases of various kinds of disease, inflammatory as well as chronic, nervous as well as other tedious maladies. There were individuals of almost every age and rank, and of both sexes, married and unmarried; and the magnetic treatment affected these patients in the most remarkable manner. In some of the cases the improvement was only temporary, in others partial, in others—and these not a few—the cure was complete. Weinholt made use of electricity combined with Animal-magnetism in his experiments. In these cases the sleep-waking condition excited the greatest surprise, and became the chief stumbling-block.

During the period of Gmelin's and Weinholt's activity in this field of labour, Animal-magnetism attained, through the discovery of Galvanism, to more respectful consideration in the learned world. Already, and principally through Gmelin's researches—to which we have already referred—the existence of a so-called life-atmosphere around the nerves, was believed

to exist. This supposition was rendered more probable by Reil's excellent work upon the nerves, and at length was clearly demonstrated by Humboldt's galvanic experiments with animal-fibres, and thus was Animal-magnetism brought nearer to physical science. Equally favourable were the observations of Spallanzani and Fontana. On every side, old conventional opinions and doctrines which had taken deep root, were seen to be attacked and destroyed by new opinions and doctrines, and thus people at length accustomed themselves to enquire with more equanimity into Animal-magnetism, and gradually discovered that it really did contain some truth.

Through Schelling's Nature-Philosophy, other worthy minds were encouraged to cast off the chains of the old systems, and take higher flights through the illimitable realms of nature. Thus the arrogant tone of the would-be-all-wise was not so universal, and practical physicians who formerly had been opposed to Magnetism, even deigned to operate by its means. The men who at that period principally accepted the Mesmeric theory were K. E. Schelling, W. Hufeland, Klug, Wolfart, Fr. Hufeland, Kuntzmann, Petzold, Nasse, Müller, and other physicians in Berlin. At a later period followed that remarkable man whom, comparatively speaking, we have only lately lost, Dr. Ennemoser; and who has given forth to the world, both practical and theoretical works upon the subject. Also Eschenmayer has been an invaluable labourer in the field. Dr. Karl Passavant, of Frankfort, we have also to thank for his *Researches into Life-magnetism and Clear-seeing*, which has become a classical work. Also Count Zappari, and his unfortunate countryman Count Mailath, have both earned our thanks through their peculiar conception and development of the Mesmeric doctrine.

It is especially through the exertions of the above-named men that Mesmer's discovery enjoyed a triumph, already before the death of Mesmer; although at a period when personally he was entirely forgotten, and now (in the year 1856), forty years after his death, a yet greater triumph exists in the appearance of magnetic table-turning, and of Reichenbach's discovery of

the odylie light and force. (In 1883, however, more marvellous has become this triumph, through the ever unfolding confirmation of the truth of Mesmer's discovery, as demonstrated by the varied phenomena of Spiritualism: that fuller development of occult force, the dawn of which Dr. Justinus Kerner was one of the first to proclaim.)

It ought not to surprise us, that Mesmer was not comprehended by the learned men of his day, seeing that he was through his views of nature, forty years in advance of his age. Nevertheless it is almost inconceivable that during all these years of the progress of magnetic enquiry, personally, Mesmer should have been forgotten, and this not alone by his opponents, but by those who honoured and practised his doctrine. Throughout the numerous volumes of the writings of Gmelin and Wienholt upon Animal-magnetism, between the years 1787 and 1805, you may seek in vain for the name of Mesmer. And with other writers it is the same. They well knew what persecution and contempt Mesmer had drawn upon himself, by the expression of opinions which were the same as their own; nevertheless, nowhere throughout these writings does one meet with one single expression of sympathy with Mesmer: nowhere a defence of him. It seems as though they dreaded to touch upon that name of "Mesmer," so hooted at by the scientific world. Not one of these writers took the trouble to search out the discoverer of that power of nature which they were themselves thus developing and defending, in order to become personally acquainted with him: to know what kind of a man he was: to hear from his own lips the explanation of his theory: to learn from himself the practical part of his doctrine: to be shown by himself his magnetic manipulation; in short, to drink of the knowledge which they sought at its very fountain head.

Mesmer, during the greater portion of his later life, took no part whatsoever in the discussions of the scientific world; took no interest even in the magnetic labours of his followers. He dwelt in the most perfect retirement at Frauenfeld, a blessing to the sick and the poor of that neighbourhood. He appears,

however, to have deeply sympathised with the great political changes occurring in Europe.

Various of Mesmer's friends in France sought to recall him into their midst from Switzerland, representing to him that his ideas would never be comprehended in that country, and seeking to induce him to publish his writings in the French language. Nevertheless to France Mesmer did not return.

Mesmer was already an old man of seventy-eight, when a circle of his zealous disciples in Berlin applied to him by letter, through Reil and Wolfart, to visit them, in order that they might hear his doctrine explained to them by himself. Throughout the rest of Germany, at this period, Mesmer personally was as one dead. It is easily understood that Mesmer, who had in his earlier life declined a similar invitation, now in his old age, and when he was weary of scientific discussion, did not accede to his friends' desire. We have reason, however, to believe that from this application of his Berlin friends resulted Wolfart's invaluable edition of Mesmer's writings. With the greater portion of his fortune, Mesmer had lost in France the whole of his papers. Nevertheless, in the later years of his life, during his solitude, Mesmer employed himself with marvellous patience in re-writing his ideas and experience in French. Many of these manuscripts fell into my hands amongst the papers discovered at Meersburg. They are the rough drafts from which Wolfart ultimately made his German translation, and which was, in 1814, published by Mesmer's authority and under his supervision a year before the great discoverer's death. Numerous letters from Wolfart to Mesmer—but, unfortunately, not Mesmer's replies—were also amongst the Meersburg papers, throwing much valuable light upon Mesmer's life and views. It is most pleasant to contemplate the friendly relationship which existed between Mesmer and his translator; and to observe the sunshine which this happy relationship cast around the last years of this great man's life.

From Frauenfeld, Mesmer removed to Constance, and from Constance ultimately to Meersburg, where, as we shall see in the concluding section of our memoir, he calmly sank to rest.

## VIII.

## MESMER'S LAST YEARS—POWER OVER BIRDS, ETC.

In the summer of 1814, Mesmer removed to the village of Riedetsweiler where he had caused to be prepared for himself a dwelling in the farm of the peasant Futterer. In Constance, as well as here, and in Meersburg, he lived entirely for science, and exercised his art with the most beneficial results; everywhere assisting the suffering poor. Various individuals still live who remember him with respect and gratitude. Mesmer did not, however, long inhabit this rustic abode; he moved in a short time to Meersburg. It is possible that he removed at this period to the neighbourhood of his relatives and to a town, because he was firmly convinced that he should not live beyond the age of eighty-one. This idea originated in the circumstance, frequently related by him, of a fortune-teller—a person who possessed the faculty of entering the magnetic condition through gazing upon any glittering substance—prophesying that he would attain the age of eighty-one, but no greater age. This individual had told him at the same time, whilst he was possessed of a large fortune, that he would lose it. This portion of the prophecy having been fulfilled, he used frequently to maintain that the former would also prove to be true: as indeed proved to be the case.

Spite of his age and the infirmity—disease of the bladder—from which he occasionally suffered, both his body and soul appeared full of health and power. That his ardently-pursued and long-continued magnetic manipulations produced no deleterious effects upon his constitution, was owing, probably, to his applying himself, without the interference of any un congenial occupation, to the development of that influence of which he himself was the discoverer; and with which, through being its discoverer, he was more thoroughly permeated than any other person possibly could have been; and also, that by birth, he possessed a calm, clear, firm, and not easily disturbed nature.

He loved society, and whenever any one was really agree-



able to him, the company of this person was never unacceptable—so well-beloved a guest might even without offence invite himself to table. Usually Mesmer was very cheerful and conversational. His relatives, especially, were ever welcome. In their seasons of trouble he, also, thought frequently of them. Besides his relatives two intelligent young priests were his frequent visitors. One of these young men had been restored through Mesmer's assistance from a dangerous illness. Both of them were so greatly impressed and penetrated by the importance of Mesmer's conclusions, with reference to religion and to nature, that they became attached to him with a childlike reverence.

Of the learned world but few visited him. Dr. Hirzel, of Gottlieben, occasionally came to see him; and later, in the last years of his life, Dr. Waldmann was intimate with him, and bears witness to the calmness of his mind, even up to his latest breath.

In the last years of Mesmer's life, the Bishop Prince Dalberg, in the outset a violent opponent of Mesmer's doctrine, became as warm a believer and friend. He, about the same time as Mesmer, came to reside at Meersburg. Mesmer thus writes to Wolfart, in Berlin, December 26, 1814:—

“You will have heard that Prince Dalberg has resided here already several months. So soon as he became aware that I was at this place he recalled his former avowal of disbelief, and at every possible opportunity has shown me respect. He gives to the aristocratic residents here, every week a concert, to which I am invited. He has invited me to his table and so forth, and thus in every way he shows that I am no longer indifferent to him.”

Mesmer did not possess a garden, nevertheless he was a great lover of flowers, which he cultivated in his room, as well as shrubs, laurels, etc., which he made use of in his magnetic cures.

He kept a horse and light carriage, in which he drove out daily. Probably owing to the infirmity already referred to, he was rarely seen on foot. He exhibited towards his horse,

as well as to all animals, and especially towards birds, a great affection.

Probably through his powerful magnetic influence, he possessed the faculty of taming and attracting animals towards himself. Stories are still afloat regarding him, somewhat exaggerated probably, which recall the history of the Brahmin, who, through magical art, caused a troop of birds to constantly hover above his head, thus accompanying him upon long journeys. It is related that whenever Mesmer visited the island of Mainau—where it is well known that formerly a considerable number of canaries dwelt, being prevented by the wide expanse of water from escaping from the island—these birds would fly towards the trees and shrubs around Mesmer, and would only settle when and where the wonder-worker took his seat. One of these canaries from the island of Mainau was Mesmer's companion at Meersburg until his death; its abode being an open cage in Mesmer's chamber. Every morning early, the bird would fly forth, perch upon Mesmer's head whilst he slept, and wake him with its song; nor would the bird allow his friend any peace, until he rose, dressed, and placed himself at the breakfast table. So long as Mesmer drank his coffee, the bird remained perched upon the sugar basin, and pecked the sugar. If Mesmer hesitated to drop a lump of sugar into his cup, the little creature remarking the hesitation, would drop the lump of sugar. When his master arose from the breakfast-table, the little canary would fly back into its cage. A slight stroke from Mesmer's hand would throw the bird into a sleep as though it were dead, whilst a stroke, the reverse way of the feathers, would awaken it. Mesmer was, like his bird, accustomed to retire early to rest, usually about the hour of eight; whilst he prepared for sleep, the bird would thrust its head beneath its wing.

The observations which Mesmer made upon animals with reference to their inner sense—their instinct, brought him into very near sympathy with them. He studied the proof of the existence of this faculty with profound interest, and expatiating on this theme, always expressed his regret that man alone

of all the animal creation should neglect this inner sense, which in him is thus driven to solely assert itself in the magnetic condition, and in the ordinary dream-life.

Wolfart, when speaking of his visit to Mesmer at Frauenfeld, refers to the old man's love of playing upon his glass-harmonica. He says, "Mesmer was accustomed when supper was over, after a little repose, and when twilight was gathered, to play upon his beloved harmonica—when all around and within him seemed harmonious. As his playing became more and more animated, and the tones drawn forth by his hand became more intense, he would accompany the music with his voice, singing in a low tone, and guiding his fingers by the modulation of his voice, which even now in old age was a very agreeable tenor. Thus his soul entered into the music, and such a harmony of the spheres as was this music I have never since heard. I may mention that Mesmer whilst residing in Paris, was intimately acquainted with the great composer Gluck, and that he frequently inspired him by thus playing upon his harmonica, and was made by him to promise that he would never play otherwise upon these musical bells than thus improvising, without notes or art. This instrument, which he had caused to be made under his own eye in Vienna, and which had followed him about through life, has after his death, been left to me as a remarkable and dear *souvenir*."

Books, Mesmer did not greatly read; and he has been reproached for not troubling himself with the literature of the time, as though he believed, that through the discovery of universal magnetism he had attained to the limits of science.

In his old age, if he were not occupied in driving about or in writing, he was employed in modelling or in drawing. The drawings introduced in Wolfart's work are from his hand.

He appears rarely to have attended church; celebrating his worship of God, quietly in his own heart.

Mesmer was remarkably temperate, both in eating and drinking. He had an opinion, however, that man distinguished himself from the animals in the necessity for a variety of food, and that in consequence, man is in a much healthier and more

natural condition when he is enabled by circumstances to satisfy himself not from one dish alone, but by moderately partaking of a variety of food in small quantities.

On the 20th of February, 1815, Mesmer felt unwell, and did not visit the Cassino, as he was accustomed to do, upon the Sunday. The following day he was not worse, but gradually his illness increased, and upon the 5th of March, feeling his end approach, he begged that his friend, the young priest, Fessler, might be sent for, to play to him upon the harmonica whilst he departed. Before his friend arrived, however, Mesmer, smiling, fell asleep for ever in this world, seemingly filled with a presentiment of an unending, all-musical divine harmony awaiting his soul beyond the grave. As if still alive, the body lay untouched till the morning, but the canary did not, as usual, fly forth from its cage to perch upon his head, to awaken him. The bird neither sang nor ate any more, and very shortly afterwards was found dead in its cage.

According to Mesmer's desire his body was opened and the seat of his disease discovered. Mesmer had left directions in his will that, being without worldly titles and honours, he should be interred very simply, as though he were any other common man; but the inhabitants of Meersburg determined otherwise. Both the clergy and the citizens gave this great benefactor of the human race a ceremonious funeral: whilst numbers who were indebted to him for health and life, followed the procession. His young friend, Fessler, spoke the funeral oration above his grave, in the beautiful graveyard of Meersburg, where subsequently—as we have seen—a monument was erected to him by his Berlin admirers and disciples.

WILLIAM HOWITT

AND

HIS WORK FOR SPIRITUALISM.

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY

ANNA MARY HOWITT-WATTS.

TO  
William M. Wilkinson, Esq.,  
HIS FRIEND AND CO-WORKER  
AS A PIONEER OF SPIRITUALISM,  
THIS RECORD  
OF  
WILLIAM HOWITT'S  
WORK IN THE CAUSE  
IS DEDICATED BY HIS DAUGHTER,  
A. M. H. W.

# WILLIAM HOWITT

AND

## HIS WORK FOR SPIRITUALISM.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### HIS CHILDHOOD.

“My father’s memory has become very holy to me; not sorrowful, but great and instructive. I could repeat, with softly resolved heart, ‘Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; they do rest from their labours, and their works follow them;’ no grain of truth that was in them but belongs to eternity and cannot die.”—*Thomas Carlyle.*

WILLIAM HOWITT was born at Heanor, in Derbyshire, December 18th, 1792. Both on the paternal and maternal side, his ancestors had resided in that locality for generations. His father, Thomas Howitt, was the first of his family who joined the Society of Friends. This event was brought about through the marriage of the said Thomas Howitt with Phœbe Tantum, whose family had been Quakers since the time of George Fox. The Tantums, farming their own land, had resided for many generations on the same spot, an ancient grange called Heanor-Fall. The Howitts had belonged to the Church of England. Indeed, several rectors of that name lie interred in the chancel of the church at Eastwood, a village lying distant some two miles from Heanor, on the opposite side of the Erewash Valley, and according to Rutter’s “History of the Sufferings of the Society of Friends,” one of those Howitts, rectors of Eastwood, was a sharp persecutor of the Friends in the time of Fox.

The Howitts, originally possessing a fair estate, and intermarrying with their wealthy neighbours, in the course of the

last century, like many other families in the country, leading a reckless, "jolly life of hunting, shooting, coursing, dining with one another, and indulging in excess, both of eating and drinking, for which country squires in the last century were notorious," had gradually squandered their land, their money, and their health, until their worldly fortunes had suffered an all but total eclipse.

With Thomas Howitt and his marriage with Phebe Tantum of the Fall commenced a new day. "She was the last of her family who remained in the Society of Friends," writes her son, William Howitt. "My father was," he adds, "the first of his family who entered it. No doubt it was a good thing for him, as it confirmed those habits of sobriety and accumulation which he had commenced, after so long a career of jollity and of spending by his own line."

It is not easy for us to realise the condition of England in such remote districts ninety years ago, either mentally or physically. The subtle influences—vivifying for the future, yet thoroughly destructive as regards the past—of the Great French Revolution, already in the rise of its terror when William Howitt was born, had not yet penetrated, except in vague and faint echoes, to these rural solitudes. There the slumber of generations of the old-world-past still brooded over both nature and humanity. Such spots still retained much of the rude comfort, and the not ungraceful simplicity of manner of life, mingled with the poetry of many an antique observance, which, together with the surrounding luxuriance of the free, unkempt nature of woods, heaths, and meadows, bore within them the spirit of England in the days of the Tudors and Stuarts, rather than of the England, as we picture it, of the Georges. Ancient types of human character, full of violent passions and eccentric humours, linger long in such hidden spots; strongly marked are the tragic and comic incidents in the life-drama of such neighbourhoods. For tragic interest, witness, indeed, the wild and well-known history of the Byron and Chaworth families, connected with this very locality, Newstead and Annesley lying within a comparatively



short distance of this edge of Derbyshire, though themselves situated in Nottinghamshire.

Cradled in a nook of this Old England, environed by its sylvan and pastoral scenes, backed by the range of the beautiful hill-country of the Peak—on another side the district of Sherwood Forest, stretching away into romantic solitudes of primeval woodland and heathery wilderness—with places of historic note scattered here and there, Codnor and Bolsover Castles, Hardwick and Haddon Halls, Wingfield Manor, and Dethic—the romantic memories and traditions of these and many another stately or antique spot—lingering in the memory of the people, and feeding the ever active popular imagination : born of a mother keenly alive to every influence of her romantic, native locality, and attached with a passionate love to life in the country, and to all rural things—what marvel that the little William should have come into the world dowered with the heart and eye of a poet ; or that in due course he should have “lived and moved and had his being” in literature, through his vivid delineation of the loveliness of English scenery—should have revelled in gathering up ancient, historical, and traditionary memories, and the quaint, racy, or sternly tragic features of a rural world already fading away for ever.

Jean Paul, in his autobiography, has said in his humorous way, “Let not a poet suffer himself to be born or educated in a metropolis, but, if possible, in a hamlet, or at highest in a village. The excesses and fascinations of a great city are to the excitable, weak soul of a child like supping at a midnight-table a draught of burnt waters, or bathing in fiery wine.”

Little William had, it would seem, “*let himself be born*” in full accord with the philosophic recipe here laid down by the wise German philosopher. It gave a vigour to the physical frame, an elasticity to the mental being, a certain joyous hopefulness of heart, and an indwelling spirit of faith in the abiding beneficence of God, which never deserted him throughout his long and varied career. His was an instance of the truth

enunciated by Wordsworth, that "Nature never did betray the heart that loved her." Those who best knew him under the varied circumstances of life, can best testify to the peculiar spirit of healthful hope in the beneficence of God, which wrapt him round, as with a spiritual garment, diffusing wheresoever he went, a light and warmth, and subtle invigoration. It was this "inner kernel of sweet joy" of heart—the mental health and *wholeness* (which in one sense truly is *holiness*)—this enthusiasm for all beautiful and pure and poetical things, which were for him essentially symbolised in the externals of natural scenery, that gave a perennial verdure to his writings; and that indescribable charm to his "Book of the Seasons," "Boys' Country Book," "Rural Life of England," "Visits to Remarkable Places," "Homes and Haunts of the British Poets," "Madame Dorrington of the Dene," and other writings especially devoted to the description or contemplation of the spirit of rural nature and life, which took so strong a hold on the affections and memories of his readers,\* and which, in fact, were pure emanations from his indwelling spirit.

In his "Boys' Country Book," he gives a graphic description of this period of his life—to him so fascinating, and which was as the acorn to the oak-tree of his life, containing quick within it the very essence of all that had to follow.

He was the third of a group of six brothers—thus was in no lack of boyish companionship in his rambles and adventures; though mostly, it would appear, that it was with a troop of

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\* That I may not be accused of exaggeration in thus speaking of the spirit of my father's writing upon rural subjects, I would refer my readers to an almost exhaustive review of this class of the works by William Howitt, which appeared shortly after his decease, in the *Edinburgh Review* for July, 1879, under the head of "Rural England." The article is written, *con amore*, with a warmth of enthusiasm for the country, and with a glow of admiration of the works under review, showing how magnetically the spirit of the writing of William Howitt can work upon a congenial heart and mind. In the *Quarterly Review* for July, 1881, the same works are noticed in a similar spirit, showing that, in the course of forty years, their freshness and graphic truth had not vanished, having within them, indeed, the perennial brightness of Nature herself.

the lads of the village, who followed him—his trusty and faithful followers, willing to dare any enterprise under so dauntless a leader—that his most hairbreadth escapades took place: such as when he climbed to the topmost bough of some lofty old elm in search of a magpie's nest, or was held by his village comrades by the heels over a yawning mouth of an old coal-pit, in order that he might reach down into a concealed blackbird's nest. No wonder that his mother endured agonies of fear for the safety of her "little Billy," or that he returned home, occasionally, in so ragged a condition from encounters with "brush and briar," as to be threatened, henceforth and for ever, to wear a penitential garment of leather! Seeing, however, that George Fox, himself, the apostle of "the Friends," is recorded to have gone about in the early days of his mission precisely so attired, this threat may have failed to terrify little William, who, throughout life, gloried to walk in the footsteps of Fox. Certain it is that the bird-nesting passion continued a characteristic of William Howitt throughout life; not, however, that in his maturer years he rifled the lovely and fairy-like nests for their eggs, but was wont always to tell boys who accompanied him "only to look at the eggs, and admire their exceeding beauty—beauty as of the rarest gem, formed by the Creative Spirit—or at most *only to take one egg* as a specimen, and leave the rest for the old mother-bird."

This bird-nesting in all manner of places; bathing, swimming, boating, fishing, cowslip-gathering in spring, and nutting in autumn; sliding and skating in winter, and the glory of the deep snows, made his childish days one long delightful holiday; riding on his pony, "Peter Scroggins," far and wide—on Peter Scroggins he rode all through the Peak and into Yorkshire when he was taken to the great Yorkshire school—riding also when at home, all by himself, to his great delight, on this pony, to the Peak, sent by his father to pay the miners on his lead-mines, the money concealed about him in a bag, it being thought that no thieves could suspect so little a man of carrying so big a treasure. Thus riding, past solitary old

halls, past great waters, and amongst the bleak, silent hills, what inward joy was his! His young heart absorbed the silent glory all around, to give it back again in his writings with added brightness. Rambling about with his uncle at the Fall when he went out shooting and coursing—for, Quaker though he was, this last remaining Tantum, like his ancestors, was as keen a sportsman as any to be found all the country round. Learning thus, everywhere, knowledge of rural people, rural sports, and rural labour; working as a holiday joy with his father's men on the farm, learning to plough, to mow, to make hay and to stack it, to reap corn and to bind it up with the reapers—to say nothing of the amusement of gleanings with the gleaners, and bestowing his gleanings upon the weakest, youngest, or oldest gleaner in the field—the boy soon understood all the labours of a farm. I well recall, during a summer sojourn in Gloucestershire in his late life, his astonishing a reaper by taking up his sickle, as if for examination, and then reaping away with a wonderful zest and enjoyment to the peasant's blank amaze. Also, in still later years in Tyrol, to the equal surprise of a group of country folk, his mowing vigorously amongst them with one of their curiously long-handled scythes.

Then, too, there was the race of colliers, with their black faces, black clothes, black coal-pits, life of darkness and danger underground; jolly life above on the pit's mouth with their droll stories and yet droller nicknames; scattered about in the village the far less robust stocking-weavers, or "stockingers," as they are familiarly called, hanging over their ceaselessly noisy looms in their close low rooms—all fed the strong, eager-hearted boy's awakening imagination—all called forth his pity and sympathy with the weary, monotonous life of toilers for their daily pittance of bread. "We delighted," he says, "to watch the progress of all handicrafts in the place; there was not a trade in the village (from the miller to the blacksmith, carpenter included) but furnished us with many an hour's observation, and with a great deal of useful knowledge thus casually picked up." At home, in the bowery old garden,

there was the ceaseless joy of gardening; in the out-buildings of the farm there was the keeping of all manner of domestic animals and birds, the boys' own special property. By the fireside, with delighted faces bent over the volumes of Natural History of Thomas Bewick,\* studying their inimitable head and tail-pieces, each containing a history of rural life—without doors, amidst the woods and fields and brook-sides, in spots of true Bewickean picturesqueness—were the young brothers imbuing their souls with an enthusiastic love of natural history. Woods and fields were their museums of living specimens, and their halls of study. Not a bird's note, not a bird's nest, no haunt of creature in air, land, or water, but became familiar to them. To Godfrey, the youngest, no habitat of rare plant, no habitat of grub, fly, or beetle, for miles round, remained unknown. Every aspect of the seasons, every changing aspect of the heavens, by day or night, every atmospheric change as it affected the myriad tiny dwellers in the foliage and flowers, in the earth or sky of the landscape around was noted by the brothers—nothing fell unheeded out of their memories, and in due course was given forth again by William and his younger brother Richard to the world in poetry, and poetic prose; by Godfrey, the youngest, in his labours as a Botanist and Entomologist, not unknown to his generation of “collectors;”—labours which added a lustre of scientific grace to his memory, still green in Melbourne, Australia, as one of the most benevolent of physicians.

In a faded drab-cover, the pages grown yellow, and the ink faded into a pallid brown, there exists a little manuscript written by my father in these early days—a plaintive phantom from a vanished world! Its author must have been aged

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\* “History of British Birds.” The figures engraved on wood by T. Bewick, 3 vols. Newcastle, 1797. Those head and tail-pieces in the Natural Histories, true gems of art, were the picture galleries of my father's childhood. In later life he was one of the first writers who drew the popular attention to their exceeding truthfulness to Nature, and to the inventive genius which they display. The recent Exhibition in Bond Street of the collected works of Thomas Bewick will be fresh in the memory of our readers.

eight or ten years. It is the first outcome of his enthusiasm for natural history; "the child being father of the man," it is an embryo of the later "Book of the Seasons," a book in its day very popular, and running through I know not how many editions, one of his most successful books, but now out of print. His first essay in verse, inscribed to his mother, is still extant in manuscript equally yellow and faded. It is an "Address to Spring," evidently formed on the model of Thomson's "Seasons." Some "admiring friend," unknown to the young bard and his family, sent it to the *Monthly Magazine*, the same periodical in which Lord Byron's first production appeared, where it had the honour to be printed.

#### AT THE FRIENDS' PUBLIC SCHOOL AT ACKWORTH.

According to the published List of Ackworth scholars, William Howitt entered this school in the year 1806. It must have been shortly after writing the "Address to Spring," lovingly inscribed to his mother, possibly in the grief of his impending separation of three years—for once at that school in the old days no hope of "going home for the holidays." If the parents yearned to see their children, to their children they must travel, and see them at the great annual gathering of the Religious Society in that far-off Yorkshire locality.

A chronicle of these school-days with incidents of school-life amongst a set of quaint, old world people, in a somewhat primitive scholastic establishment, will be found in "The Boys' Country Book," where it forms not the least original portion of this picturesque chapter of his life.

Later on he was at school at Tamworth, placed with a young, active-minded master of decidedly a scientific turn of mind, not to say eccentric, and who, to the infinite delight of the youths, some of them scarcely younger than their master, employed them as assistants in his experiments in Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, etc., for lectures which he was wont to deliver in the town, and also in the development of his various mechanical inventions.

Thus, it must be confessed, in no very systematic manner

did my father's early scholastic education progress. His *real* education came later through his innate love of books and of literature, which had from his earliest years made him an omnivorous reader. This was an appetite which ceased only with life. He was blessed in the possession of a retentive memory, which held fast, once and for all, whatsoever interested his mind, whether it were what he read, heard, or observed.

From youth upwards he possessed a power and a delight in acquiring foreign languages. Every now and again throughout life, even into old age, he would be drawn into the study of some fresh language, with every fresh foreign tongue opening out for himself a new and endless world of enjoyment in its stores of literature and the thoughts peculiar to its people. His love of study was his real education, his truest instructor. This inborn nature of the student balanced the equally inborn desire for and love of change of scene, of movements and of activity in the free air and sunshine—this counter-balancing of tendencies brought about an harmonious union of mental with physical health.

To return to his mother, from whom we have seen that he inherited his strong attachment to rural-life. Equally from her did he receive his reverend admiration of the grand old poetry of the Holy Scriptures; equally his love of English poetry and of all poets. She had fed her children, from the cradle upwards, upon the sweet honey-comb of poesy, not alone from the poetry of the Psalms, and the divinely beautiful parables of our Lord, but also in the form of verses from her trinity of secular poets—Milton, Thomson, Cowper.\*

Equally from his mother did he receive his baptism in the clear waters of the "Free Spirit"—which made him a Liberal for life, both in religion and politics; this, through his mother's

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\* It carries the imagination curiously into the past, to recollect that, in those early infant days, William Cowper was *the modern poet*—an innovation in the poetical realm. He was still living amongst men, though rapidly fading from earth, wrapt in deep clouds of dejection. Neither had Robert Burns yet passed away.

devotion, to the spiritual Christianity of her ancestors as set forth in the writings of the Early Friends, and in the records of their lives of patient suffering, obedient to the influence and monition of the Holy Spirit. The innermost doctrine of the Friends is the "cultus" of the Holy Ghost—"the Leader unto all Truth—the Comforter."

All these good and perfect gifts had he received through the being and influence of his mother—and yet one thing more—his susceptibility to the influence of the Invisible, his faith in the over-shadowing of the Supernatural.

His mother was a seeress, endowed with glimpses into the world of spirit, and the spiritual *aura* around her, and her memory, powerfully influenced the future of her son.

Also the house in which he was brought up from infancy was said to be—*haunted!*

In 1840, in the "Rural Life in England," vol. i. p. 211, writing about the "Terrors of a solitary Farm-house," William Howitt thus refers to the

#### HAUNTED HOUSE AT HEANOR.

"I myself have seen such sights and heard such sounds as would puzzle Dr. Brewster himself, with all his natural magic, to account for. In an old house in which my father lived when I was a boy, we had such a capering of the chairs, or what seemed such, in the rooms over our heads; such aerial music in a certain chimney corner, as if Puck himself were playing on the bag-pipes; such running of black cats up the bed-curtains and down again and disappearing no one knew how; and such a variety of similar supernatural exhibitions, as was truly amusing. . . . After all, I know not whether the world of sprites and hobgoblins may not assume a greater latitude of action and revelation in their out-of-the-world places than in populous ones; whether the Lars and Lemures, the Fairies, Robin-good-fellows, Hobthrushes, and Bargests may not linger about the regions where there is a certain quietness, a simplicity of heart and faith, and ample old rooms, attics, galleries, and grim halls to range over, seeing that they hate cities, and knowledge that attends upon them."



It is to the same early home—the house is still standing and in possession of a member of the family\*—that he refers in “The Boys’ Country Book,” and which was the scene of so many childish adventures recorded in that pleasant chronicle of his early years. He thus describes the house in its original state when in his infancy it was purchased by his father with land attached:—

“My father’s house was a large old-fashioned place, with long dark passages, wide halls, half-a-dozen staircases, with closets and hiding-holes under them that were awful to my young imagination, with a step up, or a step down to every room in the house. The chambers hung with paper of a large pattern—scriptural scenes, and pastoral scenes, flocks of sheep and shepherds and shepherdesses, and haymakers with rakes and forks almost as long as real ones; and dressing-rooms with paper all covered with birds of paradise—such creatures as were never seen in paradise or out of it, with tails that were curiously linked to the heads of their neighbours, sitting on fanciful pedestals, with scroll-like feet running here and there, till the whole pattern was an inextricable entanglement. One side of the house was all glazed, having at some remote time evidently formed a conservatory; and there might be seen a large old-fashioned wilderness of a garden, bounded by a dark orchard and pond. The house had, besides, the reputation of being haunted.”

In my father’s autobiography written for his children—and still in MS.—he again refers to these hauntings of the old house.

“I saw and heard there,” he says, “sights and sounds of various kinds during the winter evenings—saw movement of furniture without visible causes. I have seen chairs lift up

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\* By a singular coincidence, in the old family-house at Heanor, the youngest of the six brothers—Francis Tantum Howitt—departed this life at the self-same hour and day, at the self-same moment it is believed, that his brother William Howitt died at Rome. They were the last of their generation. This singular circumstance of the two brothers, so widely separated, simultaneously passing away, was referred to in the local newspapers, and called forth, I have understood, several poetical effusions.

their feet against the wall, and so remain, every one in the room observing the fact. At times we would have all the furniture in a chamber overhead in riotous commotion, as if some one were throwing it about, but on rushing up to the room with a light, we found all still and in order. At other times music of a plaintive and peculiar character would sound in a corner of the kitchen on one side of the great open fireplace. My mother also repeatedly said that she saw things pass athwart the house; at one time a greyhound going out through the glass of the window without breaking it, at another, the figure of some strange person. On my father pulling down the very old half of the house, with its strange passages and glass wall, there was found, under the floor of one room, a great quantity of old boards and other timber from the church, pieces of carved seats, etc., put there to prevent the running about of rats. The repairs of the chancel of the church was an obligation of the estate which my father had bought, and probably this wood had been put under the floor on the occasion of such repairs. It was immediately thought that the discovery of church-timber explained the cause of the hauntings, and, singularly enough, no such anomalous noises or appearances ever afterwards recurred. Sceptics would say, 'Yes, this idea of the cause and its removal removed the real origin of the supposed hauntings,' but the sceptic will please to remember that, whilst the hauntings really went on, not a soul in the place had the least knowledge of the church-wood lying under the floor. It had been put there long before that generation existed, and there was no tradition of any such fact. Possibly my mother's mediumistic powers had more to do with the phenomena than the church-timber; but the fact remains that, with the removal of that strange old part of the house, the anomalous events ceased for ever."\*

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\* It is in accord with accounts of other haunted-houses, that the hauntings cease with the destruction of the old-places—or haunted portions of them. Experience of modern spirit-manifestations leads to belief, that material objects which have become *charged* with emanations from earth-bound spirits facilitate their manifestation. Thus destroy these material objects, and with them, probably, vanishes their persistent haunting.

In this old house, in William Howitt's very early days, occurred several events, which, from their supernatural character, left an indelible impression of blended mystery and reality upon the child's memory, and, doubtless, tended in no small degree, many years later, to open his mind to the reception of the phenomena of modern "Spiritual Manifestations."

Phœbe Howitt was, as we have already seen, a seeress into the invisible world; it was thus that she beheld

#### THE GHOST OF HER MURDERED BROTHER.

An account of this singular circumstance was given in "The Footfalls" \* of Mr. Robert Dale Owen, by William Howitt. He thus elsewhere writes of the event,—

"My mother had two brothers, Francis and Richard. The younger, Richard, I knew well, for he lived to an old age. The elder, Francis, was, at the time of the occurrence which I am about to report, a gay young man about twenty, unmarried; handsome, frank, affectionate, and extremely beloved by all classes throughout that part of the country. He is described in that age of powder and pigtails, as wearing his auburn hair flowing in ringlets on his shoulders, like another Absalom, and was much admired, as well for his personal grace as for the life and gaiety of his manners. One fine, calm afternoon, my mother, shortly after a confinement, but perfectly convalescent, was lying in bed, enjoying, from her window, the sense of summer beauty and repose; a bright sky above, and the quiet village before her. In this state she was gladdened by hearing footsteps which she took to be those of her brother Frank, as he was familiarly called, approaching the chamber door. The visitor knocked and entered. The foot of the bed was towards the door, and the curtains at the foot, notwithstanding the season, were drawn to prevent any draught. Her brother parted them, and looked in upon her. His gaze was earnest and destitute of its usual cheerfulness, and he spoke not a

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\* *Vide* "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World," with narrative illustrations, by Robert Dale Owen. Philadelphia: Lippincott & Co., 1860. P. 373.

word. ‘My dear Frank,’ said my mother, ‘how glad I am to see you! Come round to the bedside: I wish to have some talk with you!’ He closed the curtains as complying; but, instead of doing so, my mother, to her astonishment, heard him leave the room, close the door behind him, and begin to descend the stairs. Greatly amazed, she hastily rang, and when her maid appeared, she bade her call her brother back. The girl replied that she had not seen him enter the house. But my mother insisted, saying, ‘He was here but this instant. Run! quick! Call him—haste! I must see him!’ The girl hurried away, but, after a time, returned, saying that she could learn nothing of him anywhere; nor had any one in or about the house seen him either enter or depart.

“Now my father’s home stood at the bottom of the village, and close to the high road, which was quite straight; so that anyone passing along it must have been seen for a much longer period than had elapsed. The girl said she had looked up and down the road, then searched the garden—a large old-fashioned one, with shady walks. But neither in the garden nor on the road was he to be seen. She had enquired at the nearest cottages in the village, but no one had noticed him pass. Whilst my mother lay pondering upon this circumstance, there was heard a sudden running about, and excited talking in the village street. My mother listened: it increased, though up to that time the village had been profoundly still; and she became convinced that something very unusual had occurred. Finally my mother’s alarm and earnest entreaties drew from her nurse and family the terrible truth that her brother had just been stabbed at the top of the village, and killed on the spot.

“The melancholy event had thus occurred. My uncle, Francis Tantum, had been dining at Shipley Hall with Mr. Edward Miller Mundy, Member of Parliament for the county. Shipley Hall lay off to the left of the village as you look up the main street from my father’s, and about a mile distant from it; while Heanor Fall, my uncle’s residence, was situated to the right; the road from the one country-house to the

other, crossing nearly at right angles the upper portion of the village street, at a point where stood one of the two village inns, the Admiral Rodney, respectably kept by the Widow H—ks. I remember her well—a tall, fine-looking woman, who must have been handsome in her youth. She had one only child, a son, then scarcely twenty. He was a good-looking, brisk young fellow, and bore a very fair character. He must, however, as the event showed, have been of a very hasty temper.

“ Francis Tantum, riding home from Shipley Hall after the early country dinner of that day, somewhat elated, it may be, with wine, stopped at the Widow’s inn, and bade the son bring him a glass of ale. As the latter turned to obey, my uncle, giving the youth a smart switch across the back with his riding-whip, cried out in his lively, joking way,—‘ Now be quick, Dick ; be quick ! ’

“ The young man, instead of receiving the playful stroke as a jest, took it as an insult. He rushed into the house, snatched up a carving-knife, and darting back into the street, stabbed my uncle to the heart, as he sat on his horse, so that he fell dead on the instant, in the road.

“ The sensation throughout the quiet village may be imagined. The inhabitants, who idolised the murdered man, were prevented from taking summary vengeance on the homicide, only by the constables carrying him off to the office of the nearest magistrate. Young H—ks was tried at the next Derby Assizes (but justly, no doubt, taking into view the sudden irritation caused by the blow), he was convicted of manslaughter only, and after a few months’ imprisonment, returned to the village, where, notwithstanding the strong popular feeling against him, he continued to keep the inn. He is still present to my recollection, a quiet, retiring man—never guilty of any irregularity of conduct, and seemingly bearing about with him a silent blight upon his life. So long as that generation lived, the church-bells of the village were regularly tolled on the anniversary of his death.

“ On comparing the circumstances and the exact time at

which each occurred, the fact was substantiated, that the apparition presented itself to my mother almost instantly after her brother had received the fatal stroke.\*

There belongs to this morning-twilight period of little William's existence an incident of a touching and spiritualistic nature, which, often recounted by his mother, made an impression scarcely less profound upon his childish memory than the above ghost-story. It relates to the death of his maternal grandfather, Francis Tantum, the father of the young man whose tragic end has been just recorded. In it he beheld another instance—

#### HOW MUCH STRONGER IS LOVE THAN DEATH.

“My grandfather,” writes William Howitt, “was a man of mild and poetic temperament, extremely attached to a country life, and to all the beauties of nature. He had often said, that if he might choose his death, it should be to pass away quietly on some vernal bank on some fine moonlight night. He had a friend, Jonathan Dunn, living in the village of Losecoe, about a mile from his house. For many years he and his friend had scarcely passed a day on which they had not paid a visit to each other. The way between their two homes lay through a deep winding lane, or along a picturesque valley, upon the bank of a wandering brook amidst woodlands, and by a large

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\* To her grandchildren (myself amongst them) Phoebe Howitt in her advanced age more than once related this ghostly experience. On one occasion, in an impressive manner, she bestowed on me an old-fashioned oval brooch worn by her luckless brother when stabbed. On the gold mounting of its back and edge, it bore the indelible stain of his blood; on the front was seen a small figure of “Justice,” with bandaged eyes, in one hand holding a drawn sword, in the other the typical pair of scales. Some details of the ghost story I noted in a book of childish “*Memorabilia*.” This little manuscript turned up the other day; looking it over, I found one detail which had escaped my father's memory and my own. She referred to having, on an occasion previous to the murder of her brother, beheld him also in vision during his life-time, and when he was, as to the body, many miles separated from her. Like other seers, she was therefore accustomed to behold the spirits of the living, as well as those of the so-called dead. A strong magnetic link of affection united the brother and sister.

water. The two friends, now grown old, traversed these familiar scenes with unabated attachment to their beauties. One night, after Jonathan Dunn had been in bed some time, his wife awoke him, saying that his friend Tantum was knocking at the door. The old gentleman listened, and said sure enough it was Tantum's knock. He arose, opened the window, but saw no one at the door, though it was a night bright with moonlight. He called out 'Frank!' My grandfather's name was also Francis. But no answer was returned. He put on some of his clothes, went to the door, and looked up the street and down the street, but no one was to be seen. He returned to his chamber, saying that it was very strange—certainly it was his friend's knock—yet where had he vanished to? Whilst speaking, the knock, loud and distinct, was repeated. 'That is Frank, and no mistake!' he exclaimed again, and went to the window, but could see no one; called, but obtained no answer. Upon this, being greatly disturbed, and saying that he was sure something had happened to his friend, he completed his dressing, and declared that he would go to the Fall to enquire. His wife earnestly endeavoured to dissuade him, but in vain. He set out, and had advanced half-way, when he saw his friend seated on a bank, and gazing fixedly at the moon. Approaching, he asked what had brought him out at that hour of the night? There was no answer, and his friend appearing to gaze with a glaring eye at the moon, he touched him in alarm on the shoulder, when he rolled quietly over on one side on the bank. He was dead, and appeared to have been so some time. He had died exactly as he had always wished to die; on the way to his friend's house also, and though unable to reach it in the body, it was clear that he had not taken his final departure without calling to give him a token of his remembrance. These facts are as well-known to my family as anything that ever occurred; they are such as have taken place too frequently in all ages and in all nations, and in numbers of families in the country, to admit of any more doubt than that the sun rises and sets, and that the seasons pursue their accustomed courses."

## LITTLE WILLIAM IS HIMSELF SPIRIT-GUIDED.

“My paternal grandfather” (continues William Howitt in his autobiography) “died on the 6th of November, 1799, when I must have been about seven years of age. I remember my father coming home much distressed. He had just witnessed his father’s decease. He sat down on announcing this event to my mother, and gave way to a paroxysm of tears. I was greatly affected by the scene, and was certainly moved by some inward influence beyond my own childish mind. I went quietly away into a distant room, got a chair, and reached up to a book-case containing a large family Bible, which I took down and carried,—a considerable load for me.—into the room where my father was sitting sunk in his grief. The book seemed to open almost of itself, and I began to read the first thing that I cast my eyes upon. It proved to be the 14th chapter of the Gospel of St. John. I read, ‘Let not your hearts be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.’\* I shut the book, and was carrying it away when my father stopped me, took the book, opened it and read the words in evident astonishment, and then said, ‘I have never been impressed before, by these remarkable words.’ He dried up his tears and seemed wonderfully comforted. I remember the whole transaction as though it were but yesterday. From what I know now, I see that it was an act of spirit influence. It was always remembered in the family with a feeling of wonder, approaching to awe.”

## LITTLE WILLIAM BECOMES A SLEEP-WALKER.

“About the age of ten years I was,” continues my father, “for a considerable time a sleep-walker. I well remember the circumstances. Soon after falling into slumber, I used to get

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\* Chosen as epitaph for William Howitt’s grave in Rome, in memory of this incident.



up, being still profoundly asleep, but with my eyes open, and conscious of all about me. In this state I would go down stairs, making a moaning noise, as if in anxious quest of something. I remember, through the staircase window, seeing the lights from a shop of stocking-weavers, in a cottage, on the opposite side of the road, hearing the sound of their *frames*—as they there called, their looms—and often of their singing. I used to enter the room where my parents were sitting, sometimes at supper; and once I remember my father put a roasted potato into my hand, of which I took no notice. They were accustomed to awaken me by a shake, and then, after a stare of astonishment, I was wont to decamp upstairs again as fast as I could. At length one night my father took his riding-whip, and awoke me by a sharp cut with it. The shock which I received from this seemed to break the habit, for I recollect no further occurrence of the kind. Some people might suppose that I was shamming on these occasions, but my sleep-walking was real enough; though I had a consciousness of the things and persons about me, I was as under a spell, and could not avoid the ghostly walking; nor was I able to recover my waking-condition by any effort of my own. Besides this somnambulism, of which phenomenon, at that time, I had never read anything, in common with all the household, I saw and heard strange things.”

The somnambulant condition developing in youth is a not infrequent sign of the possession of that faculty of introvision, of clairvoyance, and clairaudience for the things and sounds of the so-called invisible world, which, for want of more exact nomenclature, we Spiritualists of late years, have termed “Mediumship.”

With this somnambulant state frequently commences clairvoyant dreaming. This dreaming of clear-seeing dreams, and also of singular dreams of a highly poetical, symbolic, and even prophetic character, accompanied my father throughout life. To several of these, in due course, I shall have occasion to recur.

I would embody the spirit of William Howitt's early years

by giving, in his own words, praise to the earthly guardian-angel of his youth, and

PRaise TO ALL GOOD MOTHERS.

“ And what scene, except the brightest of the eternal Heaven itself, can ever cast into comparative dimness the paradise of a boyhood in the country, under the pure and angelic guardianship of a mother. In my own heart, such a time shines on through all the gladness or the sorrows of life, as a holy and beautiful existence, belonging rather to a prior world than to this. God in his goodness has built me a house, and peopled it with hearts that make existence to me precious and beautiful; but even with the fairest hour of that domestic peace and affection, which no thankfulness can repay to the Divine Giver, still gleams the serenest and most joyful sunshine of those days, when around the native home lay greenest fields, golden with flowers, murmuring with bees, musical with birds, and in some odorous part of the old garden, or under some orchard tree, I sate and listened to that voice, and gazed on that beloved face, which made the charm of the young world to me. There were walls of crystalline peace, hedges of rosy and innocent joy hemming in and guarding that true Eden of human life from all jeopardy and frostiness; wings of angels hovered around in the sunshine, and wafted airs of delicious soothing on the nightly bed. There is not a bird that sings—there is not a flower that blows in garden or in field—there is not a creature that belongs to the rural home, or enlivens the country by its presence or its voice that does not call up that day of paradisaical felicity, and the one ever loving, ever gentle, ever benignant being, that made that felicity perfect. He that has been blessed with a worthy mother can never disbelieve in the being of a God, or the futurity of virtue. The peace and the glory of Heaven have received him into this world; the hand of angels has sown his early way with flowers of beauty from the sanctuary of God, fair beyond all mortal creation; the wisdom and purity of the Divine Nature has been shed for him on the maternal heart in measureless

affluence ; the glorious hopes of immortality have been made actualities on her tongue ; the triumphs and rewards of goodness have arisen before him in the very tones of her voice as she sang to him the songs that stirred her own soul, like glowing faces and forms of seraphs, whose nature and mission he could not then comprehend, but saw and felt that they were beautiful. Yes, when a true mother walks amongst her young children, there walks as actual a spirit of Divine love and loveliness as ever trod the pavement of Eternity itself.\*—(“ Visit to the Home of Thomas Bewick,” “ Visits to Remarkable Places ”—2nd series, 1841.)

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\* In the character of Madam Dorrington of the Dene, in the novel of that name (Colburn, 1851), he has sought to paint a delicate and almost “ Pre-Raphaelite ” portrait of his mother and her surroundings. Her devotion to the sick and the suffering, in mind and body, amongst the poor of her neighbourhood, her passionate love of her children, her sympathy with the animal creation, her delight in the beauty of nature, and her spiritual piety, are all drawn from the life.

## CHAPTER II.

“Our fathers find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors.”—*Sir Thomas Browne’s “Hydriotaphia.”*

IN announcing the death of William Howitt, at Rome, on March 3, 1879, the *Standard* newspaper, in a leading article on the event, observes: “It is possible that to the generation now growing to maturity ‘the Howitts’ are only a tradition and a name. History is made so rapidly now-a-days; reputations are so ephemeral and evanescent; if the work endures, the worker is so speedily and completely forgotten, that the man who does not die actually in harness might, so far as the recognition of the world is concerned, have almost ceased to exist, when the last token of his energies was given to the public. A man scarcely less indefatigable in his way than Mr. Gladstone, a prolific author of all kinds of topics, a keen and not an uninfluential politician in an era before the Reform Bill of 1832, has died tranquilly at Rome. Forty years ago, when yet the Manchester School did not exist, William Howitt, even then a man of middle age, was considered in some quarters to have a great political future before him. He had written a book, designed as a blow to sacerdotal pretensions, called ‘The History of Priestcraft;’ he had produced a variety of works showing the most thorough interest in, and devotion to, the social welfare of the masses. He was a strong Protestant and an honest philanthropist,” etc.

Reputations are indeed so “evanescent” that in composing these necessarily brief memoirs of my father’s life, I shall here prefer, when speaking of the work which he accomplished in divers directions, and of the mark which he left upon his own generation, to quote, when possible, opinion expressed publicly by well-known organs, or writers, lest I should not unnaturally

be accused of the exaggeration of affection: when, also, narrating the story of his life, shall seek, so much as may be, that he himself shall tell his own tale.

So various, however, were his literary labours, so incessant his mental and physical activity, that I feel embarrassed by the very richness of the material before me. Fully to depict this man, who during the last twenty years of his long life came forth prominently as the champion and apostle of a new, and, consequently, unpopular truth—my special object in writing this memorial—a championship and apostleship which, in the sight of an unsympathetic world, throw their shadow, rather than their light, upon his previous reputation and works—it will be needful to name these various works, and to briefly explain their character. This must be done, also, in sequence and connection with the story of his life, to which we will now return.

#### HIS MARRIAGE.

In his twenty-eighth year William Howitt married Mary Botham, a young "Friend," some years younger than himself, who, like himself, came of "the stock of the martyrs," and who, born in the Forest of Dean, Gloucester, had, until her marriage, spent her childhood and youth in the pleasantly situated little town of Uttoxeter, in Staffordshire. Of the idyl of her youth it is not for me, here, to speak. It has been remarked that amidst the Society of Friends, amongst whom, until of late years, the cultivation of music was forbidden, the cultivation of poetry appears to have been specially fostered; the love of harmony, innate in all gentle and cultivated natures, thus finding a needful and natural outlet. Mary Botham had begun to write poetry almost as soon as she could write at all. Verses of hers, in manuscript, however—for nothing written by the future authoress appeared in print until after her marriage—having been lent to a mutual friend, fell into the hands of a young Quaker-poet—no other person than her future husband. These verses, admired by him, brought about a friendship which resulted in a union of fifty-six years, full of domestic peace and unceasing literary labour,

and which, blending their names together, made them as the "Corn-Law Rhymer" once remarked, as difficult in thought to dissever "as the heads of William and Mary on the face of an old coin."

In writing a biographical sketch of the one, it is difficult, therefore, not equally to mention the other, the history of their life and of their work, continually, so to speak, "dove-tailing."

To omit in these sketches of William Howitt, as beheld in his "Homes and Haunts," a less than passing glimpse of Mary, would be omission indeed—Mary, the constant fellow-labourer, companion, sympathiser, inspirer—the more than wife, and the more than friend. Suffice it now, however, to give as a description of her, and of her influence over all who came within her sphere, personal or literary, the words of Mr. R. H. Horne, in his article upon "Mary Howitt and her Poetry," printed many years ago in "The New Spirit of the Age," in which he says, quoting the beautiful lines of old Chaucer, that she was ever—

"—— so discreet and fair of eloquence,  
So benign and so *digne* of reverence,  
And could so the people's heart embrace,  
That each her loveth that looketh on her face.  
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And all was conscience and tender heart."

#### EARLY MARRIED LIFE.

The first year of their married life was passed in Staffordshire, where they conjointly wrote a poetical volume, entitled, "The Forest Minstrel," followed within a year or two by another, "The Desolation of Eyam and other Poems." Their names, within the next few years, began to be more widely known through their contributions, both in prose and verse, to the "Annuals," the popular "gift books" of the period, and they were then gradually brought into friendly intercourse, by letter or by personal acquaintance, with various of their literary contemporaries, amongst whom we may mention Mrs.

Hemans, Miss Mitford, Miss Caroline Bowles (afterwards Mrs. Southey), Wordsworth, "L. E. L.," Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, Alaric and Zillah Watts, etc., etc.

In the year 1823—at that day an unheard of achievement—the young married pair had made

#### A PEDESTRIAN TOUR THROUGH SCOTLAND.

Fired with enthusiasm for the writings of "The Great Unknown"—for as yet Scott had not unveiled the authorship of his novels—William and Mary set forth to visit the stern and beautiful scenery of this land of romance, with their knapsack strapped on William's shoulders, and gay, young hearts, brimful of romance and poetry, beating within their breasts. This was their first personal contact with mountain and lake, waterfall and morass; and all was beheld through the mingled atmospheres of youth and poetry. Life to them was new—Scotland was new to all England. The Highlands yet remained an almost barbaric region, untransformed into the ordinary aspects of modern existence, by the then undreamed of shoals of annual visitors from the South; in ever-increasing numbers, to be attracted by the loadstone of the wonder-working Waverley Novels. In a local newspaper, William and Mary, upon their return, printed an account of their Scotch tour. Well worth reading is this simple and unpretending journal, lighted up here and there, amidst its word-pictures of prose description, with graceful, tender, or lively verse, like gleams of sunlight glinting transiently upon the deep lines of the solemn mountain landscape.

The life of the people, the condition and appearance of the country, as depicted in this journal, remind the readers of the Scotland described in Sir Walter's introductions to his novels, rather than of the modern Scotland as known to the traveller of to-day. Our pedestrians had been so fortunate as even to catch a glimpse of "The Great Unknown" himself, as he sat in his carriage, whilst post-horses were changing, reading his newspaper. They also had their full share of danger. Having, with the temerity of inexperience, ascended Ben

Lomond without a guide, and at a season—in May—when, at its best, the ascent was not without a certain risk of bad weather, a cloud descended upon the mountain. Enveloped in it, they wandered for some hours, making ceaseless and ineffectual attempts to descend on the opposite side of the mountain. At length the cloud breaking, for a moment, revealed to the wanderers the frightful fact, that they were standing upon the very edge of a chasm, the depth of which they could only just discern through the vapour, as it was manifested by the gleaming white wreaths of snow, resting upon the ledges of rock beneath them. One single step farther, and they must have been inevitably dashed to pieces upon the rocks beneath!

In this instance of salvation from imminent danger, as in several later ones occurring to William Howitt whilst in the Australian “bush,” the idea has not infrequently suggested itself to the writer—who firmly believes in the beneficent mission of guardian-angels and ministering-spirits—as to whether the cloud-veil might not have been upraised and their feet arrested on the brink of the precipice, by some benign attendant-spirit. Their Scotch-tour terminated, in 1823 commenced their

#### LIFE IN NOTTINGHAM.

In the celebrated “Noctes Ambrosianæ”\* of *Blackwood*, for April, 1831, where “Christopher North” and the “Ettrick Shepherd” are made to converse regarding “Quaker Poets,” “the Shepherd” asks: “Is Nottingham far intil England, sir? For I would really like to pay the Hooitts a visit this summer. Thae Quakers are, what ane micht scarcely opine frae first principles, a maist poetical Christian seek. . . . And, fecnally, the Hooitts—the three Hooitts—na, there may be mair o’ them for aught I ken, but I’se answer for William and Mary, husband and wife (and oh, but they’re weel met!) And eke for Richard (can he be their brither?)—and wha’s

\* The Works of Professor Wilson, edited by his son-in-law, Professor Ferrier. Vol. III. April, 1831.



this was tellin’ me about anither brither o’ Wullie’s, a Dr. Godfrey Hooitt, ane o’ the best botanists in a’ England, and a desperate beetle-hunter.”

NORTH.—“Entomologist, James—a man of science.”

SHEPHERD.—“The twa married Hooitts, I love exceedingly, sir. What they write canna fail o’ being poetry, even the most middlin’ o’t, for it’s aye wi’ them the ebullition o’ their ain feeling, and their ain fancy; and whenever that’s the case a bonny word or twa will drap itsel’ intil ilka pome, and sae they touch and sune win a body’s heart; and frae readin’ their beuckies, ane wishes to ken theirsels, and, indeed, do ken theirsels, for their personal characters are revealed in their volumes; and methinks I see Wullie and Mary”——

NORTH.—“Strolling quietly at eve and morn by the silver Trent—one of the sweetest streams in England, James.”

Let us now do what the “Shepherd” desired to do, visit the “Hooitts” and see “Wullie and Mary” “strolling quietly at eve and morn by the silver Trent.”

Yes, and leading studious yet active and sweetly domestic lives in the old house in the Market-place.

In Nottingham, William carried on for some years, business as a chemist, his “brither” Richard at first being with him. Godfrey, the still younger brother, “the best botanist in England and the desperate beetle-hunter,” according to “the Ettrick Shepherd,” having, at the earnest suggestion of William, matriculated at Edinburgh, taken his degree of M.D. there, and then settled at Nottingham also. Thus the three younger brothers began life together in a brotherly sort of combination, promising to carry out in these practical forms the love of medicine and the healing art so conspicuous in the life of their mother, of whom, in her amateur character of doctress of the sick for miles around her home, I have already spoken.\*

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\* In a pleasant book by Dr. Spencer T. Hall, entitled, “Remarkable People whom I have known,” is given a description of Mrs. Howitt, of Heanor, when already advanced in life, administering medicine and food to a crowd of poor people. He speaks of “her active, little figure, already bowed with age,”

From memoranda of my father's I perceive that he once entertained serious thoughts as to whether he should not study medicine, and thus become a physician. He says that his mind was, as to this matter, much tossed to and fro. The imaginative sensitiveness of his temperament and his benevolence both urged him towards, and equally deterred him from, the needful studies. He loved to alleviate suffering, possessed a sort of instinctive power to do this (of this I have known instances repeatedly in his later life), but he had as equally an instinctive horror of the needful anatomical and physiological preparatory studies. Above all—and this seems to have at last given the power of decision to him—he was seized with a conscientious dread lest his passionate love of general literature and of authorship, together with his innate tendency to the introverted life of the student, might not have been dangerous for the safety of his patients. With this divided mind he, therefore, wisely chose the path of business. All his leisure he would devote to literature. After a few years he naturally found that he had entirely merged into the professional author, and quitted, therefore, Nottingham for the neighbourhood of London.

But as yet we have not finished with his life in the old house in the Market-place. Before, however, transporting my readers in fancy thither I would say a few words relative to the other "Hooitts," Richard and Godfrey. They also walking in the pathways of their own individuality, and always much attached to their brother William, ultimately left Nottingham, shortly after he had done so; and were amongst the earliest settlers in the now prosperous and populous city of Melbourne, Victoria, at that day called Port-Philip. They also became, through the writings of William—at a much later date—deeply interested in modern Spiritual-manifestations, and died be-

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tripping here and tripping there with an almost youthful step; now with clever hands binding up a wound, now bestowing medicine, or food in place of medicine, as the case appeared to require; and to all giving kind and sympathetic words. Her memory, as healer of mind and body, is still green in her native place, although she has passed from earth these forty years.

lievers in the varied phenomena of Spiritualism; having had their faith in the invisible-world much strengthened thereby. Dr. Howitt was, as may be seen by referring to the volume of the "Spiritual Magazine" for 1869, an investigator, together with Dr. Motherwell, of Melbourne, of mesmeric and clairvoyant phenomena.

#### THE OLD HOUSE AT NOTTINGHAM

no longer exists where William Howitt wrote three of his most popular early works, typical of the three distinct elements of his character: "The Book of the Seasons," showing his love of Nature; "Pantika: or, Legends of the Most Ancient Times," showing his love of the Supernatural; and "The History of Priestcraft," his aspirations after Freedom of Thought. These were written between 1830 and 1836, in which year he left the town for a country cottage at Esher, in Surrey. In this old house, at Nottingham, Mary wrote some of her most imaginative poetry, her "Seven Temptations," a dramatic volume long out of print, in which was sought to be depicted the attempt of the evil principle to seduce mankind, and the struggle of the poor human soul against evil. A poem so daring in its intention, and earnest eloquence, pouring forth from the fresh fountain of her youth, without let or hindrance of questioning or fear, as to have called down on the sensitive authoress from an influential, orthodox literary organ of that day, the term "blasphemous:" little, indeed, deserved, since the spirit of the whole seven dramas is that of fervent adoration of the holiness of God, and of the mystery of His redemption of the human soul through trial and suffering. There also she wrote many of her most romantic ballads. As though the surroundings of a town rendered only the more keenly vivid to her imagination the lovely objects of the country, amidst which, until then, her life had been continuously passed, also several of her most popular poems for children, relating to the common, every-day things of the country—verses which have made her name a household word at the hearths of thousands, wheresoever the English tongue is spoken. Several poems by William Howitt of the same

character, and equally popular amongst children, such as, "The Wind in a Frolic," "The Wind in a Rage," "The Arctic Seas,"\* "The voyage of the Grey Squirrels," † etc., date from this period. Originally printed without his initials, in a volume by Mary—"Sketches of Natural History"—the two latter poems have been generally supposed to be from her pen. They are full of the spirit of adventure, and of a vigorous joy peculiar to himself, and which made, in remembrance, his inexhaustible tales told by the fireside to his children, or when, hand in hand with their parents, they were "strolling quietly at eve or morn by the silver Trent," "a joy for ever."

In this old house, besides these many children of the brain, had been also born to William and Mary three children of flesh and blood—the writer of the present sketch, and her brothers, Alfred and Claude. Alfred William Howitt, since known as an Australian explorer, geologist, and writer on anthropological subjects; Claude Middleton, the brightest and most promising of the young group of those early days, died when only twelve years old, from the effects of an accident met with in Germany.

The old house itself deserves a few words of description, forming, as it did, no uncongenial home for a poetical pair, It was one of those ancient houses of which several still exist in the older portions of Nottingham, and in other important country-towns, but which modern changes are destroying ruthlessly every year, mansions originally built by county families as their winter residences in the old-fashioned days, before county-people came up to London "for the season." This house in question was, in one sense, historical. It had been built, as his residence during his exile in England, by Marshal Tallard, the great French General, taken prisoner by Marlborough at the Battle of Blenheim, and a prisoner *en parole*

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\* The writer has understood that a distinguished living Arctic explorer avers that, when a boy, this poem of the "Arctic Seas" first awoke his passion for Arctic exploration.

† Reprinted recently by Nelson & Sons, Paternoster Row, London. Beautifully illustrated by Gacomelli.

in Nottingham. Consequently, it was a *bonâ fide* “Queen Anne’s Mansion”—a handsome specimen, too, of the dwelling-house of that age, with spacious, wainscotted rooms, and entrance hall; with wide old staircase of easy ascent, and heavy twisted balustrades; with high carved mantel-pieces, well proportioned windows, their small square panes still remaining, embossed ceilings; and in the drawing-room, enclosed in the carved mouldings of the egg-and-spear pattern—which also ornamented the doorways—a Claude Lorraine-like yellow-brown landscape, with distant mountains, brown trees, and a pastoral foreground, wherein might dimly be discerned a shepherd with his sheep. I can recall my father lifting us children in his arms, to show us the shepherd and his sheep. There were strange dusky nooks and corners and heavy doorways in the house, giving a shadow and a mystery. The glory of the whole, however, consisted in four cherub heads with outspread wings which filled the corners of a dressing-room, where we little children slept. I can see those cherub-faces now. Always to me, they in memory, symbolise the spirit of that happy home, where heavenly aspiration, poetry, innocent life and joyousness truly may, as angels, have been said to brood above the hearts of its dwellers, surrounding and uniting all in a sphere of peace and love.

My father, for the prosecution of his literary work—besides the books which naturally have a tendency to accretion around those who love them—needed many works of reference of divers kinds. Such works, and the current literature of the day were, fortunately, easily obtained from an extensive library of local fame, collected by several gentlemen of means and love of literature connected with the town, and filling another and still more stately “Queen Anne’s Mansion,” also situate in the Market-place, namely “Bromley House.” Thus there was no lack of books, ancient or modern, in the quaint old rooms. Nor was there lack of flowers and country things either, to make them fresh and fair, although Marshal Tallard’s town-garden had, by the encroachment of houses, been shorn of its original proportions, leaving only, as signs of its ancient

estate, its graceful gate of artistically-curved iron-work,\* a few decaying, old elm trees, a strip of smoke-dried grass plot, with here and there white jessamine, with its starry, sweet blossom, and white lilies, pallid as the dwellers in towns. Although there were to be seen in our rooms no flowers from our garden, still, together with the rural pleasantness of birds' nests of curious form, of rare and beautiful birds' eggs, placed about in the sitting-rooms, were bouquets of the pale lilac and purple *crocus vernus*, brought from "the meadows by the Trent," where they then empurpled the land for acres in extent; or golden king-cups from the low-lying marsh land or river's brink; sprays of snowy meadow-sweet and pale, pink butomus and the sweet-scented calamus, gathered by William, who to the end of life loved with a child's delight to pluck such flowers. Bunches of wild flowers he brought home from his early morning's walk to the Trent, whether he went for his daily plunge into its brightly clear and flowing waters. Thus he carried on his intercourse with "THE FOUR FAMOUS DOCTORS," who, he was wont to say, kept him in health through life; and in whom he had an ever-increasing faith—"FRESH AIR, PURE WATER, EXERCISE, AND EARLY HOURS." But not even these "Four Doctors" can always entirely banish disease, or keep the human frame in perfect harmony.

The little son, Alfred, five years old, was seized with severe inflammation of the lungs. During this time of anxiety the following singular incident—interesting from its psychological side—occurred to the father. It shall be told in his own words, showing the

CURIOUS EFFECTS ON THE NERVOUS SYSTEM OF VERY  
STRONG TEA.

"His mother and I," writes my father, "had attended the poor little fellow day and night for nearly a week; and though

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\* Probably from the forge of the famous Nottingham blacksmith, Huntington Shaw, whose splendid iron-work, for the railings of the gates of Hampton Court Palace, is now to be seen in the Art Museum at South Kensington—a marvel of beauty of design and exquisite manipulation.

nearly worn out, our anxiety was so intense that we strove to keep up, feeling that he might expire at any moment. In this condition I became heavily sleepy, but yet so anxious that I would not consent to sleep, whilst my wife watched, nor would she consent to sleep whilst I watched. We agreed, therefore, to take some very strong tea: she put tea into a tea-pot and set it with some water by the fireside. Whilst she was gone out of the room to see after something for the little invalid, in my drowsy state, supposing the tea made, I poured out a cup and drank it. It seemed to me intensely bitter. Scarcely had I done this, when my wife, coming in, exclaimed, 'You have not drunk that tea! It is strong enough for a dozen people! I intended to have put more water to it.' The powerful dose of tea soon began to exhibit its effects. All sleepiness had vanished. Anon I saw, I did not know how, a circle of light proceeding from the pit of the stomach; it was like a sun, the rays streaming from that centre and forming a disc of a foot or more in diameter. I seemed to see this, not by the eyes but by the stomach itself. It was in fact a violent excitement of the solar-plexus of nerves there.\* Then all at once the room was filled with white moths, whirling and shooting round each other. They were as thick as flakes in a snow-storm. It was midnight. Anon my sleepiness returned, and I was compelled to throw myself on a sofa in the room. There I slept till morning. Then in a half-sleep I thought I was in a vast temple and beheld the lofty columns rising majestically around me. I attempted to raise myself on my elbow to take a view of this strange place: but I found myself

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\* For much curious information regarding these rays of light noticed issuing from the *solar-plexus*, see writings of Mesmer, Ennemoser, Reichenbach. *Vide* also the following account—"Little Anna Caroline Josephine Gerand was born Jan. 24th, 1847—died Aug. 1st, 1855. Three hours after death a daguerreotype of the corpse was taken, upon which the effect of the magnetic fluid from the *plexus-solaris* (the central point of the nervous system) appeared in the form of a regular sun, with rays outstreaming from the centre; also with rays streaming from the head of the corpse; likewise a third 'magnetic sun,' of equal rays below on the floor, the three 'suns' forming a regular triangle."—"Dreams, Clairvoyance, Magnetism," by Harro-Harring. "Spiritual Magazine," 1863; p. 92.

wholly unable to move. My limbs were paralysed. I could move neither hand nor foot. I was now sufficiently conscious of my condition to call to my wife to procure some leeches, and place them on my temples. This was done, without loss of time, and totally freed me from the cataleptic condition; nor did the least bad effect result from it. Mentioning to my brother, Dr. Howitt, in the morning, when he arrived to see the little patient, this singular experience, he said that it was very fortunate that I thus awoke. The greater probability being, that I should have died in the state of coma."

This "vast temple with the lofty columns rising majestically around" him, into which my father gazed, when thus awaking from his state of deathly coma—was it a vision of the "intermediate" condition into which he had been intromitted—the "intermediate state" through which the dying pass on their way to the "fuller life"? The *subjective* thought of man—we are taught by Swedenborg—and the experience of all seers and mediumistic persons bears testimony to his teaching—becomes *objective* in the spirit-realm; the thought of the spirit-man there, becoming his surroundings—thus each soul carrying with it, its own peculiar world and the countless shifting scenery of its own thoughts. This also is the teaching of Böhme, and, in degree, of all mystical writers.

This "vast temple" is in perfect "correspondential" accord with imagery of the book written by William Howitt about this period—

"PANTIKA; OR, LEGENDS OF THE MOST ANCIENT TIMES,"

a prose poem. The legends purport to have been collected by a sage named Pantika, who, in his youth, had travelled from land to land, seeking for Divine Truth and sacred learning. The titles of these legends express their nature, "Nichar, the Exile of Heaven," "The Valley of Angels," "Beeltuthma, the Desolate and the Faithful," "The Soothsayer of No," "Ithran the Demoniac," etc., etc. The author had, with much conscientious research, gone to such authorities on ancient mythology and ancient history as at that day were available.



But unquestionably the book bears upon it the impress of the author's mind and age; and is not clothed in that archæological garb in which the fashion and learning of a later day would have dressed it. The reader is irresistibly reminded of the vast, solemn, and archaic treatment of Blake's inventions to the "Book of Job;" we meet the same ancient patriarchs and sages, robed in the same ample raiment, diffusing around them an awe-inspiring simplicity as of a more stern and simple age. Youths and maidens, titanic warriors, and angelic beings appear upon the scene, imbued with a strangely sweet, unearthly innocence and grace, that fill you with a sentiment new and undefinable. The landscape painting is vast, dreamlike—yet in its immensity of horizon far from vague or unreal: it is akin to the dreamlike pictures of John Martin, where you behold gardens of paradisiacal beauty, regions of primeval forests, fading away into illimitable horizon of hill-country and mountain peak, till all is lost in cloudland; or tier upon tier of marble-palaces, and terraces, and towers, and domes, ascend into the sunlight of heaven, where all again is lost in a brilliancy of blinding light.

A spirit was abroad at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century of abstract imagination, which delighted to bathe itself in immensity and remoteness—to dive backwards, so to speak, into the ocean of the past. It freely poured its influence over all minds open to its reception. Both in literature and art numerous works were produced inspired by this influence—works which made more or less mark upon their generation, but which at the present day would be wholly forgotten, except for certain great names which produced them, their subject-matter being far removed from the sympathies of the readers at this end of the century. Now are the concrete and the microscopic, rather than the universal and telescopic, views of things in the ascendant. As was the form of the mind into which this spirit descended, and as were the images with which that mind was peopled, did the work of art or literature come forth embodied to the world. In Shelley and in Keats this spirit of vastness and remoteness came

forth clothed in the Greek form, and we possess their immortal poems of "Prometheus Unbound" and "The Hyperion" fragment—"the large utterance of the early gods." With Southey it produced, sinking into his wildly romantic mind, the "Curse of Kehama" and "Thalaba, the Destroyer." In other minds it came forth clothed in Hebrew forms, as in James Montgomery's "World before the Flood;" in Byron's "Cain: a Mystery;" in the Rev. Isaac Taylor's learned romance, "The Temple of Melecartha;" and in this prose-poem of "Pantika." In Germany the same spirit had been at work, and we have writings of Lessing, of Schiller, and of Herder, which equally proclaim its presence. In England, Mrs. Browning's early poems, "The Seven Temptations" of Mary Howitt, and the dramatic poem of Philip Bailey, "Festus," might be called the last blossoms from this branch of the Spiritual Tree of Life.

May we not regard this poetic outflow from what may be considered as the Spiritual-realm the forerunner—herald, in fact—of the present acknowledged manifestation of the Spirit?

Judging from internal evidence, I am inclined to believe much of "Pantika" written from what we now should term "Spiritual impression." For instance, in the tale of "Nihar, the Exile from Heaven," we meet with

#### A SPIRIT SEANCE OF THE WORLD BEFORE THE FLOOD.

"They resolved to consult their celestial sires on their enterprise. This was a measure of terrible anxiety. . . . Night descended. The Azims, with their wives, glowing with the anticipation of mighty good achieved, of immortal renown won, ascended the tower of Teleg. A golden cresset and a gigantic harp were placed in the centre of the marble-paved roof. They stood round in a wide circle—such a circle of noble and beautiful forms as earth has never since beheld. Phaniel, the eldest of the tribe, distinguished for the mild dignity and generosity of his character, advanced to the cresset—Talula, his lovely bride, to the harp. There was a pause of awful solemnity. Above them the great arch of heaven

displayed in its deep azure its glittering silent hosts; around them all was obscurity; and the night breeze which sighed amongst the low, massy pillars of the parapet, seemed to wander up from the depths of unfathomable gloom. All eyes were fixed upon Phanuel. He flung into the cresset a fragrant powder from a golden box, the workmanship of Tubal Cain, and immediately a bright flame burst forth, a stream of blue and starry meteors rose into the heavens, and the most delectable odours floated around them. At the same moment Talula struck the towering harp with sweet and solemn strokes, and gave life to a music which fixed the soul in breathless wonder at its deep and mystery-breathing power. At once appeared, as it were, a new constellation kindled in the heavens—a cluster of stars more resplendent than all others of the nightly host—and every moment they became more and more brilliant. The Azims stood with their faces fixed with immoveable earnestness upon the glowing effulgence. In a moment they became distinct—a troop of careering angels; in a moment they were at hand. They alighted with a rush of mighty pinions, and in an atmosphere of their own brightness which made night roll back from the tower on whose top they stood—a vision of glory and beauty inconceivable to our pale fancies. They were winged forms of Heaven's unapproachable grace and sublimity. Their pinions were as the sunshine itself, and quivered with a pearly radiance that varied at every motion. Thought which stamps on our brows shadow and pain, shed on them the spirit of rejoicing; the serene azure of their large love-inspired eyes, threw forth streaming rays of the felicity which filled all their being with an inexhaustible fulness.

“‘But wherefore,’ said a majestic spirit, ‘wherefore have you called us hither? It is not alone that we may meet and rejoice in our love, that ye have raised the invoking sign, some cause of high import moved you to this act.’”

An entry in a commonplace book, in 1824, shows that William Howitt, not only from his childhood had possessed an

imagination teeming with imagery taken from the Bible-sphere, but also was considerably possessed of what has been termed the gift of

“SENSORIAL VISION,” OR VISION OF THE “INNER EYE.”\*

“Well do I recollect,” he writes, “my first entrance into the pleasant land of fancy, where one became at once a monarch and an absolute one, too! Lying in bed one winter’s morning, I found, by a slight pressure on the eyelids, represented in a sort of internal vision, the most gorgeous escutcheons of the richest and most intense colours, varying gradually from blue to purple, red, and so on, but always enriched with a golden glory. This was a splendid discovery, and many an hour these richest shields, or clouds, as they sometimes seemed, ministered to my amusement. But lo! another came to light which diminished this to a trifle! Thrusting my head deep into the downy pillow, I imagined to myself whatsoever scene I pleased, and behold! it appeared. Old men, with solemn faces and awful eyes, gazing silently upon me; mountains, woods, wild heaths. They were there, distinct as reality. They were always, indeed, in Cimmerian twilight, for I never could succeed in giving a sun to my created world, yet they were clear, every object perceptible. The scenery was chiefly that of the early history of the Scriptures, each as I had seen it represented in the plates of a large folio Bible belonging to my father. There were shepherds, with their long crooks, and their sheep lying about under the pleasant shade of large trees; wells; and damsels in red and yellow raiment, carrying their

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\* For description of similar phenomena, *vide* article on “Sensorial Vision,” and “Vision through the Spiritual Eye,” in *The Spiritual Magazine* for April 1st, 1861, wherein are given identical experiences from various sources, the most authoritative being from the pen of no less a person than Sir John Herschel, who in September, 1858, delivered before the Philosophical and Literary Society of Leeds a lecture upon what he terms “sensorial vision,” his own personal experiences forming the theme of his lecture. *Vide* also two curious articles, entitled “Faces in the Dark,” by two individuals subject to this class of vision, who communicated their remarkable experiences to the *St. James’s Chronicle*, February 10th, and February 15th, 1882.

tall, old-fashioned pitchers; camels and old-world merchants; Joseph sleeping amidst the sheaves which stood up to do him homage; Jacob's ladder; warriors and old towns; towers, round, tall, and built of stupendous red bricks. Then the faces which I saw would, as they continued to look upon me, insensibly change, as we see them in dreams, slowly altering their expression, through a course of the most grotesque and sometimes horrid mutation, and frequently would expand till they were as large as a shield. Immense was the gratification which I drew from this faculty, but it seems to be an endowment of childhood, for I have since frequently repeated the experiment, and it would not succeed."

This faculty had, doubtless, simply gone *inward*, only to manifest itself through word-pictures in such writings as "Pantika" and similar tales and poems to be produced in due course.

Upon the next page of the manuscript book we come upon this singular instance of his

#### PREVISION OF FUTURE ACHIEVEMENTS OF SCIENCE.

"I recollect in my boyhood," he pursues, writing still under the date 1824, "that one of my great schemes, the subject of many an hour's speculation, was that of *cutting through the two isthmuses of Darien and Suez. To me in fancy it was already done.* Navigation, the whole civilised world, was indebted to me for facilitating beyond calculation, communication throughout the earth. In imagination I had formed the expedition. Like another Columbus, I visited the Courts of Europe, to seek for patronage. I laid down the most lucid plans, made the wisest speeches, and, finally, led forth a mighty army, not for subjugation or destruction, but for the aggrandisement and happiness of the human species. Alas! that such potent philanthropist in imagination should be nothing in reality! Many a bloody battle has since been fought, the half of whose victims would have accomplished the adventurous project. *But Darien and Suez remain in statu quo, and our vessels still toil round whole Continents, because the Monarchs of Fairyland are not acknowledged amongst the powerful of the earth!*"

I will conclude this chapter in William Howitt's spiritual life by a poem of this period, so far as I am aware, not before in print. It describes a real dream, one which made upon him a profound impression, and belongs to the spirit of vastness and remoteness here referred to :—

## A D R E A M.

Hoar with the lapse of ages seemed  
 The silent land towards which I drew,  
 And yet within myself I deemed  
 The dwellers in that land were few.  
 A strong conviction seemed to rest  
 Upon my heart, that I was then,  
 In the sole portion of the earth  
 Which since Creation's perfect birth  
 Had held the sons of men ;  
 And I was on a marvelling quest  
 Of that small colony of the blest.

How lone ! how silent !—not a sound  
 In earth or air, from wind or flood !  
 And o'er the bare and barren ground  
 Brooded an endless solitude.  
 It was an awful thing to tread  
 O'er grey and parched and mighty plains,  
 Where never living thing was seen,  
 Where the live heart had never been.  
 The blood chilled in my veins,  
 Yet still I felt in spirit led  
 Across that wilderness of dread.

Onward—and onward—but no change,  
 No life was in the earth, no motion  
 In the dull heaven, but o'er that range  
 Of desert, stretched out like the ocean,  
 The cloudless, sunless sky looked down,  
 And shed a fearful calm below ;  
 Which felt so fixed, so stern, yet pure,  
 It must for evermore endure,  
 And thence could never go.  
 Dreadful it was to breathe alone,  
 Where never life but mine was known.

But lo! that deadness of the world  
 Which seemed of an eternal power,  
 Like a light vapour was unfurled.  
 My path was over fern and flower,  
 Hills robed in light celestial blue  
 Bounded that amplitude of plain,  
 And round me there were lofty trees,  
 Yet noiseless, soundless to the breeze;  
 And not a wild bird's strain,  
 Nor cry of beast, could still undo  
 The spell, which silence o'er me threw.

But man was there. Not far aside  
 I saw one who intently toiled.  
 He seemed a youth of solemn pride,  
 A noble form, but dim'd and soiled  
 With rural labour and with care;  
 And he clove wood for sacrifice.  
 I listened for his sounding stroke—  
 There was no sound—and now the smoke  
 Did from the pile arise;  
 And he looked on it with an air  
 Less full of pleasure than despair.

But then a lovelier vision sprung  
 Before me, and between those tall  
 And shadowy trees a low cloud hung,  
 So low it scarcely hung at all.  
 'Twas like no cloud which veils the sky;  
 Around it all was clearly seen;  
 It mixed not with the ambient air,  
 Rolled on itself, compact and fair.  
 It rested on the scene,  
 More still and motionless than lie  
 The clouds of Summer on the eye.

Beside it stood a hoary Seer,  
 And through my heart a whisper ran—  
 "God in His Angel shrouded here  
 Holds converse with this holy man."  
 Dark was that cloudy dwelling-place,  
 No glory on it seemed to dwell,  
 Yet still on everything around—  
 On tree, on shrub, on heathy ground—  
 A streaming radiance fell,

And on that Patriarch's awful face,  
Glowed with intense, unearthly grace.

Propped on his staff, in peace he stood,  
Sandalled and girdled in his vest ;  
And his full beard in silver flowed  
Far down his pure and quiet breast.  
His eye was on the cloud ; as one  
Who listens to momentous things,  
And seems with reverence to hear,  
Yet with more confidence than fear,  
What some great herald brings.  
I could not look that sight upon,  
Nor fear me lest it should be gone.

And as I gazed a little boat,  
Swift, without rudder, oar, or sail,  
Down through the buoyant air afloat  
Bore onwards one who seemed to hail  
The Patriarch, and he turned his head.  
He turned and saw a smiling boy,  
Smiling in beauty and in youth,  
With eyes in which eternal truth  
Lay with external joy.  
He touched that old man's snowy head—  
And boat, youth, cloud, and patriarch fled!

A multitude of dreams have passed  
Since this, and perished as they came,  
But in my mind imprinted fast,  
This lives, and still remains the same.  
The beauty of that gliding car,  
The majesty of cloud and sage,  
These plains, in arid drought so stern,  
That hush, which no change could o'erturn,  
In memory's living page  
Still stands in light more real far,  
Than thousands of our day-deeds are.

WILLIAM HOWITT.

*May 19th, 1824.*

The next chapter shall treat of the noon-tide of his life, as yet we have seen falling around him alone the enchantments of the morning lights of existence.



## CHAPTER III.

## NOON-DAY OF LIFE.

“ At the same time he was catholic in his tastes and extremely liberal in his views, while in varied experiences of an active life he had gathered great stores of practical information.”—(*Edinburgh Review*, July, 1879 ; Review of William Howitt’s Works on Rural England.)

THE soft opal hues of morning until now have cast their lingering light of poetry around the life of our author, giving an ethereal ideality to the aspiration and productions of his mind. Now with the labour and sweat of the brow and struggle of noon, for a season this illumination from the ideal world must vanish, and all be viewed in the clear and unromantic light of full day. Again, as the sun of this life’s day begins to descend, once more shall we behold the mellow and magically transforming spirit of Poetry transfuse and transfigure his existence.

Thus probably is it, more or less, with the lives of all humanity ; but especially is it so with the race of Poet-men, who are *Spirit-men*.

In the heat and struggle of labour, in the harsh contact of the business of life with the many natures of many men, the “ astringent,” the “ heat ” (“ Hitze ”), as Bœhme would call it— all that is discordant, antagonistic, is called forth involuntarily in man’s nature. In the full glare of day, in this strife of combatants, little is discerned but antagonism—the *dis*-harmonies in place of the harmonies. Still the east wind and the north wind, as well as the west and the south winds, go to the making of harvests and to the development of man.

UNTIL THE PUBLICATION OF “ THE HISTORY OF PRIESTCRAFT ” no one out of William Howitt’s own immediate personal acquaintance knew of his political opinions.

Scarcely was the Reform Bill passed before the Dissenters began to agitate for the separation of Church and State.

The blood of the nonconforming Quakers was stirred in him: and as he himself has somewhere observed, "having revelled all his youth in reading of the stalwart bearing of the sons of Fox against tyrannical oppression, and of the frightful sufferings unflinchingly endured by them at the hands of the Church and State beneath the rule of the Stuarts," he had become baptized in the well-spring of nonconformity. It was therefore in this fervour of an indignant spirit, and in the glow of the vigorous prime of life, that he wrote, within the course of three months, throwing it off at a heat, his "History of Priestcraft." Zeal at all times is wont to wax over-hot. At "fever-heat" stand doubtless many passages in the book, and to "fever-heat" did it raise the temper of its antagonists. Witness the curious fact that a reader of the volume travelled a hundred miles "to leave," as he himself said, "his curse at the door of the writer"! Its pages, if at times they are heated with the fever of zeal, teem with facts and statistics, and glow with ardent devotion to Liberty and Truth as they, at that period, revealed themselves to him. The whole book breathes an impassioned eloquence, whose strong, sonorous language reminds the reader, if I may be permitted to say so, at times of the prose writings of Milton. The book ran like wildfire through edition after edition.

It has, since many years, been out of print. In his advanced life the author was urged to reproduce it. To that end he began his revision. On careful consideration, however, of the vast change wrought in the whole spirit of the age, of amelioration already effected in many directions in the Church itself, and of a liberal public opinion having, in fact, moved to the point at which the author himself had stood when he composed his book, he abandoned this intention. He would, he said, now remain content to have simply been a pioneer in this, as in various other directions of reform.

#### LOCAL LEADERSHIP.

The excitement incident in Nottingham to the appearance

of this remarkable book, which elicited hot and vigorous controversy in the local as well as Metropolitan press, brought William Howitt prominently before his townsmen. Gradually he was induced to take a part in the political agitations of the place. Nottingham was always noted for its strong party politics; its hot elections with its notorious "Nottingham Lambs," which ought rather to have been termed wolves, and for the Democratic spirit amongst its working classes. The history of the "Luddite Riots" in earlier years, and of the Nottingham Riots previous to the passing of the Reform Bill, when the rioters burnt the castle—now recently restored and converted into a local museum—have become portions of history. Such a town was glad to possess itself of an able leader for the Radical party—a man upright, bold, of benevolent impulse, and possessed of the far-seeing eye of the Poet. Such a leader for a few years my father became. His ambition, however, was not political. When the writer in the *Standard*, already quoted, observes "that his place was the study and his favourite theme the social life of England," and that "although injudicious friends suggested St. Stephen's, the honour was happily never forced upon him," he accurately described William Howitt's private opinions regarding his own mental instincts. In 1835 the Municipal Reform took place, when, much to his astonishment, my father found himself elected an alderman of the town, an honour to which amongst his dreams of ambition he had not aspired. Being elected, however, to this municipal dignity he resolved henceforth to fight for the rights of the people, and for the general good of the town. The town at that time being so densely built as to be "girt round," according to my father's expression, "as by an iron band," the lands on all sides surrounding it being held from enclosure by the Corporation itself through immemorial rights, the trade of the town suffered grievously therefrom, and was removing to distant places where building ground for factories, etc., could be procured—the new alderman, therefore, forthwith gave notice that at the next meeting of the Corporation he should move for an Act of Parliament

empowering the enclosure of certain lands lying to the north of the town. This was the land where in later years have been laid out the beautiful public walks of the Arboretum, and where now are built the School of Art, one of the most important in the kingdom, and the new University College, the glory of modern Nottingham, together with a perfectly new town of streets, squares, manufactories, etc. Possessed with a keen eye for the beautiful in nature, and believing through life that where nature dwells there also dwells health, he desired to preserve, intact, however, the broad, beautiful expanse of meadow-land to the south, then extending from the town to the banks of the river Trent, as a zone of beauty and health *for ever* for that picturesquely-situated, ancient, historical town. But in this he was greatly disappointed, and with enclosure came finally the loss of these beautiful meadows, with their acres, in the spring-time, of purple crocuses.\*

The battle which ensued between vested interest and "immemorial rights" and the modern needs of the town, in the person of the new-found champion, may be better imagined

\* Mary Howitt, in a letter to Miss Mitford, thus describes the "*Crocuses*":—"I wish you would come and see our great flower-show this month (February) the vernal crocuses in our meadows. These flowers surpass belief, and I almost despair of making any one comprehend how beautiful they are. They are seen at many miles' distance, spaces of twenty acres or so, in the green flats of the meadows, of one intense lilac colour, as clearly and vividly lilac, as the grass around is green. But when you walk among them the effect is inconceivable, the petals of transparent, tender hue, contrasting so beautifully with the yellow of the inside. The expanse is so unlike the common covering of the earth, that it seems a sin to tread them down. They look almost spiritual, and make you think of the flowers of heaven. Then again they are so lavishly spread, so thick, springing up by millions, that one longs to grasp them by handfuls, to lie down amongst them, as the children do. But their most beautiful attribute is the joy they diffuse over the hearts of thousands. They make the paradise of the poor. Here come the poor, pale children who have sate seaming stockings, or running lace thirteen or fourteen hours a day for a few pence—here they come, in the half-hour they can steal from their meals, and gather up flowers by thousands; and no lane or alley shall you enter at this season, but in its poorest dwelling you shall find the little cup of crocuses brought by some little child or old man."—"The Friendships of Mary R. Mitford." Vol. I., p. 260.

than described. The butchers of the town, whose interests were touched in the matter of "grazing," were said to have declared that if this innovator proceeded with his agitation he would be stabbed! "Then stab away!" my father is reported to have cried, and therewith his popularity grew immensely. His power at that time over the working-men of Nottingham was great. It was a power wisely employed; to see them primarily, a thoughtful and an educated class was his fervent desire. His humorous sayings, and original ways of placing truth before them by some quaint metaphor, remain current in the town to this hour.

His work in Nottingham, however, drew to its end. Literature had become his profession, and his literary engagements attracted him to London. The disappointment was great amongst the working-men of Nottingham when it became known that the champion for their "rights" was about to depart. "We thought," said they, "that at last we have found the man for whom we have waited so long! and now he deserts us!"

But he had done his work. He had set the stone of enclosure, as well as other stones of change, rolling. Now it was "To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new!"

As at Nottingham, so elsewhere in connection with other questions, political, social, philanthropic, his was, according to his own showing—

#### THE MISSION OF A PIONEER :

A pioneer, in pointing out the necessity of change throughout the Society of Friends,\* in the widening of their educational and intellectual horizon, and in change regarding their

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\* In the pages of *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine* appeared from his pen an article regarding the Society of Friends, which at the time greatly discomposed the members of that worthy religious body. Its words were like seed scattered to bring forth a future growth. He regarded the Society as having lost the glory of its first estate, and as sunk into a slumber of torpid formalism and illiberalism, its spirit having departed. He desired to arouse them into new life.

peculiarities of dress and speech—a pioneer in agitation for the abolition of the Corn Laws, previous to the formation of the famous Corn Law League—a pioneer in the reform of the abuses of the Established Church, as we have seen through his “History of Priestcraft”—a pioneer in reforms in India, through a work published some years later, entitled “Colonisation and Christianity,” and in its offspring, “The British India Society”\*—a pioneer in agitation for improved Road-making, for abolition of the Game Laws, for Protection of Animals against the horrors of Vivisection, for Co-operation in trading and farming amongst the working classes, etc. etc.—and assuredly a pioneer in the Investigation and spread of truth regarding Modern Spiritual-manifestations.

Between the home at Nottingham and the home near London, intervened, through a second visit to Scotland in 1836, one of many agreeable

#### BITS OF TRAVEL

which ever and anon broke the monotony of William and Mary’s industrious literary life, and which provided him with ever constantly fresh material for one class of his writings. When overstrained by work during the middle portion of his life, my father was wont suddenly to start off on a walking tour through some interesting portion of England, Ireland, Wales, or Scotland. On these occasions, he alone, frequently, knapsack on back, tramped through many remote districts—as, for instance, through Devon and Cornwall on one expedition, on another through “the Borders,” etc., etc. Thus he encountered all manner of curious adventures and quaint

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\* The results of the formation of the British India Society, with George Thompson as its lecturer, were a great agitation throughout the manufacturing districts. In the end, gradually, all that was agitated for, was obtained by the repeal of the Company’s charter, and various other reforms, operated through Parliament. One of the most active founders of the *British India Society*, was Lieut.-Col. (later General) Briggs; indeed, its three founders were—Joseph Pease of Darlington, General John Briggs, and William Howitt. To this distinguished officer and scholar, General Briggs, an interesting reference is made in the *Life of Augustus De Morgan*, p. 31. Longmans & Co. 1882.

people, which, described *con amore* by his graphic pen, at a time when the art of "word-painting," as it has come to be called, was much less common than now-a-days, gave an original charm, and infinite freshness and variety to his writings on rural subjects. He also during these journeys availed himself of the opportunity which they afforded to become personally acquainted, or to renew his acquaintance, with various illustrious contemporaries — as, for instance, when *en route* for Scotland, to visit at Rydal Mount the Wordsworth family, with whom William and Mary were already personally acquainted; at Newcastle, to make the acquaintance of the daughters of Thomas Bewick, the father of English wood-engraving, visiting, with them, Bewick's birth-place and grave, surrounded by those simple, unpretending northern scenes, to which the force of his original genius has given an immortal place in the history of English Art; at Edinburgh, to strengthen the mutually cordial feeling of friendship with Professor Wilson, and the brothers William and Robert Chambers;—on other occasions, visiting Miss Edgeworth, Daniel O'Connell, Miss Mitford, Walter Savage Landor, Sir Samuel Meyrick, etc., etc., pleasant sketches of whose "homes and haunts" may be found scattered throughout his pages.

With reference to this special class of my father's works, the "Rural Life of England," "Visits to Remarkable Places," and "Homes and Haunts of the British Poets," a writer in the *Edinburgh Review* has said:—

"We know not whether he (William Howitt) was a diligent student or no; but, assuredly, few men have been so liberally educated for the practical purposes of an enjoyable life. Apart from the pleasantness of his style, and from the freshness of enjoyment which he never lost, and which he invariably succeeded in imparting to his readers, we should desire no more cultivated or sympathetic guide in the tours he made to 'Remarkable Places.' He pulls a venerable building to pieces, telling the dates of foundation, addition, and reconstruction from the architecture. He shows an appreciative taste, he

painting, developed and refined by extensive foreign travel. He has studied English History in its broadest sense, going into the minute details of domestic furniture and habits. He has the art of making archæology light and lively, and illustrating genealogy by anecdote and reminiscences; while he relieves the inevitable dryness of those topics by introducing personal incidents and sprightly conversations. So it is, and in an even greater degree, in his 'Visits to the Homes and Haunts of the Poets.'\* Their most characteristic beauties were as familiar to him as household words, and he traces with the fondness of intimate friendship the influences of its surroundings on each particular genius. . . . Howitt was never so happy as when away on one of his pilgrimages, among the spots consecrated by associations with historical deeds or illustrious men, or when plunging unguided on an expedition of discovery into some of the secluded nooks and recesses of Old England. Guides he loved to dispense with, though he delighted to draw strangers into conversation."—(*Edinburgh Review*, July, 1879. "Rural England.")

#### WAFTS FROM THE WEIRD AND WONDERFUL†

are never entirely banished from these writings and experiences of travel at any period of his life. He never failed to record with interest any psychological fact which came across him. In one place he mentions an agreeable encounter with a gentleman, who invited him to his beautiful home, an old abbey, so remarkably lovely in its situation, and so curious a place in itself, that Mrs. Radcliffe might have made it the

\* "Homes and Haunts of the most Eminent British Poets." Richard Bentley, 1846. Small and Revised Third Edition, 1857. George Routledge, London.

† As examples, *vide* in "Rural Life,"—Superstitions and omens connected with the ancient white cattle of Chillingham; "Visits to Remarkable Places," first and second series; "Phantom Battle," seen on the Field of Culloden; "Auld Lad of Hilton," "Visit to Hilton Castle," "The Cont of Kealdar," "Lord Soulis at Kealdar Castle," etc., etc. A cheap edition of the "Visits to Remarkable Places," has recently appeared, issued by Messrs. Longman & Co., London.



scene of one of her romances. This gentleman, a lover of books and an accomplished scholar, who had studied man, nature, and art, in foreign lands, interested my father greatly by his conversation, but specially through his description of a peculiar hallucination to which his son was subject. My father says—"My sympathy was deeply excited by the peculiar condition of his son, who had recently lost his wife, to whom he was passionately attached. The loss had so singularly affected the brain, that he was visited by a species of insanity; during the paroxysms of which, he beheld most beautiful pictures on the walls of his house—always the same—which he described. When they faded, he was found to be himself again. When he remarked, 'What fine pictures those were,' it was known at once that the attack was imminent. This was the chief feature of his hallucination. He had travelled much to surmount this singular tendency." Similar pictures have already been referred to in the *Psychological Review*, in articles on "The Mystical Death."

In the autumn of 1836, William and Mary settled in a country home, such as whilst dwellers of the town they had long sighed for. This was

WEST END COTTAGE, ESHER,

distant fifteen miles from London. Previously to the making of the South-Western Railway, it was a charmingly rural spot. Heaths and wide breezy tracts of common-land, where fed large flocks of geese, vast extents of fir woods in one direction, of meadow-land sloping down to the Thames, on the other, made a paradise for these true lovers of the country. Within sight of their fields was the interesting ruin, called Wolsey's Tower—"Asher House, my Lord of Winchester's," as Shakespeare hath it: and they were within a walk of the stately old palace and gardens of Hampton Court.

Here for three years their time was unremittingly devoted to literary pursuits; their relaxation being found in the enjoyment of their garden, in walks, drives, and unpretending, but most enjoyable, little pic-nic parties, with their children in the

pleasant country around, and in the society of a few intimate and congenial friends. Here were born their two youngest children, Herbert Charlton, and Margaret Anastatia.

It was at Esher that my father wrote his "Boys' Country Book," of which the friendly reviewer of the *Edinburgh Review* thus writes:—"To our mind his 'Boys' Country Book' is the best of the kind that has ever been written, and the publishers would do a kindness to the boys of the day if they were to bring it out in a new edition. . . . Like all his later work, it has the force of faithful delineation; and there is a fresh exuberance of hearty appreciation of those innocent pleasures in which his days flew by. The only art in it is the art of graphically reproducing the pictures that had impressed themselves indelibly on his mind."—*Edinburgh Review*, July, 1879.

The publishers, Messrs. Nelson & Son, Paternoster Row, have brought out this new edition required.

Besides the "Rural Life of England" (2 vols.), and the first series of "Visits to Remarkable Places," my father also wrote at West End Cottage, in 1838, the work entitled "Colonisation and Christianity," to which there has also been a reference in this sketch. Its intention is one of wide benevolence.

#### STUDY OF THE GERMAN LANGUAGE

and literature commenced at Nottingham some years previously by William and Mary, had captivated their imaginations. Desirous to obtain fuller educational advantage for their children than at that period so retired a spot as Esher afforded, they determined to let their cottage and go abroad—Germany, with its strong intellectual attraction, being their immediate goal, although both France and Italy they hoped to visit before returning home.

Ere we transport ourselves to Germany with our authors it may be as well, however, here to record

#### A CURIOUS CLAIRVOYANT DREAM,

connected with the settling down at West End Cottage, since

it materially helped to keep alive, through this noonday period of his life, William Howitt's interest in what the Germans have called "the night side of nature."

An upholsteress from London, working at the house of a friend, who resided at a short distance from Esher, was recommended by this friend to my mother to help in the settling down in the new home. She came to the house and neighbourhood an entire stranger, nor had she previously seen any of our family. No sooner, however, had she entered the house than, looking around her in considerable surprise, she said, "It is very odd, but I know this place quite well! and the master of the house also!—*I have been here in a dream!*" She then described my father quite accurately, although she as then had not seen him. Also, she described the drawing-room accurately, with French windows opening out into the garden. "I had in my dream," she continued, "in connection with this house a serious accident. What exactly this accident was I cannot remember, but it was a serious one, and was connected with a carriage. I wish," she added, "that I had not dreamed of this, because—though I very rarely dream—when I do dream, my dreams are quite certain to come true."

No one paid much attention to these remarks of Mrs. S., the upholsteress, and some time elapsed. Mrs. S., having nearly completed her work, was obliged to leave West End Cottage for a few days to go back to our friend and neighbour from whom she originally had come to us; after which she was once more to return to West End Cottage for a few days to complete our work, and then finally to return to London. Possibly three weeks or a month had thus elapsed since Mrs. S. had spoken of her dream, and it had been all but forgotten.

I, still a child, was spending a day or two with our friends, and Mrs. S. having completed her work there, it was settled that, Mrs. S. returning to Esher, I should walk with her, the distance being some three or four miles. We set off on our walk to meet midway my father and a young brother driving the pony carriage. "Do you think," said my father, addressing me, "that you could drive home? for in that case we will

walk." "Certainly, certainly, papa," I cried, with the eager delight of a child to do something unusual—to do something like a grown-up person.

Away we drove, I flourishing the whip about in a way my father always said when relating the occurrence, which sent a chill to his heart. But the pony was quiet, and the chaise was low; what anxiety could there be?

Scarcely had my father reached the hill-top overlooking West End, when he beheld, coming hurriedly along the road, with a very pale face, our gardener, who breathlessly gasped out as he rushed past, "Miss has upset the chaise, Mrs S. is thrown out and hurt, and I am going for the doctor!"

Alas! and so it was. Singular to relate, as we drove to the garden gate, catching a full view of the cottage with the French windows referred to, visible between the shrubs and creepers, Mrs S. said, "*The house looks now exactly as I saw it in my dream.*"

The right proceeding would have been to draw up at this front gate—where, indeed, we usually alighted. What possessed me I know not—possibly ambition to do what I had seen my father do—drive smartly round to the back gates, and through them into the stable-yard. I did drive round, and catching one wheel upon the spur of the fence of the holly hedge—the stiff holly leaves rustling upon the side of the chaise made a queer noise—the pony suddenly started, flung us both on to the ground; the wheel went over an end of my cloak, and over the ankle of poor Mrs. S.! She was seriously hurt, and laid by for at least six weeks—firstly, with us; later on, in London. Thus was her dream perfectly fulfilled, and so ended my first and last attempt at driving!

#### AT HEIDELBERG

the Howitts now took up their residence with their children for the next three years. At first they had apartments in a large house, to which my father refers in his sketch of the life of Madame von Krüdner, in the *Spiritual Magazine* for January, 1864. The Baroness Barbara Juliana von Krüdner

was a lady who, at the end of the great French war, made a sensation through Europe by her eloquence as a preacher of religion, and to whom is attributed the organisation of the so-called "Holy Alliance" of the sovereigns of Europe—her influence over the mind of the Emperor Alexander of Russia being at one time all powerful. My father says, "Alexander fixed his head-quarters at Heidelberg, in a large house facing the Neckar, a little outside the city gate, the Karlsthor. He was attracted to it by a large crucifix which stood attached to the garden wall, and which stands there now. In this house I myself resided two years—1840 and 1841. In the hilly shrubbery behind, there stood the Russian imperial crown on a stone pillar, and over the front door was a brass plate on which was engraved a command to any Russian army who might again invade Germany to spare that house. The last time I was there I observed that some ignoramus had painted over this inscription. Madame von Krüdner located herself at a pleasant villa about a mile up the Neckar valley, near the village of Schlierbach, also facing the river and charmingly surrounded by forest hills. She was thus enabled to see the Emperor daily, to strengthen his religious sentiment, and to incite him to great plans of human amelioration."

The little house formerly inhabited by this interesting lady my father used almost daily to pass when taking his favourite evening walk up the valley of the Neckar.

William Howitt, in his work entitled

"THE RURAL AND SOCIAL LIFE OF GERMANY,"

did for the Germany of his day much what the Rev. Baring Gould, in his valuable work upon Germany, has done for the Germany of our day. He made known to the English reader in a graphic manner and condensed form, the condition, social, political, and intellectual, of that great people. The work was reviewed by the *Allgemeine Zeitung*—the *Times* of Germany—in a highly appreciative spirit.

"Howitt, a man of mature years, with all the youthful fire of poetry and humanity"—says the reviewer—"every inch

an Englishman — gives us here a most original work on Germany. He treats us and our affairs with an earnestness of conviction, such a love of impartiality, such an amiable candour, that we cannot censure him, but respect what he says.”—(*Allgemeine Zeitung*, Feb. 5, 1848.)

Until this book appeared, there was little attainable information for the general public of England regarding the literature, art, or philosophy of Germany, beyond the charming and graceful early work of Mrs. Jameson, “Sketches at Home and Abroad.” My father also translated a curious manuscript, written at his request by a German acquaintance, who called himself Dr. Cornelius—“History of the Student Life of Germany,” containing nearly forty of the most popular songs of the German student in German and English, with the original music adapted to the pianoforte by Herr Winkelmeyer. This work was very severely handled by some of the English reviewers, especially the *Times*’ reviewer, but was highly commended by the Germans.

In 1841, during their abode at Heidelberg, William and Mary, accompanied by their eldest daughter, made a tour through the most interesting parts of Germany, visiting Stuttgart, Munich, Vienna, Prague, Dresden, Weimar, Jena, etc., becoming acquainted with various interesting persons as well as places. Amongst the interesting people may be mentioned Ludwig Uhland, the poet; Dümmecker, the sculptor, already far advanced in life; Kaulbach, the painter, in the strength of his genius; \* Tieck, the poet; Moritz Retzsch, the celebrated designer of the illustrations to “Faust,” “The Song of the Bell,” etc.; Madame von Goethe, daughter-in-law to the world-famous poet of that name; and others. Not many lines of railway existed at that day in Germany, consequently travelling was rendered more full of adventure and character, through

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\* This meeting with the painter in 1840 led, in 1851, to William Howitt’s eldest daughter becoming a pupil in the studio of Kaulbach, and to the production of a book, popular in its day, “An Art Student in Munich,” by Anna Mary Howitt, a new edition of which appeared, with additions, in 1880. London: De La Rue & Co., 10 Bunhill Row.

driving by slow stages from place to place, than it is at present. One of the pleasant abiding results of William and Mary Howitt's sojourn in Germany, was a friendship, formed I believe originally through Longfellow, with the poet Ferdinand Freiligrath and his accomplished, poetical wife, god-daughter of Goethe. With Freiligrath, later as a sufferer in the cause of political freedom in Germany, even to imprisonment and exile, my father's sympathies were great.

The German sojourn enabled the indefatigable William and Mary not alone to extend their knowledge of German literature in many directions, but having, through acquaintance with a lady from Sweden, had their attention drawn to the literature of Scandinavia, they commenced with ardour the study of the Swedish and Danish languages. These studies made them acquainted with the earlier works of Fredrika Bremer, then achieving their deserved popularity. These were translated by Mary.\* Somewhat later she also translated the earlier and most characteristic works of Hans Christian Andersen, and had thus the pleasure of introducing the works of those authors to the British and American public by whom they were received with enthusiasm.

Admiration of the vigorous genius of the north led William Howitt to produce

#### A HISTORY OF SCANDINAVIAN LITERATURE.

It is enriched with specimens from the Scandinavian poets, translated by Mary Howitt. Her work was not, however, published until ten years later—in 1852. Mary Howitt received a silver medal from the Literary Academy of Stockholm in token of the esteem in which her labour was held.

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\* Mary Howitt also, later, translated the whole of Miss Bremer's works—her travels in Europe, the Holy Land, and the United States, the latter being translated from her original manuscript. In 1863 Margaret Howitt paid a visit to her mother's friend, Miss Bremer, spending twelve months at Stockholm with her. After the decease of Miss Bremer, a diary of this visit was published. "Twelve Months with Fredrika Bremer in Sweden, by Margaret Howitt." London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder.

This history was entitled, "The Literature and Romance of Northern Europe."\* "This erudite work," says the compiler of Allibone's "Critical Dictionary of English Literature," † "the only complete one of the kind in the English language, will be more and more prized in proportion as the taste for Scandinavian literature becomes generally diffused among the scholars in Great Britain and the United States. It is an excellent guide to the literature of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Iceland, with copious specimens of the histories, romances, legends, dramas, ballads, etc., of those countries."

To certain

#### GERMAN WRITERS ON PSYCHOLOGY

my father's attention was now drawn.

Amongst the names of German writers, at that day little known to the English reader, were those of Dr. Ennemoser of Munich, and of Dr. Justinus Kerner, of Weinsberg, on the Neckar. "The most prominent figure in the Spiritual circle of Germany is Dr. Justinus Kerner," wrote my father in 1863. Twenty years previously, though residing within a comparatively short distance of the illustrious man, my father, although already conversant with his writings, never sought his acquaintance. Kerner, with his *somnambules*, wonderful "Seeress of Prevorst," crystal-seeing, numerous writings about guardian spirits, demons, angels, was immensely laughed at by the learned Professors of Heidelberg University. My father never joined in the laughter. He purchased all Kerner's works, and carefully perused them with considerable curiosity rather than interest. He had made the acquaintance of the two poets Ludwig Uhland and Gustav Schwab—life-long friends of Kerner, who with him in their student days at Tübingen, formed a poetical trio, "establishing themselves as a

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\* "The Literature and Romance of Northern Europe, constituting a complete History of the Literature of Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland," by William and Mary Howitt. London: Colborn and Co. 1852.

† Allibone's "Critical Dictionary of English Literature and of British and American Authors. Philadelphia: Childs & Peterson. London: Trübner.



'Round-Table' of Knights of the Intellect," to destroy the existing school of artificiality in the poetry of the period; and yet he had at that time no impulse to make the acquaintance of the most original member of the trio! He was in friendly relations with Captain Medwin, of the Byron "Conversations," long resident in Heidelberg, who visited annually the Poet-Physician at Weinsberg; yet my father never felt drawn to accompany him! Nay; even being once in Weinsberg he actually saw Kerner standing with a friend near his own door in conversation, yet never exchanged a hand-pressure nor word of sympathy with the "great and shining light" of the new day of spiritual life and knowledge close at hand! How often in life may each of us be equally near in the flesh, yet still far distant in the spirit, from those whom but a short period of time may reveal to us as our very nearest kindred of the mind! In later years, one of my father's pleasant day-dreams was to pay, in company with the writer, a visit to Weinsberg, in order to converse on psychological subjects of spiritual interest, with Kerner, already become blind and aged; but this day-dream never accomplished itself. Kerner's writings, however, as also those of Ennemoser, read simply from curiosity, were producing their useful work in William Howitt's mind, and preparing him for his reception of the facts of

#### MESMERIC PHENOMENA,

a knowledge of which came to him at Heidelberg," in the following manner:—

"Whilst we were living at Heidelberg," writes my father, I had been startled by Spencer Hall sending me a Nottingham newspaper, containing a lecture by himself on mesmerism.\*

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\* It is interesting to note how another distinguished worker in the cause of modern Spiritualism, Mr. Alfred Wallace, gained his first knowledge of mesmeric phenomena from experiments made by Dr. Spencer Hall, and which also, as in William Howitt's case, prepared his mind for a later reception of the truth of the phenomenon of Spiritualism. "My earliest experience," writes Mr. Wallace, "was in 1844. Mr. Spencer Hall was then lecturing on mesmerism, and visited our town, and I and many of my pupils attended. We were all greatly interested."—"Miracles of Modern Spiritualism," by Alfred Russel Wallace. London: Burns, 15 Southampton Row. 1875.)

As at that time I had never looked into that curious phenomenon, and considered it all folly, I wrote to Spencer Hall, whom I knew when he was a youth, and his father before him, at once, begging him, as he valued the comfortable post which he then held as Master of Holler's Hospital, to let that unpopular thing alone or he would lose his appointment. The same day that I wrote this letter, there presented himself in the evening a young American, who, having overworked himself at Harvard College, was now travelling in Europe for his health, *en route* for the East. I placed the newspaper in his hand, asking him what he thought of Hall's lecture. Having read it very deliberately, he said, to my great astonishment, that the whole was perfectly true, and that he himself possessed some mesmeric power. As several other friends were coming that evening to us, we requested him after tea to make a trial of his power. He consented. He first experimented upon a German gentleman, the tutor of our sons. Mr. Wheeler, the American, had not made many 'passes' over our German friend, before he cried, vehemently, 'Take me out of this! take me out of this! I am being frozen to death!' The operator stopped, and finding the young gentleman actually trembling with cold, we at once gave him some wine and roused up the fire in the stove. This, however, did not fully restore the young man to his usual temperature; nor, indeed, did he fully regain it throughout the evening. Notwithstanding this strange effect, a lady, a strong, healthy, high-spirited woman, a cousin of my wife's, proposed to sit down next, and have 'passes' made over her. The effect produced was exactly the same, and it was as difficult to restore her natural warmth as it had been in the case of the young German. She cried out that she was perishing with cold, and it seemed impossible to conquer the chill from which she suffered. Our American friend expressed much astonishment. Such an experience was entirely new to him. It was evident, however, that the mesmeric force was a very powerful and formidable one. Mr. Wheeler took his leave of us that evening, saying that he started the next morning on

his journey towards Syria. Within ten days after this we were shocked to learn that he had proceeded no farther than Darmstadt, a stage but of a few hours, where he had died of a rapid consumption! This threw a curious light over his mesmeric operations. Death was already in him, and the deficiency of his life-power in his mesmeric passes was rapidly drawing away that of his patients.

“The cold they felt was really the cold of death, proceeding from the already well-nigh dead man!

“My warnings—all warnings, of course, were lost on Hall. He went on lecturing on the then most unpopular topic of mesmerism: lost his mastership, and still went on lecturing. He had got hold of a natural fact and a great truth, and, like a brave man, stuck to it with pertinacity.”

#### RETURN TO ENGLAND.

As already stated, the intention of the Howitts had been to extend their Continental experiences into France and Italy. The unexpected success of the Bremer translations, however, with other engagements, recalled them to the neighbourhood of London. In 1843 they settled at Clapton.

Whilst in Germany William had lost his mother. Within a year of their return a great grief fell upon the tenderly united family in the death of Claude, twelve years of age, a most promising boy, of all the children the one most strikingly like the father—called by his masters and school-fellows at Heidelberg, “*der goldene Junge*”—“the golden lad,” from his joyous nature and power of apparently learning without an effort; making life, as it were, a pure holiday to himself and to all around him. As already said, he met with an accident; this was shortly before his parents left Heidelberg. Fearing to bring blame upon a companion through whom the accident—a fall from a staircase—originated, the brave boy for some time concealed the occurrence. Gradually, however, the painful fact disclosed itself, that an injury, which no surgical skill could then rectify, had been sustained. During that sad year—he expired on the anniversary of the day on

which the accident occurred, it was his mother's birthday too—he matured in mind and heart, and the words “he grew in favour both with God and man,” spring involuntarily to my pen in recalling him. “He being made perfect in a short time fulfilled a long time.” In occult-wise Claude will appear again in our narrative.

It was while at Clapton that William Howitt prosecuted his inquiries into the truth of mesmeric phenomena.

“During our residence at Clapton,” he says, “we had a

#### VISIT FROM SPENCER HALL, THE MESMERIST,

our old friend. He had now come to London to give a series of lectures.

“We invited him to Clapton, and he came with a boy of about twelve years of age, the son of a shoemaker of Leicester. This boy was said to be a very remarkable mesmeric sensitive. We had plenty of opportunity for witnessing and testing the phenomena produced by mesmeric action upon him, and these were truly amazing. The lad was simple and artless, and during the month that he remained in our house had lessons with our sons; for at that time we had a German tutor for them living in the house. By this means we ascertained that the lad in his normal condition had no knowledge of any foreign tongue, ancient or modern. Yet, when he was thrown into the mesmeric trance, and his organ of imitation was touched, he would immediately pronounce, with the most perfect accuracy, any words of any language which were spoken before him. A very plain-featured boy he was, yet, when in the trance, certain phrenological organs in his head being touched, he would, through the transfigured expression which suddenly lit up his face, acquire the countenance, as it were, of an angel; upon the organ of veneration being touched, he would kneel and assume an attitude of prayer most strikingly beautiful. The positions which he assumed under the influence of varied sentiments would have been fine studies for a sculptor.

“As it was of vital importance to Mr. Hall to obtain the

favourable opinions of the London press, we invited some seventy persons more or less connected with the newspapers, and several medical men, in order that Hall should explain to them the main facts of mesmerism and exhibit thus in private some of the wonderful phenomena produced in the boy. When under the influence of his excited organ of imitation, sentences uttered by gentlemen present in French, German, Italian, Spanish, Arabic, and Hebrew, were repeated by the boy, rapidly and instantaneously, with perfect pronunciation. When several persons were talking together before him in the trance state, he gave a laughable repetition of the intermingled and Babel-like sounds. These and various other most striking exhibitions of well-known phenomena excited not only curiosity in the company then assembled, but witnessed again and again, with countless variations, in our own family circle, completely convinced all of us of the existence in so-called mesmerism of a mighty power latent in man."

#### STRIKING INSTANCE OF "CROSS-MESMERISM."

"During Hall's stay with us he delivered some lectures at Hackney. One evening about this time Hall went with us to a party at the house of some friends living near. As he and I came out of the house to walk home—it was getting towards midnight—amongst other carriages standing before the door was one out of which sprang a youth, exclaiming, 'Oh, Mr. Hall, we are in such trouble! We have been down to Mr. Howitt's in search of you, and were told to come here.' He then related that at the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Society at Hackney they had been trying the experiments which they had witnessed at his lectures, and by several persons trying their powers on one youth—a plumber's apprentice—they had so 'cross-mesmerised' him that he was gone raving mad. Two young men were then holding him in the carriage.

"'This is serious!' said Hall.

"'Can we do anything with him at our friend's here?' I asked; 'they would allow us a private room.'

“‘No, no,’ he replied, ‘to restore his sanity it will require strong means, and he will howl like a demoniac.’

“‘Then let us away down to our house.’

“We entered the carriage with him, and the young man his companion, got up with the driver.

“We drove on. The maniac—for such he truly was—was most difficult to manage. Now he was violent, and menaced us with both words and actions, and we had to struggle with him. Now his mood was changed. He sang, laughed, and was very merry. As we drew near the house—though I do not suppose he knew where we lived—he called out from his dark corner of the carriage, without leaning towards the carriage window to look out, ‘Stop! stop!—that is the place!’ The carriage pulled up, and the young man got down and rang the bell. It was about midnight—all was dark, and at first no one came.

“‘The boy,’ I said, ‘who is sitting up for us has probably dropped asleep—pull the bell again.’

“‘No, no,’ cried the demoniac youth, ‘they are coming; don’t you see the light in the hall?’

“Now, in the front there was no window in the hall, and no fanlight over the door. If he *saw* the light, he must have seen it *through the door*. The next moment the door opened, and the servant lad stood holding the light on the top of the steps.

“‘He is perfectly clairvoyant,’ said Hall; ‘he can see through anything.’

“We entered the house, and, at Hall’s desire, descended into the kitchen, where in the scullery was a pump. Spite of his struggling and cries, he stripped the youngster to his waist, and held his neck under the pump, whilst, by Hall’s directions, one of his companions pumped lustily over his head and neck. He howled like ten demons, in a voice, hoarse, strange, and demoniac. But Hall cried, ‘Pump away, pump away!’ The infernal din was appalling.

“‘We shall have the police here,’ I said, ‘they will think that a murder is committing.’

"At length the unnatural sound of the voice changed. It was now human, and, his companion said, his own. The poor fellow looked quiet, and like one just come out of a dream. But seeing one of his companions who had helped to cross-mesmerise him, he shook his fist at him and said, 'I have a crow to pluck with you!'

"'Oh!' said Hall, 'I have not done with you yet. Give him another dash of water. His organ of combativeness is still excited. So they pumped away again. It was but for a moment; he called out again—

"'Enough! enough! I feel all right.' And so he was, to my great relief—perfectly calm and good-humoured. At one time I did not know what would be the upshot, nor whether we might not get into trouble through our share in the affair, if he turned out a confirmed maniac.

"'What would the doctors have said to us?' I asked.

"'The doctors,' replied Hall, 'don't understand these things. They most likely would have made an incurable maniac of him. Their lunatic asylums every day become more and more crowded with patients that they cannot cure. They are not on the right track.'

"However, there was the youth again all right. We had him well rubbed and dried, and he dressed himself composedly. I lent him a plaid to wrap himself up in, and the next day he came to return it with his thanks, and he said he did not feel any worse for the ducking. He added that he and his friends had had a lesson, and that they should never again touch mesmerism, or anything else which they did not understand.

"These lectures in Hackney of Spencer Hall diffused a great deal of intelligence on the subject. A curious proof soon after came to our knowledge, of the manner in which such knowledge spreads; and how people, who had never dreamed of such a power existing in themselves, found that they possessed it in a most astonishing degree. Dr. Sadler, who has since become well known to the general public by his interesting 'Life of Henry Crabb Robinson,' was then the Unitarian minister at Hackney. He had been present at the experiments of Hall

at our house. One day he told me that a foreman in a ready-made clothes warehouse, who belonged to his congregation, had attended Hall's lectures. Walking home from one of these lectures with a friend and a younger brother, recently from the country, he proposed that they should try whether they did not possess mesmeric power. His power over his brother, a lad of sixteen, proved to be extraordinary. This power speedily developed, and phenomena were produced of clairvoyance, far beyond anything witnessed at Hall's lectures."

My father, in company with Dr. Sadler, visited the amateur mesmeriser, and beheld numerous deeply interesting experiments of various kinds, which served to widen his knowledge of the facts of mesmerism, and deepen his faith in its powers also.

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Whilst residing at The Elms, Clapton, in 1846, the Howitts availed themselves of an opportunity which appeared to promise a useful sphere of congenial labour, in the establishment of a journal devoted to literature and social progress, entitled *The People's Journal*. A series of unfortunate events, however, soon brought their connection with that journal to an end, and a periodical—*Howitt's Journal*—of a similar character started by themselves failing to repair the losses which the first enterprise had entailed upon them, they returned, after a couple of years to the less anxious pursuit of general literature. It was at this time, when, having left The Elms, Clapton, and living at St. John's Wood, that the "History of Scandinavian Literature" was published; and two novels were written by William Howitt, descriptive of life in rural England, "The Hall and the Hamlet," and "Madam Dorrington of the Dene," the latter tale embodying much of the author's youthful experience. In *Howitt's Journal* various "Wafts of the Weird and the Wonderful" appeared—a series of authentic ghost stories, and an account of that singular haunting of a house at Willington, near North Shields, the report of which, circulating widely at that time amongst the Society of Friends,



first seriously inclined my father to look into the subject of Haunted Houses. Of

#### THE WILLINGTON GHOST,

my father, in his "History of the Supernatural," says:—

"In our own day no hauntings have been more remarkable than those in the house at Willington Mill, between Newcastle-on-Tyne and North Shields. Between the railway running betwixt those places and the river Tyne there lie, in a hollow, some few cottages, a parsonage, and a steam flour mill and miller's house; these constitute the hamlet of Willington. This mill belonged to Messrs. Matthews & Procter, and Mr. Joseph Procter resided in the house by the mill. He is a member of the Society of Friends, and when these events came to my knowledge, was a gentleman in the prime of life. I learned that this family, belonging to a sect of all others most accustomed to control, and even to put down the imagination—the last people in the world, as it would appear, to be affected by mere imaginary terrors—had for years been persecuted by the most extraordinary noises and apparitions. It was said that the figures seen were of a man in the dress of a priest, and a woman in grey, having no eyes. That these figures frequently went about the house, and that the man would sometimes be seen gliding backwards and forwards, about three feet from the floor, level with the bottom of the second storey window: sometimes in the window itself, partly within and partly without the glass, quite luminous, and diffusing a radiance all round. This figure, which went by the name of Old Jeffery, the same as the ghost at the Wesleys, was seen by various persons, and under circumstances which precluded all possibility of its being produced, as had been suggested, by a magic-lantern. Besides this, it appeared various noises were heard at times, and glasses and other articles at table would be lifted up and put down again without any visible cause. I was, moreover, informed that Dr. Drury, of North Shields, had volunteered to sit up in the house, in order to satisfy himself of the truth of these reports; that he had

done so in company with a friend, and had been so terribly frightened by the appearance of the female apparition as to faint away, and to become for a considerable time extremely ill. It was added that a narrative of these events and circumstances had been published by Mr. Richardson, of Newcastle, in a pamphlet, and afterwards repeated in the 'Local Historian's Table-Book.'

"Being on a tour in the North in 1845, I called at the shop of Mr. Richardson for the pamphlet. On receiving it I made some jocose remark about the ghost; but I was gravely assured by him that it was no joking matter, but one which had been amply proved to be perfectly true. On reading the pamphlet, I found it to contain a letter from Dr. Drury to Mr. Procter, detailing the particulars of his, as it proved to him, serious visit. My space does not permit my giving all these particulars; they may be read in the 'Table-Book' just mentioned, in 'Howitt's Journal' of 1847, and in Mrs. Crowe's 'Night Side of Nature.' I was myself extremely desirous to spend a night in the house, and, if possible, see the ghost, notwithstanding Dr. Drury's catastrophe. For this purpose I called, but found the family gone to Carlisle. The foreman and his wife, however, showed me over the house, and confirmed all that I had heard from their own personal knowledge as matters too positive to be questioned, any more than that the house stood and the mill ground. I afterwards saw Mrs. Procter, her friends, brothers, and sisters at Carlisle, who all confirmed the story in every particular; some of them having had very serious experiences of the apparition, and one of the ladies having in consequence, during her stay, removed to the foreman's house to sleep, refusing to pass another night in the house itself. After enduring these annoyances from the apparitions for many years, Mr. Procter, apprehensive of the effects of the many strange phenomena on the minds of his children, quitted the house, and removed to North Shields, and subsequently to Tynemouth. By a correspondence betwixt him and a Catholic gentleman inquiring into these matters, only a year or two ago (1863), it appears that the hauntings never followed him to

either of his new abodes. That though they still appear occasionally at the old house, now turned into dwellings for the mill people, they do not mind them. Mr. Procter adds that a lady, a clairvoyante, a stranger to the neighbourhood, being thrown into the clairvoyante state, and being asked to go to the mill, described the priest and the grey lady; and added that the priest refused to allow the female ghost to confess a deadly crime committed on that spot many years ago, and that this was the troubling cause to the poor woman; representations quite agreeing with the impression of those who had repeatedly seen the ghosts. The publication of these occurrences brought Mr. Procter an extraordinary number of letters from different parts of the country and from persons of different ranks, some of them of much property, informing him that they and their residences were and had been for years subject to visitations of precisely a similar character."

## CHAPTER IV.

“The Invisible World with thee hath sympathised ;  
Be thy affections raised and solemnised.”—*Wordsworth.*

PIONEER IN THE GOLD-FIELDS OF THE VISIBLE AND  
INVISIBLE WORLDS.

UPON the discovery of the gold-fields in Australia, William Howitt, accompanied by his two sons, Alfred and Charlton, set sail in June, 1852, and arrived at Melbourne on the 24th of September. Various causes led to this expedition. A desire personally to inspect the conditions of the important colony of Victoria, suddenly become a region of so great interest to the British public; the pleasure of seeing his brother Godfrey, settled as a physician in Melbourne; the necessity for repose after so many years of incessant intellectual labour; and last, but not least, the intention, should circumstances prove favourable, of settling his sons in the colony.\*

The following two years form a chapter of considerable adventure in the life of William Howitt, and were productive of much useful result. Through his brother's long residence in the colony, William Howitt possessed many facilities for

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\* The elder son, Alfred W. Howitt, F.G.S., F.L.S., etc., etc., remained in the colony. Having graduated, so to speak, in the school of an explorer's life, he was, in 1861, despatched by the Royal Society of Victoria as leader of a party in search of the missing explorers, Messrs. Burke and Wills. He discovered the last survivor of that ill-starred expedition, and interred the bodies of Burke and Wills in the Wilderness. Was again despatched to bring back their remains for public interment in Melbourne. He has contributed valuable papers to the Reports of the Geological Survey of Victoria, to the Geological Society of London, Anthropological Society, etc., etc., published in 1881, in conjunction with the Rev. Lorimer Fison, M.A.; an ethnological work, “Kamelaroi and Kurnai,” noticed in the *Psychological Review*, August, 1881, containing psychological as well as ethnological facts regarding the Australian Aborigines.

acquiring information which were not accessible to the ordinary traveller. Nor did he fail to make the most of his opportunity. After a few weeks' sojourn in Melbourne, our traveller, accompanied by his two sons, a nephew, and a friend, went up to "the diggings," which they visited in succession. From a letter written home by the elder son, I give a picture of the

## SETTING FORTH INTO THE BUSH.

"Nov. 6, 1852.—Last Wednesday week, we departed from Melbourne. On that day, at six o'clock, we were all ready—the cart loaded, the horses as fine a team as you could see in a day's walk, and ourselves dressed in digger costume; and well armed with guns, rifles, and revolvers. It was three o'clock, however, before the two other parties, with whom we had promised to go up the country, were even in anything like moving order. . . . I wish you could have seen the sight our troop presented. Three carts, heavily laden with tarpaulin covers, and drawn by two horses each, with tent-poles poking out at each end, and pots and pans hanging on behind, jingling all the way. Then fifteen people, in picturesque-looking *jumpers*, with all sorts of hats and caps, and many of them carrying bundles on their backs; some with guns across their shoulders, and almost all with pistols or knives, or both. These defensive weapons were for the bushrangers, who had lately become unusually numerous and daring—even stopping as many as fifteen persons within an hour's time, at only three miles from Melbourne."

Being thus well armed, and provided with good horses, they were tolerably independent, and in little danger of attack from bushrangers; nevertheless, they encountered perils sufficient both by day and by night, although no signal misfortune befel them, with the exception of the serious illness of William Howitt, occasioned by their camping in an unhealthy locality. This

## ILLNESS IN THE BUSH,

so serious as, probably, to have proved fatal to my father,

except for the providential kindness of a wealthy "squatter," a "good Samaritan," occurred shortly after they had commenced their perilous journey.

"The very day that I wrote," continues the writer of the letter already quoted, "my father was taken very ill with dysentery, but is now recovering. It was a most severe attack. Here we were in the bush, our cart disabled, my father seriously ill, and thirty miles from the nearest medical advice; the weather, too, was terribly hot, the swarms of flies perfectly maddening to a sick person, and our tent as close and oppressive as an oven. For a week we stayed there, hoping every day that an improvement would take place. It was a time of terrible anxiety to us, and great changes to and fro in the state of my father—sometimes he was better, then again he was much worse. The very place where we were encamped seemed to have an evil influence; the creek dwindled day by day under the glaring heat, and showed that its bed was full of rotting trees and branches; legions of bull-frogs kept up a horrible croaking all night, and numbers of carrion crows stalked about the flats around us, or perched in the trees by the tent to croak dismally at us. The only sort of relaxation we had was opossum-shooting at night. One morning Mr. F.'s overseer rode up, and most kindly offered my father the use of their hut at the Seven Creeks, and would not be refused. We accepted it, and moved my father up there the next morning. The effect was magical; that very morning his appetite and strength began to return, and ever since he has been getting better every day, so that we hope to be able to start once more in a few days' time. We have moved our tent, baggage, and even the broken cart up here upon one of Mr. F.'s drays, and we have installed ourselves in the hut. . . . Altogether the hut looks very brown and venerable with its slate walls and earthen floor; but we are very comfortable and jolly."

That William Howitt speedily recovered health and strength, the accounts of adventures, wild and manifold, related in his "Land, Labour, and Gold," fully testify. He also says, in a

tract on the good effects of Temperance and simplicity of life, written by him some years later, entitled “The Four Famous Doctors” :—“ During my two years’ travel in Australia, when about sixty, I walked, often under a burning sun of 120 to 130 degrees at noon, my twenty miles a-day for days and weeks together ; worked at digging gold in great heat, and against young, active men, my twelve hours a-day, sometimes standing in a brook. I waded through rivers—for neither man nor nature had made many bridges—and let my clothes dry upon my back ; washed my own linen, made and baked my own bread, slept constantly under the forest-trees, and was hearty as a roach. And how did I manage all this, not only with ease, but enjoyment? Simply, because I avoided spirituous liquors as I would the poison of an asp.”

He had not alone visited the various diggings, staying at them himself ; and his sons “digging for gold,” but visited also New South Wales and Tasmania. As regards his accurate descriptions of the condition, at that period, of the colony of Victoria, it was observed by a high public functionary there, that “ William Howitt’s volumes are not *like* the colony—they *are* the colony itself.” His book, however, from its plain-speaking with regard to the question of questions connected with the colony, the “ Land Question,” gave much offence. The great “ Land Question ” was just beginning its violent agitation.

To the graphic pictures of nature and human nature found in the volume, “ Two Years in Australia ”—in later editions, entitled “ Land, Labour, and Gold ”—the following letter witnesses :—

THE NOVELIST CHARLES READE TO WILLIAM HOWITT.

“ 6 BOLTON ROW, MAYFAIR.

“ DEAR SIR,—Should you ever fall in with a matter-of-fact romance called ‘ It is Never Too Late to Mend,’ you will not be surprised at this letter from me. To avoid describing Hyde Park, and calling it Australia, I read some thirty books about that country, and yours was infinitely the best. In reading you, I found I was in the hands of a man who had really been

there, and had seen things with his own eyes, and judged them with his own judgment, and, rarer yet still, could paint them to the life. Your vivid scenes took hold of me; and your colours are the charms of many of my best pages. I could not tell you all my obligations; but some of them I can. You restored my faith in nature. A pack of noodles had been out there, and came home and told us the air had no perfume, and the birds no song.

“The real fact is, that there have not yet been in Australia two centuries of poets to tell the people what to hear and what to smell. You extinguished that piece of cant; you smelt the land, like cowslips, ninety miles off; and you not only heard the birds, but described the song and note of each with a precision of detail that was invaluable. That passage of yours was a nugget. I have made use of it in a full description of the rising sun; and it is, to my fancy, the light of my whole picture. I had from you, too, the snowstorm—the flakes as large as the palm of your hand, and the great branches of trees rent from the stems with reports like cannon by the weight of superincumbent snow. Then in the details of digging you have told me, etc., etc. In short, I have taken from you far more than I could have taken with decency if our two works had not been heterogeneous. As it is, I hope you are too candid, and too good-natured to grudge me—who can never hope to see that wonderful land—a few colours from your palette. A traveller with a painter’s eye is a rarity. He must make up his mind to teach the artists of the pen as well as the public. . . . May you visit many countries, and may I sit by the fire and see them in your glowing pages.—I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

“CHARLES READE.

“William Howitt, Esq.”

In December, 1854, William Howitt, accompanied by his younger son, Charlton, again set foot in England.

In connection with this chapter of my father’s life in Australia, I must now note several interesting facts from the point of view of the psychologist.



During his outward voyage to the Antipodes—at that time a voyage of three months' duration—my father, assisted by his eldest son, had commenced and completed a translation of

DR. ENNEMOSER'S HISTORY OF MAGIC, CONNECTED WITH WHICH  
ARE TWO REMARKABLE DREAMS.

The MS. of Ennemoser, transmitted home for publication by Mr. Bohn in one of his valuable series, was seen through the press by Mary Howitt and her elder daughter; to whom, also, was given the task by the publisher of forming as an appendix a collection of curious illustrative matter. Mary Howitt wrote a short preface to the translation, in which she says:—

“Perhaps the Dream of Prevision mentioned at page 416 of the Appendix may be explained in part by the mind of the translator being occupied at the time by the peculiar views of Ennemoser, which predisposed it for occult impressions. This explanation, it appears to me, is rendered still more probable by another circumstance, which, being no way irrelevant to the subject, I will mention. The printing of this Ennemoser translation had commenced—and to a certain extent my mind was imbued with the views and speculations of the author—when, on the night of the 12th of March, 1853, I dreamed that I received a letter from my eldest son. In my dream I eagerly broke open the seal, and saw a closely written sheet of paper, but my eye caught only these words in the middle of the first page, written larger than the rest and underdrawn, ‘*My father is very ill.*’ The utmost distress seized me, and I suddenly awoke, to find it only a dream; yet the painful impression of reality was so vivid, that it was long before I could compose myself. The first thing I did the following morning was to commence a letter to my husband, relating this distressing dream. Six days afterwards, on the 18th, an Australian mail came in, and brought me a letter—the only letter I received by that mail, and not from any of my own family, but from a gentleman in Australia with whom

we were acquainted. This letter was addressed on the outside, *'Immediate,'* and with a trembling hand I opened it; and true enough the first words I saw—and these written larger than the rest, in the middle of the paper, and underdrawn, were—*'Mr. Howitt is very ill.'* The context of these terrible words was, however, *'If you hear that Mr. Howitt is very ill, let that assure you that he is better';* but the only emphatic words were those which I saw in my dream, and these, nevertheless, slightly varying, as, from some cause or other, all such mental impressions, spirit-revelations, or occult, dark sayings, generally do vary from the truth or type which they seem to reflect."\*

The dream referred to in the appendix is as follows:—

WILLIAM HOWITT'S CLAIRVOYANT DREAM ON HIS VOYAGE TO  
AUSTRALIA IN 1852.

"Some weeks ago, while yet at sea, I had a dream of being at my brother's at Melbourne, and found his house on a hill at the further end of the town, next to the open forest. The garden sloped a little way down the hill to some brick buildings below; and there were greenhouses on the right hand by the wall as you looked down the hill from the house. As I looked out from the windows in my dream, I saw a wood of dusky-foliaged trees, having a somewhat segregated appearance in their heads; that is, their heads did not make that

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\* It may be permitted to the writer to suggest, that through a fuller acquaintance with, and deeper observation of, the phenomena of "spirit-revelation, occult, dark-sayings," etc., the truth has forced itself upon various philosophic minds, that in obedience to a primal law of spirit's intercourse with spirit—it is always the *essence* or *spirit of an idea or fact* which is sought to be conveyed to the mind; and not the mere literal clothing of that *idea or fact*. This *essence or spirit of the idea* is the grain of true wheat alone needed; the *form* is simply the husk that clothes it for a temporary purpose, and must of necessity fall away from it as a dead thing. "In this material, matter-of-fact age, *literal truth*," says the Rev. James Smith,—"*the lowest of all truths, in one sense—is generally regarded as the highest. But there are superficial thinkers who dabble only in literal truth or physical truth.*" This is a knowledge of Law-Spiritual, without which progress is impossible for the student of psychology.

dense mass like our woods.\* ‘There!’ I said, addressing some one in my dream, ‘I see your native forest of Eucalyptus!’ This dream I related to my sons, and to two of our fellow-passengers, at the time; and on landing, as we walked over the meadows, long before we reached the town, I saw this very wood. ‘There!’ I exclaimed, ‘is the very wood of my dream. We shall see my brother’s house there!’ And so we did. It stands exactly as I saw it, only looking newer; over the wall of the garden, is the wood, precisely as I saw it, and now see it, as I sit at the dining-room window writing. When I look on this scene I seem to look into my dream.”

In the *Spiritual Magazine*, October, 1871, William Howitt speaking of this dream gives further curious details; he says—

“In a vision at sea, some thousands of miles from Melbourne, I not only saw clearly my brother’s house and the landscape around it, but also saw things in direct opposition to the news received before leaving England. It was said that all the men were gone off to the gold-fields, and that even the Governor and Chief Justice had no men-servants left. But I now saw abundance of men in the streets of Melbourne, and many sitting on door-steps asking employment. . . . When in the street before my brother’s house, we saw swarms of men, and some actually sitting on steps, seeking work. All was so exactly as I had described it, that great was the astonishment of my companions.”

IN THE AUSTRALIAN BUSH FIRST MEETS WITH “TABLE-TURNING”  
AND THE SO-CALLED “WILLING GAME” OF TO-DAY.

“Whilst we were in Australia,” says William Howitt, “came to us rumours of the outbreak of Spiritualism in America. In our letters from home we heard of it having assumed first

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\* It may be interesting here to note a clairvoyant dream of William Howitt’s brother Richard, referring also to Australian scenery. “Let me add one fact he once related to me in conversation—namely, that when a youth in Derbyshire, he dreamed a strange sight—the sunlight descending on a slope amongst trees, *the like of which he had theretofore never seen, and that dream was realised exactly some thirty years afterwards in Australia.*”—(Chapter xxiv., Richard Howitt, “Sketches of Remarkable People, by Spencer T. Hall,” The Sherwood Forester. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co. 1873.)

the shape of table-turning and hat-turning. We heard that this phenomenon had excited great sensation, that it was become an amusement in all ranks of society; hats and tables were being spun everywhere. The philosophers were ready to account for the strange spectacle, as they are generally ready to account for anything. . . . The relation of these things as they came to us in the Bush appeared absurd enough. I have successively laughed at Homœopathy and Mesmerism; and now I laughed at this new phenomenon. I jocosely asked in my letters home, whether 'the spirits' could not tell us where the great nuggets lay? We were, however, much sooner to be convinced of the moving of hats and tables than we expected. At Wangaratta, on the Broken River, far up in the Australian Bush, a Dr. —, seeing Mr. B. (one of our party), sketching near the bridge, fell into conversation with him, and learned that he belonged to our party. Dr. —, indeed, hunted us out at our tent, and pressed us cordially to spend the evening with him, which we did. A social evening, in our journeyings through the forest, was a rare pleasure. The Doctor had two daughters. After tea he asked us if we had seen any hat-turning. We replied in the negative. A hat was placed on the table, one or two of us put our hands on it, and certainly it began to spin round, without any action on our part. It struck us as very curious. The same experiment was made with a small table, and the result was the same. Whatever was the cause, the effect was real and curious. Thus my first acquaintance with modern Spiritual-manifestations was made in the Australian Bush. After these demonstrations, the Doctor threw his eldest daughter into the mesmeric sleep, and showed us some remarkable experiments. The Doctor then took a little pile of half-pence, set them on the table, and, taking me aside, told me *that he had willed* that when his daughter awoke she should immediately take up these pence, and put them away in a cupboard. This exactly occurred. On her being demesmerised, she looked round for a while, like a person just awoke, and then, without a word, took up the pence, and carried them to a cupboard!

Her father asked her why she did that, and she replied that she could not tell, but that she felt a strong impulse to do so.

“Soon after, on our journey, stopping at Mr. Turnbull's Station, Charlton and one of the young Turnbells tried the experiment with a hat, and then with a table, when, to their great astonishment, the table went whirling about the room in a very wild way!”

In connection with William Howitt's visit to Australia is his publication, in 1857, of a description of life in Australia, in which he has allowed the romantic character of his mind to have full play. To this novel are added various short tales, the scene of which is laid in Australia. Originally these shorter sketches appeared in *Household Words*—sketches which received warm encomium from Dickens, to whose pen, in Australia, they had, much to my father's amusement, been attributed!

This novel, “Tallengetta, or the Squatter's Home,” contains many incidents entirely of a Spiritualistic and “supernatural” character, the result of my father's first personal knowledge of “modern spirit manifestations,” and its preface contains a frank confession of his faith in them, and the following extract from it may be said to contain the germ of his future “History of the Supernatural.” He says: “In all ages Spiritualism has been exhibiting itself in one form or another; and there is a very old adage that where there is smoke there is pretty certainly fire. In the long ages of the sacred history, in the remarkable centuries which succeeded the first spread of Christianity, in the mythic structures and creeds of ancient nations, in India, China—familiar with rapping and table-turning these thousand years—Egypt, Greece, and Rome; under all the distortions and concealments of magic, witchcraft, and the occult sciences of the middle ages, spiritual agency has been working according to the firmest convictions of the greatest minds of those countries and times. As Socrates has his ‘familiar spirit,’ Numa his Egeria, as the Arabs had their genii, Friar Bacon his brazen head, and Paracelsus his inward illumination, his ‘Einhauchende Geister,’ so Jacob Böhme

and George Fox, in recent, and Zschoke, in our own times, astonished their contemporaries by their revelations. Certainly in all ages there has been a very great smoke in that quarter." My father goes on to say: "The smoke of Spiritualism is now visible enough," and that where he has found it, he has made use of it in his novel—namely, in the Australian Bush—"and this, not in the person of a humbug or a charlatan, but in men educated, scientific, serious, acute in all their relations, profoundly religious, and admittedly honest."

Between December, 1854, when William Howitt returned to England, and June, 1857, when *Tallengetta* was published, much of psychological interest had occurred. Our author had left "the gold-fields of the external world, not greatly enriched with "nuggets;" enriched in far better ways, however, with a new lease of health and strength, with much new and varied knowledge, and with a seed of truth sown in his mind—the perception of some unrecognised "force" behind the phenomenon of "hat and table-turning" and the "willing-game," destined to bring forth, within the next twenty years, a great harvest. He was returned fully prepared henceforth to dig for spiritual and celestial gold in the "gold-fields" of spirit-knowledge.

The introduction of spirit-manifestations to his observation, and of the phenomena themselves into his family circle was through a

#### REMARKABLE SEANCE WITH TEST OF SPIRIT IDENTITY.

In April, 1856, a lady who for some years had been interested by the phenomenon which, at that day, was termed "spirit-rapping," invited my mother to accompany her to the house of her friend, Mrs. De Morgan, in whose family circle *séances* were occasionally held.\* My mother, although strongly attracted by everything bearing upon the occult, at that time had no special interest, or, indeed, curiosity,

\* For an interesting account given by Professor De Morgan himself, of one of these *séances*, *vide* Life of Augustus De Morgan, by Sophia E. De Morgan. Longman & Co., 1882, p. 221.

regarding "spirit-rapping." So little knowledge did we possess with reference to the subject, that a year previously, when preparing the Appendix to the translation of Ennemoser's *History of Magic*, we had requested a friend, conversant with the phenomenon, to write a succinct account of the so-called "spirit-rappings" in America for the Appendix; which request this friend kindly complied with. Indeed, this phenomenon of "rappings" and movement of tables, and of noises, said to be produced by "spirits," appeared to my mother, and indeed to all of us, at that time, as a something, if real, very absurd, and derogatory to all preconceived ideas of the sublimity and beauty of the spirit-world. Thus it was not without a certain sense of absurdity in the whole affair—nay, even, it may be, in a certain spirit of secret contempt for the approaching *séance*, that my mother took her place at the table in Mrs. De Morgan's drawing-room. All present, including her hostess, were—with the exception of the mutual friend who introduced her—entire strangers to my mother. The *séance* consisted of the hostess; one of her servants, who was the "rapping-medium;" Mrs. Nenner, now deceased, wife of the late Hebrew Professor at the Dissenters' College, St. John's Wood; Miss W., who introduced my mother; and my mother herself. The company were arranged round the table, with hands placed upon it, and the usual, now so well known formula having been gone through, tilts and raps commencing, the usual questionings as to who was present were asked, and finally messages were spelt out. My mother was inclined at first to regard the whole thing as utterly ridiculous, and listening in an amused spirit, thought how droll an account she should give to her family of the scene upon her return home.

At length, however, her turn arrived to be addressed by a spirit, it being rapped out that a spirit was come who wished to communicate with Mrs. Howitt. As this occurred a strange thrill of awe ran through her. The spirit being requested to give the name, forthwith C L A U D E was spelled out. "Oh!" said some one present, "Claude! what a curious name—can it be Claude Lorraine, the landscape painter?" "Let us hear

what the spirit has to say," quietly said my mother. Then was given through raps in response to the alphabet—"Dear mother, I am here. I am often with you. I will return home with you. I will write through my brother's hand." "Through your sister's hand!" suggested my mother—the brother referred to having been a little child at the time of Claude's decease, whereas his elder sister had been in constant attendance upon him during the last months of his suffering. "No, through my brother's hand," insisted the spirit. My mother's interest was now thoroughly aroused.

Mrs. Nenner said—"I feel impressed that if I put my hand beneath the table the spirit communicating will give me a sign." Saying this, Mrs. Nenner put her hand beneath the table. With a cry of surprise she suddenly drew it back. "Oh," cried she, "I have been touched by *such* a tiny skeleton hand!" Great was the astonishment of my mother. "But, oh, dear Claude!" exclaimed she, addressing the spirit, "You surely are not *now* the poor little skeleton that you were when you went away from earth? That is a dreadful idea." "No! no!" was immediately rapped out with little raps of a peculiarly individual and joyous character—little raps since that time frequently heard and always equally joyous, and to be at once distinguished from the rapping of other spirits who presented themselves. "*No! no! but how else could I give you a sign!*" Most true. A sign it was indeed, not alone to his mother, but to the rest of the circle at home. That little skeleton hand had rent for us all, the veil which divides the two worlds: the ice of Death was broken, and the warmth from the land of Immortality began to flow in upon us.

Within a month from this time "mediumship" had developed in our whole circle: gradually, however. Firstly, as foretold by the "raps" at the house of Mrs. De Morgan, in my younger brother, returned from Australia. To him it commenced with automatic writing; then in the same manner came to myself, and so on in due course to others of the family, merging by degrees into automatic-drawing, clair-audience, and spirit-vision. All our knowledge had to be



bought by experience—often bitter ; as, indeed, it would seem all knowledge and joy in the life-spiritual must be bought. Few at that period were the individuals who could give counsel with regard to an understanding of the phenomena—many of which were then manifesting in England for the first time. The dangers of the subject were but vaguely comprehended, if even suspected to exist at all. As for ourselves we, at the commencement, knew of no dangers to be expected, nor yet that such things existed as “deceitful communication,” or the antagonism of “undeveloped” influences. Thus, William Howitt’s first knowledge was gained entirely in his own domestic circle. For a considerable time he wisely suspended his judgment on many points of detail, though obliged to perceive, before very long, in the midst of all these chaotic phenomena, the operation of some uncomprehended “force.”

The occult power having taken especial hold of myself, and being manifested in strange and ever-varying forms—all after a period more or less distressing—I am obliged to confess that, in the first stage of our experiences, spite of my earnest desire to the contrary, I became to my father “a stumbling block.”

Writing of this early time he says:—“Our daughter, amongst the communications made to her, had the startling one that her mother would soon die. Under the terror of this apprehension, she came quietly one night to our chamber door to ascertain whether all was quiet, and whether she could hear her mother breathing. I heard something moving on the landing before our door. I rose and opened the door, and found her sitting there. This occasioned us great anxiety ; and when nothing whatsoever happened to her mother, the spirit said that it was not physical death that they meant, but a sort of spiritual death. This was palpably false.” \*

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\* This symbolic teaching of the spirits with regard to the true meaning of the word “death,” remained, as did their symbolic language in general, in all their verbal communications henceforth and to the end of his days, “a stone of offence” to my father. Symbolism *in vision* and *in dream* involuntarily he received, but in *language* it offended him. “If they want to talk to me,”

Yes, false, in "the letter that killeth," but true in the spirit which maketh alive with a recognition of things of the spirit. The "deaths" of a number of persons were in writing foretold at that time, all of whom ultimately received, in more or less fulness, a knowledge of the truth of Spiritualism.

"In order," continues my father, writing his memoranda of his first knowledge of the phenomena, "to divert our daughter's mind, we proposed to go away from home. My daughter inclined to go to North Wales. It was indeed a very strong instinct within her mind, implanted by her spiritual guardian, to bring her into quiet and harmonious conditions, into harmony of mind and body; but I was not inclined to go to North Wales, I am sorry to say, and overruled the plan, preferring Normandy, whither we went.

"The effect of this visit to Normandy, but especially the visit to Rouen, upon her mind was painful in the extreme. In that old city where so many strange events had taken place in past ages, and where Joan of Arc had been burned, the spirits seemed to be as thick as motes in the air. Once out of Rouen, our daughter's mind became relieved. All these things gave me a strong prejudice against Spiritualism, and I was anxious to be clear of it. One day we made a visit to the ruins of an old castle some miles from Rouen. Whilst there,

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he would say, "let them speak a rational language which they know I can understand." It was no use suggesting that this symbolism was as much the inherent language of spirit as French was the language of a Frenchman, or German of a German; and that, therefore, it might be as well to learn this universal language of the next life, as to learn on earth French or German—or even possibly was more important. He remained, however, always on this point, impervious to argument. It was to the wise and comforting words of the Rev. James Smith, author of "The Divine Drama of History and Civilization," and of Dr. Hugh Doherty, author of "Organic Philosophy," &c., &c., that the writer owed her *first* perception of the universal language of spirit-symbolism—and with this perception dawned for her a new day—a day of understanding and peace. [For information regarding this spiritual *death* and the frequent use of this word by spirits, and consequent misunderstanding of messages, *vide* "From Matter to Spirit," by Mrs. De Morgan; "Light in the Valley," by Mrs. Newton Crosland; "Coming Man," by Rev. James Smith, &c.; "Mystical Death of Mediumistic Persons," *Psychological Review*.]

some spirits told my daughter that they could more easily pass through the solid stone wall of that old castle, than penetrate my mind with any conviction of the good of Spiritualism." It was also told her that the time would nevertheless arrive when he who so strongly now rejected "the power," would be considered one of the apostles of "the New Truth;" that he would write books on the subject, and one a book wholly written by "the power" guiding his hand. "I will believe it when I see it," was my father's curt reply of utter incredulity. In the end he did both see and believe. I have in my possession a carefully-written manuscript book, written through his hand by "the power," from which, in due course, I will give an extract. All, however, was the growth of experience and time.

The conditions which surrounded us were, at first, highly unfavourable to an orderly and gentle development of occult force. With regard to needful conditions, we were at that time entirely in the dark. The house in which we resided, in itself, with its shady garden overgrown with tall old trees, and its masses of ivy, was no healthy *locale* for "sensitives." Reference to this house will be found in "The Northern Heights of London," written by my father some years later, p. 413. He says—"At Highgate, on the West Hill, stood, inclosed in tall trees, a small house called

‘THE HERMITAGE.’

Adjoining it was a still smaller tenement, which was said to be the original Hermitage. It consisted of one small low room, with a chamber over it, reached by an outside rustic gallery. (This Hermitage proper was used as a studio and a study.) The whole was covered with ivy, evidently of a very ancient growth, as shown by the largeness of its stems and boughs, and the prodigality of its foliage. Being its last tenant, I found that its succession of inhabitants had been a numerous one, and that it was connected with some curious histories. *Some dark tragedies had occurred there.* One of its tenants was a Sir Wallis Porter, who was an associate of the Prince Regent. Here the Prince used to come frequently

to gamble with Sir Wallis, *and there Sir Wallis put an end to his existence, as reported, by shooting himself.* It was reported, too, that Fauntleroy, when officers of justice were in quest of him, concealed himself for a time at this Hermitage. There was, however, a pleasanter legend of Lord Nelson, when a boy, being once there, and climbing a very tall ash tree, by the road-side, which therefore went by the name of Nelson's tree."

These "dark tragedies" having occurred on that spot, fully explain the antagonism to calm spiritual development which we experienced during the whole of the time we remained there; and also account for the presence of an earth-bound grey spirit, occasionally visible to the eyes of a clairvoyante, and which would frequently envelope the writer like a cloud. This presence would create a mental depression, which it is impossible to describe.

Nevertheless, at the Hermitage my father had some very interesting experiences. It was there, that upon Mrs. Nenner's first visit, occurred the following singular instance of a manifestation of

#### TRANSCORPOREAL ACTION OF SPIRIT.\*

The writer of this sketch conducted Mrs. Nenner through a room which contained some ancient furniture and a quantity of valuable old china. This china had been left in our care by a friend during his lengthened absence abroad. His thoughts from his place of sojourn at the Antipodes constantly reverted to these heirlooms.

"Who are these six gentlemen, evidently brothers, sitting where the old china is?" asked Mrs. Nenner, when we had passed through the room.

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\* Contributed to the interesting article of "M.A., Oxon.," on "Transcorporeal Action of Spirit," which appeared in "Human Nature." Numerous facts collected by the Society for Psychical Research, deserve careful attention from students of Psychology, inferences of the highest importance being thence to be drawn, not alone with reference to mediumship, but also with reference to the normal condition of persons in sleep.

"There was no one there at all," I said, much surprised. "Then," said she, "I must have seen six brother spirits. There they were sitting; tall, fair men, light haired, all strikingly alike, all the same age. They must be brothers!" I recognised in her description the owner of the china. Before Mrs. Nenner left, we showed her a portrait of the owner of the china, our friend on the other side of the world. She at once said, "Oh, that is one of the six brothers!" In some mysterious manner the intensity of thought fixed by the possessor of the china upon his possessions—we knew that his thoughts constantly reverted to them—had been able to manifest itself to the sight in the form of the man himself—but multiplied into six forms. It should be observed that this gentleman was of what now we should term a "mediumistic" temperament. It is possible, that being at the Antipodes, he might have been asleep at the time when his multiplied form was beheld—it being night there when it is day with us—and that his thoughts might thus in a dream have revisited England.

"It was," says William Howitt, in his "History of the Supernatural," "Mrs. N. (Nenner),

#### TO WHOM THE SPIRIT OF CAPTAIN WHEATCROFT APPEARED

in London, the same evening that he appeared to his own wife at Cambridge, and informed her that he was killed that day before Lucknow, and that his body was not then buried. 'The thing that I wore,' he said, 'is not buried yet.' The whole case is related by Mr. Dale Owen in his 'Footfalls.' The circumstance had been related by Mrs. N—— to myself before Mr. Owen took up the matter. It will be seen, in Mr. Owen's narrative, that the return of the killed at the storming of Lucknow, did not agree, in the date of the death of the captain, with that of the apparition. To both the ladies the apparition was on November 14, 1857: the return stated the death on the 15th. Had the return been correct, the spirit must have appeared the day before its departure. The solicitor to the captain's family communicated this discrepancy to the War Office, and requested that reference should be made to

Lord Clyde as to the correctness of the date in this instance. This was done, and Lord Clyde returned answer that the death took place on the *fifteenth*. Here the ghost and the War Office were at variance; but a letter subsequently received from a brother officer proved the ghost to be right, and the War Office, in consequence, corrected its date. These ghosts, however visionary and unreal some people think them, can on occasion show themselves more exactly accurate than people in the body. I could relate many equally curious proofs of the validity of Mrs. N——'s statement."

As may readily be inferred we gradually became acquainted with various persons investigating the new phenomena in much the same frame of mind as ourselves; some were already more firmly established in their new faith, being further advanced in knowledge and experience; others less so, being in even earlier stages of experience than ourselves, whose knowledge was still extremely crude. We became yet more closely united in friendship with old friends and acquaintance who had already before ourselves become "investigators." Amongst the old friends already "believers," I may, perhaps, name my husband and his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alarie Watts, Dr. J. G. Garth Wilkinson,\* Dr. Robert Chambers, Mr. and Mrs. Newton Crosland; as yet, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall had not witnessed their first séance. Amongst the new friends, Professor and Mrs. De Morgan, Professor and Mrs. Nenner, the Rev. James Smith,† Dr. Doherty, Dr. Ashburner, the Honourable Robert Dale Owen, Mr. Benjamin Coleman, etc., etc.; and one of the

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\* "A writer, according to Emerson, whose treatises throw all the contemporary philosophy of England into the shade."

† In "Memoirs of Augustus De Morgan, by his Wife, Sophia E. De Morgan," London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1882, is the following reference to this interesting man:—"Several friends addicted to mystical studies found their way to us. . . . Of these, I think, the Rev. James Smith was the most learned and the least appreciated by the world at large; for his estimate of Swedenborg as an authority on spiritual questions . . . was thought to throw discredit on his good sense. Swedenborg is not held utterly contemptible now, though, as Mr. Smith said then, 'he is least understood by his own followers.'"

warmest friends ever possessed by William Howitt, to look back upon whose friendship is a true pleasure, Mr. William Wilkinson, later the proprietor and editor of the *Spiritual Magazine*.

It was through the kindness of Mr. and Mrs. Newton Crossland, shortly after our return from Normandy, whilst my father naturally suspended his judgment, and the chaotic mediumistic condition, to which I have referred, still existed, that we became acquainted with a lady, a seeress from childhood possessed of great powers as a "psychic" both on the intellectual and physical planes; and whose gentle, refined, and benevolent nature endears her to all who have had the privilege to know her intimately. Preferring to be one who works for good and truth in secret, and ever shunning publicity, I feel constrained to speak of this lady—whose extraordinary experiences, if properly recorded, would form a pendant to those of the celebrated Seeress of Prevorst—simply under the initials "L. M." It is to this friend that William Howitt ("History of the Supernatural," p. 226, vol. ii.) refers, saying that she is "one of the ladies who saw the apparition of Squire and Dame Children at Ramhurst, in Kent, the particulars of which are given by Mr. Owen in his 'Footfalls.' These particulars," he adds, "were also well known to me before Mr. Owen took up the subject, and discovered, by a visit to Ramhurst and to the British Museum, in consequence, "facts regarding Squire Children and his family known only at Ramhurst through the apparitions, the memory of the family there having almost wholly died out." Amongst the particulars communicated to this lady by Squire Children's ghost was the date of his death, which Mr. Owen, after much search in the MS. department of the British Museum, found to be perfectly correct.

The manner in which we became acquainted with this lady might be counted amongst "modern miracles." "L. M." visiting us occasionally whilst we were residing at the Hermitage and later on at West Hill Lodge, Highgate—whither we shortly removed—such remarkable séances took place, such unpremeditated tests occurred, proving the identity, incontestably to my

father's mind, of spirits belonging to his own family—to whom the seeress was an entire stranger;—such characteristic messages from the spirit of his beloved mother were given—one of which, the first delivered, has remained henceforth as a talismanic motto for her descendants—that he found his doubts to fade away, and his judgment to become fully established as regarded the existence of communication between the invisible and the visible worlds.

More than this, also. Harmonious conditions having been established for our growth in a fuller knowledge of things spiritual, our knowledge and development progressed rapidly. Truly it might be termed the *re-creation* of us all. Speaking of this remarkable time, the writer has already, upon another occasion, observed that then “ideas of lovely new truths gradually unfolded themselves, and old truths, breathed upon by spirit, were no longer dry bones, but clothed in the blooming freshness of immortal life.” Even as in the prophet's vision, bone united itself to bone of old and fragmentary Truth, and gradually a glorious, harmonious, newly-arisen system of Divine life stood revealed before us, welcoming us into a new day. But all had to be learned through patience, prayer, faith, and—trial. Truly has it been said by that wise and experienced writer, the Rev. James Smith, when speaking of the training of the spirit-mediums through development of the intellect—and alone through *such* development can the philosophy of this great dispensation be attained to—“They were trained to interpret even by contraries, to seek truth through the mazes of falsehood, and driven to use their reason even when forbidden to use it.”

What substantial comfort henceforth William Howitt received through the broad acceptance of the fact of spirit-manifestation, accompanied even with much that is perplexing and troublous, is proved by the following remarks written by himself some years later. He says that in his youth at one period he had read the various sceptical writers of the day—Voltaire, Volney, and their school—and that although his admiration of the supreme truth and nobility of Christ's



doctrines remained in his mind unaffected by the influence of these writers, *not so his imagination.*

“My imagination,” he says, “was to a degree tainted, and became a source of doubt and anxiety in my mind. A dark shadow of fear, like a cloud coming over the sun, would continually haunt me, and spite of the firm stand of the intellect would whisper, ‘But if, after all, there should somewhere be a flaw in your reasoning, and all the fair show of historical truth be but a beautiful seeming?’ This ugly haunting fear beset me for years, and no amount of intellectual conviction could cast the devil out. I used to pray that God would give me a convincing proof of the reality of the soul and and its future life; that God would not so perseveringly hide Himself from the present generation. Thus did I continue in this curious and uncomfortable condition, intellectually believing and imaginatively doubting, till the introduction to Spiritualism, many years after, fully answered the demand of continued proof, and set my mind at rest for ever. I saw incontrovertible evidences of spirit-life, and though these were of a mingled character, good and evil, they were at all events *real*, and by direct immediate *knowledge* superseded all doubt and all reasoning. Spiritualism even, spite of all the opposition to it and ridicule of it, is nothing less than the practical answer to the prayer and demand of ages; and, on being duly inspected, showed that in all times, the same evidences were offered to those who were willing to accept them.”

There were not wanting in William Howitt’s own personal experiences of mediumship, tests of remarkable clearness, such tests as, unsought-for, bring with them the strongest conviction of their truth. Here is one—

#### A STRIKING MESSAGE GIVEN THROUGH A TABLE.

“Our friend, Dr. S—— H——, then living at Derby,” writes William Howitt, “came in one morning. He said, ‘I would like to ask a question of the spirits through your little table. May we sit down?’ We sat down, and I said, ‘You can ask

your question in your own mind—I need know nothing of it.’ He did so, and it was soon tilted out, ‘Jesus Christ has taken little David to his rest.’ At this Dr. H. sprang from his chair, saying, ‘God forbid!’

“I asked him why he was so much concerned? He replied, ‘I have a patient, a little boy, the only child of his parents, the hope and treasure of their lives. He seemed so much better that I thought I could run up to town for a few days on very important business; and now if this has really happened, what a stunning blow to his parents! I must hurry off down by the next train.’ I advised him to telegraph and ascertain the reality of the case; but he was too much agitated. He hurried away; took the train; and on arriving at Derby found his little patient had died about an hour before he put the question in our house.”

Nor did William Howitt, like other wise investigators, fail to learn much, even through

#### HIS EXPERIENCE WITH THE UNDEVELOPED.

“It appeared to us evident that there were plenty of disembodied spirits roaming about the confines of earth in a very low state, and, as it would seem, under very little surveillance. Some of these spirits would say, on my questioning who and what they were, that they were no spirits known to us; *that they simply had seen a light in passing, and had come in.* Some professed to be in a state of darkness and of desolation. On asking whether we should pray for them, some declined, saying that they did not want to be better, and did not expect to be happier, for they did not love Christ, and Christ did not love them. We sometimes reminded them of the Prodigal Son, and sometimes read the parable to them. Some then said that they felt better, and were comforted; others, that they were no better, and had no hope, and did not want to have any. Others said that they were very unhappy, and wandering in darkness through the waste places of creation. They desired our prayers, and expressed themselves benefitted by them, and came again and again. Some of the good spirits

who frequently came, said that they had to descend into lower regions to endeavour to reclaim and bring up spirits, the spirits of their relatives sometimes. That these were most painful missions, for they were obliged to put themselves in a manner into the condition of those that they sought to benefit and raise; and to pass amongst crowds of low, malign, and vulgar spirits, who mocked and jeered and insulted them, and did all in their power to prevent any of the spirits they sought to reclaim, following them, or listening to them. They said that as Christ had suffered in his endeavour to save souls, both on Earth and in Hades, so all who followed Christ had to suffer in degree in the same labours of reclamation. Some spirits, they said, had sunk so low, that they had lost not only almost all desire for becoming better, but even were fallen into a condition of only partial animation. Some of the good spirits said that, in their journeys of this kind, they stood on the tops of the lofty mountains of Eternity, and had wonderful views into the depths of Infinitude, and into the future of the world. Once they said they saw a gigantic arm stretched out in the heavens, which indicated the indignation of the Almighty, and menaces of

#### COMING WARS AND CALAMITIES.

This was a short time previous to the commencement of the great American struggle between North and South, and to the commencement of the wars of Europe, of Denmark and Prussia, of Prussia and Austria, of Germany and France.\* Another very remarkable prognostication was written by my hand. At the time that there was fear of invasion from France, under Napoleon III., and the Volunteers were raised in England, it was spiritually written through my hand, that we need have no fear of Napoleon, for he would never come to England as an invader, but in a while would be taken away in a manner that no one could have a conception of. This

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\* Indeed, this time of "wars and rumours of wars" has continued with but short intermission until the present time, 1882.

stands written in the book in which I wrote what my hand was moved to write, with the proper date attached, and the regular sequence in the book.”

Here is a picture of

ENTRANCE INTO THE INTERMEDIATE STATE,

which assuredly is highly instructive :—

“On one occasion, a spirit unknown, and declining to give his name, said that he would relate to us his first experiences in the spirit-world. He said that he found himself with a number of others in utter darkness—cold, hungry, and most miserable. In endeavouring to advance, he and his companions found their progress obstructed by a massive and lofty wall. They felt along it to discover some door or passage through it, but could find none, though they continued their search to a great distance. At length in despair they shouted to make some one hear them, but for a long time received no answer but a dreary and hollow echo. All else was silent and dead—a vacancy and most terrible negation. They then burst into cries of desperation and despair, when at length a Voice demanded who they were and what they wanted. They replied that they were newly disembodied spirits, who were perishing with cold, starvation, and nakedness. They wanted to know where they should find a door of escape from this region of darkness and of the shadow of death. The Voice replied in stern tones, ‘There is no door.’ They insisted on its being found for them. There was no response. After fresh demands for entrance, they cried, ‘Let us in, for we are cold and famishing, and naked, and miserable.’ Then the Voice replied, ‘I have told you there is no door.’ But they reiterated, ‘Let us in! there *must* be a door, and therefore let us in; for we are gentlemen and cannot wait longer.’ On this the Voice replied, “Listen! there is a door; but it does not exist for you. To you it is *no door*. On the earth you lived only for yourselves. You felt nothing, did nothing for your fellowmen. Your only love, feeling, and sympathy were for yourselves. You felt no thankfulness to God for your bless-

ings, or that thankfulness would have generated in your hearts love for your fellowmen. The door in this wall is composed of two folds; one is Love to God, the other Love to Man. You had neither of these on earth, and therefore you find them not here. As you were as an adamantine wall to your fellowmen, an adamantine wall now rises inexorably before you, as before all who are in your condition, cutting off all admission to more favourable regions, all possible progress and advance towards heaven: as you measured, it is meted to you.'

"This terrible announcement struck them down like dead men. They lay and bewailed themselves bitterly, and cried vehemently for a long time for mercy and pardon; and at length a Voice cried, 'Arise!' and a strong hand was put forth from the darkness, and the apparently impassable wall gave way to that mighty hand, and they found themselves in a dusky, and, as it were, Cimmerian meadow, where friendly beings clothed and fed them, and told them that now they were in the open highway of the great Pilgrimage of Eternity, and must advance, grow purer, and enjoy, according to their own exertions,—to their obedience to their spiritual guides and teachers, and to the prayerful love with which they clung to the life of the Great Father, and to the law of Christ—the love of their neighbour.

"Will any one persist," exclaims my father, "in saying that great, practical lessons like these, taught from the inner to the outer world, are not substantial results of Spiritualism?"

No personal experience of William Howitt in intercourse with the spirit-world is more striking than the following

CURIOUS CASE OF SPIRIT-LIFE, INCLUDING A REMARKABLE  
PROOF OF IDENTITY.

"In my early life I lived amongst a number of simple country people, belonging to the Society of Friends. I used every week to see them at a rural meeting-house quite away in the fields. They were most of them old men when I was a boy. Half a century at least had passed over; I had long removed

from that part of the country, and been engaged in many busy scenes, both in our own and other countries, and amongst throngs of people of very different classes and many different pursuits and characters; so that, like a great flood, these things and persons had flowed over these beings of a remote memory, and all but obliterated them from my thoughts. Years, in fact, passed without my probably once calling this primitive group to mind. One only amongst them, a man of a much younger generation, had lived on long after them, and I had seen him old, decrepit, and very deaf, still living in his quaint old farm-house. Even he, however, I had not seen for many years, and for some years he too had gone after his former simple friends.

“Suddenly, without any apparent reason, whilst we were sitting at our little evening *séance*, these old acquaintances of my boyhood announced themselves one after another, to my great astonishment. It was, in fact, like a resurrection of the dead. These worthy old men, who belong to a time and a state of things which now seemed almost antediluvian; these figures of a past, gone and buried under an ocean of such different and much more stirring events and interests, to announce themselves as if but of yesterday—gliding, as it were, over a vast interval, in which they had had no part or recognition, and yet standing there with all their old character and atmosphere about them, it gave one much such a feeling as if life, indeed had been but a dream, had suddenly broken, and had returned me to whence I had originally started in the race of existence.

“‘What,’ I asked, ‘can have induced you, friends, to come to me after such a long absence—an absence never once before interrupted by your presence?’

“‘It is not without sufficient cause,’ they replied; and they named the one who had lived on long after them, and whom I have last mentioned. I shall name him Daniel Faber.

“‘Daniel Faber,’ they said, ‘is in great trouble, and we are anxious to assist him. The last comer from that neighbourhood has told him that his daughter has married a farmer on the next farm, and if it be the man he supposes, he is sure that

nothing but misery can be the result. This is a man of the name of Hunt, a man of a character that promises nothing but trouble.'

"'But,' I asked, 'could not the "last comer," as you call him, tell you precisely who the man is?'

"'No,' they replied, 'he was not personally acquainted with either party, but heard it through another—heard simply the fact of the marriage, and that it was to a farmer on the next farm. The second and casual informant knew no more.'

"'But,' I again interposed, 'why do you come to me? Why do you not go yourselves to the place, and ascertain the facts for yourselves?'

"'We have been,' they rejoined, 'but we cannot find Daniel's daughter; the whole land lies in darkness; we can discover nothing.'

"This surprised me for some time. It seemed strange that these good old friends could find their way to me, but not to the person they were in quest of. But it soon cleared itself up to my mind. To me they were drawn by the hope of assistance. To me they were drawn also by spiritual *rapport*. I knew and understood these spiritual conditions; we lived, as it were, in the same life-atmosphere, and, therefore, all was open between us. On the other hand, no one, not even the daughter sought after, had any knowledge of, or consequently any sympathy with such things. The people all down there were so unspiritual, so intensely in the atmosphere and interests of Earth, that to spirits they did not seem even to exist. At best, they were like people whose backs were turned towards the spirit spheres, and, therefore, towards these inquirers.

"After reflecting on this, I said, 'Yes, I see how it is; you cannot at present find Daniel's daughter yourselves, but what is it you wish me to do?'

"'To write,' they replied, to a friend down there, and learn whether it be true that Daniel's daughter is married, and to whom.'

"I promised, and I wrote accordingly. What now was

curious was the anxiety with which these spirits awaited the reply. Every evening they used to come to learn whether I had received a letter, and seemed much disappointed at hearing the same negative answer. I reminded them that people in the country were generally slow correspondents, but I promised to write to my friend and give him another gentle poke. The reply being long in coming, they evidently began to apprehend that it might be unsatisfactory, and this brought out a trait of character so beautiful in good spirits. One evening they came without their friend Daniel, and begged us, if the reply should prove painful in its nature, to break it as gently to Daniel as we could, observing that he was so unhappy about the affair. We were delighted with this tender care for their friend.

“At length the expected letter arrived, and when they came the same evening to make their usual inquiry, I said, ‘Yes, here is the letter; listen!’ and I read it aloud. The facts stated were, that after Daniel’s decease, his daughter had had several offers, but the one that she had accepted was from a farmer on an adjoining farm—so far it looked ominous, but it went on to name not the Hunt of whom the father was apprehensive, but a gentleman of a different name, a gentleman by birth and education, a man not dependent on farming, having property of his own—and who, it was added, had been a most excellent son, and, no doubt, would prove an excellent husband.

“On hearing these particulars, there appeared to be a great jubilation amongst the spirits; they put up a thanksgiving, and said ‘All right! all right! this is the right man, a good man: thank God, all is well.’

“After this, Daniel Faber came frequently, and was most anxious that we should write to his daughter, and give his love, and express his entire approval of her marriage. It is curious how spirits overlook or overleap all difficulties in such cases. They forget what would have been their own ideas and impressions if some living person had sent to them a message from the dead. I told him I could do nothing of the sort; the only effect of such a message from me to his daughter, who



knew nothing of the recent revelations and facts of Spiritualism, would be to make her suppose that I was gone off my head. Still he continued to come and to urge on me this commission, which I as steadily declined. We wrote, however, to congratulate his daughter on her marriage, and immediately afterwards he came, and said, 'Now you have opened my way, your letter made a track down to my daughter. I have been and seen her. I was present as she and her husband were at supper. I listened to their conversation, and was much pleased with her husband. He is a good man. But I tried in vain to make my presence perceptible to them.'

"From this moment Daniel Faber was more than ever impatient that we would give a message from him to his daughter; saying, 'You will find it made very easy, if you will only try.' I assured him, however, that as I had no desire to pass for a lunatic, I should not write anything of the kind, but if I saw her I would tell her. This opportunity came much sooner than I expected. In a few months we received a note from her saying that she was in London with a brother, recently returned from America, and proposing to come up and spend an evening with us. Accordingly, she and her brother came, and during the evening I drew a chair close to hers, and told her I had something to say to her, that no doubt would surprise her. I then told her that her father had come to us on various occasions, and wished me to send her a message of affection, but which I had not done, as she would naturally not believe it. She did not appear in the least surprised, but expressed much pleasure in having such a message from her father. 'But how is it,' I said, 'this does not seem to astonish you at all?' 'No,' she replied, 'I know all about such things; my brother' (pointing to him) 'is a Spiritualist, and has been telling me respecting it.'

"Here was the verification of the father's assurance that if I would only give his message, I should find the reception of it made very easy. But what was more remarkable still, was, that when I told her the anxiety her father had shown after receiving the news of her marriage in the other world, to a

farmer on an adjoining farm, fearing it might be to one Hunt — ‘How curious!’ she exclaimed. ‘That Hunt made me an offer in my father’s time, which gave my father great displeasure; the man’s character being very indifferent, but he said if my present husband should make me an offer it would have his entire approbation.’

“This was to me extremely interesting and satisfactory. Of the very existence of such a man as Hunt I was utterly ignorant, yet he had been expressly named by Daniel Faber and his spirit friends, and as living on an adjoining farm. Nothing could be more demonstrative of the identity of the spirits who had come to me. The persons, the places, the circumstances concerned in their statement, the very names unknown to me, were precisely as they had represented them; facts in themselves sufficient, independent of the parental anxiety exhibited, and the deep mutual sympathy and regard amongst these old friends, united in the invisible world, to satisfy the mind of any one of the actuality of everything in this spiritual transaction.

“There were one or two other particulars connected with the communications of this Daniel Faber. For years before his decease he was very deaf, and when his spirit first came to us we perceived that he communicated his thoughts to us with much more ease than he caught our replies, which were spoken. He would continue his remarks through the indicator without adverting to ours, or to our questions put. It then came out that he had carried his deafness, in some degree, with him into the intermediate state. But what we could not have conceived, he assured us, that on first entering into that state, he became blind. The light, he said, had blinded him, and he had been under a physician, and was fast recovering both sight and hearing. These were statements wholly contrary to our ordinary notions regarding the spirit after death. One had imagined that in casting off the body, spirits cast off all their ailments. We will hope that is normally the case, but it does not appear to be so universally, as regards certain classes of diseases. As spirits in the intermediate states, and

especially in those most nearly approximating to earth, many of them retain, according to repeated statements of spirits, even for very long periods, their peculiar religious creeds and earthly prejudices; so they retain for some time, certain complaints which affected them here.

“Besides these statements of Daniel Faber, we have had numerous visits from a spirit which on earth was to a certain degree insane, and who in the spirit-life always came to us accompanied by the physician appointed to attend this soul for the same infirmity.

“AILMENTS OF CERTAIN KINDS APPEAR TO BELONG TO THE  
SPIRIT RATHER THAN TO THE BODY,

and consequently still to affect the spirit after its release from the flesh, for how long we do not know. That, however, there are doctors in the intermediate states, has been affirmed on various occasions by spirits.

“In the case of an American merchant of Philadelphia,” continues William Howitt, “who, as well as his wife, was cured by a spirit-physician, Dr. Rush, also formerly of Philadelphia, as related to me by himself, and published by me in the *Spiritual Magazine*, it was asserted that this case was the result of a consultation of Dr. Rush with some of the best physicians in the intermediate states: these cases being utterly beyond the reach of earthly science. In the account of the marvellous case of Leon Favre, Consul-General of France, and brother of Jules Favre, published by himself, and translated by me for the *Spiritual Magazine*, the removal of his torturing complaint which had defied all mortal means, is ascribed by him to the agency of a spirit-physician of Italy, Giacomo Giaferro, who had practised at Verona, centuries ago. In this case, too, we are assured that the medical science existing in the intermediate states had been drawn upon. If physicians, of course, a need of them.”

“In fact, the sphere of the intermediate states, in immediate contact with the earth, would appear to bear a very close resemblance to it, in its passions and sentiments, its moral

and psychic qualities, its prejudices and earthly defects. It is, in fact, a transition so regular, so free from anything like abruptness, violent contrast or sudden leap into new and extreme conditions, as to be in accordance with all that we see in this life of gradual growth, development, and progress. We are, indeed, led to believe that moral conditions are there modified, purified, and advanced into other and higher conditions. That our lower propensities and all that is allied to our more ordinary nature drop off *seriatim*, and are left behind almost, or perhaps altogether, insensibly, and the qualities of more heavenly existence develop themselves with the ease and freshness of flowers in spring; more clear, more sound, more flushed with love and beauty, as the pilgrim of eternity draws nearer and nearer to the sun of all light, power, and perfection."

CHAPTER V.

“Death darkness, danger, are our natural lot,  
And evil spirits may our walk attend  
For aught the wisest know or comprehend.  
Then be *good* Spirits free to breathe a note  
Of elevation ; let their odours float  
Around these converts : . . . .  
Nor doubt that golden cords  
Of good works, mingling with the visions, raise  
The soul to purer worlds.”

*Wordsworth's "Ecclesiastical Sketches," Sonnet xviii.*

AUTOMATIC WRITING.

ONCE settled at West Hill Lodge, standing on the brow of West Hill, Highgate, with its open garden and airy situation, conducive to more healthful physical and spiritual condition than the former residence at Highgate, William Howitt's knowledge of spiritual manifestations progressed calmly and rapidly.

One Sunday, January 31st, 1858, my father, much to his astonishment, gained the power to write, and also to draw automatically by spirit-power. He and my mother, a day or two previously, had visited Mr. and Mrs. W. Wilkinson, at Hampstead, to inspect the remarkable and beautiful spirit-given drawings of Mrs. Wilkinson, the origin and production of which caused Mr. Wilkinson to publish his valuable book, "Spirit-Drawings: a Personal Narrative." Interest excited by these drawings naturally increased the faith of my parents. Each unknown to the other, made in private an essay for the spirit-drawing and writing-power." My father had not sat many minutes passive, holding a pencil in his hand upon a sheet of paper, ere a something resembling an electric shock ran through his arm and hand ; whereupon the pencil began

to move in circles. The influence becoming stronger and ever stronger, moved not alone the hand, but the whole arm in a rotatory motion, until the arm was at length raised, and rapidly—as if it had been the spoke of a wheel propelled by machinery—whirled irresistibly in a wide sweep, and with great speed, for some ten minutes through the air. The effect of this rapid rotation was felt by him in the muscles of the arm for some little time afterwards.\* Then, the arm being again at rest, the pencil, in the passive fingers, began gently, but clearly and decidedly, to move, and traced upon the paper, in large, strongly formed characters—some as if printed, other letters adorned with scroll work—the words,

\* The following experiences are interesting and illustrative of the above experience. The first is that of Mr. William Wilkinson, in 1856, extracted from his book, "Spirit-Drawings"; the second from appendix to "Spirit Identity" (p. 127), by M. A. (Oxon), when describing his first experience at a séance, held by Herne and Williams in 1872 :—

"I had for many weeks," says Mr. Wilkinson, "at intervals, taken pencil in hand, and held it for several minutes at a time, with no result excepting the faintest conviction that it was of no use to try again, for it was impossible for my hand to move; and my conviction was borne out by repeated failures. It never moved a jot, and, though I gave not up the trial, I held the pencil without hope. At last, at my house, in the presence of several gentlemen, I again held it, and after waiting less than five minutes, it began to move, at first slowly, but presently with increased speed, till in less than a quarter-of-an-hour it moved with such velocity as I had never seen in a hand and arm before or since. It literally ran away in spiral forms; and I can compare it to nothing else than the fly-wheel of an engine when it was 'run away.' This lasted until a gentleman present touched my arm, when suddenly it fell like an infant's as it goes to sleep, and the pencil dropped out of my hand. I had, however, acquired the power. . . . The consequences of the violent motion of the muscles of the arm were so apparent, that I could not for several days lift it without pain" (p. 20).

"To my great horror," writes M. A. (Oxon), "I found these jerks communicated to myself. My right arm was seized about the middle of the forearm, and dashed violently up and down with a noise resembling that of a number of paviors at work. It was the most tremendous exhibition of 'unconscious muscular action' I ever saw. In vain I tried to stop it. I distinctly felt the grasp, soft and firm round my arm, and though perfectly possessed of senses and volition, I was powerless to interfere, although my hand was disabled for some days by the bruising it then got. The object we soon found was to get up the force."

“GOD, GOD, GOD IS GOOD.  
PAY HIM ALL PRAISE.”

Beneath, in smaller written characters, but still large and bold, and not at all like the ordinary handwriting of my father, these words—

“*Many good things will come  
If you pray to God for them.*”

In the corner a small ornamental scroll of mingled leaves and buds was attempted to be designed, not unlike the feeble drawing of a painstaking young child. This page of his first automatic-writing my father preserved with great care. It was gummed by him on to the fly-leaf of a small manuscript book, commenced within a week of this time, to be filled with automatic writing, given each evening through his hand. This book he entitled

“VESPUSCULÆ—EVENING COMMUNICATIONS.”\*

This book lies beside me whilst I write. The communications commenced on February 8th, and terminated July 30th, 1858. All is written with great clearness, precision, and with no appearance of hurry, confusion, or of alteration. Above each communication he has signed the Cross; a loose sheet of paper lies within the book, on which he has written the answers he received to questions put to his Guardian-spirit whilst writing, as to whether he should pursue the communication or stop, etc.; and between all the questions he seems to have made a sign of the Cross, which he used in his communications as a sort of holy talisman, whereby to test the character of his communicating invisible friends. When the family had retired for the night, he was accustomed to remain for a quiet hour alone to receive these written communications. After a silent prayer and inward spiritual communion, he used to open his book and write. Some of the writings are very short, some long, and the subject-matter continuous. These longer com-

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\* The “Spirit Teachings” given by automatic-writing through the hand of “M.A. (Oxon.),” recently issued by the Psychological Press Association, by their lofty spirit and grace of language, have, in 1883, attracted towards this branch of spirit-manifestation the respectful attention of a very wide and varied circle of readers.

munications would be continued from evening to evening, the sentence or paragraph carried on in perfect sequence from the point where it was broken off the night before. The subjects are very various; but the spirit is uniform in its devout and gentle character, and the language in its great simplicity; devotion to God, and brotherly love to man, form the theme of the volume. The book thus commences—

“Call on God for the teachings of Omniscience, and he will give them plenteously. The ordinances of His Spirit are Truth and Love. He gives to all who ask in entire confidence, and seek for the growth of Divine life in their souls.

“He sends His messengers on every side to call to Him those who are endowed with simplicity of heart and teachable will. Such are the ‘little children’ who are desired to come unto Him, and ‘whose angels always see His face.’ Cleave unto the Truth, and fear no man’s criticism.”

Six months later the writing in the book terminates with the following communication which I have here slightly abridged. He would appear to have beheld a vision of cornfields; but of this vision I find no other trace:—

#### CORNFIELDS OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.

“Cornfields denote abundance, and you saw men running swiftly along the green grass, betwixt the growing crop and the hedge. They were running before you, which implies that you were to pursue and to overtake them, in time to help them to reap the harvest. They appeared like countrymen, which indicated that they were labourers, and that you were to follow them as labourers. They were in haste to show that the harvest was nearly ripe, and that no time was to be lost. They kept (near to?) the headland, which appeared to have been reaped of its grass-crop, and thus indicated that one growth was already gathered in, and another and better one was fast maturing. Cornfields denote abundance, and you were admonished to be firm in faith, and not to let any doubts enter your minds. You are thus informed that the harvest is growing, and that you must persevere and faint not; for seed-



time and harvest are promised to the end of time; and this will occur spiritually, as certainly as it does, and will, physically. Cornfields denote abundance; and the brief vision was an emblem of the abundance of the mercies and bounties of your heavenly Father, who fills the world with plenty, and is not accountable for the miseries which the evil passions of men introduce. He gives good things, but men convert them into sources of calamity. . . . The triumphs of martial men are the sorrows of the All-benevolent Creator; the glories of war are the obstruction to the spread of the Philosophy of Peace, Abundance, and Brotherly-love. Let your endeavours be to demonstrate the law of abundance of blessings, physical and spiritual, which are the gifts of an infinite God. The harvests of earth appear every year, but the Harvest of Heaven, which it has required ages to mature, stands ready in the fields, and few regard it. The blindness of men who call themselves Christian is inconceivable. Peace and abundance are at their doors; but they prefer strife and sorrow. . . . This world has reaped the lower crop of Christianity, outward decorum, outward civilisation, and enjoys thence many advantages; but the still nobler Harvest of International-amity, of 'peace on earth, and good-will towards men,' stands almost untouched, and the Divine precepts of brotherly-love in the participation of this world's wealth, and the communication of knowledge, and daily 'doing as you would be done by,' have as yet scarcely taken root, and await the latter rains of real Gospel-truth."

Various of these communications terminate with the words, "thus speaks Truth," or "thus speaks Verity." We were told that "Verity" was the name of the Guardian-angel, who was in closest communication at that time with my father. As would appear to be the law in such cases, the name of the guardian is bestowed upon his charge. Entering the "*Vita Nuova*" of the Spirit, the Spiritualist speedily receives one of these mysterious forms of nomenclature typical of his then state of progress; the name to be changed when the spiritual condition shall again in due course change.

It is to this manuscript-book that William Howitt refers in the "History of the Supernatural," when he says, "I wrote a whole volume without any action of my own mind, the process being purely mechanical on my part."

If this automatic writing did much to induct him into a knowledge of the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism, much more did

#### HIS EXPERIENCE OF AUTOMATIC DRAWING.\*

On the eventful Sunday in January, 1858, to which I have referred, the private experiment of my mother was equally remarkable. To her, in the most gentle manner, came the movement of the hand as she sat with her sheet of note-paper laid before her, upon her open Bible. She also sought for "the power" in a devotional attitude of mind. Sitting with her hand passively holding the pencil, it gently commenced automatically to trace a crocus-shaped flower with a bulbous root. After which came several other flowers delicately traced. She repeated the experiment; the power increasing. Within a short time a still more striking thing occurred. Whilst automatically drawing a bell-like flower, she perceived, lying upon the blank paper, the most delicately outlined and shaded butterfly, appearing as if it were sketched in sepia; the minute veining of the wings, and their spots delicately delineated, as if made of the finest lace.† Fearing almost to

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\* When the subject of automatic drawing and writing is under consideration, let not the earliest record, probably, of its existence be forgotten, viz., in the *Old Testament*. First Book of Chronicles, ch. xxviii., David enjoined upon Solomon to build a temple to the Lord. "Then David gave to Solomon his son the pattern of the porch, and of the houses thereof, and of the treasuries thereof, and of the upper chambers thereof, and of the inner parlours thereof, and of the place of the mercy-seat *and the pattern of all that he had by the Spirit*, of the courts of the house of the Lord, and of all the chambers round about, of the treasuries of the house of God, and of the treasuries of the dedicated things: . . . . *All this, said David, the Lord made me understand in writing by his hand upon me, even all the works of this pattern.*" Referred to by Mr. Wilkinson in "Spirit-Drawings," by Mr. Shorter in his "Two Worlds."

† The following experience is much in accord with the above:—One day, looking accidentally on a sheet of blank paper, Mrs. Puget *saw upon it a*

breathe lest she should destroy the phantom-butterfly, she watched it in astonishment. Even whilst she thus gazed, her hand was moved towards it, and the pencil traced its exact outline. It then gradually faded entirely away. A group of delicately outlined flowers, with a butterfly, were thus produced.

In the case of the butterfly alone was her vision opened to perceive the spirit-picture lying upon the paper; nevertheless, her hand was guided, or magnetically attracted, towards the invisible form of the flowers, and thus the outline of the whole was made in much the same way that a child draws its pictures upon a so-called "transparent slate." To this process, well known to the writer from personal knowledge, she hopes to recur on some future occasion. This experience tended to increase my father's interest in automatic drawing.

The promise conveyed to him by the infantile attempt at decorative design, which accompanied his first piece of automatic writing, was in due course fulfilled. In a small portfolio, my father has arranged, with that neatness and method which characterised him in all things,

#### HIS SERIES OF AUTOMATIC DRAWINGS,

in chronological order. The first bears date, June 9th, 1856; the last was made in October of the same year. These designs are divided into eight distinct sets. They are drawn in black-lead pencil, carefully and delicately, upon white letter-

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*lovely little face, just like a photograph, which gradually disappeared; then another became visible on another part of the sheet, and they arrested her attention so much, that she thought she should like to catch the fleeting image, which she did with a piece of burnt cork, thinking that a piece of pencil would be too trying for her sight."* Mrs. Puget had lost a daughter in the prime of youth, whom she mourned for with such excessive weeping, that her eyesight became affected. This occupation, Miss Houghton says, aroused her from the stupor of despair into which she had fallen, and the faces, in various positions, presenting themselves, whenever she sat down to the work, her eyesight, as well as her whole being, became restored to a more healthy state. *She had to work rapidly, for the faces soon faded.*—(Miss Houghton's "Evenings at Home in Spiritual Séances," first series, p. 68.)

paper. Upon the second half of the sheet is an explanation, written by his hand, guided spiritually. These explanations appear without any alteration or confusion of expression. Their character is always pious, sometimes devotional, sometimes didactic, frequently very graceful in expression and idea. These writings show the nature of the designs to be symbolical, and thus William Howitt's spirit-drawings, like their congeners, partake of the character of the diagram—their lines, circles, and angles may truly be designated “cogitative,” and produced by the clear demonstration of some moral or intellectual truth—their outer form is but a means to an end.

The drawings, and accompanying explanations, are in pairs. No. 1 set of drawings is endorsed “*Rude Beginnings.*” No. 2, “*Flowery Standards*”: these are all symmetrical arrangements of vegetable forms, more or less in the shape of standards. No. 3, “*Flowers not Symmetrical,*” but all of a decorative nature, not infrequently Oriental in character, resembling portions of Indian arabesques.\* No. 4, endorsed “*Symbolical*

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\* As a specimen of the explanations which accompany the drawings, I give the following. These drawings and explanations have value, as being amongst the earliest produced in England. *A group of pansy-like flowers, springing forth on every side from a mass of tube-shaped leaves,* is thus interpreted:—

“Love sends Love, and out of the leaves of the human brain spring the flowers of spiritual beauty and wisdom. As the brain sends forth fancies, so does the Plant of Truth send forth spiritual blossoms, and indicate to the learner that there are many kinds and degrees of blossoming to be attained. These flowers are, as it were, half-leaf, half-flower, because they typify a state of only partial development, yet they assume a rude resemblance to the pansy, or heartsease, to denote that there is much *heartsease* even in the early exercise of God's spiritual endowments. They who once accept the offered boon of the inner-life, find in it an inexpressible charm. They perceive at once a taste of heaven, of heavenly life, and fragrance that makes poor all earthly things. A new interest is added to life—that interest which grows and deepens through all eternity, and which made the apostle declare, that ‘ear hath not heard, neither has it entered into the mind of man to conceive the glory which God has prepared for those that love Him.’ This is the mystery of the felicity of the saints, the divine charm, which made the martyrs tread on flames and perceive them not, and the soul of the anchorite in the most inhospitable deserts, find a paradise. This is the marvel of the Divine life, which, filling more and more the departed souls of the happy, render them eager to press ever onwards, and causes man to see and hear no more of the majority of them.”

*Designs*," contains only one pair of sketches, a diagram of "*The Net of Evil*," with one clear, uniform, unbroken descending line representative, according to the written explanation, of "*Love Divine*," which, entering into the chaotic entanglements of the dark "net," touches every portion of it with intent "to elevate, to comfort, and relieve," even as the explanation tells us, "Love Himself, after His death on the cross for the salvation of a wicked world, went down into hell to preach to the souls mourning and despairing." No. 5, endorsed, "*Elaborate Designs: partly vegetable, partly architectural*," also Oriental in style, reminding one of the art of Cashmere, and occasionally appearing as if encrusted with pearls and precious stones, or as if designed to be wrought out in mosaic or sandal wood, ebony, and ivory, as seen in the delicate Indian caskets of Bombay workmanship. No. 6, endorsed "*The Teacher's Snub*"—contains a single design, representing a sunflower, clothed with tobacco-leaves, explained as a picture of the disharmony produced by the blind self-will of man, which would disfigure and distort by incongruities divine growths. "Let the Sun of Heaven shine upon its own Flowers, and let it, by obedience to its true nature, put forth true leaves." Nos. 7 and 8.—Circles and Geometrical Designs. These are accompanied only occasionally by a written explanation. These designs, from their remarkable accuracy and infinite variety of rich and elegant combination of line and jewel-like ornamentation, are highly noteworthy. One can alone compare them to the varying—ever fresh and ever perfectly symmetrical—combinations of patterns exhibited to the eye by the mysterious toy of science, the kaleidoscope. These might be termed drawings from the kaleidoscope of the spirit. Some appear to be thickly set with pearls or jewels; pearls and jewels accurately diminishing in size as they approach the centre, placed at regular intervals upon the cobweb-like converging rays of the design. Executed in colour in stained glass, they would form, with their geometric interlacing of line, beautiful "*rose windows*." The number of designs contained in this portfolio, including the few rude beginnings, is

eighty-six—by a coincidence the number of the completed years of his life. The following explanation of one of the least elegant or elaborate of the circles is worthy of consideration for the principle of Hope and Consolation sought to be thereby demonstrated.

“The present drawing is a circle of circles all agreeing with each other, though differing in dimensions, and all bound together by intervening lines and figures which are in harmony with them, and run through them not to disturb but to combine. Thus do the laws of the Creator run through all circles of matter or of life, and bring every portion of His works into union with each other. All is designed by unerring Wisdom, and even where the disturbing influences of men produce disorder, God over-rules them to leave all safe and even comely. The lines converging from the outer towards the inner centre of this diagram are irregularly projected, and do not meet in perfect symmetry, but they are still so over-ruled as to give strength and even a certain regularity; but man works in perversity or ignorance. Let all be as clay in God’s hands, and not as turbulent demons resolute to do their own wayward wills. Learn to act in harmony and not in self-will. Power enlightened from on high . . . has much larger liberty, because it runs in accordance with universal laws” (October 9, 1858).

It is to these sketches that William Howitt refers in the following passages in his “History of the Supernatural,” when writing of the

CURIOUS CIRCLES STRUCK BY THE SEERESS OF PREVORST,  
 the description of which, as given by Dr. Kerner, accurately describes the character and mode of production of those struck by my father’s hand. The circles drawn by the seeress she described as “sun-spheres” and “life-spheres,” and she averred that they mysteriously contained in spiritual cipher the history of her own life, divided into circles. *Vide* Seeress of Prevorst, Mrs. Crowe’s translation; or for fuller detail regarding these “spheres,” the original.

“We have,” writes William Howitt (vol. i. p. 58 of “History of the Supernatural”), “in the original German edition of Kerner’s *Seeress*, seven lithographic plates representing her sun and life-spheres. These Madame Hauffe drew under spirit influence; and the manner of her drawing them is deserving of especial attention, as every Spiritualist will see from what he has experienced in himself, or seen in his friends, how genuine it is. Kerner says:—‘She threw off the whole drawing (Plate I.) in an incredible short time, and employed in marking the more than a hundred points, into which this circle was divided, no compasses or instruments whatever. She made the whole with her hand alone, and failed not in a single point. She seemed to work as a spider works its geometric diagrams, without a visible instrument. I recommended her to use a pair of compasses to strike the circles; she tried, and made immediate blunders’!

“Having myself,” continues my father, “who never received a single lesson in drawing, and never could draw in a normal condition, had a great number of circles struck through my hand under spirit-influence, and these filled up with tracing of ever new invention, without a thought of my own, I at once recognised the truth of Kerner’s statement. The drawings made by my hand have been seen by great number of persons, artists as well as others, and remain to be seen, though the power is again gone from me (1863). Giotto, or any pair of compasses, could not strike more perfect circles than I could under this influence, with nothing but a piece of paper and a pencil. No inventor of tracery or patterns could invent such original ones as were thrown out on the paper, day after day, with almost lightning speed, except with long and studious labour, and by instrumental aid.” \*

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\* The following extracts show, from the experience of other persons, the general character of this exhibition of a peculiar power:—“Another effect, astonishing to us, as to most who have seen it, was the production of a large circle, described with great accuracy by hand, without the aid of compasses, and which was next filled up with a series of geometrical figures, each of the four divisions of the circle being co-relative with its opposite. It was then a

These instances of accurate circles being drawn by spirit-influence through the hand of a "medium," lead to interesting reflection when compared with the account given by Vasari in his life of Giotto, the father of Italian art, of Giotto's "famous O"—the circle struck by his hand, without the use of compasses, and which was sent by him as the sign of his skill to Pope Benedict IX., being at once accepted as such by his Holiness. Light has yet to be thrown upon the origin of Art in its varied schools, by a knowledge and intellectual observation of the well-known phenomena in spirit-drawing.

#### SEANCES WITH MR. D. D. HOME.

Having thus sketched the experience of William Howitt within the private circle of his home, it is time to notice the opportunities enjoyed by him of studying manifestations given through celebrated mediums. It was first, I supposed, at the residence of Mr. W. Wilkinson, that he had made the acquaintance of Mr. D. D. Home, witnessing the extraordinary physical and other manifestations exhibited through this gentleman. Paragraphs in the *Spiritual Magazine* for 1860 and 1861 lead to other inference, however.

In the number of the *Spiritual Magazine* for February, 1860, there is a notice of "Mr. Howitt" having met, "at the house of an eminent literary man, Mr. D. D. Home, now so well known through the Courts of Europe, and Mr. Squire from New York." There being present "four authors of long-established reputation, two editors of journals, an artist of eminence—in all, eleven persons well known to each other"—where "were heard often loud raps, the table rising repeatedly into the air during their sitting." . . .

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complicated and wonderful circle of geometrical figures, and appeared complete in itself."—(Wilkinson's "Spirit-Drawings.")

"The medium draws a square or a circle to accurate measurement, without other implement than a mere pencil, and that with the right hand or left."—(Drawings by Mr. Abraham James, the discoverer of petroleum at Chicago, and also in Pennsylvania. See account of him by William Howitt, "Spiritual Magazine," 1871. "History of the Chicago Artesian Well, demonstrating the Truth of Spiritual Philosophy. By George A. Shufelt, Jun., Chicago, 1865.")



Next direct spirit-writing was obtained repeatedly, and once with the cardboard laid on the floor at a distance from every one, when immediately was written upon it, "I am glad to see you all here to-night. God bless you!" Hands were both seen and felt—one of these the hand of a female. "Mr. Howitt himself had his hand touched three times by a spirit-hand, every other hand being laid visibly upon the table, which felt like the hand of a man, not a woman. It was laid on the back of his hand—warm, soft, and solid as any hand he ever felt; a second time the thumb of the spirit-hand was pressed strongly against his thumb; and a third time the spirit-fingers were put point to point with his extended fingers, and this time with so strong an electric quality as to prick his fingers exactly as the sparks from an electrical machine would have pricked them."

Again, the *Spiritual Magazine* informs us that Mr. Wilkinson *first* beheld the phenomena as manifested through Mr. D. D. Home, on June 16, 1861, in the drawing-room of a house in Cornwall Terrace, Regent's Park. Of this very striking séance, we have also printed in the *Spiritual Magazine* for October, 1861, the following account from William Howitt—who was present—in a letter written by him to Mr. T. B. Barkas, of Newcastle-on-Tyne:—

"There were," he writes—"besides Mr. and Mrs. Wilkinson and ourselves—Mr. Home and a Russian, Count Steinbock. We had beautiful music played on the accordion when held in one hand by Mr. Home, who cannot play a note, and the same when held by Mr. Wilkinson. We had the clearest and most prompt communication on different subjects through the alphabet, and flowers were taken from a bouquet on a cheffonier at a distance, and brought and handed to each of us. . . . I saw a spirit-hand as distinctly as I saw my own. I touched one several times, once when it was handing me a flower. . . . Then the spirits went to a shrine of bronze idols belonging to the lady of the house, who brought them from India. Some of these are very heavy. They pitched them down on the floor, and with such violence that the clash

might have been heard all over the house. The larger of these idols—perhaps all—of that I am not certain—unscrew, and the screws work exactly the opposite way to our screws; but the spirits unscrewed them, and pummelled their heads lustily on the floor, saying through the alphabet, ‘You must all do your best to destroy idolatry, both in India and in England, where it prevails in numerous ways;’ . . . two parts of the idol Mahadeo, of heavy bronze, were placed on the table by a visible hand. The head of the idol felt to me to weigh four or five pounds. Mr. Home was lifted about a foot from the ground,—but did not float as he frequently does—in the strongest light. The table—a very heavy loo-table—was also several times lifted a foot or more from the ground, and you were invited to look under and see that there was no visible cause. To us who have seen so much of these things, to whom they are almost as familiar as the sight of a bird flying, and far more familiar than the present comet, this was not necessary.”

This account of the séance was printed in full by Mr. Home, in the first volume of “Incidents in my Life,” p. 189. Description of other séances with Mr. Home, witnessed by my father both at West Hill Lodge and elsewhere, may be found in an article from his pen in the *Spiritual Magazine* for 1871. To one very interesting séance with Mr. Home, which took place in the drawing-room of his friends, Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, my father was wont to refer with special interest and pleasure. It is the séance so graphically described by Mrs. Hardinge-Britten in the *Psychological Review* for October, 1882, p. 439. The manner in which, as she says, “the spirits formed a beautiful tent, the apex of which was gathered into graceful knots above our heads, the sides being drawn tightly all around the backs of our chairs, held there by at least twenty pair of hands, large and small, fair and brown, all of which were visible to the whole company for more than an hour,” he has described again and again in very similar words. This séance, let it be remembered, was one taking place in the full, clear light of a summer’s evening. The conditions were harmonious; consequently the power was strong.

In "The History of the Supernatural," vol. ii., chap. xi., having in brief described the important work of Mr. Home up to the period at which he wrote, William Howitt concludes by these words—"The office of Mr. Home has been the first great necessary office of awakenment; the watchman crying the approaching hour of recompleted man; he has done much—and there remains still more to be done."

The following experiences of

A TEST SEANCE WITH MR. CHARLES FOSTER

have not in detail been, I believe, printed before, and are also of interest:—

"On the arrival of Foster in England," writes my father, "I was invited to meet him at the house of Mr. William Wilkinson. Sitting after dinner, he bared his arm and said—'Observe, red letters will presently come out upon my arm,' and indeed very soon there *was* writing on his bare arm traced in red letters. I do not remember what was the sense of the writing. Mr. Wilkinson rose and left the room, and soon after returned with red writing on his arm. 'This,' he said, 'I have made from a black lead pencil, writing and rubbing the place, so that I do not consider Mr. Foster's letters are proved to be by spiritual agency. He *may* have made them unobserved by us.' The messages, however, which he gave, as from spirits present, were more startling. He mentioned names of spirits who gave the messages, and which he could not very probably know anything about. He gave a message from my father, who, he said, was present, naming him rightly Thomas Howitt. As Mr. Foster was anxious to procure introductions to people in London—he had only just arrived in England—I told him that before I gave him any introductions I must see more. The manifestations certainly were surprising; but I wanted further proof. I invited him, therefore, to spend an evening at my house at Highgate, and said I would invite a friend or two to meet him, who were well acquainted with mediumistic facts. He accepted for the next evening. I invited Colonel D—— to be present. The séance

was remarkable. The pellets were written upon by us, rolled up closely, mixed, and then picked out by Foster with the most amazing accuracy as to their contents. He then said he felt his head affected by some very powerful spirit, who said he would give his initials in red on his arm. He, upon this, bared his arm, upon which no marks whatever had as yet appeared. Presently, however, G. B. appeared in letters strong and clear. Colonel D——, who at once divined of whom the initials were, made no remark, except that he would like to hear the name in full. 'He says he will give it,' exclaimed the medium, and, as with a sudden effort, threw out the name 'George B——,' adding that the message was intended for Colonel D——, who at once declared that the manifestation was satisfactory.\* The spirit happened to be that of Sir George B——, who had commanded during the Indian Mutiny, and who was an old friend of Colonel D——. Of these facts Mr. Foster, who was newly arrived from New York, and who knew nothing whatever of Colonel D——, nor probably of Sir George B——, must clearly have been ignorant. Later on in the evening, Foster said that there was a spirit of a woman, apparently of the poorer class, standing near to my wife, who was anxious to speak about a daughter, regarding whom she was in solicitude. On being asked who this spirit was, he said she replied, 'One who died of cancer.' My wife begged him not to refer to things so painful; but he asked, 'How then was the poor woman's spirit to identify herself?' My younger daughter and a lady present knew immediately who was intended. It was the spirit of a poor woman whom they had discovered in Agar-Town (a miserable district then lying between Highgate and London), and who had begged of them after her death to take the daughter, quite a girl, from her drunken step-father, who otherwise would be the ruin of her,

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\* Since this account first appeared in the *Psychological Review*, Colonel Drayson has assured me that upon this occasion Foster gave him a proof of the identity of the spirit purporting to be that of Sir John B—— still more remarkable than the one here recorded. Colonel Drayson testified to the accuracy of the above record.

and place her with some respectable woman. They had done this, placing her with a worthy widow who kept a shop; but during the recent absence from England of my daughter and her friend, the drunken step-father had taken her away, and was realising all that her mother's fear foreboded, through the terrible scenes into which this wretched step-father had introduced the girl. These ladies then asked what the spirit wished done for her daughter. She replied through the medium, that she desired her to be taken from her step-father, and placed in a certain institution for young girls. They replied that this institution was one belonging to the Church of England—and that she herself during life had been a Methodist. She replied that she did not mind this; and they promised to do what could be done to get the child placed in this institution (all of which was ultimately done, and the girl grew up a good and useful woman).

“Upon receiving their promise to befriend her child, the spirit of the poor woman expressed her great gratification and withdrew. Now, all this must assuredly have been unknown to Foster, only arrived a day or two from America, and knowing nothing of the circumstances or persons alluded to. Foster continued to address the lady who had been concerned with my daughter in the affairs of this poor woman. He went on to say that he saw an old gentleman, in Quaker costume, standing near to her, who was most nearly related to her—indeed, he observed that she was wearing some of his hair in a locket. By the description she at once recognised the aged-looking spirit as her father. ‘Yes,’ said Foster, ‘and your uncle Norton and your grandmother Treadwell are both here, and expressing great affection for you.’ Foster was in these instances an undoubted ‘medium,’ although much has been subsequently alleged against him which was seriously damaging.”

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Did space permit, further detail might be added regarding other interesting séances at which William Howitt at various times was present, and from which he derived valuable know-

ledge of facts and tests of spirit-presence and power. Except in the case of the séances of the Davenport Brothers, he avoided sitting in mixed companies for manifestation, knowing too well the stringent necessity for suitable and harmonious conditions being maintained if satisfactory results were desired. The séances already referred to were strictly private. Of several curious séances he at various times gave account in the pages of the *Spiritual Magazine*. Shortly before quitting England in 1870, he was present with my mother and myself at an interesting séance at the house of Mr. and Mrs. Everitt, in Penton Street, Pentonville, where some conversation was held through the voice of the spirit who calls himself "John Watt." Very noteworthy was the fact, that, according to the character of the question put to the spirit—intellectual or otherwise—was the quality of his reply. The maxim of this spirit might truly have been that of St. Paul, when he says, "Even as I please all men in all things, not asking my own profit, but the profit of many, that many may be saved." Thus we perceived that the same "voice" to the stupid and foolish, would have replied in their stupid or foolish spirit, while to the thoughtful and intelligent the reply would be in proportion to their thought and intelligence. This gradation of quality was peculiar and instructive.

In 1859,

A CORRESPONDENCE WITH CHARLES DICKENS ON  
HAUNTED HOUSES

took place. Mr. Dickens, who, together with several of his friends, professed to desire to visit some well-known haunted house, applied to William Howitt for information as to where so desirable an object of "investigation" was to be met with. Mr. Dickens was referred to the house at Willington, in the North of England, which his informant *had* visited, and to a house at Cheshunt, near London, which he had *not* visited, but regarding the haunting in which my father had heard extraordinary accounts from Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, whose relatives Mr. and Mrs. Chapman had for some time inhabited the house, and who, with their family, had been forced to quit

it owing to the annoyance they endured from the presence of the earth-bound spirits.

This house is mentioned by Mrs. Crowe in her "Night-Side of Nature," at p. 332. "The account," says my father, "there given was written down from the lips of Mr. and Mrs. Kean by a gentleman equally eminent as a publisher and an author.\* I have his copy of Mrs. Crowe's book before me, with the names of the place and parties written by him on the margin. That same account, only fuller, and with all the names, was detailed to me," continues William Howitt, "by the same near relatives of the Chapmans long after, and has by them been told to many others." Mr. Dickens and his friends professed to have sought for this house in Cheshunt, and could not even hear there of its existence. This led to a lively exchange of letters in the *Critic* regarding this house in particular, and ghosts in general. The house, it appeared, on further inquiry, still existed, but had been much altered and partly pulled down. With its change of form the haunting appears to have ceased—a circumstance not infrequent in such cases. This may be regarded as William Howitt's *début* in the newspapers as champion of the Spiritualist cause.

In the spring of 1860, the advent in London of

THE REV. THOMAS LAKE HARRIS,

and the delivery of his celebrated inspirational addresses, enabled my father to make the personal acquaintance of one whose poetical endowments had for some years excited his admiration, and whose claims of "inspiration" interested him. He attended the morning services of Harris, and was present at the delivery of that startling sermon delivered upon the dangers of Modern Spiritualism, "in which was presented in bold relief the danger of Spiritualists giving themselves up to production of physical phenomena, and allowing their minds to be held captive by the teachings of the low forms of Spiritualism." This sermon led to an article in the *Morning Adver-*

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\* The late Dr. Robert Chambers.

*tiser* of a somewhat "rampant" kind, headed, "Extraordinary and Triumphant Exposure of Spiritualism," which called forth from William Howitt a reply in the *Critic*, in which, amongst other remarks, he says:—

"In your very fair remarks on the article of a contemporary on Mr. Harris's sermon of Tuesday morning week, you doubt my being quite so enthusiastic in my estimation of Mr. Harris's ministry after that discourse. I assure you that I entertain precisely the same admiration of it as noble Christian oratory, and as pure Christian Spiritualism. I can recollect no man to be compared with him in the essentials of a finished preacher; for power and originality of mind; for poetry of diction; for breadth and copiousness of argument; for affluence of historic and philosophic illustration; for vivid and acute analysis of the elements of modern society; for a courageous trampling of all conventionalities; in a word, for the effectual stripping from the gospel of the cobwebs of a dusty, worn-out divinity, of the hampering bandages of creeds, and for planting Christianity before us in her divine and undisguised lineaments, in her free and noble beauty. I am glad that Mr. Harris gave that energetic warning against the abuses of Spiritualism; and I expressed to him my satisfaction before I left the place. I should be glad to know whether all who heard that discourse believed it; for if so, they believe in Spiritualism being a great and unquestionable power. I care not whether a reality is presented in its terrors or in its amenities, so that it is planted as a truth in the heart's and soul's conviction. Let its entity be admitted, and we shall have time enough to learn all about it. It will no longer depend on the dicta of individuals; it will be placed in the arena of the world, and must be touched, handled, probed, and tested till all its qualities and tendencies are ascertained as those of any other principle or substance.

"Mr. Harris's discourse was not directed against Spiritualism, but against the *abuses* of it; not against Christian Spiritualism, but against the inversion of it—un-Christian Spiritualism. Christianity needs its continual warnings; shall Spiritualism be exempt from them?"



In the "History of the Supernatural," its author, speaking of Harris, says—

"Whatever be the process (the 'inner breathing'), those who heard Mr. Harris during his visit to this country in 1860 had abundant proofs of the magnificent results. His extempore sermons were the only realisation of my conceptions of eloquence; at once full, unforced, outgushing, unstinted, and absorbing. They were triumphant embodiments of sublime poetry, and a stern, unsparing, yet loving and burning theology. Never since the days of Fox were the disguises of modern society so unflinchingly rent away, and the awful distance betwixt real Christianity and its present counterfeit made so startlingly apparent. That the preacher was also the prophet was most clearly proclaimed, by his suddenly hastening home, declaring that it was revealed to him that the nethermost hells were let loose in America. This was before the public breach betwixt North and South had taken place. But it soon followed, only too deeply to demonstrate the truths of the spiritual intimation."

To the consideration of the inspirational powers of Harris, first as preacher, secondly as poet, William Howitt devoted two articles in vol. i. of the *Spiritual Magazine*. In later years, without losing his admiration of the inspirations of the earlier years of Harris, he did not refrain from very fearlessly and freely, as was his wont, expressing his entire dissent from the dogmatisms and eccentricities of this remarkable man. Harris's volumes of "The Arcana of Christianity," and his beautiful treatise entitled "The Breath of God with Man," claimed in many passages my father's warm admiration.

Some six years later (1866), when another gifted inspirational speaker arrived in London—

MRS. EMMA HARDINGE,

my father attended the soirees held in Harley Street, and listened with warm appreciation of her eloquence, to the addresses delivered there by that lady. With Mrs. Hardinge Britten, and her interesting mother, the venerable Mrs. Floyd,

he had at various times agreeable personal intercourse. Ideas emanating from the lips or pen of Mrs. Hardinge Britten were ever listened to by him with a cordial and sympathetic interest; their views on most points connected with the movements of Spiritualists and Spiritualism, having much in common.

#### THE DAVENPORT BROTHERS

having, in 1864, arrived in London to cause excitement by their unique manifestations, in company with his stalwart, friendly co-labourer in the cause of Modern Spirit-manifestations, the late Mr. Benjamin Coleman, William Howitt witnessed on various occasions the extraordinary display of the phenomena manifested in the presence of "the brothers." Abundant opportunity was afforded for testing the genuine character of the manifestations: also, through conversation with the Davenports, as well as with the late Dr. J. B. Ferguson, their attendant friend and guardian, my father learnt many particulars of a singular and noteworthy character, with reference to the unpremeditated manifestation of spirit-power repeatedly occurring through these young men in their hours of private life. For instance, when travelling by railway, and entering a dark tunnel suddenly, hands or arms, *à l'improvise*, would appear; whilst, during the profound sleep of the brothers at night, startling signs of spiritual presences would also occur.

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Thus on all sides, and for a series of years, did William Howitt industriously gather together that knowledge which can alone come from personal experience, fitting him for his special labour in the cause—the writing his "History of the Supernatural," and his series of articles running through the thirteen volumes of the *Spiritual Magazine*. Whether his experiences, and the knowledge deduced therefrom, belonged to the intellectual or physical phases of the subject—whether to its branches, sacred or secular, all were welcome, since each one illumined some portion of the vast, mysterious arcanum of Modern Spiritual-manifestation, which gradually he began to regard as exhibiting the signs of

## A THREEFOLD DEVELOPMENT OF SPIRITUALISM.

“The Jews,” he says, “would not tolerate God’s foolishness; nor can our Scribes and Pharisees of to-day. They cannot see that the development of Spiritualism is threefold. First comes this wave of foolish physical manifestations from the secret but illimitable ocean of the Divine economy—comes as the harbinger of the higher developments—the intellectual, and finally the spiritual. They cannot see that the Holy Ghost, in its great work of the ages, is bringing every man to judgment; and that before JUDGMENT there must be LIFE. God cannot judge a stone or a clod, because they have neither life, consciousness, nor responsibility; and the mind sunk into the death of materialism is but a clod or a stone, so long as it is in that state. The great realm and condition of materialism must be first broken up; its stony deadness dashed to pieces, its dormant life excited by that other stone which is ‘cut out of the mountain without hands,’ which is already on its way crushing and grinding to powder the whole inert mass of materialism, and evoking in agony and astonishment the souls compressed and embedded in it. Not only the materialism which denies all soul and spirit, all Creators and created life beyond the mechanical life,—which it supposes is the physical organisation,—but that other materialism which rejects the real life of the Divine, the real presence of Christ in His immediate healing, restoring, wonder-working potency. All this was a varied mass of materialism, and must be first scattered and destroyed; and it can only be destroyed by material manifestation. No higher, no spiritual or ethical operation can touch it, for it is incapable of perceiving it. It must be plucked naked from its material petrification, and raised to life, before the Living Spirit can become apparent to it, and operative upon it. This is the work of ‘those foolish physical manifestations,’ low and undignified as they seem to the yet unsealed vision; they are God’s physical hammer, pounding and pulverising the material crusts, which the ever-accumulating secular residuum of selfishness and

grossness of death-exhaling philosophies, has wrapped about the souls of men. *Similia similibus curantur* in this case as in pharmacy. . . . First comes in this great wave of physical manifestations, destroying physical death, rousing up the deadened souls of men, whether they will or not; dissolving the cerements of scepticism, and compelling them to stand in their ranks, living and conscious entities, knowing that there is a Spirit-world and a Spirit-life, and a Spirit-God, and thus prepared for Judgment. When the first development shall have done its appointed work, and the Soul of Humanity stands thrillingly conscious—believing, per force, dread realities of Time and Eternity—there will come the second wave of life entering into the intellectual portion of man; and after that the third, entering into, occupying, vivifying, and glorifying the spiritual (celestial?) nature, and perfecting the Divine scheme of the complete restoration of humanity—for the threefold nature of man must receive the influences of the Threefold Dispensation of the Triune-God.”

## CHAPTER VI.

## FURTHER PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES.

“Spirit is certainly something we do not fully understand in our present confused circumstances, and as we do not understand the thing, so neither can we distinguish its operation. Yet, notwithstanding all this, it converses, is with us, and among us; though unembodied, with our spirits, and this conversing is not only by an invisible, but to us an incomprehensible way.”—*De Foe.*

BEFORE we glance at the literary work accomplished by William Howitt for the advancement of a knowledge of psychic phenomena, the reader may possibly find the following experiences worthy of insertion in this record:—

## THE HAUNTED FARM-HOUSE OF CLAMPS-IN-THE-WOOD.

“In the spring of 1859, we spent,” says William Howitt, “a few pleasant months at Thorpe, in my native county of Derby, near the entrance of the charming glen, Dovedale. Whilst here, a poor woman from the hills at a few miles’ distance came to a neighbouring clergyman to beg that he would go to her cottage and exorcise some spirits which haunted it, and which she said she was afraid might frighten the children. She described them as coming enveloped in a peculiar light, which sometimes illuminated the whole house. The clergyman, a young and clever Oxford man, told the woman that all such notions were now exploded as silly and superstitious, and that the best proof was, that such things as ghosts never appeared to the enlightened and well educated, etc. He had little doubt the light was thrown into her house by a magic lantern, and advised her to keep a sharp look-out, and try to discover her disturbers. The poor woman shook her head,

and returned home, nothing assured by this learned lecture. Hearing of this from the clergyman himself, I asked him, much to his astonishment, whether he was quite sure that there were no spirits? He looked hard at me to see whether I were not quizzing him; but being told I was quite serious, he grew more astonished.

“Naturally desirous to ascertain the amount of truth in the old woman’s story, I asked the person whose cottage I occupied whether he had ever heard of Clamps-in-the-Wood being haunted. ‘Oh,’ said he, ‘that is a very old story. Clamps, a labourer, lived there fifty years, and he always talked of the *lights* which every few evenings lit up his house. He had grown very fond of them, and called them his “*glorious lights*.”’ ‘Does he live there now?’ I asked. ‘No,’ said my informant, a clear-headed, unimaginative carpenter; ‘no, sir, old Clamps left the cottage four years ago, and went to the next village, where he died. He was above eighty years of age, and wanted caring for.’ ‘And did any one else ever see these lights?’ I asked. ‘Oh, bless you, sir, yes—plenty of people. They were no way *healer* (shy), they would come when neighbours were in.’

“On a fine afternoon in June, I set out for Clamps-in-the-Wood. My way led me past that charming place, Ilam Hall, and along the banks of the Manifold, that pleasant and careering trout-stream, and so up into the hills beyond.”

My father, asking his way at the gate of a “good country mansion,” is pressingly invited to enter and drink tea with the owner and his family, which he does willingly, gaining the information from his kind host that the man who lived at Clamps-in-the-Wood was his labourer. Just going home, this man (David) is called by his master, and bade to show my father the way to his cottage. “David will tell you all about the ghost,” added his master, taking leave.

“Accordingly,” says my father, “as we pursued our way over the bare green moorland hills, I asked David, ‘What about the ghosts?’ He told me that he could not himself speak as to ghosts, only on the authority of his mother-in-law,

who lived with him. All that he had seen were *lights*. These, he said, came almost every evening, but only on dark nights. In the summer they saw nothing of them, but about November, when the cold weather and the long nights set in, they came very often round about the house, sometimes made it quite light, and then sank through the floor. His mother-in-law said she saw black figures in the middle of these lights, but for his part he only saw the lights, and so did his wife. I asked him if they had ever been seen before he came to live there, and he gave the same account as that which I had received at Thorpe.

“With this conversation we were close upon the place, and a very striking place it was. A deep valley presented itself below us, its sides clothed with woods, and along its bottom ran the winding course of a stream, which now was dry, and showed only here rugged stones. Around this deep, solitary valley rose naked hills, and on their sides, not far from this cottage, appeared the mouths and debris of lead-mines. It was altogether a place apparently much suited for the haunts of solitary spirits. A paved causeway led down to the house, which stood on the edge of this lonely glen, amid a few trees. It looked ruinous. The end nearest to me had in fact tumbled in, and the remains of an old cheese-press showed that it had once been a farm-house. The part remaining habitable was only barely sufficient for a labourer’s cottage.

“On entering I found the old woman who had invoked the aid of the clergyman seated in her armed chair under the great wide fire-place. There were also a stout healthy daughter, the wife of David, and two or three children.

“On telling them my errand, both mother and daughter gave the same account as David had done. The old woman said that soon after they came to live in the house, where they had been four years, the lights began to make their appearance. That they would appear most evenings, for months together, and sometimes several times in the course of the evening. That they would appear to come out of the wall, would advance into the middle of the floor, would

make a flickering, and sometimes illumine the whole place, and then descend into the floor, generally at one spot. They described the light as neither like the light of fire, a lamp, or a candle, but they could not express themselves more clearly about it. It did not at all alarm them, and the old woman said that the reason that she went to the clergyman was because the children were now getting so old as to notice the light before they went to bed in the evening, and they were afraid it might come to frighten them.

“What made them think so was that the old woman saw clearly—

#### DARK FIGURES IN THE CENTRE OF THE LIGHTS.

They were generally three, like short men, as black and as polished, she said, ‘as a boot.’ Whilst they stayed, she said their hands were always in motion, and that occasioned the flickering upon the wall. She thought them quite harmless, for they never did any mischief, but seemed to take a pleasure in coming towards the fire and looking at what was going on. She said that at first neither her daughter nor son-in-law saw anything, and laughed at her when she said she saw old Clamp’s lights. But she had prayed earnestly that they might be enabled to see them, that they might not think she was saying anything that was not true. And they soon began to see them, and now saw them regularly, but only the lights. They could not perceive the dark figures with the lights.

“I expressed a great desire to see them myself, but they said it was the wrong time of year; the nights now had scarcely any darkness, and the lights could only be seen through the dark season; that if I should be there towards ‘the latter end’—that meant of the year—I might see them almost any evening. I asked if she had ever tried to speak to the dark figures. She said no; she thought it was best whilst they were harmless to let them alone; and let them come and go just as pleased them. I asked if they ever heard them speak, and they said never inside of the house, but that they often heard them speaking outside as they came up to



the door. I asked them if they had never been frightened by them, and they replied only once. On a dark night in winter they heard a horse coming down the causeway dragging a log at its feet. They could hear the distinct striking of its iron shoes on the flag-stones, and the jingling of the chain, and lumbering of the log as it was drawn forward. When it came up to the door a fierce dog growled at it, and they were so frightened that one of them jumped up and bolted the door. The sounds then ceased altogether, and on going out to search neither horse nor dog were visible. I remarked that perhaps a horse had got into their yard; but they said it could not do that, and that they had no dog. On another occasion the old woman said that the door being open into the next room—which was the sleeping room—she saw a young woman kneeling on the bed with her back to her in the attitude of prayer; that she watched her in silence for some time, when all at once she became covered with spots like a leopard, and then disappeared. They had also observed when the flickering of the light on the wall was strong, that drops of blood would seem to trickle down, but no stain was ever left. Such was the statement of the old woman, her daughter, and son-in-law.

“Speaking of these curious circumstances on my return to London; one of our friends, Captain D——,\* a scientific man, observed that he had an engagement in Yorkshire about Christmas, and that he would go round that way, and, if necessary, stay all night at Clamps-in-the-Wood. He kept his word.”

My father concludes his account of Clamps-in-the-Wood with the experiences of our friend Colonel Drayson there. He passed a night in the house, having persuaded the good people to retire to rest and leave him sitting up alone in the “house-place”—as it is termed in Derbyshire—in the darkness, with a candle ready to be lighted if occasion required. Thus he sat, nothing occurring until about two o’clock in the morning, when “his ear caught a sound almost soundless, and

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\* Colonel Drayson, R. A.

turning towards the place, he saw a globular light about the size of an ordinary opaque lamp-globe issue from the wall, about five or six feet from the floor, and advance about half-a-yard into the room. He was all attention, and so evidently was the intelligence within the light: it paused there as if become aware of the presence of a stranger." It remained thus for about a couple of minutes, and then receded into the wall again at the spot whence it had issued. The wall being examined by the light of his candle, the Colonel found no fissure or hole through which the spirit-light could have entered the room. He had previously carefully examined the whole room.

The second experience relates to

#### THE LIFE OF A CHILD SAVED THROUGH MESMERISM.

"Once only," says William Howitt, "did I try to effect a cure by Mesmerism. I had never supposed that I possessed much mesmeric power, nor do I now imagine that I have it to any great degree; but on one particular occasion I felt a strong impulse to attempt a cure by mesmeric action. I believe this impulse was originated by good spirits, and that they through me worked and effected the cure. The occasion was this:

"In the year 1864, my wife and I spent some weeks at Aldborough, on the Suffolk coast. In our frequent walks up the shore from Aldborough we passed the fishing village of Thorpe, about a mile and a half from the town. There we frequently saw a whole family come out to meet a fisherman as he came in with his boat. The fisherman was a tall, amiable looking man of the name of Alexander. He had medals and certificates from the Humane Society for saving people in wrecks on that coast. His family consisted of his mother, his wife, a daughter of about sixteen, and some lesser children, the youngest a stout, handsome, healthy boy of perhaps two years old. We were interested in the family affection that evidently prevailed in this group, and the activity displayed by them all in receiving the fish from the

boat and making it ready for market. We often stopped to talk to them. One day about noon, as we were returning from our walk, we saw Alexander alone about to put out his boat, but he looked pale and woe-begone. We asked if he were ill. He said no; but that the little boy whom we had often noticed admiringly was dying.

“‘Impossible!’ we said, ‘a child so healthy so suddenly to be dying.’ He said it was too true. The day or day but one previously he had fallen from the dinner-table in a fit, had never spoken since, and the doctor said he could not live many hours. We were very much grieved and astonished, and asked whether we might go in and see him. He replied, ‘By all means.’ We went in and found the family all sitting round the bed on which the child lay. We expressed our great sympathy and regret to see the poor child so ill, and a hope that he might yet be saved. The grandmother and mother shook their heads, and repeated that the doctor said there was no hope, and that they were praying that he might be released from his suffering.

“On observing the child more closely, I saw that his eyes were turned up in his head, the whites only visible; there was a flush on one cheek, he ground his teeth, but there was no fever. I asked to what the doctor attributed his fit. They replied that he had not said what caused it. ‘But,’ I observed, ‘it is clear to me that he is suffering from the difficulty of cutting a double-tooth on the side where the flush appears, and that this is irritating the brain.’ The grandmother instantly exclaimed, ‘Why, his father nearly lost his life from that cause at about the same age!’

“As we were speaking, in came the doctor, who looked at the child, felt his pulse, and without making any remark, was going away. I followed him to the door and said, ‘Doctor, I hope you will be able to save this child; he is such a nice little fellow.’ ‘It is impossible,’ he replied, ‘it is altogether hopeless; it is too late,’ and he went away. On returning into the room, and seeing the lovely little fellow with his sunny cloud of hair about his handsome, innocent face, and

the sorrowful group seated round in expectation of his last hour, I felt an intense grief and sympathy for them all, and at the same time an overpowering impulse to try the effect of Mesmerism. As I have said, I had never dreamt of attempting such a thing ever before; but now at once I took off my coat, and commenced making passes from the crown of the head down to the child's feet. I observed to the relatives that they would, perhaps, wonder at my proceedings; but the daughter of sixteen said she had been in service in London, and had there seen this done. I continued my exertions, praying inwardly and earnestly that the child might be spared. In about ten minutes his eyes began to return to their natural position; he saw his mother and smiled. 'There!' they all said, 'he has never done that since he was seized.' In a while he ceased to grind his teeth, looked more calm, and at length turned on one side, and with a most natural motion laid his head on one hand. 'There!' said the mother, 'that is just like himself.' 'Yes,' I added, 'I believe we shall now cheat the doctor; but I should be delighted to see him go to sleep; for then I should know that the irritation of the brain had ceased.'

"After half-an-hour's active continuation of the passes, we left, promising to see him in the evening. As we went out of the town on the way back in the evening we observed, in a confectioner's, grapes, and went and bought some, and some biscuits. On arriving at the cottage, we found the child sleeping, and they told us that he had dropped asleep just as we left the house. We asked them not to disturb him, but let him sleep as long as he would. We were going to leave the next day, but told them we would come up in the morning before leaving, and bade them, if he awoke in the night, to give him some of the fruit or biscuits, both if he liked.

"As we went thither in the morning we observed the doctor coming away in his gig, but he was too far off for us to be able to speak to him. He looked, however, gloomy and sad; thus we were afraid that he had found the little boy dead. On

entering the house all was so still that it added to our forebodings; but the moment we caught sight of the mother's cheerful face we knew that all was right. They were quiet because the little boy was yet asleep. We found that he awoke in the night, was very hungry, ate some soaked biscuits with evident pleasure, and once more fell asleep. We were now confident that he would recover. I mesmerised him again for a quarter of an hour, and finding that the mother could write, I gave her our address, and begged her in ten days to inform us how he had continued, for by that time we should be at home. Punctually on the tenth day I received a letter from the mother saying that the child had continued to improve from the time we saw him, and was now to all appearance as well as ever, except that he was rather sooner tired by his play. She expressed the great gratitude they felt for my endeavours on his behalf, and added that the doctor had appeared extremely astonished at the turn the child had taken. Whether they had ventured to tell him by what means, I do not know. One thing, however, I do know, that the doctor from his ignorance of, or prejudice against, Mesmerism, would have let the child die, and I am quite as confidently persuaded that many patients die from medical men sticking fast in their old grooves, and not adding to the cycle of their remedies those newer means which magnetic and spiritual science have disclosed."

## CHAPTER VII.

## HIS WORK FOR SPIRITUALISM.

“Ob man uns für Narren und Obscuranten erklärt, oder für verrückte Schwärmer hält, das ist ganz einerlei: dafür wurde unser Herr und Meister selber gehalten. Lass't uns zu Ihm hinaus gehen, und seine Schmach tragen.”—*Jung Stilling. Scenen aus dem Geister-Reiche.*

“That we should be declared fools and under delusion, or considered mad enthusiasts, is all one; such was our Lord and Master himself considered. Let us go forth to Him and bear His shame!”—*Jung Stilling. “Scenes from the Spirit-World.”*

It was in the year 1858, in the pages of *The British Spiritual Telegraph*,\* that articles relative to Spiritual manifestation first appeared from the pen of William Howitt. It was there that originally were printed his papers upon

## THE PROPHETS OF THE CEVENNES,

which later, incorporated in his “History of the Supernatural,” became one of the most stirring and romantically interesting

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\* *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph*, published at Keighley, in Yorkshire, at the expense of Mr. Weatherhead, a grocer, and edited by his shopman, Mr. Benjamin Morell, who conducted it with much ability from 1855 to 1860. After the publication of one volume it assumed the title of the *British Spiritual Telegraph*, and contained a great mass of valuable matter. It ceased on the appearance of the *Spiritual Magazine*. (It contained contributions from Dr. Garth Wilkinson, Dr. Ashburner, the late Mr. Elihu Rich, Mr. Thos. Shorter, etc.) “Beside the support of this journal, Mr. Weatherhead built a Spiritual Lyceum. Mr. Weatherhead lived, not only a staunch Spiritualist, but as a Temperance and Dietetic Reformer, till 1875, when he died at the age of seventy-three—a man who, in a remote corner, had rendered most essential services to truth and progress.”—*William Howitt*. Whosoever shall undertake the important task of writing the history of the rise in England of the Spiritual-movement, will find in the volumes, now all but forgotten and rare, of the *Yorkshire Spiritual Telegraph*, a mine of curious and highly valuable information. The memory of earnest workers in the cause is so speedily overgrown by new labours and new names, that it is necessary an “Old Mortality” should ever and anon appear to piously restore their epitaphs.

of its richly varied chapters. This account of these martyrs of the Free-spirit, amongst whom burst forth Spiritual manifestations of mighty power and high significance, was a labour of love to him. It needed the light of the Spiritualism in the reign of Victoria to vindicate and resuscitate the truth regarding these persecuted, humble children of the Spirit,—hounded to death by Louis XIV., and set in the pillory by Queen Anne. The facts relative to this group of French Protestant-martyrs had to be sought for in many obscure places. "Many were the cross lights," says William Howitt, "which gleamed bewilderingly from the statements of the time." But the gleam of the light once discerned and followed,— "what a spectacle of poor men lifted up by the mighty power of God, amid their magnificent mountains and their rushing rivers, poor, obscure shepherds, pastors, wool-combers, into heroes, martyrs, equal to the most renowned of the most soul-inspiring times. Earth has few such stories."

In the *Spiritual Telegraph* appeared another series of papers much quoted at the time—"Some Remarks on Lectures by the Rev. Edward White against Spiritualism, delivered at St. Paul's Chapel, Kentish Town, from Oct. 31st to Dec. 12, 1858, from notes taken at the time by William Howitt." These two series of articles may be regarded as types of the opposite poles of my father's labours for the cause of Spiritualism; the one treating of the universal and historic aspects of the subject, vitalised by his knowledge of the underlying principle of universal truth recognised in the phenomena of modern Spiritual-manifestations; the other, treating of the modern manifestations themselves, and more or less written in a spirit of controversy. Both were needful elements in his work—both characteristic of the man himself—but it is to the more universal, and, consequently, least ephemeral portion of his labour that the writer would direct attention.\*

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\* In his later life, looking back upon his work accomplished, in a poem, "Longing for Rest," he has said—

To carefully and reverently gather together knowledge of the past history of humanity, imbued with the power of the Spirit, of men and women of all ages, of all countries, of all religions, churches and sects of churches; to sift the knowledge of the past through the sieve of the new experiences, he ever regarded as a work of highest importance. It was no less than to reveal, to the unwilling eyes of men, the mighty and sure foundation already laid through past ages for completion in the future, of the vast superstructure of the Universal Church Spiritual.

That his aspiration for usefulness in this direction was considered by the thoughtful and experienced of his readers to have not been without its accomplishment, may be seen by the following words, which I quote with satisfaction from the preface (p. 12) of the *History of Spiritualism in America* by Emma Hardinge :—\*

“William Howitt alone has exhausted the subject, and as far as a world-wide history can be transcribed, and bound up in a limited space, that noble champion of divine truth has ransacked the ages to bear witness on the side of God, Immortality, and Religion.”

WORK IN THE “SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE.”

In January, 1860, commenced the *Spiritual Magazine*, under the able editorship of Mr. William Wilkinson, its

“I have fought out the fight of this hard world  
 Boldly and steadfastly, intent to hold  
 The onward, only way of Truth and Faith,  
 But waxing oft too feverish in the strife  
 With the perverse and loveless sons of men,  
 Which better had been borne in Wisdom's peace.”

It is in this spirit of his later life that these sketches have been sought to be written ; with controversy, consequently, they have little in common.

\* “Modern American Spiritualism ; a Twenty Years' Record of Communion between Earth and the World of Spirits. By Emma Hardinge. New York, 1870.



originator and proprietor, and with Mr. Thomas Shorter, best known at the time by his *nom-de-plume* of Thomas Brevior, as sub-editor. During the thirteen years which it was destined to run its course under the aforesaid management, William Howitt was a constant contributor. Within these thirteen volumes will be found somewhat above a hundred articles from his pen. It was the hope of my father to have seen the more important of these papers collected into a volume, to form an illustrative sequel to his "History of the Supernatural." Passing over the purely controversial letters and articles which, from the nature of controversy, possess, as already suggested, rather an ephemeral than lasting interest, we find that his writings divide themselves into three distinct classes. Firstly, articles containing biographical and historical information, bearing upon the supernatural in the life of men and of nations, and usually directed to some special phase of Modern Spiritual manifestation under discussion at the time; secondly, articles relative to the religious and philosophical aspects of the manifestations of the phenomena of Spiritualism; thirdly, accounts of seances with "mediums;" accounts of "hauntings;" and personal experiences in general connection with the subject of "Spirit-manifestations."

"GLEANINGS FROM THE CORNFIELDS OF SPIRITUALISM"

is the title of a series of papers which William Howitt contributed to the *Spiritual Magazine*, and under such a heading the most important of his contributions would arrange themselves. He says—"Let us stroll through the wide cornfields of Spiritualism. Let us lift up our eyes and see that they are white for harvest. There are immensities of grain garnered in its barns—the libraries—which those who will may thresh out. There are standing crops also, some green, some milky in ear, some golden for the sickle; let us draw the awned ears through our hands! Let us hear the larks—the poets of all ages carolling above our heads!" He had ascertained that Spiritualism, in its higher phases, is living Poetry; and, through

Spiritualism, that Poetry of the highest, is Spiritual Truth. Strolling through "the cornfields" of Literature, past and present, was one of the highest enjoyments of his life. Thereby, indeed, he accomplished one of his most valuable labours for the cause, collecting thus, in many of these papers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, as well as in his "History of the Supernatural," the golden grain of spiritual knowledge ripened through centuries for the sustenance of the future, but which most men, in the present, are either too lazy, or too busy, or too blind, to gather in for themselves.

The most noteworthy, perhaps, of these contributions, taken in sequence, may be said to be the following:—

Vol. I., 1860: Two articles, "*On the Poetry of Thomas Lake Harris*"—"Persecutions of Baron Reichenbach for his Discoveries of Odyle Force."

Vol. II., 1861: "*Spiritualism amongst the American Indians.*"

Vol. III., 1862: "*Berg-geister, or Clumps-in-the-Wood,*" extracts from which have been given in the previous chapter. Appended to this article references concerning the varied classes of spiritual beings—elementals and elementaries—together with instances of similar appearances recorded of spirits connected with mines.

Vol. IV., 1863: "*Modern Miracles in the Catholic Church—Curé d'Arts,*" his life of prayer for souls in Purgatory and wonder-working benevolent power. "*The Haunted Tower of Spelding,*" with remarks on the philosophy of ghosts. "*Peeping or Muttering; or, Who is the Sinner?*" a letter full of humour and cogent reasoning, in reply to one signed "Rustica," to show the results to "Rustica" if she determined to literally carry out the whole law of Moses.

Vol. V., 1864: "*Persecution and Expulsion from his paternal home of M. Joller, late member of the Swiss National Council, by disorderly Spirits:* translated from the narrative of M. Joller. These hauntings, of a most persistent and annoying description, occurred in 1860-62 at Stans, near to the Lake

of Lucerne.\* "*Spiritualism in Germany; Researches of Hornung*,"—two articles of importance, giving a brief account of the researches of Daniel Hornung, late Secretary of the Berlin Magnetic Union. Hornung was a man of great learning, who took up in 1853 the inquiry into Table-turning. He was on all sides deserted by his former assistants in magnetic researches, but undauntedly prosecuted his investigation for five or six years with unremitting activity in the chief cities of Germany, Switzerland, France, and Italy, either personally or through trustworthy coadjutors. He published the results in 1857-58 in his works, the most important of which are "*Neue Geheimnisse des Tages*," and "*Neueste Erfahrungen aus dem Geisterleben*." These remarkable researches of Hornung appear to have been quite forgotten by the present German investigators—an instance, by no means rare, as Sir Thomas Browne tells us, of "our fathers finding their graves in our short memories, and sadly telling us how *we* may be buried in our survivors!" "*Spiritualism in France—Jean Hilluire, the Medium of Sonnac*." Curious account of a remarkably powerful physical-medium, peasant by birth; written with reference to manifestations of the Davenport Brothers, just arrived in England.

Vol. VI., 1865: Three articles relating to "*Throwing of Stones and other Substances by Spirits*," collected from a variety of sources, ancient and modern. Two articles upon "*Spiritualism in Sweden*," translated from various Swedish sources. "*Darkness as an Element of Power in Divine Economy*,"—one of William Howitt's most powerful and poetical pieces of writing. Searching the twin-books of the Creator—the Book of Revelation and the Book of Nature—he demonstrates the existence of "a Law auspicious to the performance of the Power of Spirit in the absence of the *sunlight*, and *often of all Light*." He regards Darkness as the handmaid of Light in one sense; in another sense,

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\* The house was still unoccupied by the family in 1870 when visited by the writer of this book and her husband.

that all Life and Light are the children of "Nox, most ancient, most regal of all mothers," since all the lives and bodies of men, of animals, of vegetables, and the substances of metals and minerals—all things subtle, powerful, rare, and beautiful are generated in the womb of Darkness. "*Prophets of the Cevennes*," reprinted in this volume.

NEW SERIES OF "SPIRITUAL MAGAZINE."

Vol. I., 1866: Two articles relating to the psychological experiences of two German poetesses—"*Bettina von Arnim*" (*née Brentano*), and her friend, "*Caroline von Günderode*." "*Spiritual Idiosyncrasies of the Goethe family*." "*Spiritualism in France—Mademoiselle Le Normand, the Parisian Sibyl of the Revolution*." "*A Few Stones from the Quarry of Truth for the building of the Temple*," contains teaching regarding various spiritual laws, as revealed through personal intercourse with spirits.

Vol. II., N.S., 1867: "*John Darrel the Exorcist*;" "*Joseph Balsamo, the so-called Count Cagliostro*;" drawn from various sources; the moral of this extraordinary narrative being, that "such men are deserving of unmitigated contempt, for they are those who make truth appear a lie; who by their deceptions give the air of deception to the real power which they possess, and render the progress of genuine knowledge a perpetual martyrdom." "*Healing Mediums—Prince Hohenlohe*" (written with reference to the arrival in London of the Zouave Jacob, "the healer"). A second article also on "Healing Mediums." "*On Fire, and other Phenomena amongst Eastern Nations*" (with reference to the remarkable "fire-tests" of Mr. D. D. Home).

Vol. III., N.S., 1868: "*Spiritual Discoveries of the French Magnetists prior to the outbreak of Spiritualism in America*,"—full of valuable facts; drawing attention to a circumstance little realised in England, that the magnetists of France anticipated by at least half a century the revelations made at Hydesville in 1848. This great fact is brought to light by the publication of the correspondence of Messrs. Billot and Deleuze

in 1836. *“French Magnetists (Part II.): A critical Examination of Cahagnet’s Arcanes de la Vie-future dévoilée.”*

Vol. IV., 1869: *“Baroness Juliana von Krüdner.” “Classical and Modern Notions of Matter and Spirit,”*—important, showing the imminent danger of “obsession” and “possession.”

Vol. V., N.S., 1870: *“Walt Whitman’s Poetry and Spiritualism,”*—written *con amore*. *“Spiritual Communications of Maria Kahlhammer and Criscentia Wolf, No. I.”*

Vol. VI., N.S., 1871: *“Excitement in Munich in 1855, occasioned by the Spiritual Communications of Maria Kahlhammer and Criscentia Wolf, No. II.”* Highly curious. Maria Kahlhammer and Criscentia Wolf, two pious young women of humble origin; Maria, a cook to a family in Munich, became a writing-medium; Criscentia, a friend of hers, became a “trance-medium,” both of a highly developed order. Their manifestations becoming known far and wide in Munich, called forth interference from their Church, both being Roman Catholic. Criscentia was removed to Rome, where Pope Pius IX., taking kindly notice of her, her mediumship was swallowed up in the life of a convent. Maria, as an obedient daughter of the Church, signed a document promising to have no more to do with *séances*, and thus the wonderful door of her mediumship was closed. *“Reason and Faith, or Lavater and Nicholas von der Flüe.” “Modern Spiritualism, from the different standpoints of Catholic and Protestant. Estatica with Stigmata,”*—valuable as showing the existence in the Roman Catholic Church of an outpouring of magnetic-power in the early portion of the century, analogous in nature with “Modern Spiritual Manifestations. *Vide* writings of Clementz Brentano. Letters of Clementz Brentano to his brother Christian.” *“Spiritual Experiences in the Life of St. Vincent de Paul.”*

Vol. VII., N.S., 1872: *“A Significant Parallel betwixt Old Times and New, showing how the Primitive Church was regarded by the Roman.” “Curious case of Spirit-Life, including remarkable proof of Identity,”*—a personal experience. *“Some Séances with Mr. Home some years ago.”*

Vol. VIII., N.S., 1873: "*Old Father Taylor*," a Sailor-Preacher in the United States,—a fresh and vigorous spirited article. "*Trance and its Suggestions*."

In the cause of Spiritual Truth, the most important of all William Howitt's work, is assuredly

"THE HISTORY OF THE SUPERNATURAL

*in all ages and nations and in all churches, Christian and Pagan, demonstrating a Universal Faith.*" It was published by Messrs. Longman in 1863. *The Spiritual Magazine*, May, 1863, in reviewing the book, says—

"Through it, is opened out to the reader a mine of wealth from the rich stores of the modern and dead languages, which there are few authors who could have given to us; and the whole is presented in the always rich and glowing words of Mr. Howitt. He reminds us, for his vigour and strength, of some brawny, poetical blacksmith, with bare arms, striking away at the iron which he has got to a white heat, and moulding it as he likes, amidst a coruscation of sparks like fireworks, and singing sweet songs the while. He has such life and vigour, and there are such gleams of bright forest glades, and rich anecdotes interspersing the depth of earnest wisdom to be found in his writing, that we shall wonder if these volumes be not taken up generally by the reading public in place of the fashionable novels, which have not half the adventure, and none of the peculiar interest attaching to the great subject of the spiritual."

Of his special object in writing this book, the preface tells us—

"All past history being supported by a vast present experience, the Author deems the candid consideration of this aggregate of historic evidence as the highest duty of the day for all who regard the most sacred hopes and the moral progress of humanity. If this evidence be found conclusive—and it cannot be found inconclusive except at the cost of all historic verity—then it presents an impassable barrier to the ultimate and dreary object of scepticism, and renders easy the

acceptance of the marvellous events of the Sacred Scriptures. Once admitted as historic and present truth, it furnishes of necessity the only conceivable antidote to the great psychological malady of the time; for nothing can ever effectually arrest the now age-long conflict of words and opinions but the blunt and impassable terminus of fact."

And he continues—

"As to the Supernatural? The answer lies in these volumes. If you could crush it in the Bible, there remains yet a little task for you—you must crush it in the whole universe, and to do that you must crush the universe with it, for it exists everywhere, and its roots are in the foundations of all things."

"The Author of this work intends, by the Supernatural, the operations of those higher and more recondite laws of God with which, being yet but most imperfectly acquainted, we either denominate their effects miraculous, or shutting our eyes, deny their existence altogether. So far from holding that what are called miracles are interruptions or violations of the course of nature, he regards them only as the results of spiritual laws, which in their occasional action subdue, suspend, or neutralise the less powerful physical laws, just as a stronger chemical affinity subdues a weaker one, producing new combinations, but combinations strictly in accordance with the collective laws of the universe, whether understood or not yet understood by us."

#### CONTENTS OF "HISTORY OF THE SUPERNATURAL."

The first volume, consisting of twenty chapters, treats of the following subjects:—

*An apology for Faith in the Nineteenth Century—Spiritualists before the American Development—Manifestations in Germany, in Switzerland, and France.*

*The Supernatural in the Bible, in the Apocrypha, in the New Testament—In Assyria, Chaldea, and Persia, in Ancient Egypt, in Ancient India and China.*

*The Supernatural in Ancient Scandinavia, in Greece, in Ancient Rome.*

*The same Faith continues in all Nations down to the present time.*

*The Supernatural amongst the American Indians.*

*Amongst the Neo-Platonists.*

*In the Roman Catholic Church.*

In the second volume, consisting of twenty-three chapters the subjects treated of are :—

*Magic in its relation to the Supernatural.*

*The Supernatural in the Greek and other Churches—The Supernatural in the Waldensian Church—The Supernatural amongst the so-called Heretics and Mystics of the Middle Ages.*

*Supernaturalism of Luther and of the Early Reformers—The Supernaturalism of the Church of England—Present Materialised Condition of the Church of England, and of General Opinion.*

*The Miracles in the Church-yard of St. Médard in Paris, 1731, and subsequently.*

*Spiritualism in North America.*

*Opposition to New Facts.*

*The Philadelphian Brethren.*

*Spiritualism amongst the Dissenters, George Fox and the Friends, the Wesleys, Whitfield, Fletchers of Madeley.*

*Madame Guion and Fénelon—The Prophets of the Cevennes—The Moravian Brethren ; or, Unitas Fratrum.*

*A Chapter of Poets—Miscellaneous Matters and Conclusion.*

Concluding his labours, William Howitt declares that to the thoughtful student who has worked his way through the history of the great ages, and natures of the past, there cannot fail to reveal itself a

LEX MAGNA.

“The farther I have proceeded,” he says, “the more material, as I have often had to avow, have I had to select and reject. On all sides facts came pouring in. Men of all nations, and



all religions, and all grades of education, and every rank of intellect, pressed on to put in their claims as witnesses. In the heart and soul of all mankind the great truth is found to be rooted inextricably, with the roots of all life and of all consciousness. It has proved itself, what I started with calling *Lex Magna*, a great law of creation. It is no longer what the incapables—I mean those incapable of judging of and admitting evidence—would fain call it, the belief of a few weak, or visionary individuals; we may boldly pronounce it the faith of all the race, the contrary being only the exceptions. The greatest names in the history of intellect and of human achievement, are the prominent names in this cardinal faith. The list of these names, and the proofs of the fact *in extenso*, would make a large volume in itself. We must go on mustering the princes and chieftains of mind through all time. Like Scott's clans, they came thronging over the hills—

“‘Still gathering as they pour along,  
A voice more loud, a tide more strong.’”

## CHAPTER VIII.

## BRIGHT SUNSET OF LIFE.

"Nor can the snow, which now old age does shed  
     Upon thy reverend head,  
 Quench or allay the noble fires within ;  
     But all that thou hast bin,  
     And all that youth can be, thou'rt yet,  
     So fully still doth thou  
 Enjoy the manhood and the bloom of wit,  
 And all the natural heat, but not the fever too.  
 Here hoary frosts, and by them breaks out fire ;  
 A peace secure the faithful neighbours keep,  
 The embolden snow next to the flame does sleep !  
     And if we weigh—like Thee—  
     Nature and causes, we shall see  
     That thus it needs must be.  
 To things immortal Time can do no wrong,  
 And that which never is to die, for ever must be young."

*Cowley.*

ALL these labours of the pen for the cause of Spiritualism may be regarded as the recreation of their author. He was at the same period occupied with other books. We must now give a glance to these and to his personal life.

In 1865, her Majesty granted William Howitt a pension from the Civil List, in acknowledgment of his and his wife's long and valuable literary services.

In 1867, William and Mary Howitt removed with their unmarried daughter from Highgate, once more to the neighbourhood of Esher, endeared to them by the memory of their former residence there some five-and-twenty years previously. Their cottage, called "The Orchard," standing in the midst of an extensive flower and fruit garden — whence its name — in this pleasant neighbourhood, amply gratified their tastes. There William completed a work, requiring much research, occupying him more or less two or three years—

## THE NORTHERN HEIGHTS OF LONDON.

It may be regarded as a third volume of his "Visits to Remarkable Places." It was warmly welcomed by the press as a store-house of historical, antiquarian, and topographical anecdote and fact. During the last few years he had written on a variety of general topics. A small volume on "Transportation as the only means of Convict-Reform;" also on "Certain Practices of great Cruelty under the Game Laws," together with a series of valuable letters on Co-operation, which appeared in a paper entitled *The Co-operator*. Many contributions appeared from his pen at various times to the pages of *The Animal World*.

Between the year 1852 and 1862, he wrote five large volumes of a

## POPULAR HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

for Messrs. Cassell, Petter, & Galpin, which within five years had passed through seven editions. It was sold originally in weekly numbers to the amount of 100,000 copies. Of this history, Lord Brougham observed, that "in it the interests of virtue, of liberty, and of peace—the *best* interests of mankind—are faithfully and ably maintained throughout." The late Dr. Robert Chambers also bore his testimony to its high value, speaking of it as "the very best 'History of England' with which he was acquainted." It is to be regretted that the enterprising publishers, Messrs. Petter & Galpin, have not, as yet, seen fit to issue this really standard work without illustration, and in a library edition.

Whilst residing at Highgate, William Howitt had written two novels—firstly, in 1860, "The Man of the People" (Hurst and Blackett).\* The intention is to depict the life of a true English patriot. The book contains curious pictures of the

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\* It may interest some readers to mention that, in 1864, appeared an English edition of a novel by Epes Sargent, entitled "Peculia," to which its author had requested William Howitt to write a preface. It was a novel which treated of the phenomena of Spiritualism.

political life of the earlier portion of the century. The motto on the title-page gives an idea of the spirit of the novel. "It is calamity which proves the man; the self-sustained is overthrown by it; the God-sustained is ennobled by it.—*Sir Philip Sidney.*"

The second of these novels appeared in 1867, entitled "Woodburn Grange: a Story of English Country Life" (3 vols.; Charles W. Wood, London). In this book the author has blended his love of the rural in nature and human nature with his love of the supernatural. The spiritualistic element is strongly brought forward in the character of an elderly Quaker lady, Mrs. Heritage, a *replica*, with some variations, of his Madam Dorrington of the Dene—a lady whose clairvoyant faculty, and whose premonitions intensify the romance of the plot.

It is, however, rather with reference to an instance of curious

#### CLAIRVOYANCE IN AUTHORSHIP,

as shown in the details of one of the incidents of the novel that especial attention is here drawn to it. In the third volume is a chapter headed "Scammel's Death." Scammel is a fierce, almost gigantic poacher, concerned in a mysterious murder, upon the unravelling of which mystery, of course, much depends. At length the poacher is captured; and bound with cords, is brought in a cart for examination before Sir Henry Clavering, a magistrate and important personage in the story. Under pretence of great suffering on the part of Scammel through the tightness of his bonds, they are unloosed in the presence of Sir Henry. Thus at liberty, he rises up, so tall and stalwart a figure, that the magistrates feel the imprudence of their concession. He darts forward, escaping through the window, and, flying headlong across the park, followed by Sir Henry and his servants; he makes, after an abortive attempt to escape by the woods, for the river Trent—is pursued by the men and Sir Henry in boats, whilst with much desperation he swims down the current. "With stupendous strength and agility the daring haunter of woods and midnight fields

ploughed his way through the water. His muscular arms sent back waves like a strong pair of oars, and that black curly head of his rose at every stroke more visibly above the stream. . . . At once the desperate murderer cast a furious glance on one boat and then on the other, from which several hands were already straining to seize him, and throwing aloft his arms, with a savage, half-drowned exclamation, 'Damnation!' he went down perpendicularly like a stone. There was a burst of horror from all in the boats." The poacher-murderer had drowned himself!

Shortly after the publication of this novel, the author read a paragraph in the newspapers of the day, giving account of the seizure of a poacher, or poachers, in Nottinghamshire, together with the escape of one of the gang from the presence of the magistrate when brought up for examination; of his making for the adjacent river Trent, and of his death, as above described, in the river! What renders the matter still more noteworthy, is the fact that the real event occurred at the very place throughout pictured in the author's mind as the scene of this imaginary incident in his novel!\*

In 1865 William Howitt published a

HISTORY OF EXPLORATION OF AUSTRALIA, TASMANIA, AND  
NEW ZEALAND,

two volumes, written *con amore*, through the author's sympathy with the life of exploration, and with these noble colonies of England. The author's two sons had distinguished

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\* Instances of the possession by poets and writers of fiction of a curious sort of clairvoyance, as regards incidents, characters, or the plots of their works, are by no means rare. Singular psychological phenomena have been experienced, and *been recognised as such*, by various authors of eminence. Amongst these, in modern times, may be named Charles Dickens and Charlotte Bronte, *vide* "Life of Dickens," by Foster—"Life of Miss Bronte," by Mrs. Gaskell. The poetess, "L. E. L." (Miss Landon), in one of her novels describes, as if by anticipation, her own tragical end by poison. Shelley, writing his elegy on the death of Keats, closes his noble lament for his brother-poet by a picture, as it were, anticipatory of his own speedily approaching end by drowning. It would seem that, *going inward into the depths of his being*—as the poet *must* do, if he be a poet—and free to enter the realm of true Imagination, that he enters

themselves in the explorer's arduous career. The concluding volume contains a manly and touching memorial of the death of the younger son, Herbert Charlton, who, at the age of five and twenty, whilst employed in New Zealand by the Government to superintend and carry out the cutting of a horse-track upon the wild West Coast of the Middle Island, was, with the whole of his party of men, excepting one sad survivor, drowned in Lake Brunner. Their remains, carefully sought for, were never recovered—as is the case in the lakes in Switzerland—having, it is supposed, been borne away in that deep lake by an under-current. It has been said that drowning in New Zealand may be considered a *natural* death. *The Littleton Times* observes, September 12th, 1863, in announcing the catastrophe, "Last week will long be memorable here, as having brought us the intelligence of the death of one of the most active and intelligent explorers who has ever responded to the call which has so often been made in a new and partially explored country, by those whose duty it is to open up the waste, by forcing roads through what hitherto has been the impenetrable mountain and forest." A mountain on this West Coast bears the name of Howitt in memory of this young pioneer who thus perished amidst these mountains.

To commemorate the loss of this son, as ardent a lover of the free-spirit of nature and of her beauty, as he was a firm and ardent believer in the truth and beauty of Christian Spiritualism, his father has not alone preserved a memorial of him in his "History of the Exploration of New Zealand," but

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into the realm of "the Eternal Now," where Past and Future are bodied forth with equal intensity, and become one with that which, in the World of Time, we call "the Present;" and which even *here* is so evanescent that we cannot retain it for a moment's existence—as *the present*. In the notes to the "Select Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley, with an introduction by Richard Garnett" (Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1882), p. 253, reference is made to a wonderfully prophetic anticipation of the catastrophe of Shelley's death by drowning, in Mrs. Shelley's novel of "Valperga," *written almost immediately before her husband's loss*. The fate of the heroine of "Valperga," Euthanasia (the very name seems prophetic), is identical with that of the poet—she is lost in a storm upon the self-same coast, the catastrophe itself remaining a frightful mystery.

left in manuscript an account of the touching and remarkable premonitions received by his parents regarding his tragic fate. He has also, referring to this great sorrow, said elsewhere, "This power (of the spirit) brought us from New Zealand the news of the loss of one of our sons before it arrived by mail. But these things are too sacred for the public eye. All Spiritualists have them, and they are hoarded amongst the treasure which are the wealth of the affections and the links of assurance with the world of the hereafter." To these "Sacred Things" also belongs the series of beautiful and consistent communications continued through a period of several years, which subsequently, in due course, was given to bring comfort to the sorrowing hearts of the parents, by those who joyfully called themselves "their children in heaven." Happy is it, for those who can regard the promise of "the Comforter" as more than a vague and far-off promise, but as most assuredly again and again fulfilling itself in mystical, yet very certain wise in the beautiful consolations proceeding from the Realm of the Spirit of Love. Thus are tenderly "wiped away the tears from all eyes" *of such as believe that such things verily can be.*

In 1868-69 was painted, by the late Mr. Thomas Heaphy, an admirable portrait in oil of William Howitt, one of this artist's best works. In 1873 the late Mr. B. Coleman, ever zealous in kind action, purchased this picture from the artist's widow, at the request of a circle of Spiritualists, and presented it in their name "To Mrs. Howitt in testimony of their appreciation of William Howitt's efforts for the best interests of humanity, and for his advocacy of a pure and elevating Spiritualism." The value of this picture is enhanced by the knowledge that Mr. Heaphy was the "Mr. H." of "Mr. H.'s Narrative," which originally appeared in "All the Year Round," October, 1861, and which, corrected by Mr. Heaphy himself, appeared in the *The Spiritual Magazine*, December, 1861. This narrative relates to the appearance to Mr. Heaphy, on several occasions, of a beautiful young lady dressed in deep mourning, *who ultimately proves to be a lady in the spirit and not in the flesh.* For the production of a portrait of this

spirit-lady a dire necessity existed; upon it hung the sanity of her sorrowing father. The picture was ultimately produced by "Mr. H.," from sketches made from the spirit, and the father was restored to health. This strange history occurred in 1858, since which time repeated appearances of spirit-materialisation assist belief in the complicated detail of this marvellous experience.

#### LAST LABOURS IN LITERATURE.

Virtually William Howitt's labours for the cause of Spiritualism-proper, terminated with the cessation of *The Spiritual Magazine* in its original form. He continued to contribute an occasional article to its pages when it re-appeared under the editorship of Dr. Sexton. These articles belong rather to the controversial, than to the more universal class of William Howitt's writings, and as such require here simply a reference.

It has been asserted "that in 1873 William Howitt repudiated Spiritualism;" an assertion bearing upon its face—exaggeration. During the last nine years of his life, from the spring of 1870 to that of 1879, residing entirely on the Continent, with the exception of a three months' visit in 1872\* to London, surrounded by new and interesting scenes, people and associations, his mind ever active, naturally occupied itself with a variety of fresh and attractive subjects. During this period he was occupied in writing the reminiscences of his long life, together with an important work which more or less had engaged his thoughts for a considerable number of years, namely—

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\* It was on this visit to London that William Howitt, interested in accounts of Spirit-Photography, which had reached him from Chevalier Kirkup of Florence, paid an impromptu visit to the studio of Mr. F. Hudson, in company with the late Mr. B. Coleman and the writer, and obtained the spirit-portraits, professing to be, of his sons, an account of which is given by himself in the *Spiritual Magazine* for that year, as quoted by Miss Houghton in her valuable book on "Spirit-Photography," p. 39.

"Chronicles of the Photographs of Spiritual Beings and Phenomena invisible to the Material Eye," by Miss Houghton. London: E. W. Allen, Ave Maria Lane. 1882.



“THE LIFE OF GEORGE FOX AND HIS FRIENDS.”

In this book, which unhappily he did not live to complete, he was desirous to set forth in the most attractive and careful manner the pure principles of the “Early Friends,” wherein he ever more and more recognised genuine Spirituality and manifestations of “the power of the Spirit” of very varied description, strikingly in accord with “Spirit-manifestations” of the present era. In the intellectual and emotional “leading of the Spirit,” as recorded in the life of the early followers of George Fox, and in the life of Fox himself, with their sufferings for “the Truth,” my father found his fullest practical embodiment, as he believed, of the simple and unadulterated teachings of the Lord Christ. His own experimental personal knowledge of the facts and phenomena of modern Spirit-manifestation had placed within his hand a key whereby easily to unlock the experiences of these “Children of the Light.” Thus the fragment that remains completed by William Howitt of the life of the founder of the Society of Friends, possesses a purpose and a character peculiar to itself.

The last letter written by him, indeed, this letter was cut short by the first attack of that hemorrhage which finally sapping his vitality caused his death, was to his daughter in London, begging her to despatch without loss of time certain books needed for the completion of the Life of Fox. Should this fragment ever be given to the world, it will show how firm a “Spiritualist” he remained to the very end.

It may be said that when the *Spiritual Magazine* ceased, there simultaneously ceased with it the first Chapter, or it might be Book, of the History of Modern Spirit-manifestations in England.

A NEW GENERATION OF INQUIRERS

and of experimenters was arising, or about to arise. With the production of the “Materialisation of the Spirit-form” a new epoch in the history of the manifestations had arrived. In the inquiries and experiments of the new generation, the phenomena henceforth sought after, with the greatest ardour,

manifested rather—in every phase of development—*spirit descending into matter, than the sublimation of matter into spirit*, and the swallowing up of materialism in the realm of the spiritual. The intellectual branches of the subject also, where pursued, had become, even more complex, sprouting forth with countless unfolded buds, into varied directions in harmony with, and no doubt answering the needs of the classes of more complex younger minds drawn within the circle of investigation.

With this more complex, and as it must necessarily for a season appear, confused, imperfectly developed, and bewildered ramification of these young branches and twigs of the Tree-Spiritual, my father, living amidst quite other spheres of mind, had but little sympathy, and held himself all the more firmly fixed to the roots and stem of first principles. In order to present a fair picture of his opinions on these subjects, during these later years, I had desired to have given in full a letter written by him in 1875 to Mr. Thomas Shorter. I must content myself, however, with simply extracting the concluding paragraph, which is as follows:—

“In a word, dear Shorter, let us thank God that He has sent down to us Spiritualism as the seal and servant of Christianity; and not to be dismayed at the attempts of low spirits to damage its clearness and fairness. Flies and wasps, too, are sure to collect about a honey-pot, but that is precisely because it *is* a honey-pot. Odd spirits and people will, of course, come about Spiritualism, and why not? Were it not something bright and good and comfortable, they could not be drawn towards it. I am sorry that so many tender-conscienced people are kept aloof from it by the eccentricities that they see in its inspirations and in some of its adherents; but if they would dive a little, they would find that even amongst the queer things that come up from the spiritual Nile, there is in the midst of the New Egypt the rod of Divine Power still working there its enfranchising miracles.—Yours faithfully,

“WILLIAM HOWITT.

“Mayr-am-Hof, Dietenheim, Bruneck, Tyrol.

“September 8th, 1875.”

To visit

ITALY

had been a life-long dream with William and Mary. In April 1870, this day-dream drew towards realisation. Henceforth the remainder of our author's days was to be spent abroad. April, 1870, saw our three travellers, William and Mary, and their daughter Margaret, set forth for a summer's sojourn in Switzerland, and a winter's sojourn in Italy. They were at Zurich when the first tidings of the Franco-Prussian war reached them. The horrors of the struggle called forth from William Howitt an indignant protest against the inhuman cruelties and madneses of war, shaping itself into a blank-verse poem, entitled—

“THE MAD-WAR PLANET.”

This poem gives its title to the volume, which, however, contains several shorter poems, mostly of a highly spiritual character. The author in his preface says—

“Whilst almost daily ascending the snow-clad mountains of Switzerland and northern Italy;\* whilst gazing on their silent glaciers, traversing their noble forests, or listening to the sounds of their rushing rivers, or the musical cadences of their pastoral rills on their Alpine heights, these poems were written.

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\* In an article upon “Health,” written by William Howitt, for *The Herald of Health*, 1871, he says—“During the last summer in Switzerland, Mrs. Howitt and myself, at the respective ages of sixty-eight and seventy-six, climbed mountains of from three to five thousand feet above the level of the sea, and descended the same day with more ease than many a person of the modern school could do. . . . Late hours, heavy dinners, and crowded parties, would soon have sent us whither they have sent so many of our contemporaries long ago. After an evening spent in one of the crowded parties of London, I have always found myself literally poisoned. It was simply undergoing a process of asphyxia. The air was speedily decomposed by so many lungs. Its ozone and oxygen were rapidly absorbed, and in return, the atmosphere was loaded with carbonic acid, carbon, nitrogen, and other effluvia, from the lungs and pores of the dense and heated company; this mischievous matter being much increased, from the product of combustion of numerous lamps, candles, or gas-jets.” He ever sought *fresh air* as the true Elixir of Life.

Amidst the peace of Nature in these glorious lands, the continual tidings of the incredible barbarities of war inflicted on each other by peoples calling themselves civilised and Christian, have stimulated me to make that solemn protest against such prodigious madness and crime, which ought to be uttered by every man and woman who claim to be in their senses."

The spirit of the volume is embodied in the following lines from one of the minor poems, entitled, "The Great Dishonoured Name"—

" Oh, Lamb of God, how still doth shine  
The lamb's meek sufferance in thine !  
From earth's foundation for our pain—  
Still art thou slain from day to day  
*By those who stab thee as they pray.*  
Blest Lamb of God! how long wilt thou  
This mockery of Thy name allow !"

"The lyrical poems which conclude the volume," observes a reviewer, "are outbursts from the sanctum of the poet's heart; they are combinations of a child-like purity and tenderness, with the indignant protest of an aged seer, against the blindness and hardness of the human heart in its dealing with its Lord and its brother man." One poem deserving a special welcome from the true Spiritualist, "The Hymn of Nicholas of the Rock," is descriptive of the inner spiritual joy and clairvoyant visions of Divine Beatitude of Nicholas von der Flüe, the celebrated Hermit of Switzerland, who died in 1487. "The historian who has recorded the beneficent deeds of Nicholas has omitted," says William Howitt, "to reveal the thoughts which were their source. May we not divine them?" he asks. Then, as if become cognisant of the pious revelation to the hermit of the divine vision, he exclaims—

" Hark, a soft voice suspends my will!  
I sit, and wonder, and am still.  
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'Tis God, whose potency underlies  
This scheme of wondrous mysteries.  
Who wakes the wind, who rolls the spheres,  
And speaks where none but Nature hears;

Who flutters in the wild birds' wings,  
 And is the voice of mutest things ;  
 Who in the monad finds a place,  
 And fills and overflows all space.  
 Who through the fire-realms holds his march,  
 And sits upon the rainbow's arch ;  
 O God ! of holiest love and fear !  
 I feel thee near and ever near.  
 Within me, through me, round me spread,  
 With all thine armies of the dead—  
 With all Thy hosts from empires far—  
 Who were, and are not, and yet are !  
 How near they flit ! how hushed they stand !  
 They crowd and press on every hand.  
 Upon my cheek I feel the breath  
 Of unseen conquerors of Death—  
 The dwellers of the viewless day—  
 Who bring us strength to keep the way  
 Which Christ, His saints, and martyrs trod  
 To live with God—the Living God !”

In October, 1870, our travellers, crossing the Alps, soon found themselves at home, amidst Italian sights and sounds, at Bellagio, on the banks of the Lake of Como. Winter approaching, they visited Venice and Florence, *en route* for Rome. Italy, with the amenity of its climate, and with its riches of historical and poetical association, its inexhaustible beauty, both of art and nature, more than realised their anticipation. In Rome they passed the memorable winter of 1870. William Howitt watched, with keen interest, the startling changes which marked the dawn of the new era in “the Eternal City,” now become the capital of “United Italy.”

William and Mary Howitt passed in Rome, April 16, 1871,

#### THEIR GOLDEN WEDDING DAY.

This domestic festival was celebrated for them by the circle of cordial friends, English, American, German, and Italian, who had drawn around them. It was a day of sunshine and of congratulations ; and heaps of flowers were presented to the pair of venerable authors until their *salon* was gay and fragrant as a flower-garden.

Thus, for nine successive years, did William and Mary Howitt, with their younger daughter, continue to reside on the Continent, the winter and early spring being spent in Rome, and the summer in Tyrol. For the last few winters they resided at No. 55 Via Sistina. From the windows of their home over-looking the Via Gregoriana, above the fore-ground of closely crowded together roofs, with their intervening courts, orange and vine-planted, you caught a view, most beautiful, as seen through the purple haze of the golden sunsets, a view of the majestic dome of St. Peter's, of the long lines of the galleries of the Vatican, and rising into the clear heaven of gold, the crest of the memory-haunted Mount Janiculum. Associations, historical, poetical, sacred, artistic, archæological, fills the very air of the "Eternal City." Something keenly attractive to the imagination is forever rising to the surface in that inexhaustible repository of buried ages. These influences were fully appreciated by the venerable pair.

Whilst in Rome, William Howitt strenuously exerted himself, both by writing letters to the Roman newspapers, and by introducing seed from Australia, to forward the cultivation in Italy, and especially in the Roman Campagna, of the *Eucalyptus globulus*, the gum-tree of Australia, celebrated for its power to destroy malarious atmosphere wheresoever it is planted. The successful cultivation of the tree by the intrepid French Trappist-monks, at the Tre Fontane—until their plantation of the Eucalyptus, one of the most deadly and desolate spots on the Campagna—was an object of lively interest to him.

Nor was he less zealous to promote in Rome the formation of a "Society for the Protection of Animals," a movement quite new in Italy, and greatly needed. He lived to see this society fully established.

With so many intellectual interests, the winter in Rome had strong attraction for my father. The beauty of Nature he used greatly to enjoy in his daily walks to the adjoining gardens of the Pincio, interesting specially to him for their sub-tropical vegetation, and for the marble busts of the illus-

trious men of Italy which adorn them; or further still, he might walk in the beautiful wildernesses of the Villa Borghese, whence in spring he returned with handfuls of the wild purple anemone, growing there in such profusion, in the grassy lawns amidst the black, solemn avenues and groves of the ancient ilex-trees.

Then with the May-warmth of Rome would come the exclamation of "To-morrow to fresh fields and pastures new!" Speedily the scene would change to the fresco-covered ancient mansion in Tyrol, standing somewhat aloft in the sun-bathed expanse of the broad green valley of the Pusterthal. The wide valley is encircled with pine-covered hills, and, higher still, overlooking them, snow and glacier-covered mountain-summits arise. The valley is shut in at its further end by the sharp peaks of the far-famed "Dolomites," which at sunset take upon their stern, stony pinnacles the most translucent colouring, as if they were the very mountains of heaven! And—

" O! the life, the life  
 That summer poured around;  
 The merry ringing strife,  
 The jocund of sound  
 In wood and sky and ground;  
 What a chorus! what a maze  
 Of beauty there was found  
 In summer days!" \*

Josiah Gilbert, author of "Excursions among the Dolomite Mountains," and "Titian's Country," etc., has given the following picture of the

MAYR-AM-HOF, WILLIAM HOWITT'S HOME IN TYROL.†

"At Dietenheim," says Mr. Gilbert, "near Bruneck, in their

\* From a poem by William Howitt descriptive of summer enjoyments in Tyrol, entitled "Summer Days."

† American readers may possibly recall in *Lippincott's Illustrated Magazine*, a few years ago, a series of papers descriptive of life at the Mayr-am-Hof, by Margaret Howitt, entitled "Our Home in Tyrol." It may interest some kindly reader to mention that Mary Howitt and her daughter have continued, since William Howitt's decease, to spend their summer months in this old mansion, their winter residence being at Meran, in Tyrol, one of the most beautiful spots in Europe.

Tyrol home, I had a hearty welcome, and enjoyed two days of happy converse with the Howitts. They occupied the upper portion of a delightful baronial house, which had fallen into *Bauer* (peasant) hands. The farmer and his family lived on the ground-floor. The ample, black-timbered staircase led firstly into a broad corridor (where hung some large pictures and antlered heads), then into a spacious room, reminding one, with its wide bay-windows, of the Haddon Hall of the William Howitt's native Derbyshire. This was the general sitting-room, and in their equally roomy bed-chamber, it was only necessary to draw back a curtain to look into what had been the private chapel of the baronial family, and to kneel, if so minded, where they had knelt in the small gallery opposite the altar. An English garden had been formed by William Howitt on one side the house."

#### CHANGES AND THE GREAT CHANGE.

The brightest and most peaceful day must terminate, however brilliant, soft, and lingering may be its hours of sunset. Thus, amidst the amenities of this Indian-summer chapter of my father's life, ever and anon came those changes which naturally announced the approach of the final great change for himself. Ever and anon dropped off from the branch of his family tree first one and then another of the lingering leaves. His brothers were fast departing. Richard, who, not inappropriately, has been styled "the Wordsworth of Sherwood Forest," had calmly departed at his farm, on the skirts of Sherwood, in 1869.\* In 1874 came the news from Australia

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\* A writer in *The Reliquary*, speaking of the death of Richard Howitt, in 1869, records the following interesting psychological facts:—"The watchers beside the dying poet observed with awe-struck surprise, that for several hours during the night before his release, he was holding a long and affectionate conversation, as if with the spirit of his beloved mother. In the concluding stanza of one of his poems, written on his mother's decease, he had said, in 1840—

" "When these dim lights of being close,  
 And gates of heaven are nigh at hand,  
*Her hands will fold us to repose,  
 And wake us in a better land.'*

The last two lines, printed in italics, would almost appear as if they had been written in a prophetic spirit.—*The Reliquary*, vol. xi.



that Godfrey had also gone to his rest.\* The youngest, Francis, remained, still resident in the old family house in Derbyshire. Throughout the year of 1878, he also appeared to be drawing gradually to his close. Letters, messages, books, continually passed to and fro between the brothers. William, although several years the elder, still strong and hale spite of his weight of eighty-five years, appeared likely to outlive his brother some time longer. They were, however, destined to quit this life at the self-same day and hour. To Francis, upon the occasion of his last birthday, William thus wrote in the true spirit of consolatory faith:—

“The advantage of old age is, that it brings us ever nearer to a more permanent youth. The putting off this mortal covering is but the dropping of that material veil which shuts out the spiritual world, where are living around us all those whom we most would desire to see again, and who will welcome us with warmest affection to the great majority of the enfranchised and purified of our race. I remember the cheery saying of a lady friend of ours, whom we called to see in her last illness, and who, remarking that the doctors assured her that she had not many days to live, said, ‘But I do not trouble myself about that, for I know all my friends there are waiting to receive me.’”

In the same spirit, within the course of a few months, did he meet his own end. To the writer of these sketches he made use of the self-same expression regarding himself when drawing very near the confines of the next existence. “They will be all waiting for me, *I know*,” he said.

In January, 1879,† William Howitt took cold through being

\* “Dr. Godfrey Howitt died in his seventy-sixth year, at Melbourne, Australia, December 3, 1873. An enthusiastic naturalist, he bequeathed to the University of Melbourne his extensive Entomological collection and his library, equally valuable, on the subject of Entomology and Botany; also founded three ‘Howitt’s Natural History Scholarships,’ in the subjects of Comparative Anatomy, Zoology, Chemistry, Mineralogy, Botany, Geology, and Palæontology.”—*Australian Illustrated News*.

† When seized with his fatal illness, William Howitt was meditating for the first series of the *Psychological Review* an article upon Spirit Manifestations in

caught in a sudden shower in the Pincio Gardens, and after a few days bronchitis supervened. By this bronchial attack he was confined to the house for some weeks. His family grew anxious. Still greater became their anxiety when hemorrhage set in, the heart being affected. On the receipt of this sad intelligence, the writer and her husband started immediately for Rome. Happily we found my father still alive. To us he looked at first but little changed. He was seated in his arm-chair in the dining-room, wrapped in his dark purple dressing-gown, with his venerable snow-white beard falling upon his breast, on his head his small black velvet cap. His face had grown slightly thinner; over his whole countenance was spread a strangely spiritualised and almost transparent look—and he was so very still! He said that he hoped soon to be stronger, and that then we would all go together to Albano and enjoy some days of mountain air; that he should like to show us the lovely flowers which grew there in the spring. Alas! we knew that never *in this world* would he be stronger, nor go forth again to gather spring-flowers. As yet he was unaware of the fatal nature of the recently developed symptoms. For three weeks longer he remained on earth to those who loved him so tenderly.

From the commencement of his illness, he appeared to have become merged into the pure realm of love. The vigour, the energy, the fire, the combative strength of that great nature already had passed off like an outer envelope, revealing to the full the innermost nature—the principle of his being—Love.

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the Life of the self-styled "Messiah" of Italy, David Lazaretti, shot 18th August, 1878, at Archidosso, in the Appenines, an enthusiast who was followed by vast crowds calling him "Santo Davido." For some months my father had been searching for official information regarding Lazaretti, and also for his pamphlet entitled "*La mia lotta con Dio*" ("*My Wrestling with God*"). Psychological study of the dreams of "modern Messiahship" would be of value in these latter days, when the "*Lo here, and the lo there!*" are on the increase. Knowledge of the general law might tend to free the individual from self-delusion. "The coming man," or the "coming woman," is no new phenomenon. The last articles written by William Howitt on topics of general interest were for *Social Notes*, a periodical edited by his friend of many years, Mr. S. C. Hall.

He deeply felt the ceaseless ministrations of affection shown him throughout this season of weakness and suffering by friends whose friendship to him was very precious. "I am ministered to by angels in earthly form!" he said repeatedly, referring to those friends in Rome.

He bade his wife and children "to rejoice with him and not to mourn when," as he expressed it, "he should have cast off this clod of a body and have passed on to his own generation." Almost the last words uttered by him were "blessing upon his family, his friends everywhere, and," he added with emphatic, though feeble accents, "upon the whole world."

On the Sunday evening of March 2nd he became much weaker. All afternoon he had been seated in his arm-chair near the window. He said he was "weary," could he not be removed to his bed? He marvelled at his extreme sense of prostration. "Except for this heaviness of the body," he added, "I feel quite well, and as though I could go anywhere."

Tenderly he was borne by his beloved ones to his bed, from which his emancipated spirit, on the morrow, was to ascend to its Creator.

After a physically restless, but mentally calm night, it was evident, when morning dawned, that the end was near. He now spoke but rarely, yet appeared constantly to pray inwardly. Evidently in some occult manner he had learned the exact hour appointed for the removal of his spirit. Thus in great weakness did he continue through the forenoon.

About three o'clock p.m. a friend, the Rev. Dr. Nevin, the clergyman of the American church, called to inquire how he was; my father, hearing who was come, said he should be pleased to see Dr. Nevin. After the exchange of a few friendly words, Dr. Nevin asked my father if he should offer up a prayer for him. "Certainly," was the reply. We all knelt around the bed. The two faithful Italian servants, who were devoted to their dying master, knelt near the door of the room, weeping like children.

Scarcely had Dr. Nevin retired when, as if the blessed angels had assembled to receive the spirit, now ready to depart,

with a sudden and startling energy, he exclaimed in a strong voice—"Lift up my hands! Lift up my hands!" His wife and daughter, standing one on either side his bed, each held up a hand, already heavy with death, when, somewhat raising himself upon his pillows, as if to grasp the Invisible before him, his head sank back, and the spirit had arisen! The aged countenance assumed almost immediately an incredibly youthful—it might be called a beatified, expression—the expression as of one who, having fought the good fight through Divine Grace, had gained the victory and entered into his rest.\*

His mortal remains lie in the newer portion of the far-famed

#### PROTESTANT CEMETERY OF ROME,

amidst a host of illustrious dead. It is a cypress-planted lawn garden-plot on a gentle slope within the southern corner of the ancient Aurelian Wall, which shuts in "the Eternal City" from the wide purple wastes of its encircling Campagna. It is the sacred spot of which Shelley, whose own heart was destined to find burial there, said, "It is so beautiful that it makes you in love with death."

William Howitt's grave is near to the grave of the sculptor Gibson. There through the months of winter blooms the camellia, and with earliest spring the ground is carpeted with violets.

Dr. Nevin had arranged with friendly care a choral service for the interment, which, beneath the cloudless, blue Italian sky, took place on March 5th, 1879. In the climate of Italy burial follows close upon the heels of death. Numerous was the assembly who, besides the members of his own family, came to pay William Howitt these last solemn honours. It

\* Whilst William Howitt lay dying in Rome, in the home of his daughter in London a "sensitive" heard for some hours strains of exquisite and rejoicing spiritual music floating through the house, and seeming at length to be lost in the sky. The *Times* newspaper on the morrow contained a telegram from Rome to the effect that William Howitt had expired on the previous day. In the "Diary of Henry Crabb Robinson" he there states, on the authority of a German acquaintance, that whilst Goethe lay dying music was heard in his house by several individuals.

was mentioned in the newspapers that “various foreigners of distinction were present, as well as representative men, not alone of Literature and Art, but of every branch of the Church Catholic, as also Lutherans and Nonconformists.”

The writer of an account of the funeral, which appeared in *The Guardian* for March 12th, 1879, says that, as Dr. Nevin stood beside the open grave, “his voice trembling with emotion,” he commenced an extempore address, in which, amongst other testimony borne to the unvaryingly Christian spirit of the life of William Howitt, he observed—“His life was pre-eminently the outcome of his faith—singularly led by the Spirit of God. If it be true,” he added in conclusion, “as I believe most profoundly that it is—that he ‘prayeth best who loveth best all things both great and small’—then the life of William Howitt . . . was one fervent and unbroken prayer!”

THE END









✚ This List has been considerably enlarged and revised.

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