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DWELLERS ON THE THRESHOLD

OR

Magic and Magicians

WITH SOME ILLUSTRATIONS OF HUMAN ERROR
AND IMPOSTURE

BY

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DWELLERS ON THE THRESHOLD

CHAPTER VI.

PARACELSUS: A BIOGRAPHY (*continued*).

[A.D. 1493—1541.]

§ 2. HIS PHILOSOPHY—§ 3. THE PHILOSOPHER'S
STONE—§ 4. VAGUE SPECULATIONS—§ 5. THE
ELIXIR OF LIFE.

§ 2. HIS PHILOSOPHY.

AFTER having demolished the systems constructed by the philosophers of antiquity, Paracelsus felt that he owed to humanity a code of his own, which he professed to found upon the Bible. And, first, with respect to the physical ills of man, he thought that he had found in its sublime pages a key to every malady. A novel but fantastic idea! To transform the Holy Scripture into a hand-book upon health, and elevate Moses or St. Paul into the place of *Æsculapius*! As far, indeed, as those general laws of sobriety and cleanliness are concerned, which so largely influence the health of man, the Bible sets them forth in clear and emphatic

language. But Paracelsus soared above so simple and obvious an application.

According to this whimsical theorist, the whole of the Old Testament was not endowed with equal powers of healing. The most salutary and efficacious portions were the Pentateuch of Moses, who spent so many years in solitude, only to plumb to its depths the sacred art of the transformation of metals; and the Apocalypse of St. John, who was—as everybody knows—well versed in the occult sciences; who, the apostle of Hermes as well as the Evangelist, gave a proof of his two-fold mission by issuing, alive and uninjured, from the boiling cauldron of Domitian. The Apocalypse, indeed, is the book whose leaves we must read and re-read, if we would fathom the mysteries of medicinal magic; and of a truth the theories of Paracelsus are enveloped in an infinitely deeper cloud of obscurity than the revelations of the solitary seer of Patmos.

Having discovered the secret of disease in the Bible, which comes from Heaven, Paracelsus naturally sought in Heaven the source or germ of that disease. He perceived that every malady originated in the planetary spheres and the constellations, and that it follows as a consequence that, when a patient presents himself before a physician, the first thing the latter

has to do is, not to investigate his symptoms, but—to take counsel of the stars! Yes: a skilful leech will scrutinize the face of heaven, and not the physiognomy of the invalid; will listen to the throbbing of the spheres, and not to the pulsation of the overloaded heart!

So prone are mankind to submit to the marvellous, and to place implicit credence in the truth and beauty of everything that is incomprehensible, that the wildest theory, whether suggested by knave or madman, has a chance of duration. This “astral medicine,” these “planetary cures” of Paracelsus outlived their creator, and were reproduced by successive dupes or dupers. His theory forms the basis of that of Mesmer, who, in 1766, took for the subject of his prelections—“The Influence of the Planets upon the Human Body.” What mysterious spell exists in yonder beautiful stars that so overmasters our reason and imagination as to impel us to connect our existence with theirs by any tie, however fanciful—now ascribing to them an influence over our fortunes, and now a power over our frail and feeble bodies?—

. Ye are
 A beauty and a mystery, and create
 In us such love and reverence from afar,
 That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star!

Mesmer; it is true, speedily abandoned this doctrine to adopt another, whose germ was also furnished by the inventor of the cabalistic and sidereal medicine. But the inventor himself, as was fitting, showed himself more persevering, and despite of all the scientific vagaries which incessantly cropped up in his prolific and heated brain, long continued to consult, in reference to the ailments of his patients, the stars whose responses it is not easy to contradict. For it is with them as with the dead—they never falsify the oracles which they are made to pronounce, or the decrees which they are supposed to utter.

If a woman consulted him, Paracelsus, whatever might be her disease, began his treatment by examining the moon, because, said he, the moon is the adequate expression and embodiment, as it were, of the female nature. He was so persuaded that but for the existence of the earth's satellite, there would not be found in the one sex the variations of health from which the other is exempt, that he saw a something divine and celestial in the periodical proofs of their different organization.

From such reveries as these it was easy to proceed to the establishment of an astral physiology. An idea which, born in Greece, but afterwards overlaid by the cumbrous philo-

sophy of Rome, continued to be cherished by the Fathers of the Church and the sophists of Alexandria, represented man as a world—a microcosm—the likeness in little of the world which he inhabits. This elegant and prolific idea has inspired many a page of lofty eloquence. It was now adopted by Paracelsus, and pushed to an absurd extreme. Accustomed to read, or, at least, to *mis-spell*, the heavens, he now pretended to discover them in man; to establish the theory that not only “our life is but a drop of the celestial quintessence,” but to sketch in every individual an abridgment, or compendium, of the heavenly sphere. How consoling, remarks a French writer, to our vain and weak humanity! Let us when we suffer, sigh, “I am a heaven; my trouble cannot endure!” Here is a rude contrast, certainly, between “lepram, podagram, et hydropem,” and the serenely beautiful skies. But the recollections of our infirmity need not long perturb us, and we could speedily lull ourselves to sleep in dreams of a beatific purity.

A physician named Joyand, who wrote, about a century ago, a book entitled “Précis du Siècle de Paracelse,” runs riot in praise of this grand idea of a human microcosm, and ascribes the honour of its conception entirely

to our great philosopher. From the eulogistic pages of the disciple we may gather some idea of the teachings of the master.

“Man is a miniature world: not indeed as regards his corporeal substance, but as he includes all the virtues and operations of the great world. In him are all the celestial movements, the nature of earth, the properties of water, the quality of air, the character of every fruit, every mineral, every constellation. He likewise combines in himself the qualities of animals. His body is a fine assemblage of the elements. The organs by which he perceives all the objects which surround him are of an entirely celestial nature. The emotions and agitations of his soul resemble the winds, the whirlpools, the lightnings, the thunders, and the meteors which ferment in the region of the air and the wind. They perturb his heart and his blood. This is why man is a little world, and wholly the image of the universe.”

But as if the vagueness of the above would not be sufficient for ordinary mortals, Paracelsus proceeds to define more distinctly his astral man, and to show how he presents a complete exposition of the solar system.

“We have, like our universe, seven principal powers. The heart, source of vitality, is the sun, whence issues the vivifying heat; the

brain may be compared to the moon ; it obeys her phases, grows and wanes as she does. These two organs have in the human body the same importance as those two great luminaries in the celestial order. The heart, which is the centre of movement, the brain, whence radiate our ideas, are most intimately connected, like the sun and the moon, which follow and approach one another to recommence their course together and yet separately. The liver, where the blood is prepared which makes life, is subject to Jupiter, a planet essentially sanguine and vitalic. The reins, which contain the reservoir of reproduction, depend upon Venus, a prolific planet and the mother of generations. The spleen, the depository of the bile, submits to the law of Saturn, a sombre and melancholy star ; and the vessel of the gall, the domicile of passion, is under the influence of Mars, an impetuous and wrathful planet. There remain the lungs, which, agile as Mercury, are subject to the same vicissitudes. Placed in continual agitation in the midst of the chest, where they wrap round the heart, they raise the air to reanimate it, like Mercury, who presides over the winds, and who, wandering round the sun, appears to tremble on his verge but to execute his orders."

Such was the singular mixture of ancient myths, astronomical signs, and fanciful speculations which the followers of Paracelsus admire as his philosophy! The discoveries of modern astronomers have unfortunately spoiled its completeness. The number seven no longer limits the planetary system, and it would be necessary now-a-days for Paracelsus to determine the share of the human body possessed by Neptune and the Georgium Sidus, to say nothing of Juno, Pallas, Vesta, Themis, and Astrea! The researches of Herschel and others have greatly augmented the complications of anatomy!

But Paracelsus was not without nobler and purer ideas. The Dwellers on the Threshold catch some faint glimpse of the light and glory that pervade the Beyond. And one of his ideas was afterwards propounded by a philosopher, who, unlike the would-be magician, was an exact reasoner—the learned and sagacious Descartes. Afflicted by the brevity of life, which prevents the accomplishment of so many noble works; which does not permit to so many promises of glory the time needful for ripening into fulfilment; which interrupts so many grand chains of thought, whose links succeeding generations are not able to take

up; Descartes persuaded himself that it was possible to remedy this evil, and protract existence far beyond its usual limit. He conceived that if there were a more complete equilibrium between us and the multitude of beings and objects which surround us—if the elements of our bodies were more certainly in equilibrium with the air, the fire, the light, the earth—if we would better seize the astral or solar influences to which man is subjected—establish a greater harmony between him and the elements which he assimilates—prepare, as it were, a sort of “hygienic breastplate” against the accidents which strike and the circumstances which fatigue him—we might finish by rendering the processes of time tardier and more gentle and by keeping back almost indefinitely those *wrinkles of the mind* which are surer signs of old age than the furrows of the brow.

Such was the grand chimera which dazzled the brain of Descartes! Alas, he did not live long enough to learn how to extend his own life, and men must still suffer, and sorrow, and die, as the necessary preparation to that glorious immortality which shall infinitely surpass the visionary earthly existence of these unhappy dreamers!

The dream of Descartes, however, had been

anticipated by Paracelsus. He also had longed to oppose an impenetrable rampart to death, or to prolong human life through many generations. And he, too, failed to discover the secret, to find that *elixir* of immortality which has been the vision of so many hot imaginations. But he has left on record the principal points of the philosophy on which he founded his researches in his "Archidoxa Medicinæ." It contains the leading rules of the art of healing, as he practised and preached them. "I had resolved," he says, "to give ten books of the 'Archidoxa,' but I have reserved the tenth in my head. It is a treasure which men are not worthy to possess, and shall only be given to the world when they shall have abjured Aristotle, Avicenna, and Galen, and promised a perfect submission to Paracelsus." The world did not recant, but Paracelsus relented, and at the entreaty of his disciples published this tenth book, the key to the nine others, but a key which might pass for a lock, and for a lock which we cannot even pick. It is entitled the "Tenth Book of the Arch-Doctrines; or, On the Secret Mysteries of Nature." Here is a brief summary of it:—

He begins by supposing and ends by establishing that there is a universal spirit infused into the veins of man, forming within us a

species of invisible body, of which our visible body, which it directs and governs at its will, is but the wrapping—the casket. This universal spirit is not simple—not more simple, for instance, than the number 100, which is a collection of units. Where, then, are the spiritual units of which our complex spirit is composed? Scattered in plants and minerals, but principally in metals. There exists in these inferior productions of the earth a host of sub-spirits which sum themselves up in us, as the universe does in God. So the science of the philosopher has simply to unite them to the body—to disengage them from the grosser matter which clogs and confines them, and to separate the pure from the impure.

To separate the pure from the impure is, in other words, to seize upon the soul of the heterogeneous bodies—to evolve their “predestined element,” “the seminal essence of beings,” “the first being, or quintessence.”

To understand this latter word “quintessence,” it is needful for the reader to know that every body, whatever it may be, is composed of four elements, and that the essence compounded of these elements forms a fifth, which is the soul of the mixed bodies, or, in other words, its “mercury.” “I have shown,” says Paracelsus, “in my book of ‘Elements,’

that the quintessence is the same thing as mercury. There is in mercury whatever wise men seek." That is, not the mercury of modern chemists, but a philosophical mercury of which every body has its own. "There are as many mercuries as there are things. The mercury of a vegetable, a mineral, or an animal of the same kind, although strongly resembling each other, does not precisely resemble another mercury, and it is for this reason that vegetables, minerals, and animals of the same species are not exactly alike. . . . The true mercury of philosophers is the radical humidity of each body, and its veritable *semen*, or essence."

The explanation does not appear very intelligible to us, but our readers may be more fortunate. Paracelsus, however, understood himself, and strong in the principles which he had enounced, he next aspired to extract the soul from all these impure substances, and to fashion out of it an universal spirit, in case the first should fail him. He thought that if he could succeed in extracting from every substance the essence which it enclosed, whether under the form of a salt or a fluid, he should infallibly procure, by the chemical combination of these liquids and salts in the "vase of art and nature," a duplicate of man's universal

spirit, so that he might rejuvenate himself when there was need. His deductions were sufficiently logical; but logic does not materially assist us in practical matters, and Paracelsus felt this so keenly that he resolved without delay to do something more than reason.

However headstrong he may have been under the continual influence of pride and drink, he was not slow to perceive that his plan of regeneration exceeded the limits of man's life, and that Death would not halt until he had pilfered from every substance the juice or the poison which was to dethrone him. Paracelsus, therefore, resolved to classify the plants and minerals by the order of their nobility and power, and to work only upon their types. These preliminaries achieved, he began to operate upon the poppy, and having seized its "predestined element," reduced it to the state of *laudanum*.

The reader, however, must not believe that this species of Theban mucilage, named also the *specific anodyne* of Paracelsus, was the mean and unambitious drug now employed in medicine. A thaumaturgist like him could not content himself with a balm so unsophisticated. To render it more efficacious, he mixed, says Nicholas Lefiore, with his extract of poppy, the juice of orange, cinnamon, musk, ambergris, •

saffron, the essence of coral, and salts of pearls, digested together at several operations, and incorporated by a delicate manipulation! This, truly, might be called an electuary poetically combined. How far more prosaic are our modern pharmacopolists! We shall utterly humiliate them when we record, as the conclusion of the above recipe, the final recommendation of Paracelsus: it is simply to add—after the trituration of all these curative substances—a sample and a half of the quintessence of gold. You perceive, says the anonymous author of the abridgment of his doctrines, that the secret consists in the quintessence of gold, and the *magistry* of pearls and coral. The rest, the artist will do well.

The scholar is as simple as the master is enigmatic! “The rest, the artist will do well!” But it is precisely that which we cannot do which fails us. To say nothing of the “essence of corals” and the “magistry of pearls,” which are perhaps but bagatelles, how shall we procure the quintessence—that is, the mercurial element—of gold? This would be neither more nor less than the Philosopher’s Stone, which it is evident Paracelsus wished us to believe he possessed. But as according to his own avowal the stone cured everything, what need had he, when having at his disposal

the remedies for all diseases, to compose one which should only cure a portion of them?

However, the philosopher had accomplished something. He had begun by discovering the secret of sleep. Sleep cannot restore to us our youth: but it beguiles us sometimes with the phantom of it. To dream that we have is half having! He was so pleased with this result that he went no further. He stopped short in his scientific enterprise, and it mattered not what was the malady—even for a broken leg—he administered his narcotic. This preparation of opium constitutes the first *arcanum*, or the first *magistry*, of which he treats in the fifth book of his “Archidoxa.” It was, perhaps, his Azoth—the spirit which he carried in the pommel of his sword—the demon which arouses a myriad other demons, some bright and beautiful, some horrent and diabolical, for the dreams of the opium-eater are not all lighted with sunshine, but frequently plunge into the depths of darkness and despair!

Opium flavoured—upon paper, at least—with the quintessence of gold and the magistry of pearls, played for some time a wonderful part. Then this specific grew weary of curing, and, it is said, even poisoned several persons—a not uncommon accident with your universal remedies! Paracelsus was therefore con-

strained to summon new genii to his aid. He returned to his retorts and alembics, but in order to restrict his analysis and gain time, sought for a plant worthy of holding in the vegetable kingdom the same rank as gold in the metallic—a plant whose “predestined element” should unite in itself the virtues of nearly all the vegetable essences. Although this was not easy to distinguish, he recognised at a glance—we know not by what signs—the supremacy of excellence in the *melissa*, and first decreed to it that pharmaceutical crown which at a later period the Carmelites ought to have consecrated. How he obtained this new specific may be seen in the “Life of Paracelsus,” by Savarien:—

“He took some balm-mint in flower, which he had taken care to collect before the rising of the sun. He pounded it in a mortar, reduced it to an impalpable dust, poured it into a long-necked vial which he sealed hermetically, and placed it to digest (or settle) for forty hours in a heap of horse-dung. This time expired, he opened the vial, and found there a matter which he reduced into a fluid by pressing it, separating it from its impurities by exposure to the slow heat of a *bain-marie*. The grosser parts sunk to the bottom, and he drew off the liqueur which floated on the top,

filtering it through some cotton. This liqueur having been poured into a bottle he added to it the fixed salt, which he had drawn from the same plant when dried. There remained nothing more but to extract from this liqueur the first life or being of the plant. For this purpose Paracelsus mixed the liqueur with so much 'water of salt' (understand by this the mercurial element or radical humidity of the salt), put it in a matrass, exposed it for six weeks to the sun, and finally, at the expiration of this term, discovered a last residuum which was decidedly, according to him, the first life or supreme essence of the plant."

How did he recognise it, or assure himself that it was what he sought? We know not: that internal voice which for ever vibrates in the ear of conquerors might warn him; and moreover, the operation had reached its utmost limit, and nature had nothing more to surrender. But at all events, it is certain that what he found in his matrass was the genie or spirit he required; and with the surplus, if there were any, we need not concern ourselves.

Those who may wish to know what this *genie* was like, are informed that it as exactly resembled, as two drops of water, the spirit of aromatic wine known to-day as *absinthe suisse*. It was a liquid green as emerald—green, the

bright *riante* colour of hope and spring time. Unfortunately, it failed as a specific in the conditions indispensable for an elixir of immortality; but it was a preparation more than half-celestial, which almost rendered old age impossible. This assuredly is not all that dreamers and philosophers hope for, but unless you are greedy of an immeasurable life, you may well be content with gaining so much, and Paracelsus *was* contented.

We remember that our philosopher was not only a chymist, but a magician. So he had no need to demonstrate by experiments that his essence of melissa could renew man's happy years of youth, or prevent them from gliding away. He was so sure of his fact, that before revealing for whom this *bottle of youth* was destined, he wrote his book "*De Renovatione et Restauratione Hominis.*" The amateurs of literary singularities may consult it; it has the merit of not being more lucid than his other works. Here and there, however, a few phrases seem decipherable, which is more than can be said for the works of some modern philosophers! And those among our readers who do not wish to grow old will find therein, if any skilful operator will procure for them the essence already described, the manner of using it, and of rejuvenating themselves as

often as they may wish. Nothing can be more easy. When once you have obtained your flacon of youthfulness, you have only to pour a few spoonfuls into good white wine until the wine assumes the same colour as the essence, and then to drink it fasting every morning.

Here we must own a formidable difficulty presents itself. Of what wine does Paracelsus speak? Is it the ordinary juice of the vine, or the philosopher's wine, which is only an infusion of the "green lion" into the "milk of the virgin"—which is nothing more than the "blood of the red lion dissolved in the vinegar of the philosophers"—which again is the "mercury of vitriol"? I feel all the force of the objection. But it is not insuperable. After mature reflection and an attentive examination of the text, we have convinced ourselves that Paracelsus only refers to good *Rhenish* wine, which is easier to procure than a "green lion" diluted in the blood of the "red lion."

Now that we know to what wine we must confine ourselves, we must determine in what doses we ought to administer it. It is this which Paracelsus does not say; but remembering his habits of intemperance, we may presume that no very limited measure is necessary. Persons who may fear, by adopting

this counsel, only to arrive reeling and staggering at their resurrection, will do well to drink but a glass; this ought to produce the same effect. The worst that can happen to them is to grow young a few days later. But a little more or less of winter, what matters it, if one is sure of a return of the happy spring?

You must drink of it conformably to the prescriptions of the master, until this fluid has interpenetrated all the economy of the body, and restored it to youthful life, energy, and vigour. Without giving oneself the trouble of experimentalizing on this return of the vital forces, it will be easy to perceive when the reparative potion has infiltrated itself into all the tissues, and the median transformation approaches. Our corporeal springtime will announce itself by a *general verdure*, which fortunately is but fugitive, since it is not agreeable to the eye. The exhausted hairs fall off, the nails and the teeth drop, the skin shrivels, dries, and passes away like the rest. We must confess that these preliminaries to adolescence are not reassuring, and those even who have nothing to lose may be afraid to risk—*themselves*. So much the worse for them! He who risks nothing gains nothing.

Since the days of Paracelsus no one has had the courage to perform the miracle, no one has had the strength thus to strip himself of his old age. Well, let us be content to bear the fardel of our years, and deposit it only in the grave. A fairer youth than even the green essence of Paracelsus promised, awaits beyond it the soul which has kept itself free from stain and pollution in passing through the fierce struggle of the world; and we may always be young if the memory of our youth brings with it no darkening traces of grievous follies, but lights up the time with the lustre of a true love or a noble ambition!

§ 3. THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE.

By means of manipulations as subtle and ingenious as those which he employed upon the melissa, our philosopher did not draw, but learned to extract, the "predestined element" of plants which ranked much higher in the vegetable aristocracy,—the "first life" of the gillyflower, the cinnamon, the myrrh, the scammony, the celandine. All these supreme essences which, according to the 5th book of "Archidoxa," unite with a mass of "magisteries" as precious as they are rude, are the

base of so many specifics, equally reparative and regenerative. This depends upon the relationship which exists between the temperament of a privileged plant and the temperament of the individual who asks of it his rejuvenescence.

However brilliant were the results of his discoveries, those he had obtained or those he thought he *might* obtain, they were for Paracelsus but the *a b c* of Magic. To the eyes of so consummate an alchymist vegetable life is nothing; it is the mineral—the metallic life—which is all! So we may assure ourselves that it was in his power to seize the first life-principle of the moon, the sun, Mars, or Saturn; that is, of silver, gold, iron, or lead. It was equally facile for him to grasp the life of the precious stones, the bitumens, the sulphurs, and even that of animals.

Paracelsus, who had no time to lose, did not think it necessary to make himself the conquests which he points out, but he was solicitous to indicate in his works the means of attaining one particular object, which it was useless for him, as far as he was concerned, to reach to be materially convinced of his genius. It is unfortunate that we can profit in nothing by his good intentions. If he has been generous

enough to bequeath to us his arcana, he has not been sufficiently so to render his testament intelligible. "Some perhaps will say," he remarks, "that the mode in which I have written will not much assist the reader who desires to penetrate these great secrets. I reply that we must not cast pearls before swine. God will give the rest—will give intelligence to whomsoever He will. I write this but as a beginning. The artist must seek the rest and find it."

We are willing that he should seek, but as for finding! "We must accept what he shall tell us"—it is written in the "Philaethes"—"not like one who leads a blind man by the hand, but like a person who puts a clear, acute intellect in the road that will conduct him whither he wishes to go." Assuming that we are all persons of clear, acute intellect, and carefully watching the indications of Paracelsus, let us endeavour to arrive promptly at the supreme excellences of alchemy. Let us see how we may procure for ourselves the Philosopher's Stone.

Paracelsus sets forth several methods of obtaining this great arcanum. Here is the shortest and most simple, as recorded by Incola Francus :—

“Take some mercury, or at least the element of mercury, separating the pure from the impure, and afterwards pounding it to perfect whiteness. Then you shall sublimate it with *sal-armoniac*, and this so many times as may be necessary to resolve it into a fluid. Calcine it, coagulate it, and again dissolve it, and let it strain in a *pelican* during a philosophic month, until it thickens and assumes the form of a hard substance. Thereafter this form of stone is incombustible, and nothing can change or alter it; the metallic bodies which it penetrates become fixed and incombustible, for this material is incombustible, and changes the imperfect metals into metal perfect. Although I have given the process in few words, the thing itself demands a long toil and *many difficult circumstances*, which I have expressly omitted, not to weary the reader, who ought to be very diligent and intelligent if he wishes to arrive at the accomplishment of this great work.”

It is true, adds this apologetic follower of the charlatan-enthusiast, that if Paracelsus has not told us *all*, he has told at least a very important part. We ask nothing better; but confess we should like to know the part that is not revealed to us: and above all, we are utterly

unable to divine what are the "difficult circumstances" which, it appears, must be overcome before we can attain a successful result. For those of our readers who may think that we have taken one word for another, in speaking of the *sal-armoniac*, we beg to assure them that we are not in error, and that there is here no question of *ammoniac* as might at first be supposed. The salt alluded to is the mercurial salt armoniac discovered by Raymond Lulli, and "so named on account of the agreement and harmony which the quintessence of quicksilver appears to have with the essence of every metal." An explanation which surely ought to satisfy the most inquisitive!

The "spagyric philosophers" (a term used by Paracelsus) are not agreed upon the method of composing the stone. The most distinguished have all obtained it, but all by different processes. So Paracelsus himself tells us in his "Archidoxa" (book x. c. vi.), when explaining his own recipe for the completion of it, and profiting by the occasion to criticize his fellow-workers.

"I omit," he writes, "what I have said in different places on the theory of the stone; I will say only that this *arcanum* does not consist in the blast (*rouille*) or flowers of anti-

mony. It must be sought in the mercury of antimony, which, when it is carried to perfection, is nothing else than *the heaven of metals*; for even as the heaven gives life to plants and minerals, so does the pure quintessence of antimony vitrify everything. This is why the Deluge was not able to deprive any substance of its virtue or properties, for the heaven being the life of all beings, there is nothing superior to it which can modify or destroy it.

“Take the antimony, purge it of its arsenical impurities in an iron vessel until the coagulated mercury of the antimony appears quite white, and is distinguishable by the star which appears in the superficies of the regulus or semi-metal. But although this regulus, which is the element of mercury, has in itself a veritable hidden life, nevertheless these things are in virtue, and not actually.

“Therefore, if you wish to reduce the power to action, you must disengage the life which is concealed in it by a living fire like to itself, or with a metallic vinegar. To discover this fire many philosophers have proceeded differently, but agreeing in the foundations of the art, have arrived at the desired end. For some with great labour have drawn forth the quintessence of the thickened mercury of the

regulus of antimony, and by this means have reduced to action the mercury of the antimony: others have considered that there was an uniform quintessence in the other minerals, as for example in the fixed sulphur of the vitriol, or the stone of the magnet, and having extracted the quintessence, have afterwards matured and exalted their *heaven* with it, and reduced it to action. Their process is good, and has had its result. Meanwhile this fire—this corporeal life—which they seek with toil, is found much more easily and in much greater perfection in the ordinary mercury, which appears through its perpetual fluidity—a proof that it possesses a very powerful fire and a celestial life similar to that which lies hidden in the regulus of the antimony. Therefore, he who would wish to exalt our *metallic heaven*, starved, to its great completeness, and to reduce into action its potential virtues, he must first extract from ordinary mercury its corporeal life, which is a celestial fire; that is to say the quintessence of quicksilver, or, in other words, the metallic vinegar, that has resulted from its dissolution in the water which originally produced it (!), and which is its own mother; that is to say, he must dissolve it in the arcanum of the salt I have described, and mingle it

with the 'stomach of Anthion,' which is the spirit of vinegar, and in this menstruum melt and filter the consistent mercury of the antimony, strain it in the said liquor, and finally reduce it into crystals of a yellowish green, of which we have spoken in our manual."

Who could have imagined that a recipe so short, and with so apparent a simplicity, could be at the bottom so terribly abstruse and complicated? And yet we have not nearly attained to the end of our problem; but having begun to enter into the details which may lead to its solution, we feel constrained to place before our readers the whole. It is, perhaps, somewhat lengthy, but then we shall derive the benefit of those *flashes of lucidity* which gush on all sides from the aphorisms of our great philosopher. It is the *ne plus ultra* of the Hermetic eloquence. Extremes meet; and it may be that this excess of light has upon profane minds absolutely the same effect as the clouds of darkness. Paracelsus having referred us to his Manual, to his Manual it is necessary that we should have recourse, if we would be in a condition to discuss, with fulness of knowledge, the question of the great work. It is a slight sacrifice of patience, but the reward perhaps so splendid as fully to justify our

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exertions. It has long been pretended that we can only find the diamond in the heads of toads. It is the same with the Philosopher's Stone; we can find it only in the head of an alchymist. Let us resolve to seek it there.

"Take," said he, "the electric mineral not yet mature (antimony), put it in its sphere, in the fire with the iron, to remove its ordures and other superfluities, and purge it as much as you can, following the rules of chymistry, so that it may not suffer by the aforesaid impurities. Make, in a word, the regulus with the mark. This done, cause it to dissolve in the 'stomach of the ostrich' (vitriol), which springs from the earth and is fortified in its virtue by the 'sharpness of the eagle' (the metallic vinegar or essence of mercury). As soon as the essence is perfected, and when after its dissolution it has taken the colour of the herb called *calendule*, do not forget to reduce it into a spiritual luminous essence, which resembles amber. After this, add to it of the 'spread eagle' one half the weight of the election before its preparation, and frequently distil the 'stomach of the ostrich' into the matter, and thus the election will become much more spiritualized. When the 'stomach of the ostrich' is weakened by the labour of digestion, we must

strengthen it and frequently distil it. Finally, when it has lost all its impurity, add as much tartarized quintessence as will rest upon your fingers, until it throws off its impurity and rises with it. Repeat this process until the preparation becomes white, and this will suffice; for you shall see yourself as gradually it rises in the form of the 'exalted eagle,' and with little trouble converts itself in its form (like sublimated mercury); and that is what we are seeking.

"I tell you in truth that there is no greater remedy in medicine than that which lies in this election, and that there is nothing like it in the whole world. But not to digress from my purpose, and not to leave this work imperfect, observe the manner in which you ought to operate."

We do not know if the reader will pardon us for continuing our quotations. We confess that we do not very well understand this masonic phraseology of the *patres conscripti* of the Hermetic philosophy; but ought we to measure the intelligence of others by our own? Nature, as Fontenelle has said, when speaking of these mysteries, has not made everybody capable of understanding everything, and it may be very true that my neighbour has perfectly compre-

hended what has escaped me. Because we do not feel in our head a "stomach of an ostrich" able to digest these marvels, and to give birth, while digesting them, to an eagle, is it a reason why these birds shall not nestle and lay eggs in some cage less narrow? This would be an inexcusable presumption. We firmly believe for the rest that there is no one now-a-days, or hardly any one, who has seen what remains for us to show you.

"The election then being destroyed, as I have said, to arrive at the desired end (which is, to make of it an universal medicine for human as well as metallic bodies), take your election, rendered light and volatile by the method above described.

"Take of it as much as you would wish to reduce it to its perfection, and put it in a philosophical egg of glass, and seal it very tightly, that nothing of it may respire; put it into an athanor until of itself it resolves into a liquid, in such a manner that in the middle of this sea there may appear a small island, which daily diminishes, and finally, all shall be changed to a colour black as ink. This colour is the raven, or bird which flies at night without wings, and which, through the celestial dew, that rising, continually falls back by a

constant circulation, changes into what is called 'the head of the raven,' and afterwards resolves into 'the tail of the peacock;' then it assumes the hue of the 'tail of a peacock,' and afterwards the colour of the 'feathers of a swan;' finally acquiring an extreme redness, which marks its fiery nature, and in virtue of which it expels all kinds of impurities, and strengthens feeble members. This preparation, according to all philosophers, is made in a single vessel, over a single furnace, with an equal and continual fire, and this medicine, which is more than celestial, cures all kinds of infirmities, as well in human as metallic bodies; wherefore no one can understand or attain such an arcanum without the help of God: for its virtue is ineffable and divine."

Directions so categorical appear to us of a nature to destroy the long-existing belief that the philosopher's stone is a chimera! If each of us has not a portion of it in his pocket, the reason can only be that in two hundred years no one has cared to hunt out the secret. It has remained overwhelmed in works whose ocean-like immensity has deterred the student from plunging into them. But now that our researches have drawn it like a pearl from

the depths of the sea, if we continue to drag about an infirm body and to lament over an empty purse, the fault must be our own. There is no longer any need to enter into unholy and dangerous compacts with the Evil Spirit in order to secure the bloom of youth, prolonged life, or boundless wealth. Paracelsus shows us the process: alas! our ignorance is so dense that even now we do not comprehend it, and whatever may be the good fortune of our readers, we at least must be content with a feeble frame, a limited span of life, and too often—an empty purse!

§ 4. VAGUE SPECULATIONS.

“If Paracelsus,” says one of his scholiasts, “had composed nothing but this book of the quintessence of which we have just given a specimen, and which is the fifth of the *Archidoxa*, we might conclude that his mind was semi-divine, and clearly perceive that his writings are not those of a fool, of a man who writes at hazard and under the influence of wine, as the envious have dared to say.”

“If,” says Monsieur Deumier, “it will give pleasure to any of his partisans, I will gladly admit that he has not written under the

inspiration of inebriety; but I shall never believe that he has written under the inspiration of light." We often have a glimpse, however, of *something* through the thick wrappings in which he envelopes his thoughts; it is his pride. Some chymical experiments, made with sufficient adroitness, had so filled him with confidence in his strength that he believed nothing impossible. Of this we shall bring together a few proofs.

Not being able to create a world in the block, because he did not know where to place it, and disdaining to create it in detail, he attempted to supply the deficiency by explaining the present and the formation of all which it contained. He affirmed that the seeds of things existed from all eternity, that they were spread through the universe, and that they developed themselves, at their day and at their hour, under the influence of natural combinations identically similar to the operations which he had imagined.

Extending his system soon to its farthest limits, he maintained that he could propagate mankind without the intercourse of the two sexes. You had but to procure the needful spagyric substances (he unfortunately omits to tell us what,) and shutting them up in a glass

phial, to place them to digest in horse-dung for the space of forty days. At the end of this time, there will be something which will begin to move and live in your bottle. This something is a man ! but a man who has no body and is transparent. How easy it must be to recognise a man whom one cannot see ! Nevertheless, he exists, and nothing remains but to bring him up—which is not more difficult to do than to make him. You may accomplish it by daily feeding him—during forty weeks, and without extricating him from his dunghill—with the arcanum of the human blood ! At the end of this time you shall have a veritable living child, having every member as well-proportioned as any infant born of a woman. He will only be much smaller than an ordinary child, and his physical education will require more care and attention. This is what we alchymists call an *homunculus*, or artificial man.

At the bottom of all these hyperbolical aberrations, expressed with the utmost certainty, there is, however, a something of power and genius which influences the imagination, and we must not marvel that in the last century, men of learning and wisdom, who did not think it necessary to be charlatans, seriously

applied themselves to whatever these dreams of inventions appeared to offer of the ingenious. There is more of Paracelsus than one thinks in the considerations of Leeuwenoeck and Spallanzani upon the nature of certain infusoria, and in those of Needham upon spontaneous generation—a subject which even occupied the fancies of Sir Thomas Browne.

Needham is the English physician whom Voltaire ridiculed, who thought he had discovered, not precisely men, but eel-like animalcules—the beginnings of human beings—in the farina of fermented barley, and who profited by this discovery to announce that we all of us were completed and perfected eels. It even appears that he thought it possible to procreate beings by an entirely novel method. It was only necessary, in order to solve this problem, to infuse the flour of farina into distilled water, to enclose the infusion in a small pouch of goldbeaters' skin, and to shut up the whole for nine months in a dunghill. At the end of this term, the dunghill could not do otherwise than be delivered of a child. This was said and written more than two hundred years after the death of Paracelsus. Who will pretend after this that it is only truth which never changes?

A man superior to Needham, the Genevese, Charles Bonnet, who had no pretensions to be a magician, also resuscitated—not so many years ago, and although he probably had never read them—some of the errors of our alchymist. He restores to honour, in his “Contemplations upon Nature” and his “Palingenesis,” the system of the eternity of germs. This certainly does not prove that Paracelsus was right ; but it denotes that his philosophy had a certain depth, and may induce us to think that, under better influences, he might have originated something else than extravagances and paradoxes.

We find, too, in the most impenetrable abysses of his works, many other ideas which have risen to the surface, and which float there a long time before giving place to newer resurrections from some other gulf. Such is the entire system of magnetism, which is but a new and last transformation of the system of life-principles.

“All the beings dependent upon matter,” says M. Deslandes, “have an internal and constraining form, to which Paracelsus gives the general name of the olympic or astral spirit, and it is this form which constitutes the essence of each body, and which is the

cause, by its universal and universally extended harmony, that they all entertain anything analogous and sympathetic the one for the other. In effect, although all beings have a proper and distinctive character, although all live in their own peculiar manner, there exists between them a mutual and reciprocal correspondence, an intimate relationship which cannot but be regarded as the masterpiece of the wisdom of God."

It is now no longer necessary, in order to assure us of the sympathy that prevails between us and such or such a thing, such or such an individual, to seize its first principle chemically, and having seized it, to put our spiritual nature in correspondence with its own: it is best to establish these relations by the single fact of the will; and Paracelsus had the secret of it.

If he does not teach us how to obtain it, he assures us at least that *he* succeeded, and it was thus that he contrived to discourse with the dead, and to converse intelligibly with persons separated by more than two hundred leagues. This is absolutely what we are professing to do to-day; what our spirit-rappers and mediums assert that they accomplish. They are the same miracles, produced with the same mystery and explained with the same

clearness—that is to say, showing little and explaining less.

Paracelsus in another part of his work ventures much further. He does not limit himself to saying that every substance contains in itself something of the nature of the loadstone which forces it to gravitate towards another; he affirms that we are all but organized magnets, having each our poles which attract and repel. Our thoughts are simply magnetic emanations, which in escaping from our brains penetrate into kindred heads, and carry thither, with a reflection of our life, the mirage of our secrets.

On this magnetic philosophy it may be advisable to dwell somewhat fully.

Paracelsus was the first to compare this sympathy between things animate and inanimate to the action of the loadstone, and originated the word *magnetism* in the sense in which it is now-a-days applied.

All things, according to him, emanated from a great first being, and there was a reciprocity of life in all things. In man, too, there exists a something astral, emanating from the stars. Whether precisely physical or not, it may, when compared with the grosser body, be considered a spirit. This life stands in

connexion with the stars from which it sprang, and draws to it their power, like a magnet. He calls this sidereal life the *magnes microcosmi*—the magnet of the little world, and makes use of it to explain many circumstances in nature. The magnetic power, he asserts, is diffused through the universe—glows in the flower, glides in the stream, seethes in the ocean, shines in the sky;—the human body draws the poisonous properties of natural objects towards itself, whilst on the other hand, those natural objects again attract poisonous exhalations to themselves, and impart them to others.

“We must know,” he says, “that man has something magnetic in him, without which he cannot live. But the magnet is made for the man, not the man for the magnet. This magnetic principle includes the human magnetism, and descends from the stars, and from nowhere else.

Man is taken out of the four elements, and nourished by them; but not merely so in a palpable manner, through the stomach, but also imperceptibly, through that magnetic power which informs all nature, and through which every individual member draws to itself its peculiar nourishment.

Upon this magnetic theory is founded the

sympathetic cure of disease. In the "mummy," or so-called magnet, all physical power resides, and a little dose draws all that is homogeneous in the whole body to itself. We may thus free ourselves in a most wonderful manner from the most tedious diseases, by converting ourselves, as it were, to iron; that is, when we apply a small part of the decayed mummy to another sound body. The magnet then attracts to itself the whole of the disease.

"The magnet," he says, "has long been exhibited to all eyes, and no person has ever thought whether it could be of any further use, or whether it possessed any other quality than that of attracting iron. The base and ignorant doctors object to me that I will not follow the ancients; but in what *should* I follow them? All that they have said of the magnet is really worthless. Compare it with what I have said, and judge! I should know no more than what every peasant knows—that it attracts iron, if I had blindly followed the footsteps of others and made no experiments for myself; but every wise man will search for himself, and by this independent course I have discovered that the magnet, in addition to its obvious and generally visible power possesses another and secret spell."

"In disease you must place the magnet in the centre whence the disease proceeds. The magnet has two poles, an attractive and a repelling one. It is not a trivial thing to which of these a man has recourse. For instance, in the falling sickness, or all kinds of epilepsy, where the malady more particularly affects the head, it is proper to lay four magnets on the lower part of the body, with the pole of attraction turned upwards, and on the head only one, with the repelling pole downwards; and then *you bring other agencies to their aid*. This paragraph," says Paracelsus, "is of more value than all that the Galenic doctors have learned or have taught in the whole course of their lives. If, instead of vainly boasting, they had taken a magnet, they might have done more than they ever could with empty vaunts. For by this means I have cured defluxions of the eyes, ears, nose, and other members, as well as fistulas, cancers, and other maladies. Moreover, the magnet draws together ruptures and cures them; it expels jaundice and dropsy, as I have frequently experienced in my practice."

"You must understand," he says, in another place, "that the magnet is that spirit of life in man which the corrupted or diseased man

seeks, as both unite themselves with chaos from without. And thus the healthy are infected by the unhealthy through magnetic attraction. This fact may be illustrated by an example. When sound eyes look at bleared eyes, they immediately draw to themselves the chaos of the latter, and the ill or malady straightway passes into the sound eyes."

Reflecting upon all the marvels of his discoveries, he could not refrain from a burst of indignant vituperation:—

"Ye doctors of Paris, Padua, Montpelier, Salerno, Vienna, and Leipzig, ye are not teachers of the truth, but confessors of lies! Your philosophy is a lie! Would you know what magic is, seek it in the Apocalypse. All the trouble and unhappiness of the world proceeds from this, that your art is based upon the false. As you cannot prove the truth of your teaching from the Bible and the Apocalypse, let your sorry farces have an end. The Bible is the true key and interpreter. John, no less than Moses, Elias, Enoch, David, Solomon, Daniel, Jeremiah, and the other prophets, was a magician, a diviner, a cabalist. If all, or any of these were now living, I doubt not but that you would make an example of them in your miserable slaughterhouse, would annihilate

them there, and were it possible, the Creator of all things also."

On the astral influence, or power of the stars, he expatiates with considerable force :—

"Time is the life of the stars ; the circling and working together of them. Not alone through the sun does the earth mete out its time. All that returns in cycles to the earth, to animals and to men, owns the royalty of the stars. The individual life of earth must harmonize with the general life of higher worlds, for God in love has created for us the sidereal system, and has informed it with sensibility, that we may feel and reveal the secrets of the stars."

"Whether a fire burns or not," he says, "may be discovered by a little water. Thus stands man in the centre of the world. He is received and surrounded like a pot placed in the midst of a tripod, and as the pot and all it contains must do what the fire will—boil, steam, etc.—so is it with the body. In like manner as fire passes through an iron stove do the stars pass through man with all their properties, and penetrate him as the rain penetrates the earth, which gives fruit in return for it. Now observe that the stars envelope the earth as a shell does the egg ;

through the shell comes the air, and strikes into the centre of the sphere. As the fish suffer in the lake when heat or cold affects it, so man submits to the vapour of the stars."

Somewhat more intelligible is his exposition of the force and power of the will:—

"It is possible that my spirit, without the help of the body, and through an ardent will alone, and without a sword, can stab and wound others. It is also possible that I can bring the spirit of my adversary into an image and then fold him up or lame him at my pleasure. You must understand that the exercise of the will is an important point in the art of medicine. Man can inflict disease upon man and beast by his curses; but it does not act through strength of character, virgin wax, and so on . . . it is the imagination alone that fulfils the desire. Every imagination of man springs from the heart, for that is the sum of the microcosm; and out of the microcosm shoots forth the imagination into the great world. So the imagination of a man is a seed, which is material. *Resolute imagination is the beginning of all magical operations.* Fixed, unswerving thought is also a means to an end. I cannot move my eye about with

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my hand, but the firmly poised imagination directs it whithersoever it will. The imagination of another may be able to kill me. Imagination is the offspring of pleasure and desire ; thence result envy and hatred, for the desire is followed by the deed. A curse may be realized when it leaps from the heart ; and so from the heart issue the curses of fathers and mothers. And when any person would wound or stab another, he must first in imagination thrust the weapon into himself ; he must conceive the wound and it will be given through the thought, even as if it were wrought with the hands.

“The magical is a great hidden wisdom, and reason is a great open folly. No armour shields against magic, for it strikes at the inward spirit of life. Of this we may rest assured that, through faith and a powerful imagination only, can we bring the spirit of any man into an image. No conjuration, no rites are needful ; circle-making and scattering of incense are mere humbug and jugglery. The human spirit is so great a thing that no man can express it. Eternal and unchangeable as God himself is the mind of man ! And could we rightly comprehend the mind of man

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nothing would be impossible to us upon earth. Through faith the imagination is invigorated and completed, for it really happens that every doubt mars its perfection. Faith must strengthen the imagination, for faith establishes the will. Because men do not perfectly believe and imagine, the result is, that arts are uncertain when they might be wholly certain."

Paracelsus was above the trickery of the contemporary necromancers and astrologers. He soared to loftier heights than they ever conceived of, and with all the extravagance and mystical absurdities of his philosophy mingled the fine conceptions of a powerful but erring imagination. In the dawn of philosophy shadows were often taken for substances, and men chased the morning mists as eagerly as if they were the forms of Divine things. Hence they were led to an undue exaltation of man, upon whom they considered the whole universe to be dependent; and the force of the will and the imagination they exaggerated into a victorious and all-conquering power. At bottom, however, lay a great truth; and what may be effected by a right exercise of the will or a judicious diversion of the imagination, the moderns are now prepared to recognise.

§ 5. THE ELIXIR OF LIFE.

The possession of the Philosopher's Stone opened up to the magician visions of illimitable power and wealth, but with wonderful self-denial he sacrificed himself for the good of his fellows. Instead of erecting magnificent palaces, and filling them with the glow and glitter of luxurious splendour, he resolved to secure for mankind the gift of immortality by the conversion of the stone into the elixir of life, by reducing it, in a word, into fluid gold. This is what he accomplished. Hitherto he had only succeeded in perfecting combinations that restored the bloom of youth to the withered cheek, and the elasticity of seventeen to the paralysed limbs of seventy, but now, prosecuting his researches to a noble end, he learned to make that youth perpetual, and a new Prometheus discovered the fire of heaven—the veritable mercury of life, the true tincture of the sun, by whose agency the body of man becomes immortal as his soul!

“This arcanum,” he writes, “requires no explanation; its name alone suffices to describe it. It is a medicine so excellent and so useful, that even as the tincture of the dyers colours intimately every kind of cloth in its own hue,

so also this life-tincture converts all kinds of humours, however malignant they may be, into health, penetrating by its subtilty into every part, and transmuting the evil into the good, just as the flame transmutes wood and other combustible materials into fire and igneous vapour."

Although, like all alchymists, jealous of his secrets, and bound by his oath not to reveal them to the profane except under the cloak of a most apocalyptic style, Paracelsus has not disdained to communicate to us the recipe of this marvel. And such is its simplicity that we wonder any one consents to die! Is it that we all grow so weary of the burden of life, of the sorrows and follies and sins of this mundane world? Can no dread of the future tempt us to preserve the present? Here, at all events, is the secret of Paracelsus, and yet every cemetery is thickly studded with new graves!

"Take the spiritualized mercury, separated from all impurity, sublime it with antimony in such a manner that the two may refine themselves together and become a single inseparable substance; dissolve them upon marble, four times dissolving and four times solidifying them, after which the elixir is accomplished. The said elixir is a leaven which digests and

mingles with the radical principle of life, and has the power to maintain it in good condition, and to oppose all that is contrary to it. For just as arsenic changes into poison every aliment, this elixir converts everything into good, defends the body from evil, and even *after death* prevents the corpse from smelling, and preserves it from corruption."

It may appear extraordinary that Paracelsus relates, among the virtues of a potion which is to secure immortality, the faculty of preserving our dead bodies from stench and corruption. But we must not examine too critically the minutiae of contradictions that are probably due to the heat of the imagination—to the poetic fire and eloquent impetuosity of the writer. It may be that he wishes to intimate as a consolatory fact that if the physician charged with the glorious *elixir* should arrive too late by the bedside of the dying, he may at least communicate to the corpse the similitude of that life which he could not save. Definitions are rigid and precise; enigmas are elastic and transparent. A philosopher should always speak in riddles, for in case of a misadventure, he may thus accuse the ignorance of the interpreter. If he utters a definition he places himself in a pillory, and every wit will have his fling at him.

“Certissimum est hoc naturæ arcanum,” writes Jean Fabre, “omnium secretissimum, revelatum potius esse mortalibus ab ipsomet Deo, quam fuisse ab iisdem mortalibus excogitatum.” It is most certain, says this Paracelsian apostle, with amiable modesty, that this secret of the secrets of nature—this most secret of all secrets—was rather revealed to mortals by God himself than thought out by those same mortals.

It was the glory of Paracelsus that he was chosen to make known to earth so inestimable a revelation; and we think he might very well be content with the distinction of a prophet or a lawgiver—a Moses or an Elijah—without going further and claiming divine attributes. But what will surprise our readers, as it surprises us, is the extraordinary reticence of the great philosopher in never availing himself of the precious *elixir* which it was his good fortune to make known to humanity. He wrested the secret from heaven by hard study and the most subtle analyses, proclaimed it to the world, and abstained from using it. Methinks I have known others, politicians and philosophers, who have in like manner shrank from essaying their own nostrums, or putting to the proof their own theories. It is so

much easier to legislate for others than for ourselves.

“Not being able,” says M. Deumier, “to live as long as we could wish, we owe at least some gratitude to Paracelsus for having taught us by what means our first fathers lived for ages, while we, degenerate ones, are foolish enough to grow old at eighty years or less. The learned have endeavoured to diminish the age of the patriarchs by assuring us that they did not calculate the year as we do, which is infinitely probable, and that the vital strength of the earth having decayed, it is natural that that of its children should decline in proportion. These are the arguments of the Academy to which a *true philosopher* will not subscribe. If Adam lived nine hundred years and more, he maintained it was because when Heaven expelled him from Paradise it revealed to him, by way of consolation, the secret of the Philosopher’s Stone and the supreme essence of the sun. Without this, unhappy Adam could not have extricated himself from his sorrows. ‘For Adam our first parent, when driven out of Paradise, and thrown miserable and naked into the calamities of human life, was not able so long to preserve himself from death.’

“Since he was immortal, you will ask me,

perhaps, why he died. Paracelsus does not tell us; but it is possible that after a sojourn of nine centuries on this earth—after prolonging life to an epoch when the world was torn with distractions—our first father was more than satisfied, and renounced through weariness his use of the liquid, which he must without doubt have employed from time to time for his preservation. If Abel was killed, it so happened because he was still in the flower of his youth—of youth which only sees the present, and lives from day to day; he had no thought of the accidents of the morrow. It is not less true that this secret passed from patriarch to patriarch, and that owing to its efficacy they dwelt so long upon the earth. They only quitted it when, like Adam, they grew weary. This satiety made no remarkable progress until after the Deluge.

“Paracelsus also explains, by the possession of this precious philter, the flourishing condition of the globe under its first inhabitants. Although this is not asserted by the Scriptures and traditions, it appears certain that the first possessors of the philosophical-stone-liquid did not content themselves with taking it at fixed intervals for their own benefit, but admitted to the privilege of their protracted

existence their beasts, their fowls, their vegetables, their trees. At a time when the arms of men were necessarily wanting for agriculture, one perceives how important it was to be spared the need of constantly renewing their orchards, their granaries, their farmyards. When our fathers planted a tree, they were assured that its shadow would never quit them. Life was shared in common by things animate and inanimate, and nature was very dear to her children. All this is much to be regretted."

But besides the gift of immortality, the Philosopher's Stone was endowed with so marvellous a lustre that it lighted up at night, like the moon, that which during the day it brightened and invigorated like the sun. The knowledge of this "phosphorescent power" opened to Paracelsus an important archæological discovery—that it was not a carbuncle, as some have supposed, but a true philosopher's stone, which in the Ark served as a lamp or torch for the patriarch Noah!

If the charlatan-enthusiast—how much of his own extravagances did he believe, how much disbelieve?—has not very lucidly explained to us the means of perfecting the elixir, he has been sufficiently explicit in

reference to its immediate effects. Just as he seemed under no restraint when labouring to initiate us into the prolegomena of our rejuvenescence by the spirit of melissa, so he has not been greedy of details upon the preliminaries of our immortality.

Scarcely has a drop of the glorious essence moistened our lips before we feel as if disengaged of matter! All the dust and moil of life vanish at the breath of endless youth! The shadows of death recoil—its clouds roll up before the rays of sunlight which interpenetrate your being—a sense of ineffable happiness pervades your soul—and all nature seems illuminated with a glorious radiance. But before we attempt to reach an elevation so sublime, and so to lustrate and beautify our corporeal nature, it were as well perhaps we should remember the wise counsel of another teacher of the Hermetic philosophy—the sage Trithemius—and “study first to leave behind us our carnal affections, the frailty of the senses, the passions that belong to matter; secondly, to learn by what means we may rise to the climax of pure intellect, united with the divinities above, without which we never can gain the lore of secret things, nor the magic that accomplishes true wonders!”

Here we close our brief examination into the Paracelsian philosophy. While amused by its extravagances, let us remember that its inventor was a bold and daring chemist, who introduced into medicine the science of experiment, and bequeathed to his successors the use of two invaluable drugs—mercury and laudanum. He was but a Dweller on the Threshold; yet he caught some glimpses of the light and glory of a completer knowledge, of a more perfect science,—ay, even of a purer philosophy. He clomb the Pisgah-peak, and looked out afar upon the Promised Land. If in the cloudy vapours and uncertain mists of the morning his steps often wandered astray, and his brain grew dizzy with the boundlessness of its visions, let us acknowledge that his aspirations were those of an earnest soul, and his errors the errors of a splendid intellect!

CHAPTER VII.

HENRY CORNELIUS AGRIPPA.

[A.D. 1486-1534.]

CORNELIUS AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM: MAGICIAN,
DOCTOR, KNIGHT AND PHILOSOPHER.

In der Welt weit,
Aus der Einsamkeit,
Wollen sie Dich locken.

In the wide world,
Out of the solitude,
Will these attract thee.

GOETHE. (*Faust.*)

Chè difesa miglior ch' usbergo e scudo
E la santa innocenza al petto ignudo!—TASSO.

Surer defence is sacred innocence
Than shield or cuirass to the naked breast.

§ 1. EARLY YEARS.

HENRY CORNELIUS AGRIPPA VON NETTESHEIM was born at Cologne on the 14th of September, 1486. The Romans gave the name of Agrippa* to a child who came into the world

* Compounded from *ægritudo*, in allusion to the mother's pain, and *pedes*, the infant's feet.

with his feet foremost, and probably the infant Von Nettesheim received his classical prænomen from a similar circumstance. His ancestors had been for generations attached to the service of the house of Hapsburgh, but when Cornelius grew up to manhood he discarded his feudal family name, and for literary purposes remained constant to the classical Agrippa.

Few details of his education have descended to our times, but it is certain that he displayed a peculiar aptitude for study, and Cologne in those days was the very nursery of learning and the favoured home of science. In every branch of human knowledge it is certain that he acquired some proficiency, and he also gained an intimate acquaintance with many languages.

While still very young his ancestral connections obtained him service in the Imperial Court, and he was attached to the Emperor of Germany for several years, first as a secretary, and afterwards as a soldier. His quick pregnant intellect and ambitious spirit did not escape the notice of the shrewd Maximilian, who often employed him upon missions of some political importance; and the first notable incident in his career springs out of

a service of this nature, undertaken at the age of twenty.

Cornelius, according to Naudé, could speak eight different languages, wherefore Paulus Jovius styled him a monstrous genius (*portentosum ingenium*), Jacques Gehory ranked him among the most splendid lights of his age, and Ludwig (Ludovick) named him the venerable Master Agrippa, a miracle of letters and of learned men. His skill as a linguist marked him out for a mission to Paris. The times were then out of joint. Philip of Castile had died suddenly. Ferdinand of Arragon was disputing with Philip's father, Maximilian, the regency of the kingdom. It was important for the latter to know the policy and wishes of France, and Agrippa was sent to observe, remember, and record.

He made the acquaintance at Paris of a young Catalonian, the Senor de Gerona, who had been placed by King Ferdinand as his lieutenant over the district of Tarragon. His representations fired the young German's spirit of enterprise, and the two resolved upon a daring adventure, probably with some indistinct idea that it would finally turn to the advantage of Maximilian. A third comrade was easily discovered, an Italian, who

studied medicine in Paris, one Blasius Cæsar Landulphus, and minor confederates were enlisted by various promises.

The enterprise opened successfully with the seizure of the Fuerte Negro, a port which entirely commands the town of Tarragon. After remaining there for a brief while, Cornelius was sent to garrison the mansion of Senor de Gerona at Villarodona, and protect it from an explosion of Catalonian wrath. There he learned that Landulphus had recrossed the Garonne on his way to Barcelona, and thither he dispatched Gerona to concert with his friend their further movements. He was to return by the festival of St. John, and a banquet was provided for the occasion, to which were bidden sundry of his friends, the prior of St. George's monastery, a Franciscan priest, and others. But Gerona did not return. "The day of the appointed dinner-party was at hand, and when the sun had set upon the eve of it, Cornelius, expecting still in vain the absent man, and pondering the cause of his delay; anxious, beset with terrible suspicions, uncertain how to act, with his brain, as he says, disturbed by presage of the coming ill and dread of the approaching night, revolved in his mind many conflicting counsels. At

last he retired to rest, but when all in the castle were asleep, night not being far advanced, the abbot's steward came, for whom, when he had given the password to the sentries, the drawbridge was let down and the gate opened. He summoned Cornelius Agrippa, Perotti the Franciscan, and two other of Gerona's relatives, to tell them that on his way home from Barcelona their chief had been waylaid by a savage crowd of rustics, and that two of his followers being killed, he with the others had been bound hand and foot, and carried up the mountains."

The messenger then warned them to take instant measures for their own defence, and was silent. But he counselled them either to escape by a bold and dexterous sortie, or to fortify their castle against the rustic insurgents.

The fort was too large and in too ruinous a condition to be defended by a handful of men against a large number of besiegers, but at three miles distance there was a tower, so girdled by crags and encircled by pools and bogs, that it seemed to offer a secure asylum. Thither repaired Agrippa and his scanty band, under the cover of night, and thither on the

following morning the rebels followed them, soon discovering that they had abandoned the Fuerte Negro. But a barricade of empty waggons blocked up the only pass to Agrippa's citadel, and when the peasantry attempted to storm it, they were driven back by a scathing fire, to which their slings and bows and arrows offered but an ineffectual resistance. They then resolved to reduce them by famine, and encircled the mountain-tower with a ring of armed men. Many lives had been lost in the assault of the Fuerte Negro, and the peasants accordingly sought for vengeance on "the German," whom they regarded as the principal author of the deed. So they maintained the blockade very rigorously, and the garrison speedily began to feel the anxieties of approaching famine.

In this strait the knowledge of the country possessed by the abbot's steward, and the quick conception of Agrippa, rescued them from certain destruction. The steward discovered a concealed pass that led by a devious and difficult route to the shore of a piece of water called the Black Lake. Across this lake rose the grey walls and towers of his master's abbey; once there they were saved. But how were they to cross the lake—it was four miles

wide—without a boat? Agrippa's invention now came to their aid. He knew the aversion—the superstitious awe—with which the peasants regarded the unfortunate leper. Taking a lad who was in the garrison, and disfiguring him with stains of milk-thistle and other herbs he painted his skin in imitation of the sickly hue of leprosy, hung round his neck the leper's bell, which warned every one of his dreaded approach, dressed him as a beggar, and gave him for his stick a crooked branch, within which a receptacle for a letter had been contrived. Mounted upon an ox, he left the tower under the shadow of the friendly night. As morning broke he appeared among the watch-posts of the besiegers, but the sentinels fled at his coming in a panic of terror, never paused to question him on his errand, and at a secure distance flung to him the alms which fear and not pity prompted.

The boy therefore executed his errand safely, and safely returned to the tower early on the following night, with an answer to Agrippa's missive.

The garrison then prepared for immediate departure, and firing several guns to make the besiegers believe in their continued presence, stealthily quitted the tower at early dawn, and

ascended the mountain gorge until they reached the summit. There they became visible to the inmates of the abbey, and displaying a white cloth as a signal, soon had the satisfaction of seeing a couple of fishermen's boats row swiftly across the lake. They descended to its marge with cheerful rapidity, entered the boats, and before evening were safely housed under the hospitable roof of the abbey. This was the 14th of August. For two months had Agrippa been shut up in his mountain fastness. Agrippa now settled down at Avignon, in company with one Antonius Xanthus, and his attendant Stephen, and applied himself to his studies with characteristic vigour. He had previously visited Valencia, the Balearic Islands, Sardinia, Naples, and Leghorn. His inquiring mind—like most of the inquiring minds of that age—stood aghast at the frauds, sensuality, errors, and crimes which disgraced the Roman priesthood, and began groping through the darkness in search of light. "Secret societies," says Mr. Morley, "chiefly composed of curious and learned youths, had by this time become numerous, and numerous especially among the Germans. Not only the search after the Philosopher's Stone, which was then worthy to be prosecuted

by enlightened persons, but also the new realms of thought laid open by the first glance at Greek literature, and by the still more recent introduction of a study of the Hebrew language, occupied the minds of these associated scholars. Such studies often carried those who followed them within the borders of forbidden ground, and therefore secrecy was a condition necessary to their freedom of inquiry. Towards the close of the sixteenth century such associations (the foundation of which had been a desire to keep thought out of fetters) were developed into the form of brotherhoods of Rosicrucians, physicians, theosophists, chemists, and now, by the mercy of God, Rosicrucian, became then the style in which a brother gloried. The brotherhoods of Rosicrucians are still commonly remembered, but in the social history of Europe they are less to be considered than those first confederations of theosophists, which nursed indeed mystical errors gathered from the Greeks and Jews, but out of whose theories there was developed much of a pure spiritualism that entered into strife with what was outwardly corrupt and sensual in the body of the Roman Church, and thus prepared the way for the more vital attacks of the Reformers."

When the night first broadens into morning one cannot but perceive how in the semi-obscure air which then gathers over the earth, every object assumes a weird and portentous aspect. The clouds on the distant hill hang like the shadows of mighty phantoms, the trees stretch out their misty branches like spectral arms, and the vapours roll along the river like the march of a goblin host. To these early inquirers—these Agrippas and Paracelsuses, these Reuchlins and De Bouelles—the dawning knowledge that broke slowly and hazily upon the deep darkness and ignorance of the feudal time presented things in the same unreal and fantastic character. Like children for the first time set free on the seashore, they were lost in wonder at the strangeness and grandeur of all they beheld, and regarded as mysteries what the examination of a wider and more advanced science has shown to be simple operations of nature. Yet at these pioneers of the truth it is not well for us to fling the arrows of a satiric wit. Later inquirers have profited by their very errors, have recognised in their follies the seeds of wisdom, have discerned from the vague indications scattered about their writings the way to many paths of philosophical research.

To us the marvels of chemistry and electricity are so familiar as to be the sport of children, but to the earlier votaries of philosophy they naturally appeared surprising. And if regarded by the inventor or the discoverer with admiration, consider with how great an awe they must have appalled the ignorant vulgar ! An optical delusion, a chemical combination, an electric shock, could seem to them nothing but a miracle wrought by good or evil spirits. The Roman Church, averse to the spread of free inquiry—trembling at the advance of bold speculation and adventurous thought—eagerly launched its thunders at the wonder-workers, and discarding all reference to the possible agency of good, authoritatively pronounced them the tools and slaves of Satan. Hence they came to be looked upon with mingled abhorrence and apprehension, and fear exaggerated the circumstances which ignorance had already invested with marvellous attributes. Nor were the philosophers themselves without a certain vague belief that they possessed powers not commonly vouchsafed to man ; and in the arrogance that springs from limited knowledge began to speak confidently of the performance of miracles which assuredly never existed but in their heated and dreamy imaginations.

But it must also be remembered that the hostility of the Roman Church and the superstition of the vulgar menacing these unhappy thaumaturgists with perils both to life and property, they were compelled to conceal their discoveries in a cloud of verbiage which later inquirers have too readily despised as jargon. They wrapped up their secrets in mystical phrases, and hinted at them in obscure allegories; partly because they feared to reveal them to enemies who would have profited by them to the disadvantage of the inventors, partly from an almost childish delight in their own wonders, and in the exaggerations with which they surrounded them. The elder D'Israeli has well remarked that "magical terms with talismanic figures may yet conceal many a secret; gunpowder came down to us in a sort of anagram, and the kaleidoscope, with all its interminable multiplications of forms, lay at hand for two centuries in Baptista Porta's 'Natural Magic.' The abbot Trithemius in a confidential letter happened to call himself a magician, perhaps at the moment he thought himself one, and sent three or four leaves stuffed with the names of devils and with their evocations. At the death of his friend these leaves fell into the unworthy

hands of the prior, who was so frightened by his first glance at the diabolical nomenclature, that he raised the country against the abbot, and Trithemius was nearly a lost man ! Yet after all, this evocation of devils has reached us in his 'Steganographia,' and proves to be only one of this ingenious abbot's polygraphic attempts at *secret writing* ; for he had flattered himself that he had invented a mode of concealing his thoughts from the world, while he communicated them to a friend. Roger Bacon promised to raise thunder and lightning and disperse clouds by dissolving them into rain. The first magical process has been obtained by Franklin ; and the other, of far more use to our agriculturists, may perchance be found lurking in some corner which has been overlooked in the 'Opus Majus' of our Doctor Mirabilis." And even now-a-days, have not our philosophers a jargon of their own, and do they not often conceal their ignorance in a cloud of mystical phrases ? Has medicine no secrets, no follies, no absurdities ? And do not our theorists upon the brain and its diseases indulge in speculations of the wildest and most extravagant character ?

It should be observed that these thaumaturgists, these servants of the devil, and pro-

fessors of the magical art, were mostly men of spotless character and blameless life. They deemed the utmost purity of morals and elevation of thought essential to a successful prosecution of their researches. Chastity, temperance, devoutness, were enjoined by the early philosophers upon their neophytes as the needful virtues of the seeker after knowledge. They represented its pursuit as a difficult and arduous enterprise, not to be accomplished without resolute self-denial and pure enthusiasm.

Ardua vallatur duris sapientia scrupis.

Wisdom, they taught, was fenced round with rugged rocks. He who was a slave to his passions could never hope to enter the *penetralia*, the holy of holies. It was only when "the soul was elevated to natures better than itself" and "purged of earthly desires," that it could partake of the glorious banquet which liberal Nature prepares for her wise and earnest worshippers. You must be "poor in spirit" if you "would penetrate that sacred night which environs truth." And yet it was upon the men who preached so high and sacred a doctrine that the Church of Rome poured out its bitter anathemas, and it is such

men that the indiscriminating arrogance of a later time has confused with the dabblers in magic, the charlatans and quacks, the astrologers and diviners, who picked up a few secrets of science and employed them to extract money from a credulous multitude !

But it is time we should return to Avignon and Cornelius Agrippa.

§ 2. HIS MAGICAL STUDIES.

At Avignon Cornelius Agrippa resumed his studies, and began to drink deep of that forbidden knowledge which was stored up by the numerous mysterious brotherhoods of Theosophists and Rosicrucians, and which in its love of spiritualism and theurgic purity militated strongly against the corruptions and vices of the Romish Church. And thus it was that Rome hated not only the alchymist, the Rosicrucian, the magician, but the *heretic*. These men who carried their speculations beyond the limits assigned by a pseudo-infallible priesthood were indeed the pioneers of the Reformation, awakening a spirit of inquiry, of criticism, of profound thought, which paved the way for the bold assertions and audacious logic of Luther. It was not then at their

Cabala and their magic signs, at their dreams and follies, that Rome launched her thunders. The *elixir vitæ* and the Philosopher's Stone were as nothing in themselves, but in searching after these delusive objects the inquirer was led into trains of thought which could not but prove fatal to the pretensions of the Church; and it was the bold freethinker, the daring inquirer, the uncontrolled "ideologist," not the pale-browed votary of the Rosy-Cross whom priestcraft sought to punish. That freer and more extended learning which the researches of the reputed magicians did so much to foster and promote, was regarded by the monks with the most poignant alarm. They looked with apprehension upon the sunrise that was slowly broadening over the distant hills. It was an age of expectation—an age of waiting; but with very different feelings did the servants of the Church mark the first gleams of light upon the long-clouded horizon to these earnest and hopeful watchers who hailed them as the promise—the assurance of a full tide of splendour wherein the whole earth should bask and be glad! We must remember, then, this hostility of the Church when seeking to grapple the true secret of the lives of such men as Paracelsus, Lulli, Cornelius Agrippa. The monks

flung dirt upon them while living, and ashes upon their graves. It is the duty of posterity to do their memory justice.

From Avignon Agrippa went to Lyons, conversing with such students of the occult sciences as came across his path, and collecting materials for a complete treatise upon the mysteries and profundities of magic. In pursuit of this new object he went from Lyons to Authun, for the sake of the teaching to be derived from the learned Campegius (*né Champier*), and while under this philosopher's roof made his first appearance in the world of literature, in a series of orations upon Reuchlin's book on "The Mirific Word." Both book and orations were founded upon the traditions, or Cabala, of the Hebrew rabbis, by means of whose secrets the enthusiasts hoped to obtain communication with the spirits of the outer world. The "Mirific Word" was the Name—above all others mirific and beatific—which unveiled the mysteries of heaven to man.

His orations secured him the favour of Margaret of Burgundy, the governor of the Netherlands, and the degree of doctor of divinity, together with a stipend from the university of Dôle. Thus encouraged, Agrippa, as was natural to a young man of

three-and-twenty, began to look about for a wife, and as a preparatory step endeavoured to secure the sympathies of the "other sex" by the publication of a treatise "On the Nobility and pre-Excellence of the Female Sex,"* which he courteously dedicated to the Princess Margaret. In this curious little tractate he bursts into rhapsodies of panegyric which might satisfy the greediest of "strong-minded women." Man is altogether snubbed and humiliated in order to place woman on the loftiest imaginable pedestal. His very name furnishes an argument against him. What means *Adam* but *Earth*, while the significant and all-important interpretation of *Eve* is *Life*? As much, then, as life surpasses earth, does woman excel and outshine man. Woman, too, was the last work of creation; hence she was the best. Things animate and inanimate—stars, moon, and sun, earth and sea, animal and vegetable life, man himself—all had been called into being before woman arose—the crown, the glory, the consummate masterpiece of the creative power. Then, too, her personal charms, upon which Agrippa dwells like

* *Henrici Cornelii Agrippæ de Nobilitate et Præcellentia Fœminei Sexus, ad Margaretam Augustam Austriacorum et Burgundionum Principem, An. MDXXXII.*

an enamoured poet, sufficiently attest her pre-eminence. The light of heaven glows in her smile and kindles in her glance; her rounded form is perfect in its shapeliness; her luxuriant locks are her royal diadem; in every gesture beam dignity and grace. Even after death nature acknowledges her superiority. A woman who perishes by drowning floats upon her face; a man upon his back.

Agrippa then proceeds to borrow from Scripture and the Cabala—from anatomy and physiology—a thousand reasons to justify his assertion of woman's superiority. Many of these would shock the delicacy of modern readers; all are such as only a student of the sixteenth century, and a student very much in love, could possibly have adduced. But with these credentials in his hand he threw himself at the feet of Jane Louisa Tyssie, a Genevese maiden, whose beauty and worth almost seemed to justify his extravagant eulogiums on her sex. So flattering a lover could not be denied, and in 1509 Cornelius Agrippa was married. Life at this epoch seemed to open upon him with unclouded sunniness. Fame was his, and the repute attaching to the scion of a noble race, and a young, lovely, and loving wife. Friends were his, and admirers who

prophesied warmly of the great things to be accomplished by a man of such erudition and ability. When the heaven is serenest, however, the wise will most dread the hidden thunderbolt.

The year 1510 was distinguished by the preparation of those works on magic which have caused Agrippa to appear before posterity as a credulous and fanatical professor of the occult sciences, instead of receiving the credit justly due to him as a pure-minded, liberal enthusiast, and earnest, energetic scholar. Agrippa's treatise is known, in English, as "Three Books of Occult Philosophy, written by Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim, Counsellor to Charles V., Emperor of Germany, and Judge of the Prerogative Court; translated by J. F. London, 1651."* Though written in 1510, it was not printed until 1531; but it is essential to notice it here to obtain an insight into the character of Agrippa's studies, and the growth and expansion of his intellect. Our *résumé* of it must necessarily be very brief and unsatisfactory. A fuller outline is given by Mr. Morley, and the reader desirous of knowing

* Mr. Morley speaks of this as the best—it is not, however, the only good translation of Agrippa's "System of Occult Philosophy."

yet more may consult the English translation already indicated.

Agrippa begins by setting forth the excellencies of magic, which he describes as the very completeness and perfection of all true philosophy, and the sum and compendium of all human knowledge. It is well known that Pythagoras and Plato resorted to the seers of Memphis to learn their doctrines, and travelled through almost all Syria, Egypt, Judæa, and the schools of the Chaldeans, that they might not be ignorant of the sacred memorials and holy records, and might become imbued with the lore of things divine. What zealous and hopeful student but would wish to follow in the steps of those great philosophers !

Agrippa next proceeds to expound the qualities of the four elements—fire, air, earth, and water—which enter into the composition of all inferior bodies. They have their points of similarity and contrast, of attraction and antipathy ; are more or less mixed, and more or less convertible into one another. Each, according to Plato, has these special properties :—

Fire—Brightness, tenuity, movement.

Earth—Darkness, density, inertia.

Air—Lucidity, compressibility, movement.

Water—Weight, transparency, motion.

Respecting the "power" of each element: FIRE permeates the heaven and the earth; is one in itself, but manifold in its capability of reception, is the soul and secret principle of life. The fire infernal dries up, scorches, blights and withers: the fire celestial drives away the spirits of evil, and so does the ordinary fire of the household hearth, because it is the medium and symbol of the celestial fire. Therefore the early prophets of religion decreed that in all ceremonies of worship there should be present lighted candles or torches—to which Pythagoras alludes in his famous saying, "You must not speak of God without a light." Fires, too, were kindled around the corpses of the dead to free them from the persecution of evil spirits, and with fire every sacrifice was performed.

The EARTH contains *semina rerum*—the seeds of all things, and produces vegetation, worms and animals, stones and metallic ores. Purify it by fire, reduce it by washing to its primitive simplicity, and it becomes the truest medicine for man's restoration or cure.

Great are the virtues of WATER! It is a needful element in religious worship and spiritual regeneration; and without it earth

cannot teem with life. Earth and water are the creative powers.

AIR is the ubiquitous and all-penetrative spirit of vitality, or rather, a medium connecting all things, receiving the impressions of objects, transmitting the sounds and rays of heaven; carrying the images of things into the bodies of men and animals, and filling them with surprising sensations. And as earth and water are creative, so air is preservative. The life engendered by earth and water would perish without air, would corrupt and putrify, would become death. Not without air can the flame be kindled, or when kindled preserved alight.

There are four elements, and so are there four compounds generated by them: stones, which are mainly of the earth—metals, which contain or are generated by an aqueous quick-silver—plants, which have an affinity with air—and fire, which is natural to animals. This external division has its counterpart in the human soul, which, according to Augustine, exhibits understanding, reason, imagination, and the senses: that is, fire, air, water, and earth. The elements, moreover, are to be discovered in the outer world; in fiery, airy,

earthy, and watery demons; in fiery, airy, earthy, and watery angels; in the stars, the planets—everywhere, even in the creative principle itself.

Now, in all things, according to the Neo-Platonists, there is an occult virtue, a hidden mysterious power—not springing from any element, but a sequel of its species and form—which transforms or modifies, dissolves or resolves; is of divine origin; and the source of the phenomena of the actual and natural world. So the secret power of the magnet attracts iron, and yet the secret power of a diamond neutralizes the magnet. This occult virtue lies in every stone and plant, but chiefly in the stars. It is a quintessence—a fifth element—or rather, something superior to the other elements—the *primum mobile*, and universal soul of nature. “Influences only go forth through the help of the spirit; but the spirit is diffused through the whole universe, and is in full accord with the human spirit.” The object of the true magic is to acquire an intimate sympathy with, and perfect knowledge of, this soul or spirit; a sympathy and a knowledge only to be acquired by the man who soars above carnal and earthly things, and possesses faith, love, and hope.

Agrippa devotes several chapters to the means by which the occult virtue may be discerned. Experience and conjecture are the two bases of his system ("Quæ a nobis non liter quam experientia et conjectura indagari ossunt"); and Agrippa assuredly makes good use of the latter. Virtues, he says, may come by way of likeness or affinity. Fire turns to fire, water to water, brain to brain, lung to lung. Therefore, if the magician acquires any particular property or virtue, he must seek some animal or thing which contains ; largely, and of that make use. For love take the dove, and take it when love is strongest in that symbolic bird, sacred in the old myths to Venus and Cupid. Take the lion's heart for courage; the eagle's eye for quickness; the swallow's wing for swiftness. For garrulity take a frog or a screech-owl! Hence the heart of the nocturnal gossip—which everybody knows a screech-owl *is*—if placed over the heart of a sleeping woman will compel her to reveal all her secrets (hear that, jealous husbands!) Long-lived animals, such as the snake and viper, promote longevity. Kenelm Digby, however, who administered them to his wife, the beautiful Venetia, did not find the prescription successful.

The occult virtue of one thing can be transferred to another. The mirror used by an unchaste woman will deprive of her chastity Lucretia, if she often looks into it !

Turn next to the antipathies existing between bodies, as between fire and water, air and earth ; as between Mars and Venus, and Saturn ; though, on the other hand it is consolatory to know that Saturn is on the best of terms with Jupiter, Mercury, the sun and the moon. Mars and Mercury are foes of the sun ; Jupiter and Venus are his loving friends. Saturn alone is the enemy of Venus : that is, Time is the unchangeable foe of Beauty. Similar harmonies and antipathies pervade all nature. The dog is opposed to the cat ; the hawk to the dove. The dove loves the parrot, the vine clings to the " barky fingers " of the elm. The agate attracts eloquence ; the emerald wealth. This theory has a medicinal application. Rhubarb acts against bile ; amethyst is an antidote for drunkenness ; mercury attacks the liver ; topaz protests against sensuality.

Agrippa indulges in a variety of similar fancies, with which our limits forbid us to meddle. Let us pass to the important point of the influences of the sidereal bodies. These may be divided into solary, lunar, jovial,

saturnine, martial, or mercurial, according to the character of the impressions they produce. Certain parts of the body, as the Arabians have taught, are influenced by each planet. So are the characters of men; their trades; plants, animals; indeed everything is amenable to the planetary power. It is difficult to determine what particular planet influences any particular object, and we must be guided by the imitation of the superior by the inferior figure. Thus, the baboon is solary, because he barks every hour, and marks the divisions of time just as the sun does. Among lunar things are the earth, water, silver, crystal; animals that delight in man's company, amphibious animals, and those which spring from an equivocal generation.

Saturnine are earth and water, heavy metals, plants with stupifying juices, dull, gross, lethargic animals, and harsh-voiced birds. To Jupiter, or Jove, belong the air, blood, and spirit; bright translucent jewels; fortunate trees; mild and sagacious animals; the eagle, and other birds of a towering disposition.

Mars exercises supremacy over everything hot, passionate, and pungent; over brass and iron, the diamond and loadstone, poisonous or

dangerous plants, biting and noxious insects, venomous reptiles, and ominous birds.

Venus sways the fairest jewels, the most fragrant flowers, the blood and the spirit, air and water, and all things or animals that inspire or acknowledge love.

To Mercury are subject the lighter and more inconstant animals; quick, many-flowered plants; artificial stones, glass, quicksilver, tin; and generally bodies of a shifting and variable nature.

Having mastered the planetary influences, we must next investigate the powers of the fixed stars and the zodiacal signs. Here again like rules like; Aries rules the earthly ram, Taurus the mundane ox; Virgo governs virgins, and Ursa bears.

Such are the principles upon which the system of the occult philosophy is founded. Let us see how they are to be applied by the would-be magician.

Each star or planet has its character and seal—its *mark*—which it impresses through its rays upon the substances or bodies subordinated to it. These marks may be discovered in the limbs of animals, in plants, in the knots or joints of boughs. It will be sufficient for us to state that certain *sigilla*, or marks, have

been imprinted upon the human hand, which the student will find set forth in the 33rd chapter of Agrippa's elaborate Treatise.*

Now, whoso desireth "from any particular part of the world to receive the power of a particular star, must use the means which stand in a particular relation to that star. If thou wilt, for example, draw the power of the sun to thee, use what is of a solar nature—metals, stones, or animals; but always, and best of all, such things as stand in a higher rank. Wonderful effects are produced by the union of sympathetic bodies, divine powers being thus drawn down, for Nature is the arch-magician. When Nature, for instance, has fashioned the body of the infant, she deduces the spirit from the universe by this very preparation. This spirit then becomes the instrument to obtain of God the understanding and mind in the soul and body, as in wood the dryness is fitted for the reception of oil, and the oil when absorbed becomes the nutriment of the fire, and the fire the medium of light. From these examples you may learn how by certain natural and artificial preparations we may fit ourselves to receive certain

* And on the last page of the present volume.

heavenly gifts from above. For stones and metals correspond with herbs, herbs with animals, animals with the skies, the skies with celestial intelligences, and these with the divine properties and attributes, and with God himself, after whose image and likeness all things are created."

An image correctly made of certain proper things, appropriated to any one certain angel, will quickly be inspired by that angel. Thus, by men of a pure soul and unselfish spirit, who are lowly in thought, and pray fervently and in secret, the celestial intelligences may be invoked. And by wicked men who employ such arts for evil ends it is well known that evil spirits have been raised.

Other enchantments may be wrought by divers means. Of some of these we may find space to speak. The sword with which a man is killed; the blood and bones of a civet cat; the axe with which a criminal has been beheaded are gifted with mysterious power. But vapours and perfumes are still more influential. The inhalation of the odours of linseed and fleabane seed, and roots of violets and parsley, will endow one with the power of foreseeing the future. The smoke from a chameleon's liver burnt on the house-roof will

excite rain and lightning. The fume of the burnt hoof of a horse drives away mice; the gall of a cuttle-fish confected with roses, red styrax, and aloe wood, will fill a house with blood. According to Trismegistus, the fume of spermaceti hath a sovereign virtue as a stimulant for the nerves; while, if thou wouldst raise the spirits of the dead, go thou into a graveyard, and make there a smoke of spermaceti and aloes-wood, musk, saffron, peppermint, red styrax, and the blood of a lapwing.

Eye-waters, or collyria, unguents, love-charms, and philtres—upon all these the young magician dilates with evident relish. By the application of suitable ointments the witch gave an intense depth and brilliancy to her eyes; or by employing Martial eye-waters, struck the spectator with fear, with Saturnine produced the most abject woe. On the same principle magical charms may be constructed, either solary, saturnine, jovial, or mercurial; and rings which, prepared under a fortunate star, cannot fail to be auspicious for their owners.

Other branches of the occult art—physiognomy, metoposcopy, and chiromancy—are passed in review by the philosopher, and then he addresses himself to divination by

means of auguries and auspices, lightning and prodigies. Consider Michael Scot's division of bird-auguries:—Six on the right hand, which he calls Fernova, Fervetus, Sonnasar-nova, Sonnasarvatus, Confert, Emponenthem; and six on the left hand, Confernova, Confer-vetus, Scassarnova, Scassarvetus, Viarum, Her-renam. If a bird in its flight should perch on your right-hand side, it is Confernova, an auspicious omen; if on the left-hand side, it is Scassarvetus, an evil sign. Prognostications may also be derived from the movements of animals; from the colours, forms, and motions of the elements; the latter originating the four ancient and world-famous kinds of divination. Geomancy (the earth-prophecy), hydromancy (the water-prophecy), Aeromancy (the air-prophecy), and pyromancy (the fire-prophecy).

Finally, let every one who would aspire to a command of the celestial intelligences so conform himself to the external universe, as that he shall harmoniously combine in his own soul the powers he desires, and sympathize with heavenly minds and the minds of other men. Above all, it is necessary that the student should know the virtue, property, degree, measure, and order of his own soul among the

powers in the universe. The superior controls the inferior; the inferior bows to the superior. It is, in fact, the doctrines of the new Platonists, of Iamblichus, Plotinus, and Proclus, that Agrippa sets forth in language deeply tinged with mysticism, and occasionally elevated with the spirit of poetry. The influence of spirit over matter, of the immortal over the mortal; the endeavour to attain to an intimate communion with the beings of the unseen world—to aspire through nature up to nature's God;—the belief that by intense contemplation of the Divine man may o'erleap his mortal state; these are the principles which inform and illuminate the occult philosophy of Cornelius Agrippa. The music of the fountain must be heard in the soul *within*. The glory of the star must be felt in the innermost core of the heart. Heaven must be realized in our own mind and imagination and spirit, before we can soar upon a vigorous wing towards its radiant gates!

Agrippa concludes the first book of his philosophy with an exposition of the forms of words and letters, and the magical uses of sentences and phrases. The letters of the Hebrews are especially sacred. They divide into twelve simple, seven double, and three mothers; that is, the twelve zodiacal signs, the seven planets,

and the three elements—fire, earth, and water; air being regarded as the spirit and combining power of the others. Into these extravagant fancies it is unnecessary to follow the enthusiastic student.

Agrippa's second and third books of Occult Philosophy appeared in 1533. In the second book his principal object is to show the magical properties of arithmetic and geometry.

First he discourses upon *numbers*, by whose proportion (as Severinus Boethius says) all things were formed. The virtues of numbers are great and occult, and have been expounded by the patristic philosophers, from Jerome and Origen to Hilary and Bede. They are exhibited by nature in the herb cinquefoil, which, by reason of the number five, expels devils, resists poison, and cures fevers. Every seventh son—if the order of succession has not been interrupted by the birth of a daughter—can heal the king's evil. The mysterious value of the number Three is shown in the trinal division of time—past, present, and future; and of space—length, breadth, and thickness. In the three celestial virtues—faith, hope, and charity; in the three worlds of man—brain (the intellectual), heart (the celestial), and body (the elemental).

Of the number ONE, what shall we say but

that it is the origin and common measure of numbers; indivisible; not to be multiplied; the fount and result of all things. There is one God in the universe; one supreme intelligence in the intellectual world; one king—the sun—in the sidereal world; one potent instrument and agency—the philosopher's stone—in the elemental world; in the human world one chief member—the heart; and in the nether world one sovereign prince, Lucifer.

Two is the number of marriage, charity, and social communion. Solomon teaches it is better that two should be together, and woe be to him that is alone, because when he falls he hath not another to help him. Two is sometimes regarded as an unwholesome number: unclean beasts went into the Ark by twos. Unity, say the Pythagoreans, was God; duality the devil.

Of the number THREE we have spoken already. Of FOUR it may be said that it was the favourite number—the true *ἀρρήτῳ*—of the Pythagoreans, their *τετράκτυς*, and solemn oath. It signifies solidness, and the foundations of things are laid square—that is, by fours. There are four seasons, four elements, four cardinal points, four evangelists, and in the Apocalypse four

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beasts are spoken of as full of eyes, and standing round the throne.

The number FIVE is composed of two and three: of an even, or female, and an odd, or male, wherefore, as the Pythagoreans teach, it is the number of marriage. And as it divides ten, the number which includes all others, in an even scale, it is also the number of justice. There were five wounds (the Stigmata); there are five senses; of five letters is composed the name of the Deity, the Pentagram; and in this number we find an antidote for poison, and a protection against beasts of prey.

SIX is the perfect number, because it alone, by the addition of its half, its third, and its sixth, makes up itself ($3 + 2 + 1 = 6$). It is the sign of creation, because in six days the world was rendered complete. It is the number of servitude, because the Divine injunction runs, that "six days shalt thou labour;" six years shalt thou till the earth; and for six years the Hebrew slave obeyed his master.

SEVEN is another remarkable, and, indeed, mirific number; for it consists of unity and six, of two and five, of three and four, and attracts to itself their several powers and properties. It is the number of life, because con-

taining body = four elements, spirit, flesh, bone, and humour; and soul = three elements, passion, desire, and reason. All the stages of man's life are reckoned by seven years; *i.e.*, 7, 14, 21, 28, 35, 42, 49, 56, 63, 70. The utmost height to which he can attain is seven feet. On the seventh day God rested from the toil of creation. In disease the seventh day always produces a crisis. There are [or were, for astronomy has in this instance confuted the philosophers,] seven planets, of which the seventh, the moon, is nearest to earth, and counts her changes by periods of seven days. Seven angels minister at the foot of God's throne,—Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Zadkiel, Zaphkiel, Camael, and Haniel. Much more might be said about the number Seven, but our limits forbid.

EIGHT is the number of justice and fulness. Divided, its halves are equal; twice divided, the division is still even. Eight is the number of those who share in the Beatitudes—the peace-makers, those who hunger and thirst after righteousness, the meek, the persecuted for righteousness' sake, the pure in heart, the merciful, the poor in spirit, and they that mourn.

NINE, as everybody knows, is the number of the Muses, and of the moving spheres that chime together in unutterable harmony. Calliope represents the outer sphere, or *primum mobile*; Urania, the sidereal heavens; Polyhymnia, Saturn; Terpsichore is attached to Jupiter; Clio to Mars; Melpomene to the sun; Erato to Venus; Euterpe to Mercury; and Thalia to the moon. There are nine orders of holy angels.

TEN is the complete number ($\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu$), because you cannot count beyond it, except by combinations formed with other numbers. Previous to the sacred mysteries of the ancients ten days of initiation were necessary. There were ten chords to the psalter. In all tens there exist evident signs of a Divine principle.*

ELEVEN is the number of the commandments, and has sometimes been specially favoured by God, as in the case of him who was summoned to the vineyard at the eleventh hour. TWELVE is the number of the signs in the Zodiac, of the apostles, of the tribes of Israel, of the gates of the heavenly Jerusalem. Other numbers are described by Agrippa in reference

* See Diogenes Laertius "On the Life and Teachings of Celebrated Philosophers."

to their supposed properties and peculiar powers. Those who would see of what fantastic speculations a clear and acute intellect may be capable, when betrayed by the gleam and glitter of a false philosophy, will do well to consult Agrippa's elaborate treatise.

Now for the application of this theory of numbers. If you would discover the horoscope of friend or foe, compute his name and the names of his parents, add them and divide by twelve. If the remainder be one, he was born under Leo; if two, under Aquarius; if three, under Virgo, &c. Agrippa advises us not to marvel at these mysteries, because the Most High created all things by number, weight, and measure; but we cannot repress our surprise and admiration!

The Pythagoreans have attributed certain numbers to each god, planet, and element; one to the sun, two to the moon; five to fire, six to earth, eight to air, twelve to water, &c. Each of the seven planets has also a sacred table, gifted with surpassing properties, and these tables are given by Agrippa, together with their sacred seals or signs, their intelligences, and demons (*δαίμονες*). Engrave these, those of Mars, for instance, at a time when the

planet is auspicious, upon your sword, or a plate of iron, and you will become a terrible and successful warrior; engrave them upon cornelian, and you possess an admirable styptic. Venus in like manner will secure you love and beauty; Jupiter counsel, judgment, and worldly rule.

Agrippa next proceeds to an exposition of the power of geometrical figures; the marvellous influence of harmonious sounds, describing the tones and harmonies peculiar to each planet; the correspondence between the stars and the members of the human body; the harmonies of the celestial spheres; the images by which power may be deduced from stars and planets, the houses of the moon, and zodiacal signs. The image of any particular planet—say Saturn, “a man with a stag’s face, and camel’s feet, carrying a scythe in his right hand, a dart in his left, and sitting on a dragon”—engraved upon a stone, would represent and exercise its particular power or virtue. Astrology occupies a considerable portion of Agrippa’s speculations, and the Second Book concludes with an eloquent exposition of a man’s capacity of ascending heavenward, by his aspiration towards, and invocation

of, intelligences and spirits superior to himself. He teaches, in mystical language, the beautiful doctrine enunciated by the poet,—

Learn by a mortal yearning to ascend
Towards a higher object.

The invisible world with man

hath sympathized ;
Be his affections raised and solemnized,

Let us, therefore, elevate our thoughts from star to star, from sphere to sphere, until, purified and sublimed, they may fitly mingle with the glorious harmonies that sweep around the throne of God ; remembering that, above all, we must seek the Divine aid and counsel, and pray, not only with the mouth, but with an earnest soul and a suppliant heart ; pray without ceasing and in all fervency of spirit, that the light of heaven may penetrate the gloom and darkness with which the body envelopes and obscures the mind !

The Third and Last Book of the Occult Philosophy begins with an impassioned eulogium upon the all-sufficiency and exquisite blissfulness of religion, distinguishing with a boldness worthy of the pioneers of the Reformation between religion and superstition, the

spirit and the form, and setting forth as the three guides and helpmates of devotion, love, hope, and faith. Herein, like the Rosicrucians, Agrippa insists upon the student's abandonment of all sensual pleasures if he would rise to a comprehension of the mysteries of heaven. And it is noticeable that it was against the professors of so pure a philosophy and so simple a faith that the Church of Rome fulminated its heaviest anathemas. Agrippa and his brother philosophers were men of blameless lives, and deep religious aspirations. Their magic was a mystical but innocent idealization of the material universe; and their real crime, in the eyes of monk and priest, was not their speculative philosophy, but their exertions to enlarge the boundaries of human learning, their denunciation of superstitious and ritualistic subversions of religion, and their endeavours to elevate the spirit of man above the gross atmosphere of earth.

There are some curious fancies in the Third Book respecting the Hebrew Cabala and the Orphic hymns, and a learned dissertation on the divine names, and on the sacred words of the Pythagoreans. The well-known magical sign *Abracadabra*, if inscribed upon paper or parchment, and hung round the neck of

: diseased will cure every kind of fever.
rippa writes it in this wise:—

[illegible]

The influence of divine names flowing through certain media into inferior bodies is so discussed; and then Agrippa enters into discussion of the different orders of intelligence, angels, and infernal or subterranean spirits. There are angels super-celestial, who minister to the Most High himself; angels celestial, who control the spheres; and angels inferior, who are the good geniuses and ministering spirits of man. Of the infernal angels

there are various classes. They are usually arrayed by theologians in nine companies; their prince and sovereign—the meridian spirit—is Merim. Every man has a triple demon, a holy angel, to inspire and exalt, the angel of his nativity, who takes charge of him from his birth, and the angel of his calling, belonging to his peculiar sect or profession, and changing when he changes his sect or profession.

Of sacred characters containing divine knowledge and power, of the invocation of spirits, especially those who frequent the grove, the stream, the bower, of adjurations, of the creation of man in the divine image, of the microcosm, or world of man, of the origin of evil, of the future of the soul, in which Agrippa plainly denounces as false and futile a literal interpretation of the fires of hell; on the different channels of prophetic power, and on the various rites and ministries of the Church, the Third Book of the “Occult Philosophy” treats largely, liberally, and with a certain earnest eloquence very pleasant to the reader. Our limits forbid any further exposition, but the little we have said will serve to show the reader how much of interest and even of value, apart from certain scholastic

absurdities, the celebrated treatise of Cornelius Agrippa embodies.

As yet this Occult Philosophy, which has given to its author the ill-repute of a necromancer, was not published, but Agrippa had promulgated some of its speculations in his orations on the "Mirific Word" of Reuchlin before the University of Dôle, of which he had been appointed rector. Before giving to the world the "Occult Philosophy," he consulted the famous scholar and enthusiast, the Abbot Trithemius, with whom he maintained a regular correspondence, and with whom he had held many interesting conversations upon "chemical matters, magic, cabalism, and other things then lying concealed as occult sciences and arts." Trithemius spoke in high terms of the young philosopher's labours and enthusiasm, but warned him not to expose himself to the malice of the ignorant by publication. "This one thing," he said, "we warn you to remember: speak of things public to the public, of things lofty and secret only to the loftiest and most confidential of your friends." But before this wise counsel could be acted upon, Agrippa had already experienced the fatal consequences of being wiser than his generation. A Franciscan monk named Cati-

linet, lecturing at Ghent (in Lent time, 1510), before the Princess Margaret, denounced the Orations on the "Mirific Word" as impious and blasphemous, and the orator as a schismatic and an atheist. The princess was convinced—a loud voice is more powerful with many minds than the nicest logic—and dismissed Agrippa from his rectorship at Dôle.

§ 3. YEARS OF TRIAL.

Agrippa now repaired to the court of the Emperor Maximilian, and was immediately attached to an embassy which that astute prince was on the point of sending to London, ostensibly to congratulate Henry VIII. on his accession to the throne. While a visitor to the English capital, the young philosopher lodged at Stepney with the learned and pious Dr. John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's, and the friend of Erasmus, under whose direction he studied the Epistles of St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and a favourite hero, so to speak, of the erudite and large-hearted dean. While a resident under the dean's most honoured roof, he wrote an expostulation on his condemned Orations to the orthodox Catilinet, which is chiefly remarkable for its gentle and

liberal spirit. "To spread abroad contempt," he says, "to spread abroad contempt, cursing, and hatred is not the work of a sincere man speaking in the name of Christ, but (I make use of the words of St. Paul) to handle the Word of God deceitfully, which that great Apostle set apart for the Gentiles, says that he had never done, and which certainly ought never to be done by one who seeks to be a Christian teacher.

The business of the embassy being concluded, Agrippa returned to Germany to his wife and home at Cologne. Here he amused himself by delivering some Quodlibetal (or discursive) lectures upon theological questions. From a pursuit so scholastic and peaceful he was summoned by the Emperor to join the Imperial army in Italy, and the young doctor of divinity saw some service in the field, which appears to have been rewarded with a knighthood. The pen, however, was more congenial to his right hand than the sword, and the solitude of his study to the clash and clangour of the fight. He was very glad, then, when invited by the Cardinal di Santa Croce to act upon the Council then about to meet at Pisa—a schismatic Council—called for the purpose of reforming ecclesiastical

abuses, and opposing the encroachments of the papacy. Agrippa, with his heterodox notions of a religion unfettered by form or ritual, willingly accepted the post of theological adviser to the Council, though incurring the perils of excommunication and the persistent hostility of the orthodox party in the Romish Church. Faith in the truth—hope in the truth—will thus nerve and stimulate an aspiring soul to brave the worst dangers of the world, that God's will may be done.

The Council met at Pisa in September, 1511, but was soon compelled by the preponderant power of the papal faction in the town to remove to Milan, from whence its members were afterwards glad to escape to France. Their projects snapped asunder, but the courage with which they had faced the Papacy remained to their credit, and the sense of freedom and liberal thought which they had cherished was not too dearly purchased by a decree of excommunication.

Excommunicated and accursed, Cornelius Agrippa, Knight and Doctor of Divinity, returned to the Imperial army, which was carrying on the war in Italy with variable fortune. In the summer of 1512 we find him stationed at Pavia, where he was taken

prisoner by the Swiss on their capture of that city. He soon regained his liberty, and repaired to Milan. He now attached himself to the party of the Marquis of Monferrat, and towards the close of the year 1512, settled with his family in the Marquis's chief town of Casale.

In the following year Pope Julius died, and the triple tiara shone upon the brow of the able and magnificent Medici, Leo X. With his customary benevolence to men of letters, Leo revoked the censure which his predecessor had hurled upon Agrippa's head, and the philosopher was left free to pursue his literary schemes. He still wore the garb of a knight, and acted as captain of a troop of soldiers, but Bellona was no goddess for him! While her harsh and noisy strains echoed in his ears he was secretly sighing for that sublimer harmony, that more glorious spherul music with which Minerva rewards her votaries.

In 1515 his wishes were gratified. Powerful friends introduced him to the University of Pavia; and having lectured there upon the wisdom of Mercury or Hermes Trismegistus, the mythic philosopher and founder of the Hermetic art, he was admitted to the degree of Doctor in each faculty. Doctor of Divinity before, he now became Doctor of Law and

Divinity, and a bright and brilliant career seemed to open before the ambitious scholar. With his wife and children he settled at Pavia, and began teaching and lecturing with great assiduity, and not without success. But fate appears to have been especially hostile to Cornelius Agrippa. These splendid prospects were suddenly clouded. Francis I. of France won the battle of Marignano, and took possession of Milan. The Marquis of Monferrat espoused his cause. But Agrippa, a German knight and noble, could not forswear his allegiance to the Emperor, and dismissed by the Marquis, was constrained to discontinue his labour at Pavia. His fortunes fell into the sear and withered leaf. His household goods were torn from him; he was without resources present or prospective; ruin and beggary brooded on his threshold. His brave heart, however, did not succumb, and in his deepest agony he would still bless the Hand that chastened him. He retired to his study, and toiled zealously; the result—a treatise on Man, and another on the Threefold Method of knowing God, which, being dedicated to the Marquis of Monferrat, brought him some temporary help.

Passing over the next three years, we find Agrippa in 1518 officiating as advocate and

orator to the free town of Metz,—as its syndic and public prosecutor,—in which new capacity he showed much earnestness, skill, and vigour of intellect. He also practised as a physician, and rendered good service to the townsmen when Metz was visited by the terrible plague. In his published works is contained an account of the treatment he adopted in this disorder. It is more to be commended for the preventatives it enforces than the remedies it prescribes.

But fortune could not let Agrippa rest in Metz. Or rather, his bold, frank spirit of free inquiry would not suffer him to enjoy a lethargic tranquillity. A popular legend at Metz related to the Three Husbands of St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin Mary. Now Faber d'Etaptes had published a book in which he asserted that the saint had contented herself with one husband. The theory and the reasoning that supported it were adopted by Agrippa, but being assailed by certain violent Dominican monks, he could not content himself with nursing his belief in secret, but proclaimed it abroad against all comers. Hot and bitter grew the denunciations of the Dominicans; fierce and unsparing was the eloquence of Agrippa, who did not hesitate to

speaking of the monkish fraternity with a freedom that was anything but orthodox. So his combative spirit made him many enemies, and his attack upon the popular tradition diminished his influence in Metz. The priests waited in silence for an opportunity of revenge. Agrippa's hot and generous spirit soon afforded it. At Vuospy, a neighbouring village, a young woman was accused of witchcraft, was flung into prison, and subjected to the cruellest tortures. Agrippa boldly stepped forward as her defender, and acted with such vigour, spoke with such noble eloquence, that he saved her from the dreadful fate which menaced her, and overwhelmed her judges with shame and confusion. But the issue was fatal to his own prospects. The Dominicans slandered him as a sorcerer, as a heretic, or at least a very dubious Christian, and excited against him so fearful a storm of popular fury that he was compelled to fly Metz towards the close of January, 1520.

He now took refuge at Cologne, but the people of Cologne were scarcely more enlightened or liberal than those of Metz, and he was regarded with cold suspicion. While waiting here in hope of employment from the Duke of Savoy, he had the misfortune to

lose his wife Louisa, who was removed to Metz for interment in the Church of the Holy Cross. A pauper and a widower he then retired to Geneva, whose tolerant citizens received the famous scholar with a kindly welcome. Here he drew nearer and nearer to the Lutheran Church; like Erasmus, not actually breaking off the ties and old associations which bound him to Rome, but denouncing its iniquities, and aspiring towards the purer creed enunciated by the great German Reformer.

His skill in medicine soon procured him a practice which raised him above the pangs of want: and he somewhat bettered his fortunes by a second marriage. The departed Louisa was replaced by a worthy successor—a Swiss maiden of noble birth, aged nineteen, who proved a prolific mother, and a faithful and devoted wife. A few weeks afterwards he accepted the salary offered him by the town of Friburg, and settled therein as its physician and “medical adviser” (A.D. 1523). The Swiss treated him with generosity and respect, and among their snow-capped mountains he might have lived a peaceful life, but tempted by the brilliant offers of the Duke of Bourbon, he accepted office in France as physician to the

queen-mother, Louise of Savoy, and repaired to Lyons.

He had better have remained among the mountains! Honours and panegyrics were freely lavished upon him, but no money was paid; and his salary remained a promise, and—nothing more. The court of Louise of Savoy was orthodox, and Agrippa was known to be tinctured with the Lutheran heresy. The queen-mother employed him, therefore, but could not reconcile it with her conscience to pay him.

It was at this time that he wrote, and dedicated to the king's sister, Margaret of Valois,—the author of "the Heptameron,"—his tractate on the Sacrament of Marriage. This was another of Agrippa's ill-advised proceedings. The tone of his tractate was severely moral, and could not be acceptable to a lady notorious for the freedom of her life and the liberality of her wit. Ovid's *Epistles* or the lyrics of Catullus would better have pleased the light and lively princess. If the moralist had hoped either to amend her ways, or secure his salary through her intercession, his sanguine credulity must have been equal to his honest candour. Finally he ruined his prospects—such as they were—at the queen-

mother's court by another act of indiscreet boldness, but admirable sincerity. Ah me, we cannot serve two masters—Heaven and the world! Agrippa was requested to assist the queen-mother's political combinations by studying the stars. The scholar, the divine, and the physician was to turn astrologer! He had dabbled in astrology in his early years, as we have already seen; but his strong mind had shaken off the pleasant delusion. He still pursued the science of the stars, but not for unworthy purposes; not to gratify a worldly and vulgar curiosity. He was therefore dismissed by the queen-mother, and left to console himself in the midst of his sorrows with the composition of his fervid "Declamation on the Vanity of the Sciences and Arts," and the "Excellence of the Word of God." Like the *Faustus* of Goethe he had exhausted all the round of human knowledge to find it weary and unprofitable; but unlike that splendid hero of the philosophical poet, he had discovered a solace and a cure for the "Vanitas Vanitatum" in the pages of the inspired volume.

In 1528 he left Paris for Antwerp, where he obtained from Margaret, regent of the Netherlands, the appointment of Historio-

grapher and Judiciary Councillor to the Emperor Charles V., and once more the light of success seemed to break in auspicious promise upon his upward path. But Fate could not abandon her victim. When the clouds began to roll away from the tall mountain-peaks, a dark shadow fell upon the philosopher's hearth. The plague broke out in Antwerp, and one of its first victims was his beloved wife.

It was some consolation to him in this hour of darkness that the world appeared to acknowledge the genius and virtue of the earnest, enthusiastic scholar; that men of letters visited him from every European country; that princes showed themselves anxious to secure his services. He remained at Antwerp, however, the Imperial Historiographer, and in 1530, commenced the publication of his works. It was now that the treatise on the "Vanity of the Arts and Sciences" saw the light; and the famous three books on the Occult Philosophy (1531-1533). The outcry which, from a passage in his preface, he evidently anticipated, broke out soon after the publication of the latter work; and every little cur that yelped and barked about the streets opened upon Agrippa as

ard, necromancer, and magician. The old then as now confused the two Magis—dreams of the philosopher with the arts of conjuror—and saw in the earnest and ginitive student only a professor of the ck Art. Nor had his tractate on the ity of Human Learning found favour in high places. So great was the anger of Emperor Charles V. that its author was saved from the stake by the interposition of powerful friends, the Bishop of Liege and the Cardinal Campegio. He saved his but he lost his salary, and rapidly the lows gathered round the path of this most ly and unfortunate man. Creditors beset . Resources he had none. Loans which had obtained from the usurers at exorbitant rest he was unable to repay; and at gth he was arrested at Brussels and flung o a debtors' prison. He languished there some weeks, but was released through the rvention of his generous patrons, and ured the payment of a small salary as erial Historiographer.

He had been solicited by the advisers of herine of Arragon to devote his energies her cause, and oppose the divorce solicited Henry VIII., but his rapidly increasing

troubles had broken off the negotiation. Released from prison, he did not attempt to renew it, but retired to Mechlin—a town famous for economical living—where the indomitable scholar shortly afterwards married his third wife (A.D. 1532.) It proved an unhappy marriage. This Mechlin woman wronged the gentle husband foully, and made him the laughter of the unthinking and the byeword of wicked wits. Rabelais jeered at him. “Il, voyant toutes choses etheres et terrestres sans bezicles ne voyoit sa femme brimbalante et oncques n’en sceut les nouvelles.” With eyes bent upon the heavens, the star-gazer saw not the pool of mire and filth into which his steps were wandering! He learned the truth at last, and after three years of wedded misery was divorced.

§ 4. LAST YEARS AND DEATH—THE AGRIPPA OF TRADITION.

His later years were passed in storm and battle. The priesthood everywhere persecuted the heretic, whom they slandered as the magician. When his complete work on Occult Philosophy was passing through the press at Cologne, its publication was inter-

dicted by the magistrates at the request of the Inquisitor. Agrippa launched the thunders of his eloquence at the unfortunate magistrates; defended the work of his hands; attacked the ignorance and bigotry of the Inquisitor; exposed the immorality of the theologians and professors of Cologne. In this his last decade, Agrippa was a literary Arab: his hand against every monk and priest; every monk's and priest's hand against him. But his courage and his honesty prevailed: the interdict was removed, and the "Occult Philosophy" published.

Such were the heart-burnings, jealousies, and hostilities to which men of letters were subjected in the sixteenth century! If their eloquence sometimes degenerated into vituperation; if, their love of truth was joined with an implacable hostility to error; if while claiming toleration, they occasionally became themselves intolerant; if they sullied their generous advocacy of the right by an animosity too bitter, and an enthusiasm too extravagant, who will wonder? Who will not pity? Who will dare to condemn?

From Mechlin Agrippa had removed to Bonn. He was residing there when, convinced of his wife's infidelity, he put her away. Soon afterwards the malice of his enemies prevailed

with the Emperor Charles V., and to escape the scaffold he was compelled to flee from his country. He sought an asylum in France, but did not long require it. Prematurely aged with trouble, sorrow, and study, he died at Lyons in 1535, in his 50th year. May posterity grant him that justice which was withheld by his contemporaries !

Such was the true Agrippa : the actual, breathing, living, and suffering Agrippa. Very different, indeed, is the Agrippa of tradition ; the Agrippa painted by his monkish enemies ; and a far more wonderful individual than we, in our humble devotion to truth, have been able to represent him !

Paulus Jovius, in his "Eulogia Doctorum Virorum," catching up a popular fable, declares that the devil attended him wherever he went in the guise of a black dog. Thomas Nash, in his "Adventures of Jack Wilton," asserts that for the edification of the Earl of Surrey, he showed him in a mirror the likeness of the beautiful Geraldine, when the lover was in Germany and the lady in England. Sir Walter Scott has made an elegant use of the tradition :—

'Twas All Souls' eve, and Surrey's heart beat high ;
He heard the midnight bell with anxious start,
Which told the mystic hour, approaching nigh,
When wise Cornelius promised by his art,

To show to him the ladye of his heart,
Albeit betwixt them roar'd the ocean grim;
Yet so the sage had hight to play his part,
That he should see her form in life and limb,
And mark, if still she lov'd, and still she thought of him.*

Agrippa not only raised the semblance of the living, but the spirit of the dead. To gratify the Emperor Charles he raised King David and King Solomon; to please Erasmus and others he summoned from the shades many of the most illustrious worthies of antiquity.

The Jesuit Delrio, in his book "*Disquisitionum Magicarum*," relates a still more extraordinary story, and lays the scene of it at Louvain. The magician, he says, had a boarder who was troubled with an excess of curiosity, and Agrippa having on one occasion gone away from home, left the keys of his secret chamber with the wife whom he afterwards divorced, forbidding her to allow any one to enter therein. The curious youth, however, so entreated and besought the woman to give him the means of entrance, that she at length consented. He passed in, and his glance falling upon a large *grimoire*, or book of conjurations, began to read it. He was

* "*Lay of the Last Minstrel*," Canto vi.

soon disturbed by a loud knocking at the door. He listened, but all was suddenly hushed. Again he read; again he heard the knocking. His heart throbbing with apprehension, he attempted to say "Come in," but could not utter a sound. The door, however, was thrown wide open, and in stalked a stranger, dark and tall, of commanding bearing, but with a thunder-blasted brow. "Who calls?" he said. "What is it thou wouldst have me do?" The youth from very fear replied not a word, and the demon, enraged at his silence, seized him by the throat and strangled him.

In due time Agrippa returned home to find a mob of devils exulting over the dead body of their victim. Summoning the chief devil, he learned from him the particulars of the misadventure, and reprimanded him bitterly. Then he bade him enter into the corpse of the unhappy student, and walk to and fro in the market-place—a favourite rendezvous of the scholars in those days of mystery—by which means he averted the suspicions of the vulgar, for when at sunset the demon quitted the body, and the inanimate corpse fell prone upon the earth, it was naturally supposed that the youth had died of apoplexy. But some

quicker wits examined the dead body, and detecting the marks of the devil's claws upon the throat, discovered and made known the truth !*

It was said of Agrippa that the gold which he paid to his traders and other creditors, though surprisingly bright at first, always changed in four-and-twenty hours to slates. We opine that the magician could never have dealt twice with the same tradesmen, unless they were more trustful in the sixteenth than they are in the nineteenth century.

If it be true, says Natalis, as men relate, that he often lectured in public, when at Friburg, from nine to ten, and immediately afterwards—that is, at ten—began lecturing at Pont à Mousson, in Lorraine, “they must sweat lustily who rub out of him the dark stain of magic.” *If* it be true—we should agree with the erudite Natalis !

In the pages of Naudé, Delrio, and Paulus Jovius may be found many other examples of the injustice (which is always credulous) of the ignorant vulgar ; but we have said enough to prove how wide a gulf exists between

* Naudé “Apologie,” p. 423 ; and Delrio, lib. ii. p. 29.

Cornelius Agrippa, magician, and Cornelius
Agrippa, knight, scholar, and divine, &c.
But it is thus that the Dweller on the
Threshold must always suffer from the malice
of the passers-by !

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ENGLISH MAGICIANS.

1. DR. JOHN DEE—§ 2. WILLIAM LILLY.

§ 1. DR. DEE.

He'd read Dee's prefaces before
 The devil, and Euclid o'er and o'er ;
 And all th' intrigues 'twixt him and Kelly,
 Lescus and th' emperor would tell ye.

BUTLER, *Hudibras*.

JOHN DEE was born in London in the year
 Endowed with a surprising natural
 us, he manifested at a very early age a
 passion for books and study. When
 e fifteen years old he was sent to Cam-
 ge, where his love of knowledge so grew
 him that he spent eighteen hours a day
 is library. Of the other six, two were
 oned out for refreshment and four for
 e. So eager an ambition was crowned
 success, and his fame as a scholar spread

through all the universities of Europe; for *in* those days the learned were knit together by a species of freemasonry, and hailed each new member of their guild with a welcome proportioned to his claims. The fever with which his fellow-scholars was infected seized also upon *his* aspiring intellect and fervent imagination, and not content with the limited sphere of human knowledge, he sought, like the *Faust* of Goethe, to penetrate the Invisible, and become acquainted with the mysteries of other worlds. According to some authorities he acquired a taste for this perilous stuff at Louvain; according to others he retired thither when constrained, by the repute he had acquired for dabbling with the occult sciences, to fly from the banks of reedy Cam. At Louvain he certainly met with many kindred spirits who had sat at the feet of Cornelius Agrippa, and their recitals and fanciful conversation animated him to persevere in his vain but fascinating researches. The particular branch of magic, however, which attracted Dee was the *theurgic*; and theurgy insists upon purity of life, cleanliness of person, and chastity of thought in those who aspire to a communication with the good spirits of the unseen world. One of his earliest writings was a defence of

Dr. Bacon against the imputation of having obtained his wonderful secrets by a confederacy with demons.

Dee returned to England in 1551, and through the influence of his friend Sir John Cheek,

Who taught Cambridge and King Edward Greek,

was favourably received at court, and rewarded with an annual pension of one hundred crowns. During the reign of Mary he was in close correspondence with the Princess Elizabeth, wherefore he was jealously regarded by the Queen, suspected of heretical tendencies, and even accused of having threatened Mary's life with his incantations. He was acquitted of the latter charge, but retained in prison as a heretic, and committed to the tender mercies of Bishop Bonner; until contriving to make evident his orthodoxy, he was set free in 1555. He continued to reside in London, and to gain his livelihood by the practice of astrology, projecting horoscopes and telling fortunes.

On the accession of Elizabeth his prospects improved. He had already been consulted as to the probable date of Mary's death; he was now desired to name the most auspicious day for Elizabeth's coronation. And at a later

date her effigy in wax having been discovered in Lincoln's Inn Fields, he was summoned to her chamber to counteract the incantation. In 1578 he married, and retired to his house at Mortlake, where he was frequently visited by his sovereign. The first visit appears to have occurred in 1575, soon after his mother's death. She "came on horseback, and exhorted him to take it patiently." In 1579 his son Arthur was born there.

Living in comparative solitude—practising astrology for bread, but studying alchemy for pleasure—brooding over Talmudic mysteries and Rosicrucian theories—immersed in constant contemplation of wonders which he longed to penetrate—and dazzled by visions of the elixir of life and the Philosopher's Stone, Dee soon attained to such a condition of mystic exaltation that his visions became to him as realities, and he persuaded himself that he was the favoured of the Invisible. In his "Diary" he records that he first saw in his crystal-globe—that is, saw spirits—on the 25th of May, 1581. In another year he had attained to a higher level, and one day, in November, 1582, while on his knees and fervently praying, he became aware of a sudden glory which filled the west window of his

atory, and in whose midst shone the great angel Uriel. It was impossible for Dee to speak. His tongue was frozen with awe.

Uriel smiled benignly upon him, gave him a convex piece of crystal, and told him that when he wished to communicate with the angels of another world he had but to examine intently, and they would immediately appear and reveal the mysteries of the future. Then the angel vanished.

Dee, however, found from experience that it was needful to concentrate all one's faculties upon the crystal before the spirits would obey him. In other words, it was necessary to stimulate the imagination to the highest pitch, until the will became a willing agent in its self-deception. By fixing the will to bear upon the imagination, it is possible to realize a spirit in every shadowy corner—to hear the song of the spirits in the low crooning of the evening wind—to read in the starry heavens the omens and portents of the future! One may become with marvellous ease the deceiver of oneself,—the dupe of one's own delusions,—and brood upon a particular subject until one passes the mysterious border between sanity and madness—passes from imagination into mania.

Dee could never remember what the spirits

said in their frequent conversations with him. When the excitement was over, he forgot the fancies with which he had been beguiled. He resolved, therefore, to discover some fellow-worker, or neophyte, who should converse with the spirits while he himself, in another part of the room, sat and recorded the interesting dialogue. He found the assistant he sought in one Edward Kelly, who unhappily possessed just the requisite boldness and cunning for making a dupe of the amiable and credulous enthusiast.

Edward Kelly was a native of Lancashire, born, according to Dee's own statement, in 1555. We know nothing of his early years, but after having been convicted at Lancaster of coining—for which offence he lost his ears—he removed to Worcester, and established himself as a druggist. Sensual, ambitious, and luxurious, he longed for wealth, and despairing of securing it by honest industry, began to grope after the Philosopher's Stone, and to employ what magical secrets he picked up in imposing upon the ignorant and profligate. Dee sought knowledge for the love of it; Kelly as a means to gratify his earthly passions. He concealed the loss of his ears by a black skull-cap, and being gifted with a good

and tolerably handsome countenance, the very incarnation of mysterious power. Before his acquaintance with Dee he had obtained some repute as a necromancer and alehymist, who could make the utter the secrets of the future. One day he took a wealthy dupe, with some of his servants, into the park of Walton le Dale, near Preston in Lancashire, and there alarmed them with the most terrible incantations. He inquired of one of the servants whose name had been last buried in the neighbouring churchyard, and being told that a poor man had been interred there within a very few days, he exhumed the body, and pretended to receive from it oracular utterances.

Dee appears to have had a *skryer*, or seer, at his introduction to Kelly, who was called Barnabas Saul. He records in his "History" on the 9th of October, 1581, that the "innate medium was strangely troubled by a ritual creature" about midnight. On the 1st of December he willed his skryer to take him to the "great crystalline globe" for the vision of the holy angel Anael. Saul did so, and saw. But his invention appears to have become exhausted by the following day, when he confessed that he neither saw

nor heard any spiritual creature any more; whereat the enthusiastic Dee grew strangely dissatisfied, and soon dismissed the unsatisfactory and unimaginative medium. Then came Edward Kelly (who appears to have been also called Talbot), and the conferences with the spirits rapidly increased in importance as well as curiosity.

A clever rogue was Kelly! Gifted with a fertile fancy and prolific invention, he never gazed into the "great crystalline globe" without making some wondrous discoveries, and by his pretended enthusiasm gained the entire confidence of the credulous Dee. The mathematician, despite his learning and his profound intellect, became the easy tool of the plastic, subtle Kelly. The latter would sometimes pretend that he doubted the innocent character of the work upon which he was engaged; would affect a holy horror of the unholy; and profess that the spirits of the crystal were not always "spirits of health," but—perish the thought!—"goblins damn'd;" demons whose task it was to compass their destruction! The conferences held between Kelly and the spirits were, meanwhile, carefully recorded by Dr. Dee; and whoever has stomach for the perusal of a great deal of absurdity and not a little

blasphemy, may consult the folio published in 1659 by the learned Méric Casaubon, and entitled "A True and Faithful Relation of what passed between Dr. John Dee and some Spirits; tending, had it succeeded, to a General Alteration of most States and Kingdoms in the World."

Two such shining lights could not hide themselves under a bushel, and their reputation extended from Mortlake even to the Continent. Dee now declared himself possessed of the *elixir vitæ*, which he had found, he said, among the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey; so that the curious were drawn to his house by a double attraction. Gold flowed into his coffers in an exuberant stream, but his experiments in the transmutation of metals absorbed a great portion of his substance.

At this time the court of England was visited by an opulent Polish nobleman, named Albert Laski, Count Palatine of Siradz, who was desirous to see the magnificence of the famous "Gloriana." Elizabeth received him with the flattering welcome she always accorded to distinguished strangers, and placed him in charge of the splendid Leicester. He visited all that the England of the 16th century had worth showing, and especially her two Uni-

versities, but was sorely disappointed at not finding the famous Dr. Dee at Oxford. "I would not have come hither," he said to the Earl, "had I wot that Dee was not here." Leicester undertook to introduce him to the learned philosopher on their return to London, and so soothed his discontent.

A few days afterwards the Pole and Leicester were waiting in the ante-chamber at Whitehall for an audience of the Queen, when Dr. Dee arrived. Leicester embraced the opportunity and introduced him to Albert Laski. The interview between two genial spirits was interesting, and led to frequent visits from Laski to Dee's house at Mortlake. Kelly soon perceived what an inexhaustible Pactolus this wealthy Pole would prove, and as he was imbued with all the extravagant superstitions of the age relative to the elixir and the Philosopher's Stone, it was easy enough to play upon his imagination, and entangle him in the meshes of an inextricable deception. Dee, in want of money to prosecute his splendid chimeras, and influenced by Kelly's artful suggestions, lent himself in some measure to the fraud, and speedily the "great crystalline globe" began to reveal hints and predictions which inflamed the ardent fancy of the "noble Polonian." But Kelly imposed upon Dee as

well as upon Laski. He appears to have formed some wild but magnificent projects for the reconstruction of Europe, to be effected through the agency of the Pole, and thenceforth the spirits could converse upon nothing but hazy politics.

It happened, for instance, on the 28th of May, 1583, that Dee and Kelly were seated in their magical closet, discussing, as at this time they frequently did, the Polish Prince and the amount of assistance he might be induced to afford in the *magnum opus*. “Suddenly,” says Dee, “there seemed to come out of my oratory a spiritual creature, like a pretty girl of seven or nine years of age, attired on her head with her hair rowled up before, and hanging down very long behind, with a gown of sey (*soie*, or silk?), changeable green and red, and with a train; she seemed to play up and down, and seemed to go in and out behind my books, lying on heaps, and as she should ever go between them, the books seemed to give place sufficiently, dividing one heap from the other, while she passed between them. And so I considered, and heard the divers reports which E. K. made unto this pretty maiden, and I said,—Whose maiden are you?

“*She*—Whose man are you?

"D.—I am the servant of God, both by my bound duty, and also (I hope) by his adoption.

"(*A Voyce*—You shall be beaten if you tell.)

"*She*—Am not I a fine maiden? Give me leave to play in your house; my mother told me she would come and dwell here.

"She went up and down with most lively gestures of a young girl playing by herself, and divers times another spake to her from the corner of my study by a great perspective glass, but none was seen beside herself.

"*She*—Shall I? I will. (*Now she seemed to answer one in the foresaid corner of the study.*) I pray you let me tarry a little (*speaking to one in the foresaid corner*).

"D.—Tell me what you are?

"*She*—I pray you let me play with you a little, and I will tell you who I am.

"D.—In the name of Jesus then, tell me.

"*She*—I rejoyce in the name of Jesus; and I am a poor little maiden, Madinie; I am the last but one of my mother's children; I have little baby children at home.

"D.—Where is your home?

"*Mad.*—I dare not tell you where I dwell; I shall be beaten.

"D.—You shall not be beaten for telling the truth to them that love the truth;

the eternal truth all creatures must be obedient.

“*Mad.*—I warrant you I will be obedient; y sisters say they must all come and dwell ith you.

“*D.*—I desire that they who love God should dwell with me and I with them.

“*Mad.*—I love you now—you talk of God.

“*D.*—Your eldest sister—her name is Esimeli?

“*Mad.*—My sister is not so short as you make her.

“*D.*—Oh, I cry you mercy! She is to be pronounced Esiméli.

“*E. K.*—She smiled; one calls her, saying, Come away, maiden.

“*Mad.*—I will read over my gentlewomen first; my master Dee will teach me if I say amiss.

“*D.*—Read over your gentlewomen, as it pleaseth you.

“*Mad.*—I have gentlemen and gentlewomen, look you.

“*E. K.*—She bringeth a little book out of her pocket; she pointeth to a picture in the book.” And so continues the conversation between Madinie and her interlocutors.

On a careful perusal of “Dee’s Diary,” it is

impossible to come to any other conclusion than that he was imposed upon by Kelly, and accepted his revelations as the actual utterances of the spirits; and it seems probable that the clever, plastic, slippery Kelly not only knew something of the optical delusions then practised by the pretended necromancers, but possessed considerable ventriloqual powers, which largely assisted in his nefarious deceptions.

Kelly had undoubtedly conceived some extravagant notions of a vast European monarchy, in which Laski was to play the part of a *Roi fainéant*, and he himself of a *Maire du Palais*. To this point all the spiritual revelations now tended, and they were managed, it must be owned, with consummate skill. Laski was proved, by the agency of Madinie, to be descended from the Anglo-Norman family of the Lacies. Then an angel named Murifri, who was clothed like a husbandman, pointed out Laski as destined to effect the regeneration of the world. Next appeared a maiden, the poetical Galuah, who thus detailed the Pole's future fortunes.

"*Galuah*—I say unto thee his name is in the Book of Life. The sun shall not pass his course before he be a king. His counsel shall breed alteration of his state; yea, of the

nole world. What wouldst thou know of
m?

“*D.*—If his kingdom shall be of Poland,
r what land else?

“*G.*—Of two kingdoms.

“*D.*—Which, I beseech you?

“*G.*—The one thou hast repeated, and the
ther he seeketh as right.

“*D.*—God grant him sufficient direction to
lo all things so as may please the highest of
is calling.

“*G.*—He shall want no direction in any-
ing he desireth.

“*D.*—As concerning the troubles of August
ext, and the dangers then, what is the best
r him to do? To be going home, before or
tarry here?

“*G.*—Whom God hath armed no one can
revail against.”

But it did not answer Kelly's purposes to
ing matters too suddenly to a conclusion,
ad with the view of showing the extreme
alue of his services, he renewed his com-
laints upon the wickedness of dealing with
pirits, and his fear of the perilous enterprises
hey might enjoin. He threatened, moreover,
o abandon his task, a threat which completely
perturbed the equanimity of Dr. Dee. Where

indeed, could he hope to meet with another *skryer* of such infinite ability? Once when Kelly expressed his desire of riding from Mortlake to Islington on some pretended business, the doctor grew afraid that it was only an excuse to cover his absolute evasion. "Whereupon," says the doctor, "I asked him why he so hasted to ride thither, and I said if it were to ride to Mr. Harry Lee I would go thither also to be acquainted with him, seeing now I had so good leisure, being eased of the book writing. Then he said that one told him the other day that the duke (Laski) did but flatter him, and told him other things both against the duke and me. I answered for the duke and myself, and also said that if the forty pounds annuity which Mr. Lee did offer him was the chief cause of his mind setting that way (contrary to many of his former promises to me), that then I would assure him of fifty pounds yearly, and would do my best, by following of my suit, to bring it to pass as soon as I possibly could; and thereupon did make him promise upon the Bible.

"Then Edward Kelly again upon the same Bible did swear unto me constant friendship, and never to forsake me; and moreover said that unless this had so fallen about he would

have gone beyond the seas, taking ship at Newcastle within eight days next.

“And so we plight our faith each to the other, taking each other by the hand, upon these points of brotherly and friendly fidelity during life, which covenant I beseech God to turn to his honour, glory, and service, and the comfort of our brethren (his children) here on earth.”

Moral (by the present writer). He who keeps his eyes fixed too constantly upon other worlds will assuredly be duped and cheated in this, and a very wise man may, it is evident, be a very great fool.

Kelly now returned to his crystal and his visions, and Laski was soon persuaded that he was destined by the spirits to achieve great victories over the Saracens, and win enduring glory. But for this purpose it was needful he should return to Poland, and to Poland the poor dupe went, taking with him the learned Dr. Dee, the invaluable Edward Kelly, and their wives and families. The spirits continued to respond to their inquiries even while at sea, and so they landed at the Brill on the 30th of July 1583, and traversed Holland and Friesland to the opulent free town of Lubeck. There they lived sumptuously for a

few weeks, and with recruited strength set out for Poland. On Christmas Day they arrived at Stettin, where they remained till the middle of January 1584. They gained Lasco, the Pole's principal estate, early in February. Immediately the grand work commenced for the transmutation of iron into gold, boundless wealth being obviously needful for so grand an enterprise as the regeneration of Europe! Laski liberally supplied them with means, but the alchemists always failed on the very threshold of success. Day by day the prince's treasures melted away in the deceptive crucible; he mortgaged his estates, he sold them, but the hungry furnace continued to cry for "More! more!" It soon became apparent to the philosophers that Laski's fortune was nearly exhausted. Madinie, Uriel, and their comrades made the same discovery at the same time, and, moreover, began to doubt whether Laski, after all, was the great regenerator intended to revolutionize Europe. The whole party lived at Cracow from March 1584, until the end of July, and made daily appeals to the spirits in reference to the Polish prince. They grew more and more discouraging in their replies, and as Laski began slowly to awake to the conviction that he had been a

monstrous dupe, in order to rid himself of the burthen, he proposed to furnish them with sufficient funds for a journey to Prague, and letters of introduction to the Emperor Rudolph. At this very moment the spirits discovered that it was necessary Dee should bear a divine message to the Emperor, and Laski's proposal was gladly accepted.

At Prague the two philosophers were well received by the Emperor. They found him very willing to believe in the existence of the famous stone, very courteous to Dee as a man of European celebrity, but very suspicious of the astute and plausible Kelly. They remained some months at Prague, living upon the funds which Laski had supplied, and cherishing hopes of being attached to the imperial service. At last the Papal Nuncio complained of the countenance afforded to heretical magicians, and the Emperor ordered them to quit his dominions within four-and-twenty hours. They precipitately complied, and by so doing escaped a prison or the stake, to which the Nuncio had received orders from Rome to consign them (May 1586).

They now proceeded to Erfurdt, and from thence to Cassel, but meeting with a cold reception, made their way once more to Cracow.

Here they earned a scanty living by telling fortunes and casting nativities; enduring the pangs of penury with an almost heroic composure, for they, the pretended possessors of the Philosopher's Stone, durst not reveal their indigence to the world, if they would not expose themselves to universal ridicule. After a while, they found a new dupe in Stephen, king of Poland, to whom Kelly's spirits predicted that the Emperor Rudolph would shortly be assassinated, and that the Germans would elect him to the Imperial throne. But he in his turn grew weary of the ceaseless demands for pecuniary supplies. Then arose a new disciple in the person of Count Rosenberg, a nobleman of large estates at Trebona, in Bohemia. At his castle they remained for upwards of two years, eagerly pursuing their alchemical studies, but never approaching any nearer to the desired result.

Dee's enthusiasm and credulity had degraded him into the tool and slave of Kelly; but the latter was nevertheless very wroth at the superior respect which Dee, as really a man of surprising scholarship and considerable ability, enjoyed. Frequent quarrels broke out between them, aggravated by the criminal passion which Kelly had conceived for the doctor's

young and handsome wife, and which he had determined to gratify. He matured at length an artful plan to obtain the fulfilment of his wishes. Knowing Dee's entire dependence upon him as a *skryer*, he suddenly announced his intention of resigning that honoured and honourable office, and only consented to remain on the doctor's urgent entreaties. That day (April 18, 1587) they consulted the spirits. Kelly professed to be shocked at the revelation they made, and refused to repeat it. Dee's curiosity was aroused, and he insisted upon hearing it, but was exceedingly discomposed when he found that the spirits enjoined the two philosophers to have their wives in common! Kelly expressed his own abhorrence of the doctrine, and when the spirits repeated it, with a mixture of socialistic extravagance to the effect that sin was only relative, and could not be sinful if ordered by God, protested they must be spirits of evil, not of good,—once more resigned his post as *skryer*,—and left the Castle.

Dee now attempted to convert his son Arthur into a medium, but the lad had neither the invention, the faith, nor the deceptive powers for such an office, and the philosopher, deprived of those conferences with the other

world which he had so long enjoyed, began to lament the absence of his old confederate. At this juncture Kelly suddenly returned. Again he consulted the crystal, and again was ordered to practise the socialistic rule of all things in common. Dee was too delighted at his return to oppose any longer the will of the spirits. The two wives resisted the arrangement for some time, but finally yielded to what was represented to be the will of Heaven, and Dee notes in his "Diary," that "on Sunday the 3rd of May, *anno* 1587 (by the new account), I, John Dee, Edward Kelly, and our two wives covenanted with God, and subscribed the same for indissoluble and inviolable unities, charity, and friendship keeping, between us four, and all things between us to be common, as God by sundry means willed us to do."

The alchymists now resumed their pursuits with eagerness; but discord soon crept into this happy family of four. The wives, never very well content with the socialistic theory, quarrelled violently; the husbands began to be pinched for want of means; and Dee turned his eyes towards England as a pleasanter asylum than the castle of Trebona was likely to prove for his old age. He obtained permission from Queen Elizabeth to return, and

parated finally from Kelly. The latter, who had been knighted at Prague, took with him the elixir found at Glastonbury Abbey, and intended to proceed to the Bohemian capital. He was immediately arrested by order of the emperor, and flung into prison. Obtaining his release after some months' imprisonment, he wandered over Germany, telling fortunes, and dealing for dupes with the customary magical wits, but never getting a whit nearer that enjoyment of boundless resources which the possession of the Philosopher's Stone should have assured him. Arrested a second time as a heretic and a sorcerer, and apprehending perpetual imprisonment, he endeavoured to escape, but fell from the dungeon-wall, and broke two of his ribs and both his legs. He expired of his injuries he had received—expired in spite of his "Elixir of Immortality"—in February 1633.

Dr. Dee set out from Trebona with a splendid train, the expenses of his journey apparently being defrayed by the generous Bohemian noble. Three waggons carried his baggage; three coaches conveyed himself, his family, and servants. A guard of twenty-four soldiers escorted him; each carriage was drawn by four horses. In England he was well

received by the Queen, as far as courteous phrases went, and settling himself at Mortlake, he resumed his chemical studies, and his mad, wild pursuit of the Philosopher's Stone. But nothing prospered with the unfortunate enthusiast. He employed two *skryers*—at first a rogue, named Bartholomew, and afterwards a charlatan named Heckman—but neither could discover anything satisfactory in the “great crystalline globe.” He grew poorer and poorer; he sank into absolute indigence; he wearied the Queen with ceaseless importunities; and at length obtained a small appointment as Chancellor of St. Paul's Cathedral, which in 1595 he exchanged for the wardenship of Manchester College. He performed the duties of this position until age and a failing intellect compelled him to resign it about 1602 or 1603.

He then retired to his old house at Mortlake, where he practised as a common fortune-teller, gaining little in return but the unenviable reputation of a wizard, “a conjuror, a caller, or invocator of devils.” On the 5th of June 1604, he presented a petition to James the First, imploring his protection against such injurious calumnies, and declaring that none of all the great number of “the very

nge and frivolous fables or histories
 orted and told of him (as to have been of
 doing) were true." In consequence, an act
 passed against personal slander, which
 duced from Dr. Dee a rhymed thanks-
 ing,—conclusive proof that a man may
 a wonderful magician and yet a very
 r poet. It is difficult to say whether
 verses or his horoscopes were the more
 hless !

THE HONOURABLE THE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF
 COMMONS, IN THE PRESENT PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

"The honour due unto you all,
 And reverence, to you each one
 I do first yield most speciall—
 Grant me this time to heare my mone.

"Now (if you will) full well you may
 Fowle sclaundrous tongues for ever tame ;
 And helpe the trueth to beare some sway
 In just defence of a good name.

"Halfe hundred yeeres which hath had wrong,
 By false light tongues and divelish hate ;
 O helpe tryde trueth to become strong,
 So God of trueth will blesse your state.

"In sundry sorts this sclaunder greate
 (Of conjurer) I have sore blande ;
 But wilfull, rash, and spitefull heat
 Doth nothing cease to be enflamde.

"Your helpe, therefore, by wisdom's lore,
 And by your powre, so great and sure,
 I humbly crave, that never more
 This hellish wound I shall endure.

“ And so your act, with honor great
All ages will hereafter prayse;
And trueth, that sitts in heavenly seat,
Will, in like case, your comforts rayse.

“ JOHN DEE,

“ Mathematician to his Most Royal
“ Majesty, James I., etc., etc.”

“ Mortlake, June 8, 1604.”

Dee died at Mortlake in extreme poverty in 1608, in the eighty-first year of his age. He was buried in the parish church, but the last resting-place of the credulous enthusiast is undistinguished by any memorial. His son Arthur died at Norwich in 1651.

His “show-stone,” or “rock-crystal,” referred to by Butler in his “Hudibras,”

Kelly did all his feats upon
The devil's looking-glass, a stone,
Where, playing with him at bo-peep,
He solv'd all problems ne'er so deep;

and which Dee declared was brought to him by the angels Raphael and Gabriel, and was “of such value, that no earthly kingdom is of sufficient worthiness to be compared to the virtue or dignity thereof,” is now preserved at the British Museum. One of his show-stones, a polished lump of cannel coal, was sold at the Strawberry Hill sale. It afterwards belonged to Lady Blessington, and an extravagant account of the visions presumed to have been

and it may be read in "Zadkiel's" Almanac 351. The crystal and its properties recently acquired considerable notoriety through the sayings and doings of the said el (Lieutenant Morrison), as our readers subtly remember.

§ 2. WILLIAM LILLY.

Not far from hence doth dwell
 A cunning man, hight Sidrophel,
 That deals in destiny's dark counsels,
 And sage opinions of the moon sells,
 To whom all people far and near
 On deep importances repair
 He had been long t'wards mathematics,
 Optics, philosophy, and statics,
 Magic, horoscopy, astrology,
 And was old dog at physiology :
 But as a dog that turns the spit
 Bestirs himself, and plies his feet
 To climb the wheel, but all in vain,
 His own weight brings him down again ;
 And still he's in the self-same place
 Where at his setting out he was ;
 So in the circle of the arts,
 Till falling back still, for retreat,
 He fell to juggle, cant, and cheat.

BUTLER, *Hudibras*.

"Sidrophel," the necromancer of Butler's tire of "*Hudibras*," the poet has drawn wonderful truth and graphic force the out of the most famous, and perhaps the impudent of English magicians, WILLIAM

LILLY. Though such a man was without the philosophical pretensions of Paracelsus or Albertus Magnus, and found in science but a means for imposing upon the credulous, yet, from a work which professes to glance at the principal celebrities of the world of magic, William Lilly cannot be omitted.

He was born on the 1st of May 1602, at Diseworth, in Leicestershire. In 1620 he removed to London, where he became servant to a mantua-maker, but after three years, servitude he rose into a higher position, and being a comely, well-made youth, on the death of his master married the widow. She brought him a dowry of 1000*l.*, and dying in a very few years, was succeeded by another opulent dame who also augmented Lilly's fortune.

His soul now soared above trade and its belongings, and infected with the delusions of the age, he began to dabble in astrological waters. He took unto himself an instructor named Evans, who had formerly been a clergyman, but was expelled from his curacy for practising numerous frauds under the pretence of revealing the whereabouts of stolen goods. Lilly tells a curious tale of this worthy:—

"Some time before I became acquainted with him," says Lilly, "he then living in the

Minories, was desired by the Lord Bothwell and Sir Kenelm Digby to show them a spirit. He promised so to do; the time came, and they were all in the body of the circle, when lo! upon a sudden, after some time of invocation, Evans was taken from out the room and carried into the field near Battersea Causeway, close to the Thames. Next morning a countryman going by to his labour, and espying a man in black clothes, came unto him and awaked him, and asked him how he came there? Evans by this understood his condition, inquired where he was, how far from London, and in what parish he was; which, when he understood, he told the labourer he had been late at Battersea the night before, and by chance was left there by his friends. Sir Kenelm Digby and the Lord Bothwell went home without any harm, and came next day to hear what had become of him. Just as they in the afternoon came into the house, a messenger came from Evans to his wife to come to him at Battersea. I inquired upon what account the spirit carried him away; who said he had not, at the time of invocation, made any suffumigation, at which the spirits were vexed."

Simon Forman, who literally practised the

Black Art, and was an agent in the reign of James I. in the perpetration of many abominable crimes, also gave Lilly the benefit of his counsels, and taught him many of the secrets of his abominable trade. It is but just to Lilly, however, to acknowledge that he never descended to the depths of infamy which were sounded by such men as Forman. He juggled and he cheated, but he did not murder. He sold love-potions, but eschewed poisons and abortion-medicines. He dabbled in palmistry and horoscopes, in gold-seeking and universal cures, but he had neither the ambition nor the courage to follow in the steps of the Italian magicians, who were the secret instruments of many of the dark deeds that still overshadow the history of the Middle Ages with lurid horror.

One of Lilly's intimate associates was William Hodges, who in his turn was the friend and confederate of John Scott. Lilly has left on record the particulars of an adventure in which both were concerned :—

“Scott having some occasions into Staffordshire, addressed himself for a month or six weeks to Hodges, assisted him to dress his patients, let blood, &c. [The magicians were mostly chirurgeons and physicians as well.]

Being to return to London he desired Hodges to show him the person and feature of the woman he should marry. Hodges carries him into a field not far from his house, pulls out his crystal, bids Scott set his foot to his, and after a while wishes him to inspect the crystal, and observe what he saw there. 'I see,' saith Scott, 'a ruddy-complexioned wench in a red waistcoat drawing a can of beer.' 'She must be your wife,' said Hodges. 'You are mistaken, sir,' said Scott; 'I am, so soon as I come to London, to marry a tall gentlewoman in the Old Bailey.' 'You must marry the red waistcoat,' said Hodges. Scott leaves the country, comes up to London, finds his gentlewoman married; two years after, going into Dover, in his return he refreshed himself at an inn in Canterbury, and as he came into the hall, or first room thereof, he mistook the room, and went into the buttery, where he espied a maid, described by Hodges as before said, drawing a can of beer, &c. He then, more narrowly viewing her person and habit, found her in all parts to be the same Hodges had described; after which he became a suitor unto her, and was married unto her; which woman I have often seen. This Scott related unto me several times, being a very honest

person, and made great conscience of what he spoke."

"Another story of him is as followeth, which I had related from a person who well knew the truth of it.

"A neighbour gentleman of Hodges lost his horse; who having Hodges' advice for recovery of him, did again obtain him. Some years after, in a frolic, he thought to abuse him, acquainting a neighbour therewith, viz., That he had formerly lost a horse, went to Hodges, recovered him again, but saith it was by chance; 'I might have had him without going unto him: come, let's go, I will now put a trick upon him; I will have some boy or other at the town's-end with my horse, and then go to Hodges, and inquire for him.' He did so, gave his horse to a youth, with orders to walk him till he returned. Away he goes with his friend, salutes Mr. Hodges, thanks him for his former courtesy, and now desires the like, having lost a horse very lately. Hodges, after some time of pausing, said, 'Sir, your horse is lost, and never to be recovered.' 'I thought what skill you had,' replies the gallant; 'my horse is walking in a lane at the town's-end.' With that Hodges swore (as he was too much given unto that vice), 'your horse is gone, and

will never have him again.' The gentle-parted in great derision of Hodges, and where he left his horse. When he came he found the boy fast asleep upon the end, the horse gone, the boy's arm in the air. He returns again to Hodges, desiring pardon, being sorry for his former abuse. Old Hodges swore like a devil. This business ended so; for the malicious man brought Hodges to the Star-chamber, bound him over to the assizes, put Hodges to great expenses: but, by the aid of the Lord Dudley, if I remember right, and some other person thereabouts, he overcame the gentleman and was acquitted."

Under such promising instructors Lilly's progress became very rapid, and his natural talents being considerable, he soon attracted public attention as a felicitous predictor of events and a clever artist in horoscope-making. Rumour prevailing that there was great treasure interred beneath the cloisters of Westminster Abbey, he was applied to, in 1634, to ascertain the truth or falsity of the report by the use of the "Mosaical or miners' rods."

Permission was obtained from the dean on condition that he received his share of whatever treasure might be found, and the attempt was accommodated. "One winter's night," says Lilly,

“Davy Ramsey [the king’s clockmaker], with several gentlemen, myself and Scott, entered the cloisters. We played the hazel-rod round about the cloisters; upon the west side of the cloisters the rods turned one over another, ~~an~~ argument that the treasure was there. ~~The~~ labourers digged at least six foot deep, ~~and~~ then we met with a coffin; but in regard ~~it~~ was not heavy, we did not open, which ~~we~~ afterwards much repented. From the cloisters we went into the abbey church, where, upon ~~a~~ sudden (there being no wind when we began), so fierce, so high, so blustering and loud a wind did roar, that we verily believed the west end of the church would have fallen upon us; our rods would not move at all; the candles and torches all but one were extinguished, or burned very dimly. John Scott, my partner, was amazed, looked pale, knew not what to think or do, until I gave directions and commenced to dismiss the demons; which, when done, all was quiet again, and each man returned unto his lodging late, about twelve o’clock at night. I could never since be induced to join with any in such like actions.”

In 1644 Lilly published his first Almanack, and announced himself as *Merlinus Anglicus, junior*. During the troubles of the Civil War

he was often applied to by both parties for information touching the events and combinations of the future, and his sagacity usually enabled him to avoid any embarrassing complications. He was consulted by the royalists, with the king's knowledge, whether the king should accept the propositions of the Parliament, and received 20*l.* as his fee. The Parliament on the other hand paid him a sum of 50*l.*, and an annuity of 100*l.*—which he enjoyed for two years—to furnish them “with perfect knowledge of the chiefest concerns of France.” His repute was so great that even Aubrey and Ashmole numbered themselves among his friends, and both these credulous enthusiasts hovered curiously on the threshold of the forbidden knowledge.

Lilly remained a royalist until the fall of Charles I. was certain; he then veered round to the other side, engaged himself in its projects with eagerness, and was one of the committee appointed to discuss the solemn question of the king's execution. When the Restoration became imminent Lilly returned to his royalist predilections; but his apostasy was not forgiven, and his numerous applications for employment as a prophet were treated with contempt.

During the rule of the Commonwealth however, his fame was great. He tells us that all the soldiery adored him, and that when he went to Scotland he saw an officer standing before the army with a book of prophecies in his hand, exclaiming to the men as they marched past him, "Lo! hear what Lilly saith: you are in this month promised victory! Fight it out, brave boys!" and then read that month's prediction!

After the great Fire of London he was examined before a committee of the House of Commons respecting the causes of that terrible calamity. In his "Monarchy or no Monarchy," published in 1651, he had introduced an hieroglyphical illustration representing in one compartment a number of persons in their shrouds digging graves; and in another the conflagration of a great city. Lilly plumed himself on the fulfilment of his prediction, but admitted he had not foreseen the exact year to be rendered *mirabilis annus* by so pitiful a disaster.

He explained prophecies with sufficient ingenuity, if not with very satisfactory accuracy. Thus he announced that "in the year 1588 there was a prophecy printed in Greek characters, which exactly deciphered the long

troubles of the English nation from 1641 to 1660." It ended thus:—"And after him shall come a dreadful dead man, and with him a royal G., of the best blood in the world; and he shall have the crown, and shall set England on the right way, and put out all heresies." Lilly explained the palimpsest in this wise:—

"*Monkery* being extinguished above eighty or ninety years, and the Lord General's name being *Monk*, is the dead man. The royal G or C [it is γαμμα in the Greek, intending C in the Latin, being the third letter in the alphabet] is Charles II., who for his extraction may be said to be of the best blood of the world."

In 1652 Lilly bought a house at Hersham, near Walton-on-the-Thames, where he finally settled in 1665, practised medicine, and became the oracle of the village, dying of palsy June 9th, 1681. His friend Elias Ashmole attended his burial in the church of Walton, and dedicated a tablet to his memory. To Ashmole, Lilly had inscribed his amusing and most curious "*History of his Life and Times*," which contains a complete exposure of the degraded state of astrology and the base characters of astrologers in England in the seventeenth century.

Lilly has left one admirable rule for the benefit of the weak students of an illusory science ; it is, perhaps, the only useful passage in his voluminous writings. Speaking of the angels who appeared in the magic crystal, he says,—“ These glorious creatures, if well commanded, and well observed, do teach the master anything he desires ; *Amant secreta, fugiunt aperta*. The fairies love the southern side of hills, mountains, and groves. *Neatness and cleanliness in apparel, a strict diet, and upright life, fervent prayers unto God, conduce much to the assistance of those who are curious in these ways*”—and of those who are curious in wiser, worthier, and more honourable ways, Master Lilly !

CHAPTER IX.

THE ART OF DIVINATION.

DREAMS—§ 2. OMENS—§ 3. PROPHECIES
AND PRESAGES.

And men still grope t' anticipate
The cabinet designs of Fate;
Apply to wizards to foresee
What shall and what shall never be.

BUTLER, *Hudibras*.

§ 1. DREAMS.

ardent desire to foreknow the future—to the shadows which rest on the weird of the Book of Fate, seems a characteristic of humanity, and the men of the ancient flocked to their “juggling fiends”—oracles and their sibyls—as the moderns to the wizard and the necromancer, the interpreter of the stars or the reader of dreams. With, indeed, the revelation which God has in His Scripture is sufficiently an assurance of a world beyond the grave, but even

Faith has often longed for some clearer knowledge of the events of the present life, of the chances and changes of coming fortune, of the possible clouds or sunshine of the unavoidable to-morrow. So little do events rest in our own hands, so difficult is it for us to determine the probable issue of a train of consequences to which we have ourselves apparently given the onset, so uncertain is the course of human action, so subject is it to influences which we see but cannot comprehend, that perhaps the impulse which leads us to decipher by the slightest signs and the most mysterious indications the ways of the future is hardly open to the condemnation of philosophers. But it must be owned that in our anxiety to gain this forbidden knowledge we have often had recourse to the wildest and most fantastic aids, and have attempted to ek out our obscure speculations by a resort to the most extravagant and ridiculous agencies. Men have attempted to divine the future by the examination of the reeking entrails of slaughtered animals, by drawing lots, as it were, from the holy pages of the Bible, by interpreting those wild, vague efforts of the imagination uncontrolled by the will which we call *dreams*—by giving a meaning to the

astic evolutions of a column of smoke, or lights and shadows that flit across a surface of crystal. The learned and gossiping *de*, in his "*Magastromancer*," gives a long list of these various phases of human folly. He enumerates :—

1. *Aeromancy*—Or divining by the air.

2. *Anthropomancy*—By the entrails of human beings; a custom to which it is probable that human sacrifices of savage tribes may frequently be attributed.

3. *Arithmancy*—By mysterious combinations of numbers.

4. *Axinomancy*—By the peculiar sounds of words.

5. *Astromancy*—By stars; always a favourite mode of divination, and in vogue among all nations. The lustrous beauty of the spheres of heaven, their lofty serenity and tranquil loveliness, have ever appealed very strongly to the fancy that lies at the bottom of every heart. As Byron finely says—

If in their bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with them : for they are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

6. *Astragalomancy*—By dice.
7. *Alphitomancy*—By flour, meal, or bran.
8. *Alectromancy*—By the crowing of cocks.
9. *Botanomancy*—By herbs.
10. *Chiromancy*—By the shape of the hands.
11. *Cephaleonomancy*—By asses' heads.
12. *Ceromancy*—By the shapes into which melted wax disposed itself.
13. *Chartomancy*—By writing in papers.
14. *Crystallomancy*—By looking into crystals.
15. *Chalcomancy*—By vessels of brass, or other metal.
16. *Demonomancy*—By the help of demons and evil spirits; the divination peculiar to wizards and necromancers, who summoned them by conjuration and spells, or by compacts entered into with the devil.
17. *Dactylomancy*—By rings.
18. *Geomancy*—By earth.
19. *Gastromancy*—By marks upon, or the sounds of, the belly.
20. *Gyromancy*—By circles.
21. *Hydromancy*—By water.
22. *Idolomancy*—By idols, images, and figures.
23. *Ichthyomancy*—By fishes.

24. *Kleromancy*—By lots.
25. *Kapnomancy*—By smoke.
26. *Kinssomancy*—By burning incense.
27. *Katoptromancy*—By looking-glasses or mirrors.
28. *Koskinomancy*—By sieves.
29. *Krithomancy*—By corn or grain.
30. *Lecanomancy*—By basins of water.
31. *Lithomancy*—By stones.
32. *Logarithmancy*—By logarithms.
33. *Lampadomancy*—By lamps and candles.
34. *Macharomancy*—By knives and swords.
35. *Ornithomancy*—By the flight of birds.

The reader will remember the ancient legend of the foundation of Rome; how Romulus and Remus watched, each on his chosen hill, from sunrise to sunset, for a manifestation of the will of the gods by an ominous flight of birds. Remus first saw six vultures circling and wheeling on his left. Soon afterwards there appeared to Romulus a flight of twelve. It therefore became a moot point with whom the advantage rested—with Remus, who saw the birds first, or Romulus, who saw the greater number.

36. *Oneiromancy*—By dreams; a method of divination in vogue from the earliest ages of the world.

37. *Onomancy*—By names.
38. *Omphalomancy*—By the navel.
39. *Onchyomancy*—By the nails.
40. *Oinomancy*—By the lees of wine.
41. *Pyromancy*—By fire.
42. *Psychomancy*—By mens' soul, character or affections.
43. *Podomancy*—By the feet.
44. *Rhabdomancy*—By wands or rods.
45. *Stereomancy*—By the elements.
46. *Sternomancy*—By corporeal signs, from the breast to the belly, such as moles & blemishes.
47. *Spatilomancy*—By bones, skins, &c.
48. *Sciomancy*—By shadows.
49. *Sycomancy*—By figs.
50. *Theomancy*—By reference to Scriptural texts, and pretended revelations from God.
51. *Theriomancy*—By beasts.
52. *Tephromancy*—By ashes.
53. *Tyromancy*—By cheese.

Of these numerous modes of divination four only can be said to prevail at the present day: by cards, by the dregs in the tea-cup, & lines on the palm of the hand, and dream-reading. The gipsies are the chief professors of this delusive art; but it is not wholly unknown

tea-tables of old maids and in the servants'-
 l. And amongst the rural classes oneiromancy especially is in great repute, and every woman recounts her dreams to some pured gossip, with speculations upon their bable reference to future events. Divination cards is seldomed practised, except in jest, any other than the itinerant professors palmistry, and poultry pilfering. It is comparatively a recent invention—cards themselves not bearing an antiquity of above r centuries and a half. Cheiromancy was ctised by the Egyptians, and a belief in it l lingers even among the educated. It uld seem possible, indeed, that the shape of hand may indicate some broad characteristics of one's intellect and disposition, but what nexion with the future exists in the lines t chequer the human palm, must be left to se sagacious seers who believe that the st High reveals his mysteries in a pack of ying cards!

Oneiromancy, or divination by dreams, has scended to us from the most remote times, en, in the days of a more intimate relation tween earth and heaven than has existed ce the revelation of Christ, God deigned communicate His will to favoured mortals

by dreams and visions in the night-season. The circumstances have changed, but the belief engendered by the actual realization of the dreams of the elder world has survived this change; and every aged beldame studies her confused recollections of the mental shadows that have flitted across her brain in sleep, with an implicit confidence in their prophetic character. Remarkable coincidences, it must be admitted, will still occur between the dream and the event, and probably most of our readers have met with instances either in their own careers or in those of their friends. But it does not seem to us that these, when closely examined, bear a prophetic character, nor do they usually possess an intrinsic importance sufficient to warrant us in believing that Heaven would depart from its sublime mystery for such casual purposes. Some philosophers have pretended that we may produce dreams in others by the mere influence of the will. Cornelius Agrippa asserts that, "at a great distance, it is undoubtedly possible to influence another person spiritually, even when their position and the distance is unknown, although the time cannot be fixed within four-and-twenty hours." He declares that he himself had often exercised the power. This singular

ory has been revived of late years, and it attempted to be explained by declaring the stence of a certain "mental magnetic itement" which links soul to soul, and finds nedium in the impalpable atmosphere.

Assuming that there are authentic records fulfilled dreams which we may suspect to be pable of an interpretation on rational grounds, it have no means of disproving or discreting, we are brought to allow the "double ture of dreams"—as recognised by the cients—dreams physical (so to speak) and eams spiritual: dreams arising from some turbances of the body, and dreams in which eaven is pleased to reveal something of the ture. To this *double nature* Homer alludes a well-known passage:—

Immured within the silent bower of sleep,
Two portals grim the various phantoms keep ;
Of ivory one, whence flit, to mock the brain,
Of wingèd lies, a light fantastic train ;
The gates opposed pellucid valves adorn,
And columns fair incased with polished horn."

The language of dreams—remarks the great rman historian of the Supernatural—is ticularly marvellous, for their images are ; always appearances recognised by the mon eye, but surprising and mystical abols whose meaning can hardly be expressed

in ordinary language, and the dreamer himself can seldom interpret them. Thus, in the old times, and particularly in the Greek and Roman temples, arose a novel science, which had its acknowledged professors (*oneirocritica*, *oneiroscopia*), and we know that Joseph had some fame among the Egyptians as "an interpreter of dreams." The fathers of the Christian Church adopted the ancient belief in their significance. "During sleep," says Tertullian, "are revealed the honours to which men will attain; during sleep remedies are indicated, larcenies exposed, treasures discovered. It was thus that the nurse of Cicero could foresee the glory reserved for him; it was thus that Achilles cured Cleomene."

The great victory over Maxentius which gave to Constantine the empire of the world, owed much of its decisive character to the belief in dreams shared by all the soldiers of the emperor. In the night which preceded that last battle, Constantine was admonished in a dream to inscribe the shields of his soldiers with the celestial sign of God, the sacred monogram of the name of Christ. He communicated his dream to his army, who assumed the Cross in a transport of enthusiasm, and went forward with eagerness to an assured

triumph. The dream might have been dictated by the policy or devotion of the emperor, but it was accepted at once by his soldiers, and this general acceptance is a remarkable proof of the universal credence in the prophetic meaning of dreams then cherished by the nations of Europe.

“The philosopher,” says Gibbon, “who with calm suspicion examines the dreams and omens, the miracles and prodigies, of profane or even of ecclesiastical history, will probably conclude, that if the eyes of the spectators have sometimes been deceived by fraud, the understanding of the readers has much more frequently been insulted by fiction. Every event, or appearance, or accident, which seems to deviate from the ordinary course of nature, has been rashly ascribed to the immediate action of the Deity ; and the astonished fancy of the multitude has sometimes given shape and colour, language and motion, to the fleeting but uncommon meteors of the air.” But with still greater wonder will the philosopher examine the interpretations affixed by an ignorant credulity to the grotesquest physical dreams, and with some disgust will he find a large class of the community persistent in attributing a significance to the illusions

which possess the brain in sleep. A fit indigestion—an attack of illness—will produce the most terrible or ridiculous phantoms. A change of temperature will serve to alter the character of our visions. And yet modern oneirocritics study them with assiduous curiosity, and accept in them as indications the future with implicit confidence !

How the ancients determined the principles of Oneirocriticism we are unable to say, but the moderns do not appear to be guided by any definite or well-considered rules. "Dreams go by contraries"—seems to be the shibboleth of the creed, the leading tenet of the oneirocritical philosophy. Dream that you have lost a tooth, and you will lose a friend—which is hardly, however, an instance of "opposites," for a sound tooth is a friend not to be despised.

Dream of little pigs, for that is fortunate ; but not of big bullocks, for that is unfortunate.

Dream that your house is on fire, and you will receive news from a distant country.

Dream of gold and silver, and you will soon be without copper—at least, copper that has passed the Mint.

Dream of dirt, and you will acquire something valuable—on the moral principle, perhaps, that "all gold is dross."

Dream of a funeral, and you will hear of a wedding.

Dream of clear water, and you will speedily find yourself in a troubled stream.

Dream of the dead, and you will hear news of the living.

Dream of having many friends, and you will be persecuted by many enemies.

Dream that you are up to your neck in mud and mire, and Fortune will lavish her choicest gifts upon you.

Dream that you stand naked in the public ways, and Fate will burden you with her direst curses.

Dream of vermin, and there will be sickness in your family.

Trees, plants, and flowers play a very important part in this Oneiroscopia of the vulgar, which will always be popular with ill-directed imaginations.

To dream of an oak prognosticates a prosperous longevity; of a leafless tree great sorrow; of a bare and branchless trunk despair and suicide. There is a certain poetical character in some of these interpretations, as when we are told that for a maiden to dream she strips the bark off a tree, signifies the approaching loss of her chastity; for a wife and mother the same dream betokens a family



bereavement; for the "bread-winner," an increase of fortune. The yew is accursed in dreams, and preserves its ancient connexion with the silent graveyard. The fir-tree, green and vigorous, indicates happiness and prosperity; the limetells, of voyages across trackless seas. Then, as to plants and flowers:—

Aloes—without a flower, signify long life; in flower, a legacy.

Agrimony—(perhaps from *æger*) indicates the approach of sickness.

Anemone—prophesies of love.

Auriculas—in beds, of good fortune; in pots, marriage; and to gather them foretokens widowhood.

Broom-flowers—an increase of family.

Dock-leaves—a gift from a friend in the country.

Daffodils—a maiden is warned not to retire to any secret place with her lover, or to any spot where, if needed, help cannot reach her.

Hearts'-ease—on the rule of contraries, betokens *hearts' pain*.

Lilies—indicate joy; water-lilies, danger from the sea.

Lemons—are a sign of speculation.

Pomegranates—of happy bridals to the single, and reconciliation to those who, though wedded, have been separated by domestic trials.

Peonies—of pleasant company.

Roses—of happy love ; a love, however, not exempt from shadows. But what summer sky without a cloud ?

Sorrel—of the imminence of some great disaster, only to be conquered by the highest valour.

Sunflowers—of a grievous blow to your pride.

Violets—joy to the married, and misfortune to the single.

Yellow flowers—of any kind, signify jealousy, the which deplorable passion the colour yellow has always been associated.

Yew-berries—for either sex, betoken loss of character.

§ 2. OMENS.

Ill omens may the guilty tremble at,
 Make every accident a prodigy,
 And monsters frame, where Nature never err'd ;
 May the scar'd conscience start at blazing meteors,
 And call the scream of every hooting owl,
 Or croaking raven, fate's most dreadful voice :
 For me, I laugh at them. Should now the heavens
 Flame with a thousand fires, ne'er seen before,
 And thunder beat the winds from ev'ry corner ;
 Not for the calm of all the universe,
 Would I put off my joys a moment longer.

NATHANIEL LEE.

The same longing to penetrate the clouds
 overshadowing the future which impels the
 superstitious to discern a prophetic character

in dreams, has taught them to be sensitive to every accident of nature, and to find a warning or a consolation in the most ordinary circumstances. A shooting-star, a flight of birds, the meteor streaming redly across the heavens, an earthquake,—these are at times sufficient to daunt the hearts of men, and appal their souls with a consciousness of some concealed peril. The pages of the ancient historians are crowded with allusions to the birth of human monsters, the apparition of comets, showers of milk—of blood—of stones, and to prodigies yet more frightful—such as oxen, dogs, or new-born infants speaking, the appearance of spirits, and statues shedding tears. Shakspeare finely records the supernatural occurrences that, according to the Latin writers, heralded the death of Cæsar :—

There is one within,
 Besides the things that we have heard and seen,
 Recounts most horrid sights seen by the watch.
 A lioness hath whelped in the streets ;
 And graves have yawn'd, and yielded up their dead :
 Fierce, fiery warriors fight upon the clouds,
 In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,
 Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol :
 The noise of battle hurtled in the air,
 Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan ;
 And ghosts did shriek, and squeal about the streets.
 O Cæsar ! these things are beyond all use,
And I do fear them.

Nor have the early Christian chroniclers omitted to preserve the record of similar unusual circumstances, in connexion with the careers of saints or kings, popes, priests, or warriors. Thus, before the death of Charlemagne, there were so many omens, according to his biographer Eginhard, that not only others, but he himself could not fail to understand their meaning. "For three successive years preceding his decease the decline of the sun and moon was very great, and black spots on the sun were seen for several days. To this was added the constant tremor of the palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and the creaking of the panels in every house where he visited. The basilica, moreover, in which he was afterwards interred, was struck by lightning, and a golden apple which adorned the roof-peak, hurled by the flame from heaven, was flung on the roof of the pontiff's house, contiguous to the basilica."

Other instances of popular superstition will probably interest the reader:—

A Jewish child, saved from the massacre of his kith and kin in the fiery course of the first crusade, was baptized according to the rites of Christianity. "When the moment arrived," says Guibert de Nogent, "for lighting the

lamp and dropping into the water the molten wax, a drop which fell by itself appeared in form with such exactness the figure of a cross, that no man's hand could have designed it with an accuracy so perfect and with so little material. This cross did not appear through any simple accident, but was undoubtedly sent by Heaven itself, to announce that one of the Jewish race showed a sincerity of faith very rare in our time."

During the ceremony of the consecration of Philip Augustus and his queen, in 1181, a memorable event occurred, "which," says Rigord, "we think it useful to relate in these pages. Three lamps suspended before the high altar having been broken, the oil which they contained fell upon the royal brows as a sign of the abundance of gifts which the Holy Spirit poured upon them from the heights of heaven; for we think that God wrought this miracle to spread afar the glory and the name of the monarch, and the report of his renown, over the surface of the whole earth, as Solomon seemed to have prophesied in his Canticle upon Love, when he said, 'Our name is like an oil which they have poured out.'" Who but must admire the dexterous superstition which could convert into an augury of good

accident so disagreeable to the royal sufferers?

At the commencement of the seventeenth century most of these vulgar errors were in all our force. It was an epoch of change and disaster; men's minds were perturbed with the shock of new thoughts and emotions, and the popular feeling was so sensitive that the most natural occurrence could excite alarm and apprehension. The thunder and the comet were specially regarded as manifestations of the Divine will.

"The rebellious," says Cardinal Richelieu, wished to interpret as an evil augury an unforeseen, but yet a favourable, accident, which happened to his Majesty, near Monceaux,

his return from the chase. A burst of thunder broke over his carriage; the bolt fell near his Majesty on the left hand; and his coachman was slightly wounded in the eye and neck. The king alone was neither blinded nor injured, having felt but a moderate heat on the face, like that from the priming of a musket when one discharges it. It is certain that from all time, and amongst all peoples, the light and the fire of heaven have ever been deemed a most auspicious presage of grandeur and victory, when they do not injure the

things upon which they appear or descend. Let us content ourselves with saying that the fall of the bolt and the fire of the lightning around his Majesty were a sign which showed to all the world that God would hold the king in His safeguard, and defend him from all the perils of the earth, even as He had protected him from the fire of heaven."

A Lorraine printer and engraver named Hanzet, about to publish a treatise on "Several Military Machines and Artificial Fires," was diverted from his project by the comet of 1619; because, said he, such fiery spectacles never appear without bringing in their train a multitude of evils. But comets have always been a terror to the superstitious, and with fear of change have perplexed kings and perturbed peoples.

But the *profanum vulgus* have not been content to draw their omens from the wonders of earth and heaven; they have sought them in every ordinary occurrence, until their daily life has become a prey to evil shadows. For there is a strange propensity in the human mind to dwell upon the cloud and the darkness; to see the warning of the thunderbolt and the earthquake, but not the consolation of the musical fountain and the sunlit cloudless sky; to

agine evil and apprehend disaster; to tremble fore the God of fear, and turn aside from e benignant brow of the God of love. Out what grotesque trifles do men and women, en in this nineteenth century, continue to tract an agony and a sorrow! The guttering a candle will affright the heart that could e unmoved the gleam of hostile bayonets! dog howling at the moon will carry terror id apprehension to the bosoms of many a male who would endure the extreme of yysical torture without a groan! Addison, an admirable paper in *The Spectator*, wisely erves, that "we suffer as much from trifling idents as from real evils. I have known," adds, "the shooting of a star spoil a night's st, and have seen a man in love grow pale and e his appetite upon the plucking of a merry- ough. A screech-owl at midnight has urred a family more than a band of robbers; y, the voice of a cricket has struck more ror than the roaring of a lion. There is thing so inconsiderable which may not ap- ar dreadful to an imagination that is filled th omens and prognostics." To spill the t—to sit at a table where you make the rteenth guest—to walk under a ladder—to eze thrice—to hear the death-watch ticking

for its mate—to see an oblong hollow coal out of the fire—these are omens of evil which have appalled the souls of the vulgar through many generations of ignorance. On the other hand, to meet a piebald horse—to put on your stocking inside out—to sneeze twice—to be followed by a strange dog—to have a swarm of bees alight in your garden, are signs of good fortune and prosperity.

From this universal credence in signs and omens springs the fancy that certain days are more favourable than others for inquiring into the events of futurity. In a flimsy compilation of queries and answers, entitled “Napoleon’s Book of Fate,” we find the following days set apart as unlucky :—

January	1, 2, 4, 6, 11, 12, 20
February	1, 17, 18
March	14, 16
April	10, 17, 18
May	7, 8
June	17
July	17, 21
August	20, 21
September	10, 18
October	6
November	6, 10
December	6, 11, 15

It is some consolation that out of 365 days only 30 are stigmatized as inauspicious!

The peculiar rites appropriate to the fol-

g anniversaries and saints' days we can but briefly glance at, referring the reader for fuller formation to Hone's "Everyday Book," and the recent admirable compilation of the Messrs. Chambers, "The Book of Days."

"*The First of January*.—If a young maiden sink on going to bed a pint of cold spring water, which is beat up an amulet, composed of the yolk of a pullet's egg, the legs of a spider, and the skin of an eel pounded, her future destiny will be revealed to her in a dream. This charm fails of its effect if tried any other day of the year.

"*Valentine's Day (February 14)*.—Let a single woman go out of her own door very early in the morning, and if the first person she meets be a woman, she will not be married that year; if she meet a man she will be married within three months. There existed an old custom, as late as the days of Pepys, who repeatedly refers to it in his 'Diary,' for each gentleman to choose his *Valentine* among his female friends, married or unmarried, to whom he was expected to make some present. A lady might select her own *Valentine*, exacting from him a similar attention.

"*Lady Day*.—The following charm may be tried this day with certain success. Thread

thirty-one nuts on a string, composed of red worsted mixed with blue silk, and tie it round your neck on going to bed, repeating these lines :—

Oh, I wish, oh, I wish to see
Who my true love is to be !

Shortly after midnight you will see your lover in a dream, and be informed at the same time of all the principal events of your future life.

“*St. Swithin's Eve*.—Select three things you most wish to know ; write them down with a new pen and red ink on a sheet of fine wove paper, from which you must previously cut off all the corners and burn them. Fold the paper into a true-lover's knot, and wrap round it three hairs from your head. Place the paper under your pillow for three successive nights, and your curiosity to know the future will be satisfied.

“*St. Mark's Eve (April 24)*.—Repair to the nearest churchyard as the clock strikes twelve, and take from a grave on the south side of the church three tufts of grass (the longer and ranker the better), and on going to bed place them under your pillow, repeating earnestly three several times—

The eve of St. Mark by prediction is blest,
Set therefore my hopes and my fears all to rest :

Let me know my fate, whether weal or woe ;
 Whether my rank's to be high or low ;
 Whether to live single, or to be a bride,
 And the destiny my star doth provide.

could you have no dream that night you will
 single and miserable all your life. If you
 eam of thunder and lightning your life will
 one of great difficulty and sorrow.

“*St. John's Eve (June 23).*—Make a new
 ncushion of the very best black velvet (no
 ferior quality will answer the purpose), and
 t one side stick your name at full length with
 e very smallest pins that can be bought
 one other will do). On the other side make
 cross with some very large pins, and sur-
 und it with a circle. Put this into your
 ocking when you take it off at night, and hang
 up at the foot of the bed. All your future
 fe will pass before you in a dream.” This
 niversary has been ever famous in the annals
 f superstition :—

The rustic maid invokes her swain,
 And hails, to pensive damsels dear,
 This eve, though direst of the year.

“*First New Moon of the Year.*—On the first
 ew moon in the year take a pint of clear
 ring water, and infuse into it the *white* of an
 gg laid by a white hen, a glass of *white* wine,
 ree almonds peeled *white*, and a tablespoonful

of *white* rosewater. Drink this on going to bed, not making more or less than three draughts of it, repeating the following verses three several times in a clear, distinct voice, but not so loud as to be overheard by anybody :—

If I dream of water pure
 Before the coming morn,
 'Tis a sign I shall be poor,
 And unto wealth not born.
 If I dream of tasting beer,
 Middling then will be my cheer,
 Chequer'd with the good and bad,
 Sometimes joyful, sometimes sad :
 But should I dream of drinking wine,
 Wealth and pleasure will be mine.
 The stronger the drink, the better the cheer,—
 Dreams of my destiny, appear, appear !

" Twenty-ninth of February.—This day, as it only occurs once in four years, is peculiarly auspicious to those who desire to have a glance at futurity, especially to young maidens burning with anxiety to know the appearance and complexion of their future lords. The charm to be adopted is the following :—Stick twenty-seven of the smallest pins that are made, three by three, into a tallow candle. Light it up at the wrong end, and then place it in a candlestick made out of clay, which must be drawn from a virgin's grave. Place this on the chimney-place, in the left-hand corner, exactly

as the clock strikes twelve, and go to bed immediately. When the candle is burnt out, take the pins and put them into your left shoe, and before nine nights have elapsed your fate will be revealed to you."

St. Agnes' Eve was another night sacred to love and the future. Keats has made a beautiful use of the fond delusion :—

They told her how upon St. Agnes' eve,
Young virgins might have visions of delight,
And soft adorings from their loves receive
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,
If ceremonies due they did aright ;
As supperless to bed they must retire,
And couch supine their beauties, lily white ;
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require
Of Heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

The learned have had as keen a desire to anticipate the good or ill of coming fortune as the vulgar, and in "the grayest eld" were accustomed to consult the writings of the poets as if the divine afflatus had made them masters of the times to come. Herodotus, while recording this singular intellectual folly, relates at the same time the frauds to which it gave rise. "Onomacrites, a celebrated diviner," he says, "who trafficked in the oracles of Musæus, was expelled from Athens by Hipparchus, son of Pisistrates, because the son of Hermione had detected him in the

act of inserting among the verses of Musæus an oracle which predicted that the neighbouring isle of Lemnos should disappear beneath the sea."

Homer, and afterwards Virgil, were the poets most frequently consulted, and this custom may have had some share in originating the popular belief that the great poet of Rome was a magician. It was from the verses of Virgil that the Emperors Adrian, Alexander Severus, and Claudius I. had discovered the high dignity reserved for them.

In the Middle Ages this consultation of the Homeric and Virgilian pages (*Sortes Homericæ*, *Sortes Virgilianæ*) was merely replaced by a reference to the patristic writers and the Holy Scriptures (*Sortes Sanctorum*). Gregory of Tours relates some curious facts in illustration of this superstitious practice.

When Chramm, who had revolted against his father Clotaire, was advancing upon Dijon, the priests of the cathedral, having placed upon the altar three books—the Prophets, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Evangelists—prayed God to reveal the destiny of Chramm, and to declare, by his divine power, if he should meet with success, and if he might hope to reign. This was to be ascertained by each

est reading the passage that might first catch his eye on opening his book.

Gregory also relates that Merovius, flying from the wrath of his father Chilperic, and Frédégonde, placed upon the tomb of St. Martin, at Tours, the books of the Psalter,

Kings, and the Gospels, and "watching all night, he prayed the confessor to discover to him the future, and whether the Lord indicated if he should reign or no. Thus he fasted three days, fasting, watching, and in prayer, and returning afresh to the holy tomb, opened successively one of the books, which was that of Kings. Dismayed by the responses he met with, he wept for a long time at the sepulchre of the holy bishop, and then went out of the church."

The Councils in vain endeavoured to crush superstition. The 16th canon of the Council of Vannes (A.D. 465) forbade clerks, under pain of excommunication, from consulting

the *Sortes Sanctorum*. This prohibition extended to the laity by the 42nd canon of the Council of Agde in 506, and by the 11th of the Council of Orléans (A.D. 511), and several times renewed; amongst others the Council of Auxerre, A.D. 595; by that of Selingenstadt, A.D. 1022; and by a capitulation

lary of Charlemagne, A.D. 789. But in despite of these formal inhibitions, divination by the Bible did not fall into disuse. In some instances it even made a part of the Liturgy. Thus, during the consecration of a bishop, at the moment when the book of the Gospel was placed upon his head it was customary to open it haphazard, and to seek in the words of the first verse that caught the eye some dim prognostic of the prelate's future destiny. The chroniclers have recorded some predictions of this kind which the event verified—most predictions by their influence on the imagination having a tendency to fulfil themselves.

“Landri, elected Bishop of Laon, received the Episcopal unction (says Guibert de Nogent) in the church of Saint Ruffin, but the text of the gospel for the day was a dire omen for him : ‘Your soul shall be pierced by a sword.’” After committing many crimes he was assassinated. His successor was a dean of Orléans whose name is not recorded. “The new bishop being presented for consecration, they sought in the Evangel what prognostication related to him, but found the page of the book wholly blank. It was as if God had said, ‘I have nothing to foretell to this man, for that which he will do will amount nearly to

othing.'” And in effect he died in a very few months.

The following fact will give some idea of the importance attached to these absurd divinations.

In 1115, some discussions having been raised in reference to the elevation of Hugues de Montaigu to the bishopric of Auxerre, the dispute was referred to Pascal II., who himself consecrated the prelate. “A remark was made by those who supported him,” says Lebeuf, “to the effect that, at the opening of the book from whence were drawn the omens of the future fate of the prelates, these words of the angel were discovered,—*Ecce Maria, gratia plena*; which was understood as a good augury of his chastity, humility, and devoutness.”

The pious often derived a supreme consolation from their reference to the Bible in moments of perplexity, and no better comforter can assuredly be found by the mourning heart or sorrow-stricken soul.

The Count Leudaste having affrighted the city of Tours with many acts of high-handed violence, “When I heard of them,” says Gregory of Tours, “I was lying very sad at heart in the episcopal palace. Full of trouble

I entered my oratory; I took the book of Psalms of David, in the hope of finding some verse which might afford me consolation. I lighted upon this: 'He will lead them full of hope, and will take away all their fear, their enemies having been covered by the sea.'"

Pilgrimages to Jerusalem were often undertaken on a perusal of the passage in Isaiah: "Et erit sepulchrum ejus gloriosum."

The *Sortes Virgilianæ* were frequently resorted to by scholars and nobles as a source of intellectual amusement. They were consulted on one occasion by Charles I. when idling with Lord Falkland in the Bodleian Library at Oxford; and the passages lighted upon both by the king and his courtier were singularly ominous of their future fate. The lines that met the eye of Charles form part of the imprecation which Dido hurls at Æneas:—

At bello audacis populi vexatus et armis,
Finibus extorris, complexu avulsus Iūli,
Auxilium imploret, videatque indigna suorum
Funera: nec, cum se sub leges pacis iniquæ
Tradiderit, regno aut optatâ luce fruatur;
Sed cadat ante diem, mediâque inhumatus arena.
Lib. iv.

Yet let a race untamed, and haughty foes,
His peaceful entrance with dire arms oppose;
Oppressed with numbers in the unequal field,
His men discouraged, and himself expelled;

Let him for succour sue from place to place,
 Torn from his subjects, and his sons' embrace !
 First let him see his friends in battle slain,
 And their untimely fate lament in vain ;
 And when at length the cruel war shall cease,
 On hard conditions may he buy his peace,
 Nor let him then enjoy supreme command,
 But fall untimely by some hostile hand,
 And lie unburied on the barren sand.—*DRYDEN*.

Lord Falkland observing that the king was
 iscomposed at his infelicitous selection, and
 naging that he himself might choose some
 nmeaning passage which would deprive the
 icient of any real importance, essayed a
 enture at fortune, but happened upon some
 nes of no more cheering a character :—

*Non hæc, O Pallas, dederas promissa parenti :
 Cautius ut sævo velles te credere Marti.
 Haud ignarus eram, quantum nova gloria in armis,
 Et prædulce decus primo certamine posset.
 Primitiæ juvenis miseræ, bellique propinqui
 Dura rudimenta.*

O Pallas ! thou hast failed thy plighted word ;
 To fight with caution, not to tempt the sword :
 I warned thee, but in vain ; for well I knew
 What perils youthful ardour will pursue :
 That boiling blood would carry thee too far ;
 Young as thou wert to dangers, raw to war !
 O curst assay of arms ! disastrous doom,
 Preludes of bloody fields, and fights to come.—*DRYDEN*.

An extraordinary importance was attached
 y the ancients on certain occasions to words
 oken in their presence. Often when on the

point of engaging in a perilous enterprise, they went out of their house to collect the chance phrases scattered by the passers-by, or sent a slave to listen to what was spoken in the streets, and so endeavoured to decipher some dim indications of the future.

In the Middle Ages, this usage, though a little modified, was maintained for several generations. Clovis, when on the eve of marching against Alaric, sent some deputies to the basilica of St. Martin of Tours, saying to them:—"Go, and you will find perhaps in the holy temple some presage of victory." After having given them many presents with which to enrich the sacred place, he added—"Lord, if thou art my help, and if thou hast resolved to deliver into my hands that incredulous nation, ever the enemies of thy name, deign to show me your favour at the entrance of the basilica of Saint Martin, to the end that I may know if you will condescend to be propitious to your servant." The envoys duly arrived at the gate of the holy basilica, and, the moment they passed in, the following passage burst upon their gladdened ears: "For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle: thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against

. Thou hast also given me the necks of
 ie enemies ; that I might destroy them
 t hate me." — (Psalm xviii. 39, 40).
 ving listened to this psalm, and given
 nks to God, and presented the royal
 s to the priests, they went away full of
 to announce to the king this presage of
 tory.

This section may appropriately conclude
 h the recital of a divination sufficiently
 culous to expose the gross absurdity of
 ; superstitious practice :—

Theodatus, king of the Goths, being be-
 ged in Naples by Belisarius, as he was in
 habit of consulting the divines, and of
 ing his faith in their replies, inquired one
 of a Hebrew who was esteemed a good
 gician, what would be the issue of the war?
 ; Jew replied that if he would know, he
 st shut up three dozen of swine in three
 les, and give to the first dozen the name
 Goths, to the second that of Romans, and
 he third the name of the Imperial soldiers.
 n on a certain day he was to visit the three
 les. This was done, and at the appointed
 e Theodotus entered therein. He found
 ; all the swine named Goths were dead,
 pt two ; that nearly all of the Imperial

soldiery were living; that five of the Romans were dead, and five others had lost their hides. Theodatus, judging from this presage the fortune of the war, believed that the power of the Romans would be destroyed, that they would lose half their army and their wealth; that the Goths would be reduced to a small number, and the Emperor would gain an easy victory. This conviction crushed his courage, and he durst not venture to give battle to his foes.*

But such indeed is the natural effect of these illicit attempts to penetrate the secrets of the Book of Fate, hidden from men by a merciful Providence. If their result be a presage of disaster, the mind insensibly yields to the influence of a superstitious fear, loses its energies, relaxes in its exertions, and accustoms itself to the idea of failure. On the other hand, an augury of good fortune lends fresh strength to the adventurous soul, and it enters into a struggle with the conviction that Heaven has already assured it victory. Thus, by operating upon the will and the imagination, the most trivial circumstance becomes prophetic, and assumes an importance which it does not in itself possess. The omen works out its own fulfilment, and he who was

* Procopius, Vandal., l. ii. c. 9.

deceived by its apparently supernatural character remains ignorant of the share which his own excited fancy has had in securing the desired result.

§ 3. PROPHECIES.

Coming events cast their shadows before.

CAMPBELL.

When men began to disbelieve the oracles, the oracles ceased; but their desire to anticipate the course of time remained as eager and as keen as in the days of the prophetess and the tripod, and new prophets arose to gratify the old desire. The reverence that had been paid to the Sibyl was now given to Merlin, and the astrologer and the wizard succeeded to the reputation formerly enjoyed by soothsayer and augur. Among the British races Merlin occupied the position which the Greek had accorded to Apollo. Quaint old Drayton sings of him,—

Of Merlin and his skill what region doth not hear?
The world shall still be full of Merlin every year.
A thousand lingering years his prophecies have run,
And scarcely shall have end till Time itself be done.*

“The verses in which the ancient Cambrian poets had poured out impulsively their patriotic

* Drayton, *Polyolbion*.

enthusiasm," says M. Thierry, "were regarded as mysterious predictions in which men sought to discover the meaning in the great events of the day. Thence came the singular celebrity which Myrdhin, bard of the seventh century, enjoyed five hundred years after his death under the name of the Enchanter Merlin. . . . The books of this limited race were so filled with poetry, they had so strong a current of enthusiasm and conviction, that when translated into other languages they became for foreigners the most attractive reading, and the theme upon which the romancists of the Middle Age the most willingly founded their fictions."

Until the fifteenth century these runes, which by their vagueness and obscurity of expression, lent themselves so well to the most diverse interpretations, were looked upon by the peoples of the west of Europe as oracles whose accuracy could not be impeached. Especially in the twelfth century, no important event could occur, which the chroniclers did not profess to see predicted in the prophecies of Merlin. Take one curious instance: A prophecy for the year 1226 foretold that "the peaceable lion would die in the belly of the mountain." Louis VIII. of France,

this very year, expired at Montpensier, and a wise men of the age immediately discovered that he was "the peaceable lion" who died in *pense (ou le ventre) de Mont*—i.e., Montpensier!

"The wild seer Merlin, who saw and plainly retold," says Suger,* "and in a surprising manner, the events which, in the course of ages, would transpire in England, has proclaimed throughout the universe and consecrated the glory of Henry I. by magnificent oracles, as true as they were refined. It is at his celebration that, in the manner of inspired men, he makes known these utterances of a prophetic voice:—'To the throne shall succeed the lion of justice; at his roar the allic towers and insular dragons shall tremble. At his time men will extract the gold from the y and the nettle; silver shall flow under the hoofs of lowing animals; beasts with frizzled hair shall clothe themselves in divers fleeces, and their exterior shall thus make known their internal dispositions; the feet of dogs shall be cut off; savage animals shall enjoy a sweet peace; men reduced to supplicate shall suffer; the forms of commerce shall change; the half

* "Vie de Louis le Gros," par l'Abbé Suger (Collection Huzot, t. viii.)

of a whole shall become round; the kites shall lose their rapacity; the teeth of the wolves be blunted; the young ones of the lions be transformed into fishes of the sea; and the eagle shall build his nest upon the mountains of Arabia.' The whole of this ancient and marvellous prophecy applies with so much justice to the personal vigour of King Henry and to the administration of his kingdom, that not a contradictory word can be discovered. The allusion at its close to the young of the lion was clearly verified in the son and daughter of the king, who, drowned in a shipwreck and devoured by the fishes of the sea, have thus altered their form physically, and proved the accuracy of the prophecy."*

The vague expressions of the Cambrian bard, like the oracles of old, were generally susceptible of several interpretations, and these interpretations were often widely different in character.

William of Scotland having been taken prisoner by the English in 1174, was confined in the Palace of Richmond. "This circumstance," says Matthew Paris, "was regarded

* The shipwreck of the children of Henry I. took place in the month of December, 1120, on the rocks known as the Ras de Catteville.

the accomplishment of a prophecy of Merlin, conceived in these terms:—"They all put between his teeth a curb forged on the shores of the Armorican Gulf." The Armorican Gulf must be considered to extend from the castle hereditarily and from time immemorial possessed by the lords of Armorica, (Brittany)." Some months later the same prophecy was applied to Henry II., who during the revolt of his sons had been closely shut up by their auxiliaries, the Bretons.

Even Joan of Arc, the wondrous Maid who revived the drooping heart of France, was spoken of by Merlin, and his prescient eye, gazing far into futurity, discerned the fraternal jealousy of the ruthless Edward IV. of England. According to Martin du Bellay,* "the English monarch had a desire to see one day the prophecies of Merlin, to discover what accidents would befall his posterity, which is a superstition that has prevailed in England from the time of King Arthur. On examining the said prophecies it was found (for they were like the oracles of Apollo, which had always a double meaning), that according to the interpretation put upon them, one of his

* *Mémoires de Martin du Bellay* (Collection Michaud-Majoulat.)

brothers, whose name should begin with G, should pluck the crown from the hands of his children. Now he had two sons and two daughters, and he thought that the prophecy spoke of the Duke of Clarence, who was named George, wherefore he seized him, and without any form of justice put him to death in a pipe of Malvoisie, persuading himself that through his decease the prophecy would lose its effect." But prophets are not so easily cheated, and Edward's second brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester, proved in due time the wonderful sagacity of Merlin.

Some authorities pretend that the Cambrian seer was no real personage, but the myth of a credulous people. It seems probable, however, that the bard really existed, and he is said to have been a contemporary of the British Vortigern. The woes of his country inflamed his poetic zeal, and he uttered in wild, impetuous verse the aspirations of a patriot, for superstitious generations to reverence as the vaticinations of a prophet. The popular idea of this famous seer has been rendered by Spenser in immortal verse :—

For Merlin had in magick more insight
Than ever him before or after living wight :

For he by wordes could call out of the sky
 Both sunne and moone, and make them him obay ;
 The land to sea, and sea to maineland dry,
 And darksome night he eke could turne to day ;
 Huge hostes of men he could alone dismay,
 And hostes of men of meanest thinges could frame,
 Whenso him list his enemies to fray ;
 That to this day, for terror of his fame,
 The feendes do quake when any him to them does name.

And, sooth, men say that he was not the sonne
 Of mortall syre or other living wight,
 But wondrously begotten, and begonne,
 By false illusion of a guilefull spright
 On a fair lady Nonne, that whilome hight,
 Matilda, daughter to Pubidius,
 Who was the lord of Mathtraval by right,
 And coosen unto King Ambrosius ;
 Whence he indued was with skill so mervelous.*

The lyrical runes or prophecies of this mysterious personage were translated into Latin verse by Geoffrey of Monmouth. A volume reference to his "Life, Prophecies, and Miracles," written, it is supposed, by Robert Bosron, was published at Paris in 1498. In this scarce quarto Merlin represents that the devil himself was his father, that he spoke soon as he was born, and comforted his mother, a virtuous young woman, with the assurance that she would not die in childbirth, malignant neighbours had foretold. When

* "The Faerie Queene," book iii. canto iii.

the district magistrate heard of this wonderful occurrence, he summoned both the immaculate mother and the preternatural infant to appear before him, and they went accordingly. The judge, to test the wisdom of the youthful seer on a proverbially difficult point, asked him if he knew his own father? "The devil," rejoined Merlin; "and his power is mine, and I, like him, know all things past, present, and to come." The astonished judge put no further questions, but wisely resolved to keep clear for the future of Merlin and his progenitors.

Some of the Welsh antiquaries pretend that there were three Merlins—Merdhin Emrys, or Merlinus Ambrosius; Merdhin Wyllt, or Merlinus Caledonius, also called Merlinus Sylvestris; and Merdhin ap Morvryn, or Merlinus Avolonius, also known by the names of Melchinus, Melkinus, and Mervynus. The second and third are certainly the same person, and probably all the three Merlins are but one individual. An English collection of the prophecies was published at London in 1529, and another in 1533, and they exist in MS. both in French and English, in the Cotton and other public libraries.

The building of Stonehenge is traditionally

ributed to the power of Merlin, at whose
 command they hurtled through the air from
 land to Salisbury Plain. He ranged them
 their present order—runs the legend—to
 commemorate the fate of three hundred British
 chiefs; massacred on that lonesome and weird
 heath-land by the murderous Saxons.

His cave and the scene of his dark enchant-
 ments is still pointed out at Abergwilly, near
 Llanymarthen; and the lover of English poetry
 will remember the lurid splendour with
 which Spenser invests it in his "Faerie
 Queene:"—

Low underneath the ground,
 In a deepe delve, farre from the view of day,
 That of no living wight he mote be found,
 Whenso he counseld with his sprights encompass round.

And if thou ever happen that same way
 To travaill, go to see that dreadful place:
 It is an hideous hollow cave (they say)
 Under a rock that lyes a little space
 From the swift Barry, tombling downe apace
 Amongst the woody hills of Dyneowre:
 But dare thou not, I charge, in any cace
 To enter into that same balefull bowre,
 For feare the cruell feendes should thee unwares devowre.

But standing high aloft low lay thine eare,
 And there such ghastly noyse of yron chaines
 And brasen caudrons thou shalt rombling heare,
 Which thousand sprights with long enduring paines
 Doe tosse, that it will stoun thy feeble braines;

And oftentimes great grones, and grievous stownds,
 When too huge toyle and labour them constraines;
 And oftentimes loud strokes and ringing sowndes
 From under that deepe rock most horribly rebownds.

The cause, some say, is this : A little whyle
 Before that Merlin dyde, he did intend
 A brasen wall in compas to compyle
 About Cairmardin, and did it commend
 Unto these sprights to bring to perfect end:
 During which worke the Lady of the Lake,
 Whom long he lov'd, for him in haste did send;
 Who, thereby forst his workemen to forsake,
 Them bownd, till his retourne, their labour not to shake.

In the mean time through that false Ladies traine
 He was surprisd, and buried under beare,
 Ne ever to his worke returnd againe :
 Nath'lesse those feends may not their worke forbear,
 So greatly his commandiment they feare,
 But there doe toyle and traveile day and night,
 Untill that brazen wall they up doe reare;
 For Merlin had in magick more insight
 Than ever him before or after living wight.

In the reign of Charles I. Thomas Heywood, the dramatist, published a "Life of Merlin, with his Prophecies and Predictions interpreted and made good by our English Annals," but there is good reason to believe that they were all, or at least the majority of them, composed by Heywood himself. Take for example this prediction of Richard III., which reads like a character composed by a political satirist rather than the vague exposition of an enthusiastic Vates:—

a hunch-back'd monster, who with teeth is born,
 'he mockery of art, and nature's scorn ;
 Who from ye womb preposterously is hurl'd,
 and with feet forward thrust into ye world,
 hall, from ye lower earth on which he stood,
 Vade, every step he mounts, knee-deep in blood,
 le shall to th' height of all his hopes aspire,
 and, clothed in state, his ugly shape admire ;
 but, when he thinks himself most safe to stand,
 'rom foreign parts a native whelp shall land.

robably the following couplet was floating
 t the discourse of the common people as a
 ag of Merlin's, but it hath not the Cam-
 touch about it :—

When hempe is ripe and ready to pull,
 Then, Englishman, beware thy skull.

aster Heywood shall act as interpreter :—
 this word H E M P E be five letters.
 , by reckoning the five successive princes
 Henry VIII., this prophecy is easily
 ined. H signifieth King Henry before
 ed ; E, Edward, his son, sixth of that
 e ; M, Mary, who succeeded him ; P,
 p of Spain, who, by marrying Queen
 r, participated with her in the English
 m ; and lastly, E. signifieth Queen Eliza-
 after whose death there was a great fear
 some troubles might have arisen about
 rown. Yet," adds Heywood, "proved
 augury true, though not according to the

former expectation; for after the peaceful inauguration of King James there was great mortality, not in London only, but through the whole kingdom, and from which the nation was not quite clean in seven years after."

Other English prophets have been Peter of Pontefract, Robert Nixon, Mother Shipton, and the almanac-compilers, Lilly, Poor Robin, Partridge, Francis Moore, Murphy, and Zadkiel (Lieutenant Morrison). Nixon and Mother Shipton attained a celebrity which justifies us in devoting a few lines to their notice.

Place aux dames! Mother Shipton lived about the time of the establishment of the Tudor dynasty, and resided for many years in a cottage at Winslow-cum-Shipton, in Buckinghamshire. A popular chap-book professed to record her career and prophecies under the following attractive title:—"The Strange and Wonderful History and Prophecies of Mother Shipton, plainly setting forth her Birth, Life, Death, and Burial." 12mo. Published at Newcastle. Chap. 1. Of her birth and parentage. 2. How Mother Shipton's mother proved with child; how she fitted the justice, and what happened at her delivery. 3. By what name Mother Shipton was christened, and how her mother

ent into a monastery. 4. Several other tanks play'd by Mother Shipton in revenge such as abus'd her. 5. How Ursula married young man named Tobias Shipton, and how angely she discover'd a thief. 6. Her pphesy against Cardinal Wolsey. 7. Some er prophecies of Mother Shipton relating these times. 8. Her prophecies in verse to Abbot of Beverley. 9. Mother Shipton's death, and burial.

Robert Nixon was a contemporary of Mother Shipton. He was the son of indigent parents, born near Vale Royal, on the confines of ancient forest of Delamere. Brought up on the plough, his intense stupidity, amounting almost to idiotism, was the laughter or by-stand of all the countryside, and little heed was even at first to his desultory and incoherent utterances. Alas, he was scattering gold on the road, and there were none to catch the precious handsels! But Fame came to him, and it comes to many an inspired genius—unawares. He was ploughing one day in a field, when he suddenly paused in his labour, claiming wildly, “Now, Dick! now, Harry! Oh, well done, Dick! Oh, well done, Harry! Harry has gained the day!” For some time his neighbours could make “neither head nor

tail" of this extravagant outburst, but when the news arrived on the following day of the Battle of Bosworth Field and the victory of Henry VII., Nixon was immediately revered as a prophet!

Before long his reputation reached the royal ears, and a royal messenger was despatched to bring him to court. Before the nuncio could reach Cheshire, Nixon was aware of his errand, and ran about the streets of Over with loud cries that "Harry had sent for him, and he must go to court and be clammed.* The good townsmen could not understand these mysterious expressions, but on the third day the messenger arrived, and removed him to court, leaving the men of Cheshire convinced that there was but one Allah, and Nixon was his prophet!

He found the king on his arrival in pretended despair at the loss of a costly diamond, and his supernatural skill was invited to decide where it could be found. "Those who hide can find," said Nixon. As Henry had hidden the diamond simply to put the prophet to the *experimentum crucis*, he was much struck by this reply, and crediting from

* A Lancashire word for "starved to death" made unhappily familiar by recent events.

at time forth the prophet's pretensions, lered, it is said, that all his words should be thfully recorded.

Nixon, however, remained in mortal fear of ng *clammed*, and begged the king to let him urn to his Cheshire village. Henry laughed at his apprehensions, and gave directions to all officers and cooks to supply the prophet with whatever he needed. Hence he in due e became as obese as the proverbial London rman. One day, when the king was ting for the chase, Nixon threw himself at feet, and implored he might not be left ind to starve. Henry called an officer, . repeated his injunctions to look after the phet. The officer obeyed them by locking a up in the royal closet, and bringing him h his own hands four meals a day. So far e was cheated. But it happened that a ssenger from the king required the officer's sence at Winchester on a momentous siness, and he in great haste set out mediately, bestowing not a thought on the happy prophet. The words of doom came ie ! The officer was absent for three days, d on his return, rushing to the royal closet, and Nixon dead upon the floor, *clammed*, en as he had predicted.

Some of Nixon's prophecies have been fulfilled; at least, in the opinion of his admirers, who strain their interpretations to fit the past event, on a very Procrustean principle. Here are three which are respectively supposed to indicate the defeat of Prince Charles Edward at the decisive battle of Culloden: the Rebellion of 1745, and the execution of the Scotch rebel peers; and the Pretender's return to France, crushed and defeated.

A great man shall come into England,
But the son of a king*
Shall take from him the victory.

Crows shall drink the blood of many nobles,
And the North shall rise against the South.

The Cock of the North shall be made to flee,
And his feather be pluckt for his pride,
That he shall almost curse the day that he was born.

Here are two predictions which remain unfulfilled, because no one has succeeded in discovering their meaning:—

Between seven, eight, and nine,
In England wonders shall be seen;
Between nine and thirteen,
All sorrow shall be done.

Through our own money and our men
Shall a dreadful war begin,
Between the sickle and the sick
All England shall have a pluck.

* William, Duke of Cumberland, son of George I.

Turning our glance from English to foreign
ers, we are reminded of the estimation once
joyed by the magnificent Michael Nostra-
mus, who died in 1566. He was born in
1503,—the son of a notary of the town of
St. Remi, in Florence. He was fully fifty
years old before the world recognised his
genius, when his “Centuries,” a collection of
mythical prophecies, as obscure as they were
extravagant, began to excite attention. In
1556 Henry II. of France, attracted by his
growing fame, appointed him his physician,
and he was frequently consulted in important
emergencies by the king and his subtle astute
queen, Catherine de Medicis. After the death
of his royal patron he retired to St. Remi,
where he was visited by Charles IX., and by
great nobles and learned men from the very
corners of the earth.

His prophecies consist of more than a
thousand stanzas, each of four lines: and they
are so vague and indefinite that scarcely an
event can occur which may not be found, with
a little ingenuity, to bear some resemblance to
the prediction of Nostradamus. They enjoyed
for many years a very wide reputation. In
1766, when the Jesuits were endeavouring to
suppress the French Huguenots, they went about

from town to town, proclaiming the entrance of Don John of Austria into Flanders, and from the "Centuries" of Nostradamus showed that the great commander who had crushed the Turks at Lepanto, would in like manner annihilate the Huguenots, since Heaven had reserved for him the victory.

The "Centuries" have been frequently reprinted. The following couplet was indited anent their author :—

*Nostra damus cum verba damus, nam fallere nostrum est;
Et cum verba damus, nil nisi nostra damus.*

It is not generally known that the son of Nostradamus also professed the power of foretelling the future. The "poison'd chalice," however, was returned to his own lips, and the engineer hoisted by his own petard. When the town of Pouzin, in Languedoc, was besieged in 1574 by the Catholics, its inhabitants after a vigorous resistance were compelled to surrender it. Young Nostradamus was then with the besieging army, whose commander, Saint-Luc, demanded of him what would be the fate of Pouzin. The prophet meditated profoundly, and said it would be destroyed by fire. He took the best course to prevent any failure of his prophecy, and when the town was being plundered, the soldiers

discovered him setting it on fire in various places. Saint-Luc on the following day summoned him to his presence. "Come now, master mine, does thy art tell thee that to-day an accident will befall thee?" And before the prophet could answer plunged his dagger into his stomach.

A Florentine astrologer, named Basil, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, obtained some repute for successful predictions. He is said to have foretold to Cosmo di Medicis, then a private citizen, that he would attain exalted dignity, inasmuch as the ascendant of his nativity was characterized by the same auspicious aspects as that of the emperor Charles V. Another astrologer predicted the death of Prince Alexander di Medicis, and it is supposed that he had a hand in carrying out his own prediction. More famous was Anti-ochus Tibertus of Romagna, who was for some years the esteemed councillor of Pandolfo di Malatesta, the prince of Rimini. Three of his predictions received a remarkable fulfilment. He foretold to his friend Guido di Bogni, a soldier of great celebrity, that he would be unjustly suspected by his best friend, and would lose his life through the suspicion. Of himself he declared that the stars doomed him

to perish on the scaffold, and of his patron, then in the flush of his power and prosperity, that he would suffer extreme penury, and die a beggar in the hospital for the poor at Bologna.

Each prediction was in due course fulfilled. Guido di Bogni was accused by his own father-in-law, the Count di Bentivoglio, of a treacherous design to surrender Rimini to the Papal forces. Such a conspiracy had actually been formed, but Guido was ignorant of it. Malatesta, however, caused him to be assassinated at his own supper-table, where he had invited him with every appearance of friendship. He also flung the astrologer into prison on suspicion of being an accomplice, and Antiochus attempting an escape, was discovered and beheaded. Thus two of the prophecies had been fulfilled; a circumstance which should have caused Malatesta some uneasiness about his own fate. But we seldom believe in the evil foretold of ourselves, however willing to credit any predictions of misfortunes for our friends. Nevertheless, the conspiracy against him in due time broke out; the city was seized by the Count de Valentinois; Malatesta escaped from the palace in disguise, wandered from town to town in miserable poverty, fell ill at

ologna of a languishing disease, and died in the hospital to which stranger-hands had borne him.

We have spoken of these as remarkable prophecies: so they might justly have been called had Antiochus really uttered them. But unfortunately they were invented for him, *after* the events had occurred which they pretended to foretell.

Our limits compel us to omit any reference to the later astrologers and almanack-makers—Dee, Lilly, Forman, and Partridge: but of Dee and Lilly, as alchymists, we have already spoken in a preceding chapter. We shall now place before our readers some desultory examples of Prophecies and Predictions, without any special reference to their authors; and first, we shall glean them from the curious pages of the mediæval chroniclers.

“In those days,” says Gregory of Tours, there was at Paris a woman who said to the habitants,—‘Fly from the city, for it is about to be destroyed by fire.’ Many laughed at her, and thought she spoke in accordance with some presages obtained from the *Sortes*, or else that she had dreamed, or that she was inspired by some demon of the south. She replied: ‘It is not indeed as you say, for I speak to you

the truth. I saw during my sleep a luminous man go out of the church of Saint Vincent, holding in his hand a flambeau of wax, with which he set on fire the houses of the merchants one after another.' Three months from the day on which the woman had spoken, and about twilight, a house broke out with flames, and the conflagration devoured a considerable portion of the city."

"When Gerbert was at the head of a school," says Ordericus Vitalis, "he had a colloquy with the devil, and asked him what would befall him one day. The malignant spirit made his reply in a verse, of which the sense was—

Transit ab R Gerbertus ad R, post papa regens R.

The oracle of the infernal *cameleon* was then too obscure to be comprehended." But when Gerbert was first bishop of Rheims and afterwards of Ravenna, and finally became Pope of Rome as Sylvester II., the diabolical prediction showed itself as clear as the sun at noonday.

A boundless confidence was, at this period, placed in the prophecies of pretended sorcerers. During the wars of the Normans in Apulia—we quote from Ordericus—some magicians at Rome determined to ascertain who should suc-

seed Hildebrand as Pope, and discovered that after his death a pontiff of the name of Odo would occupy the Papal chair. At this news Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, who ruled over England in the name of the Conqueror, his half-brother, "esteeming but little the wealth and power of the states of the West, if he did not govern afar, and reign over all men by right of the Papacy, sent some delegates to Rome; who purchased a palace for him, and adorned it at a great cost, and even with superfluous objects, and conciliated with rich presents the friendship of the Roman senators. He attracted to his party Hugh Earl of Chester, and a considerable troop of the most distinguished knights, prayed them to pass with him into Italy, and lavished upon them large promises of support of his prayers." Odo's intrigues excited the wrath and jealousy of the Conqueror, who suddenly returned from Normandy, arrested the ambitious prelate in the Isle of Wight, and flung him into prison. He excited by a captivity of four years his credulity listening to an astrologer's prediction.

In 1080, says Matthew Paris, Pope Hildebrand (Gregory VII.), by a pretended Divine revelation, foretold that a false king would die that year. His prophecy was fulfilled, but not

as he had hoped ; for he had aimed its shaft at Henry, the Emperor of Germany, and the false King was Rodolph, killed by the Emperor, with a crowd of nobles, in a bloody battle.

When the great league against Philip Augustus, which the victory of Bouvines shattered, was first formed, Matilda, aunt of Ferrand, Count of Flanders, one of the chiefs of the confederacy, consulted a famous female necromancer upon the issue of the struggle. The ambiguous response to her inquiries ran as follows :—"The King, thrown from his horse by a great throng of young warriors, shall be trodden under the horses' hoofs, but he shall not be buried : at the end of the battle, the Count, elevated in a chariot, shall be received, in the midst of deafening shouts, by the people of Paris." See how the juggling fiend palters with the truth, and breaks the flattering promise with which he cheats our ears ! The prediction was accomplished, but not in its apparent sense. Philip Augustus was unhorsed, and trodden under foot, but he won the victory, and Count Ferrand entered Paris as a captive amid the applause with which its citizens greeted their victorious king.

The prophets were not always successful in their guesses at the future, and met with but

ant pity from those who had been their
pes. When John of England was wrestling
th his barons, there lived (says Matthew
ris) in a province of York an hermit named
ter, who enjoyed a great reputation for
dom, because he had often foretold coming
nts. Among other things which had been
ealed to him in reference to King John by
spirit of prophecy, or rather, we may sup-
e, by his political foresight, he affirmed and
claimed loudly, and before all those who
e willing to hear him, that John would not
king at the next Feast of Ascension, and
t on that day the crown of England would
transferred to another. The king being
ormed of the hermit's words sent for him,
l asked him, "Shall I then die on the day
name? By what means shall I lose my
one?" The hermit contented himself with
lying, "Know for certain that on the day
ich I have said you will no longer be king;
l if I am convicted of a lie do with me what
I will." Then said the king, "I take thee
thy word." And he gave him in charge to
lliam d'Harcourt, who shut him up at
fe; and the wretch waited, in good cus-
y and loaded with irons, until the event
uld prove whether he had spoken the

truth. His prophecy soon spread into the remotest provinces, and all those who had any knowledge of it believed it as firmly as if it had been a message come from heaven. . . . But when the appointed day had passed by, and the king found himself safe and in health, he caused the hermit to be tied to a horse's tail, dragged through the streets of Wareham, and hung upon a gibbet with his son." The unhappy prophet's political studies had misled him, and the issue of the king's struggle with the barons was not what he had anticipated.

It was to a sorceress that Philip the Bold had recourse to ascertain the cause of the death of his eldest son Louis (A.D. 1276), whom Pierre de la Brosse pretended had been poisoned by the Queen.

"He (the king) was told that there was at Nivelles a sorceress who spoke marvellously concerning things past and to come, and attired herself in the garb of a *béguine*, and lived in holy fame and with much devoutness; and that there was at Laon another diviner, who was the vidam of the church of Laon, and knew the secrets of necromancy; and moreover, that on the borders of Germany resided a Saracen who was converted to the

urch, and was a great master of these difficult matters, and spoke much concerning things that were to come. 'By God!' cried the king, 'can none of these reveal the truth of this deed?' So he called his clerk, who was a man of great reserve and secrecy, and bade him go to Laon and Nivelles, and inquire sagely as he could who might be considered the wisest counsellor in this difficulty. He found that the *béguine* was of greater reputation than the others, and that more credence was given to her prophecies. Then he returned to

King of France, and related all he had found. The king commanded Matthieu, abbot of St. Denis, in whom he had great confidence, and Pierre, bishop of Bayeux, who was cousin of Pierre de la Brosse on his wife's side, to repair to this *béguine*, and inquire of her diligently concerning his son's death." The first replies not proving satisfactory, Philip sent a second message to the sorceress, who rejoined that he ought not to listen to any calumnious insinuations against his wife.

Froissart has a curious story respecting a pretended divination. "At this time," (360), he writes, "there was a minor-heretic (*un frère mineur*), full of learning and understanding, in the city of Avignon, who

was named Brother Jean de la Rochetaillade, and him the Pope Innocent VI. caused to be imprisoned in the castle of Bagnolles, on account of the great marvels he proclaimed, as threatening chiefly the prelates and dignitaries of Holy Church, because of their luxury and excessive pride, and also the kingdom of France and the great lords of Christendom, because of their oppression of the common people. And the said Brother John was willing to prove all these sayings by the Apocalypse and the ancient books of the holy prophets, which were revealed to him by the grace of God, even as he said; and there were many willing to believe what he said if they should see take place aught that he had predicted. And he spake these things not as a prophet, but as knowing them through the ancient Scriptures and by the grace of the Holy Spirit, which had given to him understanding to declare all these troubles, prophecies, and writings, that he might announce to all Christians the year and the time they would happen. And he made several books, well written and well grounded upon great and clerkly knowledge, the which was done in the year 1356. And in them are recorded many marvels as certain to happen between the

s 1356 and 1370, which were very hard to believe, until men had seen some of them fulfilled. And when they inquired of him respecting the wars of the French, he said that those they had seen were nought in comparison with what they would yet see, for there would be no peace nor settlement until the kingdom of France should be despoiled and ravaged in all its provinces and regions.

And this we have seen happen, for the realm of France has been crushed, despoiled, and divided, and especially at the time fixed by *frère-mineur*—the years '56, '57, and '59—when all its regions, so that none of its princes or gentlemen have durst face the men of low degree, collected from every country, succeeded one another, without any chieftain or a leader."

It was about the same disturbed and tumultuous epoch that St. Bridget of Sweden (who died in 1373) published some predictions which the Council of Bâle approved, and which were held worthy of exposition from the public theological chairs. Hence we may understand the general acceptance these oracles received in Christendom. They were translated into every language. In 1414 the Bishop of Norwiche haranguing Charles VI. as ambassador

from the King of England, "alleged many and various authorities relating to the object of his mission, and even the revelations of holy Bridget, wherein was demonstrated how, by the prayers and orisons of Monseigneur St. Denis, the patron of the French, the princes of the warlike races of France and England might conclude a firm and lasting peace together by the ties of marriage." St. Bridget may have been an excellent prophetess, but assuredly she was a poor politician, or she would not have deemed the marriages of princes any effectual safeguards of national peace.

But the most interesting, and certainly the most curious of the mediæval predictions are those which affected the destinies of certain states. A French collector of Ana, to whom we have been much indebted, gives some remarkable illustrations of those in vogue concerning Byzantium. They prove how thoroughly the Greeks were persuaded at an early period of the limited duration of their empire, which, pressed on all sides by the Arabs, the Bulgarians, the Hungarians, the Russians, and finally by the Turks, was so often menaced in its existence.

"The Emperor Heraclius," according to Bigord, "had read in the stars, which he often

erved, that the Roman empire would be
 royed by the circumcised. But he was
 ng in thinking that these words designated
 Jews, for this prediction was accomplished,
 we know, by the race of Agarians, named
 ng us Saracens; and in effect soon after-
 ls they seized upon, and cruelly devastated,
 empire of Heraclius, and Methodius
 res that they will take possession of it
 again at the end of the ages. Methodius
 martyr has bequeathed us several predic-
 s concerning them; they shall one day, at
 end of the ages, that is to say, towards the
 : of Antichrist, make a second irrup-
 , and cover the face of the world for eight
 ves of years: the route they shall follow
 be called the 'way of distress,' in memory
 re sorrows and tribulations that shall then
 gh upon the Christians. They shall slay
 priests in the holy places, they shall lie
 n the women at the foot of the altar, they
 l fasten their horses to the tombs of the
 ts, they shall turn their churches into
 les, even close to the tomb of the holy
 tyrs, and all this shall happen as a punish-
 nt for the perversity of the Christians who
 l then be living."*

" Vie de Philippe Auguste " (Collection Guizot), t. xi.

According to Raoul de Dicet, an English writer whose Chronicle does not extend beyond 1199, the Golden Gate at Constantinople, through which entered the processions of triumphant generals, bore this prophecy : "When the fair king shall come from the West, I shall open of myself." It was not, however, through this gate that the Latins penetrated into the city in 1204, for the popular alarm at the predictions concerning it had caused it to be walled up a long time before. To-day the Turks apply to themselves the tradition which formerly affrighted the Greeks ; they firmly believe that one day the Golden Gate will open wide of its own accord to admit the Christians who, as they are persuaded, will finally reconquer the city.

According to an ancient prophecy which belonged to a very distant epoch, and was attributed to a holy man named Morenus, a people armed with arrows would seize the port and exterminate the Greeks.

These sinister predictions multiplied rapidly during the reign of the last of the Byzantine emperors. A fatal oracle of the sibyl of Erythrea was revived. A tale was noised abroad that there had been discovered in the convent of St. George, near the Arsenal, two

blets written by Leo VI., containing the list of the emperors and patriarchs, a list in which were wanting the names of the last patriarch and the last emperor. It was related, too, that Michael Paleologus, tormented by his conscience, which reproached him with the crimes he had committed to gain the imperial power, and fearing he could not transmit it to his family, had consulted one day some diviners to know if his son would enjoy it peaceably after his death. The oracle replied, "*Maximi*," a word which signifies nothing in itself, but which was explained by the necromancer in this wise:—"The empire will be possessed by as many of your descendants as there are letters in this barbarous word. When it shall be taken away from your posterity, and the city of Constantinople."

Such sinister predictions as these could hardly fail to weaken the energies and depress the spirit of the superstitious Greeks, while the Turks were equally encouraged and invigorated by the triumphant prophecies of the prophet. With one further example we must content ourselves. The following passage is said to have been engraved upon the tomb of Constantine the Great:—"Many nations shall reunite upon the Black Sea and

upon the Continent: the Ismaelites shall be vanquished, and the weakened power of their nations shall sink into decay. The confederate peoples of Russia and its surrounding countries shall subjugate Ismael, shall occupy the seven hills and all which enriches them."

Guibert de Nogent, in his "*Gesta Dei per Francos*," relates the singular presentiments which terrified the Saracens some years before the first Crusade. In 1090 Robert the Old, Count of Flanders, having made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, "lodged at the house of a Saracen, a man of advanced years, of a sagacious mind and blameless life, as blameless at least as may be among Saracens! [Here breathes the spirit of Christian charity!] One day,—as I have learnt of those who accompanied the count, almost all the inhabitants of the city repaired in a crowd to the Temple of Solomon, and after having held there a council during the greater part of the day, returned to their homes towards the evening. When the count's host returned, Robert asked him wherefore the Saracens had remained so long a time in the council, and with what subjects they had occupied themselves during so protracted a conference. The old man replied:—'We have seen certain extraordinary signs in the divers motions of the stars, and we have drawn

from them, by positive conjectures, the assurance that men of the Christian condition shall come into this country and subjugate us after numerous combats and frequent victories. But we are still wholly uncertain whether these events will shortly be realized, or in some distant future. Nevertheless these celestial apparitions have taught us that the same men to whom it is given by the will of Heaven to conquer our nation and expel us from the places of our birth, shall in the end be conquered by us, and driven by the right of war from the country they shall have usurped. In reperusing with care the oracles of our fathers, scattered through a great number of volumes, we have found them perfectly in accord with these celestial signs, and they have attested to us in the most lucid language what the shimmering stars had announced to us by obscurer signs." Guibert died in 1121, and Jerusalem, which had been captured by the Crusaders in 1099, was retaken by the Saracens in October 1187.

Next to the destinies of nations, the dabblers in the lore of the future loved to exercise their prophetic powers upon the fate of illustrious personages. The death of Henry IV.—the hero of the snow-white

plume—originated a vast number of predictions, of which the famous Richelieu has recorded in his “Mémoires” the most important:—

“Five or six months before the king’s death information was sent from Germany to M. de Villeroy that the king would incur a very great hazard on the 14th of May, the day on which he was killed. . . . From Flanders there was written on the 12th of May to Roger, the Queen’s goldsmith and valet-de-chambre, a letter, in which was deplored the death of the king that did not take place until the 14th. Many similar letters were written on the same date at Cologne, in other parts of Germany, at Brussels, Anvers, and Malines.

. . . On the same day, and at the very hour of the king’s death, about the fourth hour, the Provost of the farriers of Pithiviers, playing at bowls in Pithiviers, stopped suddenly, and after a moment’s thought said to his fellow-players, ‘*The king is on the point of being killed.*’ And as afterwards he was required to explain how he had known this news, the provost having been brought to Paris a prisoner, was one day found suspended and strangled in his prison. . . . The same day that this deplorable accident happened a

ing shepherdess, of the age of fourteen or
 een years, named Simonne, a native of the
 lage of Patay, having at nightfall driven
 ne her flocks, inquired of her father who
 king might be. Her father having
 wered that it was he who governed all the
 nch, she exclaimed, 'Good God! I heard
 just now a voice that told me he had been
 ed,' which was afterwards found to be true.

. Christianity teaching us," adds Riche-
 t, "to despise the superstitions which were
 d in great reverence among the Pagans, I
 not relate these circumstances because I
 nk they should be regarded upon other
 asions; but the event having justified the
 th of these presages, predictions, and extra-
 linary visions, we must confess there was
 them much that was singular, of which we
 the effects, but do not know the cause."

A Spanish friar and almanack-maker pre-
 sted King Henry's death in the clearest and
 ost definite terms, and Peiresc, alarmed in
 ite of his better judgment, consulted with
 ne of the king's friends, and had the Spanish
 nanack placed before his majesty. Henry's
 llant spirit was not to be daunted by a
 ar's predictions; but the event occurred,
 d in the following year the Spaniard pub-

lished a new almanack, and loudly trumpeted his infallible skill. There can be little doubt but that he had some knowledge of the foul conspiracy which wrought the great monarch's death.

In troublous times superstition always reaps an abundant harvest of prophecies. Men's minds, anxious and perturbed, give utterance to their fears, their hopes, or guesses in dark oracular sayings, which are eagerly accepted by the vulgar, and which have often a sufficient resemblance to the truth to assume afterwards a prophetic character. So George Withers, himself a vaticinator as well as a poet, has expressed it:—

It may be on that darkness, which they find
Within their hearts, a sudden light hath shined,
Making reflections of **SOME THINGS TO COME**,
Which have within them musings troublesome
To their weak spirits ; or too intricate
For them to put in order, and relate.
They act as men in ecstasies have done—
Striving their cloudy visions to declare ;
And I, perhaps, among these may be one—
That was let loose for service to be done.

The impetuous Knox, Scotland's fiery apostle of the Reformation, made many predictions which were singularly fulfilled, such as his announcements of the deaths of Kirkaldy of Grange and Thomas Maitland—his declaration

concerning Mary and Henry Darnley, that “as the king for the queen’s pleasure had gone to mass, the Lord, in His justice, would make her the instrument of his overthrow”—and his warning to the Regent Murray, not to go to Linlithgow, where, indeed, he was assassinated. But these were the conjectures of a sagacious mind, accustomed to the study of political events, and not the guesses of a would-be professor of supernatural lore.

Boundless indeed was the credulity of the Dark Ages! When the celebrated minister and favourite of John II., King of Castille, Alvaro de Luna, had been beheaded (July 5th, 1452), there arose a report, and it became (says a Spanish historian) very common, that Don Alvaro having consulted a certain astrologer upon his destiny, the latter had warned him that he should die at *Cadahalso*; which Alvaro understanding to signify a town of that name belonging to him in the kingdom of Toledo, he took good heed never to enter it. But *Cadahalso* also means a scaffold, and the astrologer’s prediction was accordingly fulfilled.

When James I., King of Scotland—who had excited the hatred of his turbulent nobles by the rigour of his rule—visited Perth in

1457, at a time that Robert Graham was secretly plotting against him, a Highland woman encountered him, endeavoured to prevent him from entering the town, and foretold that he would perish if he persisted in his resolution. James was moved by her words, for they coincided with a prophecy according to which a king would be slain in Scotland that year, but rising superior to superstitious fears, he addressed himself laughingly to one of his knights, who was pleasantly called *The King of Love*;—"Ah, well," he cried, "one of us two must die this year, for we are the only two kings in Scotland." Nevertheless, the event justified the prediction, and James was assassinated on the 20th of February. In this instance, too, it may be considered certain that the Highland woman had by some means obtained a knowledge of the conspiracy.

One of his successors, James III., assassinated in 1488, after the battle of Stirling, where the Homes and the Hepburns had totally defeated the royal army, had likewise been warned of his doom. An astrologer had told him, enigmatically, that there was a lion in Scotland who would be put to death by his whelps. The monarch, alarmed by the pre-

ion, attempted to rid himself of his
thers, who indeed had already conspired
inst him. He could but execute his
ect in part, however, and six years
rwards, when he marched against his
allious subjects, then masters of the person
his son, above whose head streamed the
it banner of Scotland, he lost all courage, and
d himself by fleeing before the *lion-whelp*.

'hilip de Comines has several allusions in
"Memoirs" to the prophetic faculty enjoyed
Angelo Catho, who after having been in
service of Charles the Bold passed into
of Louis XI., and became his almoner,
Archbishop of Vienna. From his summary
hat prelate's career we extract the following
age:—"While I was in the service of
is XI. there happened the last battle of
cy, in which the Duke of Burgundy was
1, on the eve of Twelfth Day, 1466; and
he hour that the said battle was delivered,
at the very instant that the said duke was
d, King Louis was hearing mass in the
rch of St. Martin at Tours, distant from
cy ten long days' journey at the least, and
he said mass the almoner Archbishop of
na was officiating, who, in wishing the
; the words of peace, said, 'Sire, God give

you peace and repose; you may have them if you will, *because it is finished*. Your enemy, the Duke of Burgundy, is dead, has this moment been killed, and his army discomfited.' And this hour was found to be that in which the Duke had really been slain. And the said king, hearing these words, was greatly amazed, and demanded of the archbishop if what he spoke was true, and how he knew it. To which the prelate replied, that he knew it even as he had known the other things which Our Lord had suffered him to predict to him and the late Duke of Burgundy; and without further speech the king made a vow to God and Saint Martin, that if the said news were true (as he found them to be shortly afterwards) he would cause the lattice work of Saint Martin's shrine, which was then of iron, to be made of silver." And this was one of the few vows which the astute Louis actually performed.

According to Brantôme,* the morning of the day on which the Constable de Bourbon was slain in the assault upon Rome (A.D. 1527), he harangued his soldiers in the following fashion:—

"My brothers, I see before me the very city respecting which, in time past, a wise astrologer predicted to me that, assuredly, at its capture my malignant star would be in the ascendant, and

* "Vie des Grands Capitaines," c. 28.

I must die there. But I swear to you that is the least of my anxieties; and I care little to die, if in dying my body remains a perpetual glory and renowned through the world."

his premature and unexpected death of Henry II. (of France) gave rise to a host of rumours. It was remarked that his death, which had commenced by a singular combat (the duel, *en champ clos*, of Jarnac and a Châtaigneraie), had terminated in a like manner: and more, that this prince, who had earlier deprived one of his squires of an eye, was killed by a similar wound.

"I have heard it related," says gossiping Montaigne, "and I hold it in good faith, that a few years before he died (others say some thirty), an astrologer drew up his nativity, and presented it to him. In this he stated that he should die in a duel in single combat. The King then said to the Constable, 'See, my comrade, what is foretold me.' 'Ah, sire,' replied the Constable, 'will you believe these rogues, who thought but liars and cheats? Fling it in fire.' 'Why, my friend?' said the king; 'I sometimes speak the truth. I do not care more to die by this death than any other; I shall love better to fall by the hand of

such an one, so that he be brave and valiant, and the glory of such a death endure.' And without taking any heed of what the Constable had said, he gave the prophecy in charge to M. de l'Aubespine, until he should demand it of him. Alas! neither he nor the Constable dreamed of the single combat in which the king perished, but of another duel—a duel to the death, and *en champ clos*—as solemn duels ought always to be fought."

The superstitious belief yielded to these diviners, necromancers, and astrologers reached an almost incredible height in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, previous to the great changes of the Lutheran Reformation. It is always the darkest, says the proverb, an hour before day; and certainly the shadows were terribly dense, and the clouds very thick and heavy before the sunlight of Truth broke upon benighted Christendom.

M. Valery relates that an astrologer had foretold to Cardinal Gozzadino, who died in 1623, and was a nephew of Gregory XV., that he should die in prison, or of the consequences of his imprisonment, and the cardinal, who was encumbered with debts, put great faith in the horoscope, but he boasted that he no longer feared it when his uncle became Pope. However, on the death of

gory, the sacred conclave having been assembled, the cardinal went from it sick of a malady, which he speedily fell a victim at the age of one; and the superstitious quidnuncs of age professed to see in this a fulfilment of prophecy, because the conclave had been the cardinal an actual prison, and the lot of all prisons! It is easy indeed to convince those who thus willingly deceive themselves!

It is unnecessary to extend our examination further, or this chapter in the history of man folly might easily be written in many volumes. The end of the world—earthquakes, plagues, sanguinary wars, revolutions moral and social—all have exercised the ingenuity of that large class who profit by the credulity and superstition of their fellows. Nor can we boast that the present generation is much wiser than its forefathers. Our familiar spirits are more absurd than the demons summoned by the mediæval necromancers, and instead of wizards we consult mediums; but the principle which lies at the bottom is simply that idle and unhallowed desire to enter into a knowledge of the mysteries of Providence, which has manifested itself in all ages and in many different shapes!

CHAPTER X.

WITCHCRAFT, SORCERY, AND VAUDERIE.

What wrath of gods, or wicked influence
 Of tears, conspiring wretched men t' afflict,
 Hath pour'd on earth this noxious pestilence,
 That mortal minds doth inwardly infect
 With love of blindness and of ignorance?—*SPENSER.*

Panara. The like was never read of.
Stephano.—In my judgment,
 To all that shall but hear it, 'twill appear
 A most impossible fable.

Panara.—'Tis true, I'll tell you,
 And briefly as I can, by what degrees
 They fell into this madness.

MANNINGHAM, Duke of Milan.

SOME fuller account of the great moral epidemic of witchcraft seems advisable than the hints and occasional facts scattered through the foregoing pages.*

Witchcraft in Europe originated in the

* See Jules Garinet, "Histoire de la Magie en France;" Scott's "Demonology and Witchcraft;" Louandre, "La Sorcellerie;" Michelet, "Histoire de la Renaissance;" Wright's "Narratives of Sorcery and Magic;" Cotton Mather, Reginald Scott, Hutchison, "Causes Célèbres," &c.

superstitions that rapidly accreted round the simple faith of the Primitive Christians. The idea of demonology familiar to the Mahomedan nations of the East and the tribes of Northern Europe was engrafted upon Christianity. The principle of evil—Satan or Sathanas—was invested with a personality, and the “fallen stars of the morning” were transformed into inferior demons, resembling the fiends of the Teutonic Mythology in their attributes and character. The traditions of the classic world were also drawn upon for various features of grotesque horror. The existence of these new inhabitants of the Unseen once determined, it would soon be suggested that they might be subdued to the control of man, and here the sacrificial rites of Paganism came into play. The adventurous persons who had the courage to perform these rites took the place of the ancient enchanter, and being usually of the female sex, received the well-known name of witches (from wekkan, to prophesy;) those of the male sex were called wizards or warlocks. Unlike the ancient magicians, they meditated no good to their fellows, but loved to blight their fortunes, to destroy their properties, to injure their health, and darken their lives. There was a sanguinary

hue about mediæval witchcraft that savoured more of the fierce spirit of the North than of the grave and contemplative mind of the East ; and a degree of filth and obscenity that might in some measure be traced to the impurities of the old classic mysteries, ~~but~~ was mainly due to the uncleanness of the Gothic imagination. Take it as a whole, and no grosser or fouler creed ever bore witness to the deplorable credulity and natural depravity of mankind ! It swept over mediæval Europe like a pestilence, and blighted every fair and useful thing, contaminated the minds even of the purest, and seared the hearts even of the most tender.

According to this monstrous creed, the devil would contract with man and woman to allow them certain supernatural privileges in return for the sacrifice of their immortal souls. This devil, as conceived by the vulgar imagination, was a very nauseous and sensual personage, spiteful, cruel, easily overreached, playing a cunning game for small ends, and easily cowed by the sign of the Cross or the name of the Saviour. He usually appeared to his satellites in human shape, but wanted something of the completeness of humanity. His feet were generally deformed ; his tail was

a invariable appendage; his limbs were either shrunken or swollen; and he was either too black or too white for a perfect man. Sometimes he chose the form of a goat, sometimes of a toad. He would occasionally appear as a tree or a river, and he and his demons would also assume the guise of handsome young men, and skilfully concealing their tails, would marry fair young girls and beget children upon them. This portentous demon-birth was easily distinguishable; the evil's child shrieked incessantly, and never grew fat, though suckled by five nurses!

The devil's imps possessed much the same power of disguise as their master. Their bodies were composed of thin air, and they could pass from place to place, through stone and iron, with the utmost facility. They assumed what shape they pleased, and were called *incubi* when they were male, *succubi* when female. They increased and multiplied among themselves; but their numbers were also swelled by the souls of still-born children, wicked men, women who died in childbed, and persons slain in duels. So great was their number that they completely peopled the air, and you might be unfortunate enough at times to inhale or swallow one, in which

case you would suffer pangs like those of the colic. Wier (or Wierus), however, puts a limit to their number, and computes them as divided into seventy-two cohorts, each with its own captain, amounting in all to 7,405,926.*

In order to maintain a cordial feeling between himself and his subjects, and to receive the homage of new votaries, the devil occasionally held a general meeting or assembly, which, from its taking place on the Saturday, or immediately after midnight on the Friday, was termed "The Witches' Sabbath." It sometimes took place in one district, sometimes in another, and once every year was held among the Brocken, or other lofty mountains, as a rendezvous for all the fiends in Christendom.

Commonly they were summoned to meet in a forest, or near a lake, or where four roads arrived at a point of junction. Nothing ever grew where once this scene had occurred, as the glowing feet of the demons and the witches burnt out of the earth its fecundating principle. Witches and wizards who neglected to attend were lashed by demons with a rod of twisted serpents or scorpions. Those who did attend reached the place of meeting by an

* Wier, "De prestigiis Demonum."

aerial journey. Stripping themselves naked they anointed their bodies with an unguent* which rendered them invisible; strode across a stick or some similar article; muttered a charm, and flew away,—quitting their houses by the window or the chimney, the latter being the favourite mode of exit. Sometimes (in Italy and Spain,) the devil fetched his worshippers in the shape of a goat, and bore them to and from the place of meeting. On their return they entered the house by the keyhole. To avoid the suspicions of their relations or neighbours, the witches' places during their absence were supplied by demons who assumed their shapes, and pretending illness, laid a-bed, until the Sabbath was over.

The rites which were celebrated at the Witches' Sabbath partook of the most daring blasphemy and the filthiest obscenity, and it is marvellous how even the most prurient imagination could have given birth to such hideous conceptions. Satan having assumed the shape of a he-goat took his seat upon an elevated

* *Hecate, (to a witch).*—Here take this unbaptized brat,
(giving the dead body of a child.)

Boil it well; preserve the fat;
You know 'tis precious to transfer
Our 'nointed flesh into the air.

MIDDLETON, *The Witch of Edmonton.*

throne, and all present successively paid their homage to him, *osculantes in ano*. He then appointed one of the assembly to act as usher or chamberlain, and in company with him made a close examination of every witch and wizard to see if they bore his secret mark—usually a mole which was insensible of pain or injury. If any were not so distinguished, the devil marked them, bestowing at the same time a characteristic nickname. Then the whole assembly gave themselves up to the most riotous singing and dancing, until a newcomer arrived who required initiation. While this ceremony took place—while the neophyte was denying his salvation—undergoing a burlesque of the rite of baptism—spitting upon the Bible—and receiving the devil's embraces, the Evil One assuming either the male or female shape as the occasion required—all were silent; but when it was done they again broke into a wild Mcenad-like dance, and sang aloud,

Alegremos, Alegremos!
Que gente va tenemos!

Fatigued with this Bacchanal revel they all sat down, and proceeded to relate their exploits since their last meeting. To this incident of the Witches' Sabbath, the Elizabethan Mid-

dleton alludes in his play of *The Witch*.
Hecate says—

Now, I'll be meet with 'em ;
Seven of their young pigs I've bewitched already,
Of the last litter ;
Nine ducklings, thirteen goslings, and a hog
Fell lame last Sunday after evensong, too.

So in the tragedy of *Macbeth* the three
witches recount their doings :—

1st Witch.—Where hast thou been, sister ?

2nd Witch.—Killing swine.

3rd Witch.—Sister, where thou ?

1st Witch.—A sailor's wife had chesnuds in her lap,
And mounch'd, and mounch'd, and mounch'd : *Give me,*
quothe I,

Aroint thee, witch, the rumpfed ronyon cries.

Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' the Tiger :

But in a sieve I'll thither sail,

And, like a rat without a tail,

I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.

2nd Witch.—I'll give a wind.

1st Witch.—Thou art kind.

3rd Witch.—And I another.

1st Witch.—I myself have all the other ;

And the very ports they blow,

All the quarters that they know

I' the shipman's cards.

I will drain him dry as hay :

Sleep shall, neither night nor day,

Hang upon his pent-house lid ;

He shall live a man forbid :

Weary sev'n nights, nine times nine,

Shall he dwindle, peak, and pine :

Though his bark cannot be lost,

Yet it shall be tempest-toss'd.

Look what I have.

2nd Witch.—Show me, show me.

1st Witch.—Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wreck'd as homeward he did come.

When the tales were ended, those witches who had not done enough evil to persecute man, or had even so far forgotten themselves as to do some good, were chastised by Satan himself, who flogged them with a whip of scorpions or of thorns until they weltered in their own blood. "Several of the victims of the French courts in the latter part of the sixteenth century confessed that, having been unwilling or unable to fulfil the commands of the Evil One, when they appeared at the Sabbath he had beaten them in the most cruel manner. He took one woman, who had refused to bewitch her neighbour's daughter, and threatened to drown her in the Moselle. Others were plagued in their bodies, or by destruction of their property. Some were punished for their irregular attendance at the Sabbath; and one or two, for slighter offences were condemned to walk home from the Sabbath instead of being carried through the air. Those on the other hand who had exerted most their mischievous propensities were highly honoured at the Sabbath, and often

rewarded with gifts of money, &c. After this examination was passed, the demon distributed among his worshippers unguents, powders, and other articles for the perpetration of evil.

“It appears, also, that the witches were expected, at least once a year, to bring an offering to their master. This circumstance was certainly derived from the earlier popular superstitions; offerings to demons are mentioned frequently in the early German and Anglo-Saxon laws against Paganism. A French witch, executed in 1580, confessed that some of her companions offered a sheep or a heifer: and another, executed the following year, stated that animals of a black colour were most acceptable. A third, executed at Gerbeville in 1585, declared that no one was exempt from this offering, and that the poorer sort offered a hen or a chicken, and some even a lock of their hair, a little bird, or any trifle they could put their hands upon. Severe punishments followed the neglect of this ceremony. In many instances, according to the confessions of the witches, besides their direct worship of the devil, they were obliged to show their abhorrence of the faith they had deserted by a trampling on the cross, and

blaspheming the saints, and by other profanations." *

The next ceremony appears to have been the apportionment to the new witches or wizards of their respective imps, or familiars, whom they usually addressed as their "little masters," although able to control them at their pleasure. These imps received names of a popular character, and very much resembling each other in France, Germany, and in England. Thus, in the French trials for witchcraft we read of such names as Minette, Robin, Joly-bois, Maître Persil, Sante-Buisson, Verdelet, &c.; in Germany, Mash-leid (mischief), Ungluc (ill luck), Tzum-walt-vliegen (flying to the wood), Feder-wüsch (feather-washer), and the like; and in England, Peck-in-the-Crown, Pyewackett, Sack-and-Sugat, Grizzell Greedigut, Tetty, Robin, Tiffin, Hoppe, Puckle, Piggin, Smack, Pluc, Raise-the-wind, &c. These familiars assumed the form of animals, and are described as speaking with a voice resembling that of a man with his mouth in a jug.

A dance of toads was now offered for the amusement of the assembly. Thousands of these creatures,—whose unhappy fate it has

* Wright's "Narratives of Sorcery."

been to be invariably associated by man with the grim and laidly,—sprang out of the earth, and standing on their hind legs, danced to the devil's playing on the bagpipes or trumpet. As all these toads could speak they solicited the witches to reward them for their entertainment with the flesh of unchristened babes. The witches consented: the devil warned them to fulfil their promise, and stamping his foot, the toads immediately disappeared, and a banquet was spread for his guests. The dishes usually consisted of the most unclean and loathsome food, but choice viands and rare wines were provided for those who had shone pre-eminent in wickedness. It may be noted, however, that according to the testimony of the witches themselves, these repasts were decidedly unsatisfactory, from the unsubstantial character of the food, which left the guest famished with hunger and parched with thirst, however greedily he might have drank or eaten.

The tables cleared, the dancing was recommenced; dancing of so violent a character that, at its conclusion, witch and warlock were exhausted with fatigue. Many preferred to amuse themselves with burlesquing the holy rite of baptism, standing sponsors for toads

whom they sprinkled with ditchwater; the devil making the sign of the cross backward, and the witches shouting out, "*In nomine Patricâ, Aragueaes Petrica, agora, agora! Valentia, jouando goure gaita goustia!*"—which means, "In the name of Patrick, Petrick of Arragon, now, now, all our ills are ended!" The chanting of obscene rhymes; instrumental music performed upon a horse's skull or the trunk of an oak; dances of naked witches—the waltz dates its origin from the Witches' Sabbath!—and finally, a saturnalia of lust and debauchery which may not be described, completed the horrid circle of the night's amusements. The grey dawn of the morning broke upon the haunted shades of the Brocken, and the wild revel swept hurriedly away!

Such was the belief that extended over Christian Europe in the dark days of mediævalism! Such were the features of the confessions extorted by the rack and the thumb-screws from the wandering intellects of many a trembling victim! The main characteristics of witchcraft were the same in England as in France, Germany, or Italy, with the exception that the semi-grotesque, semi-horrible ideas of the Witches' Sabbath never attained any defi-

ness or completeness in England, nor was English sorcery so marked as the continental romantic incidents, or the direct interference of the Evil One. The English witch a vulgar and unimaginative person compared with that terrible incarnation of malignancy so powerfully idealized by Michelet in "Sorcière," and by Goethe in the "Walpurgisnacht" of "Faust."

Witchcraft prevailed in Europe as early as the days of Charlemagne, who fulminated an edict against it in the "Capitulaire de Baluze," and decreed the punishment of death against those who in any way evoked the devil, compounded love-philtres, afflicted a man with impotency or woman with barrenness, disturbed the atmosphere, stirred up tempests, destroyed the fruits of the earth, sucked up the milk of the cow, or tormented fellow-creatures with sores and diseases.* Executions, or rather persecutions, for these heinous crimes, were frequent enough in the reigns of succeeding kings, and it was the first accusation of sorcery—not perhaps altogether unfounded—which enabled Philip Augustus to effect the destruction of the order

M. Jules Garinet, "Histoire de la Magie en France (Rois de la Seconde Race)."

of Knights Templars (A.D. 1307—1313). It was also the fatal weapon which the Archbishop of Bremen and other German potentates employed, under the patronage of Pope Gregory IX., against the Stedinger, a section of the Frieslanders, whose real crime was a devoted attachment to liberty of thought—to civil and religious freedom (A.D. 1234). The English raised the cry of “sorcery and witchcraft” against Joan of Arc, the virgin-martyr of France, and burned her at the stake in the market-place of Rouen, in a firm conviction that the monstrous charge was true. These examples fired that terrible blood-thirst which is the characteristic of a semi-civilized populace, and the Church of Rome soon stepped forward to turn the new folly to its advantage by associating the crime of heresy with that of witchcraft. True, every witch might not be a heretic, but every heretic *must* be a witch! Thus was Rome enabled to keep down the formidable religious sects, the vanguard of the Lutheran Reformation, that from time to time caught glimpses of God’s light, and sought to cherish in their hearts the blessed radiance. In 1459 a congregation of the Waldenses at Arras was crushed by means of this novel but cruel agency.

At this time—about the feast of All Saints, 159—a Jacobin monk, named Pierre le Broussart, was inquisitor of the faith in the city of Arras.* By his orders a young woman named Demiselle, who obtained her living by prostitution in the city of Douai, was suddenly arrested at that place, and thrown into the bishop's prison at Arras. She was accused of *Vaulderie*, or sorcery. One Robinet de Vaultx, who had resided for some time as a hermit in the province of Burgundy, had recently been burnt for the crime of witchcraft, or *Vaulderie*, at Langres, whence the name had become popular. On his trial he had confessed that there were a great number of sorcerers in Artois, men and women, and had indicated, among others, this woman, Demiselle, and a man named Jehan Lavite, who was known by the nickname of *abbé de Peu de Sens* (the Abbot of Little-Sense). Upon this confession Pierre de Broussart caused Demiselle to be arrested, and she, being cruelly tortured, was induced to confess that she had been present at the *Vaulderie*, or assembly of sorcerers, and had seen Jehan Lavite there. The unfortunate abbé was now on his turn arrested, subjected to a close examination, "Histoire de la Magie;" Monstrelet, "Chronicles."

examination, racked and tortured almost unto death, and in his agonies brought to acknowledge the truth of any assertions which his examiners put in his mouth. He confessed that he had been at the *Vaulderie*, and that he had seen there many people of all estates, whose names he gave.

It was not as yet considered advisable to strike at higher game, and the next arrests were confined to individuals of the poorer classes, a barber, three prostitutes, the mistress of the New Baths, and others. The usual machinery of the examination, the rack, and the confession, was applied with characteristic success to these victims also.

“At length a scaffold was raised in the public place of the city of Arras, and amid an immense concourse of people, all the prisoners were brought forth, each with a mitre on his head, on which the devil was painted in the form in which he had appeared at the *Vaulderie*. They were first exhorted by the inquisitors, and their confessions then read to them, in which they avowed that when they wished to go to the *Vaulderie*, they took a certain ointment which the devil had given them, rubbed a little wooden rod and the palms of their hands with it, and then placed

the rod between their legs, upon which they were suddenly carried through the air to the place of assembly. There they found tables spread, loaded with all sorts of meats and with wine, and a devil in the form of a goat, with the tail of an ape, and a human countenance. They first did oblation and homage to him, offering him their soul, or at least some part of their body, and then, as a mark of adoration, kissed him behind, holding burning torches in their hands. The *Abbé de Peu de Sens* was stated to have held the office of master of the ceremonies at these meetings, it being his duty to make the new-comers do their homage. After this they all trod on the cross, spat upon it, in despite of Jesus and the Holy Trinity, and performed other profane actions. They then fell to eating and drinking, and the meeting ended in a scene of indescribable debauchery, in which the demon took alternately the form of either sex. After a number of wicked actions, the devil preached to the assembly, and forbade them to go to church, or to hear mass, or to touch holy water, or perform any other Christian duty. The assembly was stated to have been most commonly held at a fountain in the wood of Mofflaines, about a league from Arras, but

sometimes in other places, and on some occasions they had gone thither on foot."

After this public confession had been made sentence of death was recorded against them. The accused straightway broke out into loud lamentations, declared their innocence, and protested that they had been entrapped into a pretended confession by the promise their lives should be saved. Their supplications and their threats were equally impotent, and they were dragged to the stake—victims to a brutal and ignorant bigotry.

The object of this sudden persecution now became apparent. The depositions of the victims were employed as evidence of the pretended *Vaulderie* of many of the most influential burghers of Arras, these being men who were suspected of being attached to heretical principles. Only their wealth and influence enabled them to escape the scaffold. Some were heavily fined; some imprisoned; others escaped from the city, and a general consternation seized the inhabitants of Arras. The Sieur de Beauafort, however—one of the principal sufferers—had the courage to carry his cause before the Parliament of Paris (A.D. 1461), who heard his statements with patient impartiality, and finally declared the sentence

iniquitous, and set him at liberty. The other prisoners were then sent for by the Parliament, their cases examined into; and they themselves discharged from prison and released from the penalties in which they had been condemned. Nevertheless, the panic caused in the good city of Arras had probably answered the ends of those who set in motion the barbarous persecution.

The Roman pontiffs had not hitherto interfered directly in the crusade against heresy and witchcraft, though it had been superintended by the superior authorities of the Church; but in 1488, Pope Innocent VIII. fulminated his ecclesiastical thunders against these atrocious crimes—of whose rapid increase he was himself personally convinced—and thus by bringing into action the latent forces of superstition, credulity, and fanaticism, did his utmost to swell the evil which he attempted to extirpate. In his celebrated Bull, he summoned the European nations to the rescue of the Church of Christ upon earth, and detailed the horrors of which accounts had reached his ears; how that hundreds of men and women had intercourse with the infernal fiends; how by their sorceries they afflicted both man and beast—blighted the marriage-bed, destroyed

the young of women and the increase of cattle —blasted the corn on the ground, the grapes of the vineyard, the fruits of the trees, and the herbs of the field. In order to extirpate from off the face of the earth such desperate and iniquitous sinners against the laws of God and man, he appointed inquisitors in every country, armed with the apostolic power to convict and punish.

The result was the *witch mania*, which every evil passion contributed to swell—avarice, revenge, hate, jealousy, the lust of notoriety, the thirst of blood. Hundreds of innocent persons were accused of witchcraft, tortured cruelly, convicted on the wild ravings extorted from them in their extreme agony, and savagely burnt to death. Previously the secular magistracy had possessed the power of judgment, but now heresy and sorcery were linked together, and the secular power consequently placed in subjection to the ecclesiastical, as represented by the inquisitors. And now that the accusations grew so numerous, the want of some settled mode of procedure became evident—of some code of rules and regulations appertaining to the detection and conviction of the sorcerers. This was furnished at length by the notorious Sprenger, in his famous “*Malleus*

Maleficarum,”—in German the “Hexenhammer,”—in English the “Witch-Hammer,”—in French “Le Marteau des Sorcières.” This ominous book, which poured out the blood of thousands, was originally published about 1489, and consisted of 625 pages quarto. The full title runs thus:—

MALLEUS MALEFICARUM:

In tres partes divisus, in quibus

I. Concurrentia ad Maleficia;

II. Maleficiorum effectus;

III. Remedia adversus maleficia.

Et modus denique procedendi ac puniendi maleficas abunde continetur, præcipue autem omnibus inquisitoribus et divini verbi concionatoribus utilis et necessarius.

Sprenger was assisted in its compilation by Johan Gremper and one Henry, and all three were papal inquisitors. Their labours have furnished posterity with a complete code of those popular superstitions in reference to witchcraft which were in vogue in the 15th century, and became the model and groundwork of the numerous treatises that afterwards appeared upon this sad phase of human folly. Michelet has analysed it with his usual keen sagacity, and we proceed to furnish the reader with the spirit of his observations.*

How was Sprenger, he says, led to the study

* Michelet, “Histoire de la Renaissance,” Introduction, § xiii.
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of these matters—Vauderie, or Vaulderie, and witchcraft? Sprenger himself relates that being at Rome, in the refectory where the monks were accustomed to entertain strangers, he saw there two from Bohemia; the one a young priest, the other his father. The father was sighing and praying for the success of his journey. Sprenger, in an emotion of charity, asked of him the cause of his uneasiness. “My son,” he said, “is possessed, and with great trouble and expense I have brought him to Rome, to the sepulchre of the saints.” “Where is this son?” said Sprenger. “By your side,” was the answer.

“At this reply,” writes the inquisitor, “I felt afraid and withdrew a step. I watched the young priest closely, and was astonished to see him eat with a modest air, and that he conversed with gentlemen. He told me that having spoken somewhat harshly to an old woman, she had flung upon him a spell; this spell was under a tree. Under which? The sorceress had refused to tell.” Sprenger—always out of charity—began to lead the bewitched from church to church and relic to relic. At each place, exorcism, furor, cries, contortions, wild gesticulations and extravagant outbreaks in every language, were repeated;

and all before the people, who followed them, admired, trembled. Devils, so common in Germany, were rare in Italy—a real curiosity. In a few days Rome could speak of nothing else; and the affair, which made a great noise, recommended, without doubt, the Dominican to the ecclesiastical authorities. He studied and compared all the “Mallei” and other manuscript manuals, until he became a leading spirit in the various anti-demoniacal proceedings. His “Malleus” was probably prepared in the twenty years intervening between this adventure and the great mission entrusted to him by Pope Innocent VIII. in 1484.

It was of the highest importance to select a skilful and adroit agent for the mission into Germany which the Pope contemplated. “Rome had already met with a rude check,” says Michelet, “in the Low Countries, which had made the Inquisition a thing of horror, and shut the gates of France against it.” He refers to the witch trials at Arras already described. “The Inquisition was spit at, reviled everywhere in France. The Parliament of France brusquely closed the door against it, and Rome through her awkwardness lost this opportunity of introducing into all the North a domination of terror.”

But in 1484 the time seemed ripe for another effort. The Inquisition, which in Spain had assumed the most formidable proportions, and even ruled the monarchy, appeared likely to become a conquering power, that would march of its own strength, penetrate everywhere, and subdue all. It had found in Germany, it is true, a formidable obstacle, in the jealous opposition of the ecclesiastical princes, who having their own tribunals, their own personal inquisition, were by no means eager to welcome that of Rome. But in time the situation of those princes, disturbed by the popular movements—the groundswell of the coming storm—rendered them more docile. All the country of the Rhine, all Suabia, and Eastern Germany as far as Saltzbourg, heaved and tossed as if with concealed volcanic fires. Frequent revolts of the peasantry broke out—jets of flame which revealed the subterranean commotion. The foreign Inquisition, more dreaded than the German, arrived at this moment most opportunely to terrify the country, and break down rebellious spirits, burning as sorcerers to-day those who on the morrow might be insurgents. What better arm to conquer a people could be invented! Thus was the storm turned aside upon the sorcerers,

as, in 1349, and on many other occasions, it had been directed upon the Jews.

A man, however, was required to sway the hour. "The Inquisitor who first—in the jealous courts of Mayence and Cologne, before the satirical citizens of Frankfort or Strasburg—erected his tribunal, must be a man of capacity. It was needful that his personal dexterity should balance against, should sometimes cause to be forgotten, the odium of his ministry. Rome, besides, is always on the alert to make a careful selection of instruments. Little regardful of measures, but much of men, she has thought, not without reason, that the success of her transactions depends upon the peculiar character of the agents despatched to each country. Was Sprenger such a man? Well, he was a German, a Dominican, sustained beforehand by that formidable order, by all its convents, all its schools. A worthy son of the schools was necessary, a good scholiast, a man strong upon 'the Summary,' firm upon Saint Thomas [Aquinas], always ready to hurl forth texts! Sprenger was all this, and more—he was a fool."

"It is often written," says Sprenger, "that *diabolus* comes from *dia*, two, and *bolus*, a bolus or pill, because swallowing at once the soul and

the body, of the two things the devil makes but one pill, one morsel. But," he continues, with all the gravity of a Sganarelle, "according to the Greek etymology, *diabolus* signifies *clausus ergastulo*; or better, *defluens*,—that is to say, *falling*, because he fell from heaven!"

Now for his derivation of the word *maléfice*:—"From *maleficiendo*, which signifies *malè de fide sentiendo* [thinking ill of the faith.]" Oh, wondrous etymology, and to what heights of grandeur ascending! If the *maléfice*, or witchcraft, is assimilated to *heterodox opinions*, every sorcerer is a heretic and every doubter becomes a sorcerer. We may burn as wizards everybody who believes erroneously. This indeed happened at Arras, and this it was the object of the Roman Church by slow degrees to establish everywhere.

But the solid and incontestable merit of Sprenger was, that he was a fool, and an intrepid one. He put forward hardily the least acceptable propositions. Any other person in his place would have attempted to elude, to attenuate, to diminish objections. Not so Sprenger. From the first page he exposes openly, and one by one, the natural and evident reasons why we should not believe in miracles wrought by the devil. Then he

calmly adds—*So much for heretical errors!* And without refuting these reasons, he copies contrary texts, Saint Thomas, the Bible, legends, canonists, and glossaries. He displays good sense in the first place, and then pulverizes it by the weight of authority.

Satisfied, he reseats himself, serene, and a conqueror: he appears to say,—And now then, what can you answer? Shall you have the audacity to make use of your reason? Go then, and doubt, if you can, that the devil amuses himself by interposing between husband and wife, when every day the church and the canons admit this motive of separation!

This certainly is unanswerable. No one dare whisper! Sprenger, at the head of his *Manual for Judges*, declaring the lightest doubt *heretical*, the judge is fettered; he feels that he ought not to swerve, that if unfortunately he had any temptation of doubt or humanity, he must begin by condemning and burning himself.

Everywhere we see the same methods adopted. At first reason, argument, good sense; then, in the foremost place and without any evasion, the negation of reason, argument, and good sense. Some one, for example, may

be tempted to assert that since love exists in the soul it is not at all necessary to suppose there must be any mysterious action of the devil. Is not this specious? No, says Sprenger, I make a distinction (*distinguo*). He who splits up wood is not the cause of its combustion, but only the indirect cause. Love is thus the wood-splitter (see Dionysius the Areopagite, Origen, and John of Damascus). Therefore love is but the indirect cause of—love.

Behold then, says Michelet, what it is to study! It was no feeble school which produced such a man as Sprenger. Cologne only, and Louvain, and Paris, possessed the machinery which could so mould the human brain. The school of Paris was strong; for the Latin of the kitchen what can we compare with the *Janotus* of Gargantua? But still stronger was Cologne—glorious Queen of the Shadows—which gave to Hutten the type of his *Obscuri Viri*, the obscure and the ignorant,—a race so prosperous and so prolific!

This solid Scholasticism, full of words, void of sense, the sworn foe of nature, as well as of reason, sits enthroned with a superb faith in its books and its robes, its ashes and its dust. Upon the table of its tribunal the "Summary"

lies on the one side, the "Directorium"* on the other.

"I would have wished," says Michelet, "to have seen face to face this admirable type of a judge, and the unfortunates who were brought before him. The creatures whom God might take in two different globes could not be more opposed, more foreign one to another, more destitute of a common language. The bel-dame, a tattered and ragged skeleton to the glaring eye of malice, thrice annealed in the fires of hell; the ill-omened solitary, a shepherd of the Black Forest or the lofty deserts of the Alps;—such are the savages presented to the stern gaze of the pedantic scholar, the judgment of the scholastic!

"They will not make him, however, sweat long in the bed of justice. Without torture he will confess everything. Torture *will* come, —but afterwards, for the complement and ornament of the *procès-verbal*. The criminals explain and acknowledge by order all their deeds of wickedness. The devil is the intimate friend of the peasant, and lies with the sorceress. She smiles at it—she triumphs in it. She visibly enjoys the terror of the assembly. He is her master and her lover.

* Two famous manuals of the scholastics.

Only he is a rude master and governs by dint of blows. Once filled and inflated with *him* she may desire in vain to cast out her terrible host, in vain to escape from him; wherever she flies she carries *him*! Like the sick man labouring with the *tænia*,* who feels it rising, descending, living with him, and in spite of him, she rocks in furious convulsion; it does but amuse him the more; she is his doll, his plaything; so that if she curses the world it is only because she is sorely cursed herself!"

A more vivid picture of the terrible sufferings of a woman reputed a witch, and, with a strange lust of power and notoriety, glorying in that repute, and half believing in her own demoniac possession, can hardly be imagined. Michelet continues to heighten the lights and shadows of his canvas:—

"Here is an old woman, a very foolish old woman, and there another hardly less so. Fools are they? No, neither the one nor the other of them. Far from it: they are subtle and astute—can hear the grass grow, can see through walls. And that which they can see the most distinctly is—the *monumental asses' ears* which overshadow the doctor's bonnet,—the fear which they inspire in his soul. For

* The *ver solitaire*, *tænia*, or tapeworm.

ite of all his efforts he trembles. He
lf declares that the priest, if he does not
eed, may, when conjuring the demon,
him at once to change his location, and
into the priest, finding it more pleasant
ge in a body consecrated to God. Who
if these simple devils of peasants and
ers may not have the ambition to
it an inquisitor?"

Despite those absurdities which an
ctual age like the present can criticize
only—despite those superstitions which
once so ridiculous and so sanguinary—
Malleus became the recognised code of
craft throughout Christian Europe, and
led the slaughter of thousands of inno-
ctims. Men and women were burnt at
take without pity, on indications of
y which the *Malleus* recognised as
actory. A man could easily rid himself
obnoxious neighbour in those dark days
me and cruelty! The infection spread
Germany into France, and thence into
nd and England, where the notorious
ew Hopkins obtained an infamous
ity as a witch-finder. James I. studied
science" with peculiar zest, and his
tise on *Demonologie*" demonstrates how

thoroughly he understood the signs by which a sorcerer might be detected. He thus enforces the use of the ordeal of cold water, and the discovery of the devil's mark that branded witch or wizard as eternally his :—"Two good helps," he says, "may be used: the one is the finding of their mark, and the trying the insensibleness thereof; the other is their floating on the water,—for, as in a secret murder, if the dead carcass be at any time thereafter handled by the murderer, it will gush out of blood, as if the blood were crying to Heaven for revenge of the murderer (God having appointed that secret supernatural sign for trial of that secret unnatural crime), so that it appears that God hath appointed (for a supernatural sign of the monstrous impiety of witches) that the water shall refuse to receive them in her bosom that have shaken off them the sacred water of baptism and wilfully refused the benefit thereof; no, not so much as their eyes are able to shed tears (threaten and torture them as you please), while first they repent (God not permitting them to dissemble their obstinacy in so horrible a crime); albeit the womenkind especially be able otherwise to shed tears at every light occasion when they will, yea, although it were dissembling like the crocodiles."

•

Matthew Hopkins, the witch-finder, whose name in the annals of witchcraft must rank as second only to those of Sprenger and James I., a native of Essex, and was distinguished by the number of so-called witches he pretended to detect, and brought to the stake. His doings are alluded to by Butler in his *Diablas* :”—

Hath not this present Parliament
 A lieger to the Devil sent,
 Fully empower'd to treat about
 Finding revolted witches out ?
 And has he not within a year
 Hanged threescore of them in one shire ?
 Some only for not being drown'd,
 And some for sitting above ground
 Whole days and nights upon their breeches,
 And feeling pain were hung for witches ;
 And some for putting knavish tricks
 Upon green geese and turkey chicks ;
 Or pigs that suddenly deceased
 Of griefs unnatural, as he guessed ;
 Who proved himself at length a witch,
 And made a rod for his own breech.

the swimming, or rather *drowning ordeal*, tried in this fashion :—“ The hands and feet of the suspected persons were tied together in this wise, the thumb of the right hand to the thumb of the left foot, and *vice versa*. They were then wrapped up in a large sheet or net, and laid upon their backs in a pond or river. If they sank, their friends and neighbours had the poor consolation of knowing

score was thrown into a mill-stream in the parish of Sible Hedingham, and 'swum' for a wizard. This inhuman treatment proved his death. He survived the violence for a time, but about a month afterwards he expired from the brutality to which he had been subjected. In March, 1864, the two ringleaders in this outrage were tried at Chelmsford, found guilty, and sentenced to six months' hard labour. Without entering into the evidence too minutely, we may say that the case was really as genuine a case of witchcraft as was ever reported, and that an attentive consideration of its particulars will enable us to comprehend the belief of our ancestors in this diabolical art.

"The man credited in the present instance with these supernatural powers was singularly fitted for the character. He was eighty years of age, and, though deaf and dumb, was in complete possession of his reasoning faculties. He had resided in the county of Essex for some twenty years, and for nearly half that time in the parish of Sible Hedingham. He was not, however, a native of that place, or, indeed, of this country. It was supposed that he was a Frenchman, and this conjecture was supported by certain peculiarities of his habit and manners. He was of an excitable disposition, and accustomed to express his will or his meaning by singular methods of gesticulation, which seldom, however, failed of being intelligible. Altogether, and notwithstanding the inferences suggested by his tragical end, he appears to have been by no means oppressed or friendless. The better sort of people looked kindly on his infirmities and eccentricities, while those less susceptible of such feelings had motives of their own for leaving him unmolested. In point of fact, they believed him to be a wizard, and to have the power of punishing by his spells those who might give him offence. Whether he himself advanced these pretensions, or whether he merely acquiesced in a popular impression which conduced to his security, was not clearly shown; but if he did not claim to be a sorcerer, he at least professed to be a fortune-teller, and derived his chief means of subsistence from the sale of his supernatural knowledge. One evening, then, being a person of this character and profession, he went to the house of a

certain Emma Smith, near Hedingham, and asked to be allowed to sleep on the premises. The woman refused permission, on which Old Dummev, as he was called, grew very angry, and made signs which were known to indicate his displeasure, if not to threaten harm. They were interpreted in the latter sense. Emma Smith believed herself bewitched, and at once fell sick to such purpose that no medical aid could relieve her. She was dreadfully low and nervous, her whole system was disordered by the terror under which she lay, and her sufferings were increased by the conviction that Dummev alone, who had put the spell upon her, could rescue her from its effects. It was in this condition of mind and body that she met the old man one night at a public house. She begged and entreated him to cure her. She told him that if he would but come to her house and sleep there, and take the spell off, she would not only treat him well, but would give him three sovereigns. To these prayers and offers he was deaf, answering by a sign which was variously interpreted as meaning either that he would sooner have his throat cut than do so, or that he might get his throat cut if he did. Then, at last, when no bribes or petitions had any effect, the woman fell upon him in her frenzy, and, being aided or encouraged by a crowd assembled on the spot, especially by the man who shares her punishment, she got him to the water and 'swam' him. That was the history of this poor old creature's death.

"It seems, however, placed beyond the possibility of doubt that the woman Smith did most sincerely believe that she was suffering from his diabolical spells. Her whole conduct from first to last attests the force and sincerity of her conviction. She made her submission to her enemy, she implored him to reverse his charms, she offered him a considerable sum of money if he would relent, and promised him his own way in the matter about which they had originally disagreed. When all was of no use, and when in her exasperation she flew out upon him, her words explained the passion to which she was yielding. 'You old devil,' she cried, 'you served me out, and now I'll serve you out.' Now, we have only to say that if this old conjuror did really intend to frighten this woman

into illness, and did wilfully refuse to go through the forms which she would have interpreted as releasing her—for both of which suppositions there has been some warrant—we have as complete, veritable, and real a case of witchcraft as can be found in any treatise on that wonderful subject. There is only one difference between this tale and the best authenticated tales of antiquity. That difference is in the agency to be imputed. In the days of King James I., and, indeed, a good deal later, it would have been universally believed not only that Old Dummey caused the sickness of Emma Smith, but that he did so by virtue of powers derived from the Devil. In the present day we must also believe, from the evidence before us, that the woman's illness arose from the old man's doings, or, at least, from the interpretation which she put upon them, but we have no need to assume the agency of the Devil in explaining the result. Perhaps Old Dummey did actually intend to exercise the tyranny of a strong mind over a weak one; perhaps that intent existed only in the belief of the victim; but in either case we can now understand what old writers tell us. We can see that people may really have been rendered infirm and wretched by believing themselves to lie under charms, and there is no difficulty in presuming that men and women might have been found wicked enough to pretend to these powers for purposes of evil, and perhaps even to believe that they had actually acquired them. Yet in these admissions we get the whole theory and practice of witchcraft. The thing was a terrible reality, though it did not imply the work of the Devil."

CHAPTER XI.

MESMER, AND ANIMAL MAGNETISM.*

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.—SHAKESPEARE.

WHEN Marie de Concini was asked by what magic she had acquired so great an influence over her mistress, the Queen of France, she replied, "By the power of a strong mind over a weak one." And the true principle of the curative properties of what is called magnetism appears to lie in a similar species of magic—in the control which the firm will exercises over an excitable and nervous imagination. Upon this irrefragable basis the ingenuity of the quack and the credulity of the enthusiast have built up a wonderful fabric of imposture; but the thoughtful observer will not confuse the false with the true—speculation with fact

* Winter's "History of Animal Magnetism;" "Foreign Review," vol. v. 1830; Ennemoser's "History of Magic;" "Mesmer," by M. Bersot, &c.

—or refuse to believe *all* he cannot understand. There is much that is still uncertain and unintelligible in the delicate relations which exist between mind and matter; and how far the power of imagination and the force of will may be extended has not been decided with any degree of exactness. It is not impossible that to some temperaments may be given a capability of influencing—interpenetrating, as it were—or sympathizing with other temperaments, so as to produce those psychical phenomena which we are daily witnessing, but which, since we cannot expound their causes, we put aside or ridicule. The common realities of to-day were the wonders of yesterday, and there may come a time when the mental delusions of the present may be more clearly interpreted, and the theory of magnetism or mesmerism be placed upon a sound foundation, and reduced to fixed and intelligible principles. The miraculous cures effected by Jesus and his disciples were probably the results of natural laws, which the Divine intellect alone could comprehend and explain; and the influence of the will over the imagination, and the power of an absorbing faith, were undoubtedly among the agencies by which the Saviour wrought His wonders. About every science.

· springs the overgrowth of folly, error, and quackery : let us learn to distinguish between the parasites and the noble tree they endeavour to conceal !

Paracelsus,—of whom Liebig has justly said, that “ he had the instinct, but not the full consciousness of the right path,”—was the first promulgator of the magnetic theory of medicine. He taught that there existed a sympathy or attraction between man and the stars, which nourished his senses and his intellect ; and a similar sympathy or attraction between man and the grosser elements, which renovated his flesh and blood. He taught, moreover, that the magnetic force differed according to sex. It was Paracelsus who, as we have shown in a preceding chapter, discovered the secret and miraculous properties of the magnet, which, as he asserted, cured all hysterical and epileptic affections. Diseases could be transferred from the human body to the earth by a skilful application of the magnet. “ If a person suffer,” he wrote, “ from disease, either local or general, experiment with the following remedy. Take a magnet impregnated with mummy,* and

* According to Paracelsus there were six kinds of mummies
Of these the Egyptian, Arabian, Libyan, and Pisasphaltos

combined with rich earth. In this earth sow some seeds that have a likeness to, or homogeneity with, the disease; then let this earth, well sifted and mixed with mummy, be laid in an earthen vessel; and let the seeds committed to it be watered daily with a lotion in which the diseased limb or body has been washed. Thus will the disease be transplanted from the human body to the seeds which are in the earth. Having done this, transplant the seeds from the earthen vessel to the ground, and wait till they begin to flourish into herbs. As they increase, the disease will diminish; and when they have reached their mature growth, will altogether disappear."

The physician Van Helmont was also a firm believer in the efficacy of mineral

differed only in the substances by which the dead body was preserved. The fifth was made from criminals who had been hanged, their corpses exuding "a gentle siccation" that expunged the "watery humour" without destroying the "oil and spiritual," and being cherished by the heavenly luminaries, and strengthened continually by the affluence and impulses of the celestial spirits, might properly be called by "the name of constellated or celestiall mummie." The sixth kind of mummy was composed—but in what manner Paracelsus does not explain—of corpuscles, or spiritual effluences from the frame of the living man. See the *Essay on the Magnet* in the "*Opera Paracelsi*," (*Archidoxarum*, lib. iv. &c.); "*Etudes Biographiques*," by Le Fevre Deumier; and Parkhurst's "*Medicina Diatastica*," ed. London, 1653.

magnetism. "Magnetism," he says, "is an unknown property of a heavenly nature; very much resembling the influence of the stars, and not at all restrained by any boundaries of space. He, therefore, who avails himself of a magnetic means undertakes a business pleasing to God, which has in both worlds, by one order and in equal degree, the same conductor." He expounded with elaborate lucidity the sympathy that existed between different individuals, and which after all, resolves into the well-known influence of a firm will over a weak imagination.

"The will," he says, "is the first of all powers. For through the will of the Creator all things were made and put in motion. In man the will is the fundamental cause of his movements. The will is the property of all spiritual beings, and exhibits itself in them the more actively the more they are free from controlling matter; the strength of their activity demonstrates the purity of spirits.

"The infinite power of the will in the Creator of all things is also firmly fixed in the created being, and is more or less obstructed by matter. The ideas thus enveloped in physical nature operate also naturally—that is, physically—upon the living creature through

combined with rich earth. In this earth sow some seeds that have a likeness to, or homogeneity with, the disease; then let this earth well sifted and mixed with mummy, be laid in an earthen vessel; and let the seeds committed to it be watered daily with a lotion in which the diseased limb or body has been washed. Thus will the disease be transplanted from the human body to the seeds which are in the earth. Having done this, transplant the seeds from the earthen vessel to the ground, and wait till they begin to flourish into herbs. As they increase, the disease will diminish, and when they have reached their mature growth, will altogether disappear."

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For through the will of the Creator things were made and put in motion: the will is the fundamental cause of elements. The will is the property of all beings, and exhibits itself in them as actively the more they are free from gross matter; the strength of this demonstrates the purity of spirits.

The infinite power of the will in the creation of all things is also, firmly fixed in the being, and is more or less observable. The ideas thus conveyed by the natural nature operate also, naturally, upon the living creature.

the channel of the life-activity. They operate to a greater or less extent, according to the will of the operator, and their activity may be repelled or neutralized by the will of the persons operated upon. A magician will thus operate more strongly on a feeble nature than on a strong one, because there is a limit to the power of operating through the will, and others can oppose it more or less successfully, according to their mental strength."

Among other famous apostles of the magnetic creed were *John Reuchlin*, who believed in the curative properties of the Bible, and singularly blended religion and medicine; *Trithemius*, abbot of Sponheim; and *Cornelius Agrippa*, whose career has already been illustrated in these pages. In England these doctrines were learnedly expounded by *Robert Fludd* (*Robertus à Fluctibus*), in his "*Philosophia Mosaica*," where he points out the resemblance between man and the outer world. Man, like the earth, has his poles; is divided by his perpendicular line into two equal parts; wherefore he says man should place himself with his face to the east and his back to the west. He was a great believer in the Sympathetic *Salve* (see p. 286), but cautiously adopted, in addition, the ordinary curative methods of

washing, strapping, cleansing, &c. To the former, however, instead of the latter, Fludd persisted in ascribing the cures which he effected. An attack was made upon his salve by one Foster, a priest, who did not ridicule its absurdity, but denounced its diabolical character. His counterblast was entitled, "Hyplocrisma Spongus; or, A Sponge to wipe away the Weapon-Salve." Fludd was at no loss for a reply, and poured out the vials of his wrath upon the audacious Foster in a pamphlet entitled "The Squeezing of Parson Foster's Sponge; wherein the Sponge-Bearer's inmodest carriage and behaviour towards his brethren is detected; the bitter flames of his slanderous reports are, by the sharp vinegar of truth, corrected and quite extinguished; and lastly, the virtuous validity of his Sponge in wiping away the Weapon-Salve is crushed out and clean abolished."

An enthusiastic believer in the doctrine of sympathies was the imaginative and credulous Sir Kenelm Digby, who fed his beautiful wife Venetia upon vipers' flesh to preserve her loveliness. He implicitly credited the glittering dreams which amused the imagination of the Dwellers on the Threshold of science. In conjunction with Descartes he mused over the

long-desired *elixir vitæ*; though the French philosopher was content to acknowledge that he could only prolong human life to a great extent, and not secure a complete protection against death. Sir Kenelm professed to have received from a Carmelite friar, who himself had obtained it in Persia or Armenia, the recipe of a *Powder of Sympathy*, which healed wounds if applied to the instruments that had caused those wounds. A curious anecdote in illustration of its efficacy is told by the knight. James Howell, the well-known author of the "Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ," having interfered between two of his friends, when engaged in a duel, received a couple of severe cuts on his hand. The dismayed combatants immediately flung down their swords, and embracing him, bound up his hand with a garter. They then conveyed him home, where he was attended by a surgeon. Four or five days afterwards, finding that the wounds had a very dangerous aspect, he repaired to Sir Kenelm, and solicited him to make trial of his sympathetic powder.

Sir Kenelm, having consented, asked him for any article that had his blood upon it. Howell gave him the garter that had first been used as a bandage. This was put into a basin of water in which the knight had

privately dissolved a handful of powder of vitriol.

“As soon as the bloody garter was brought me,” says Sir Kenelm, “I put it in the basin, observing, in the interim, what Mr. Howell did, who stood talking with a gentleman in a corner of my chamber, not regarding at all what I was doing. He started suddenly, as if he had found some alteration in himself. I asked him what he ailed? ‘I know not what ails me, but I find that I feel no more pain. Methinks that a pleasing kind of freshness, as it were a wet cold napkin, did spread over my hand, which hath taken away the inflammation that tormented me more.’ I replied, ‘Since, then, you feel already so much good of my medicament, I advise you to cast away all your plaisters; only keep the wound clean, and in a moderate temper betwixt heat and cold.’ This was presently reported to the Duke of Buckingham, and, a little after to the king, who were both very curious to know the circumstances of the business; which was, that after dinner I took the garter out of the water, and put it to dry before a great fire. It was scarce dry before Mr. Howell’s servant came running, and saying that his master felt as much burning as ever he had done, if not more; for the heat

was such as if his hand were betwixt coals of fire. I answered that, although that had happened at present, yet he should find ease in a short time; for I knew the reason of this new accident, and would provide accordingly; for his master should be free from that inflammation, it might be before he could possibly return to him. But in case he found no ease, I wished him to come presently back again; if not, he might forbear coming. Thereupon he went, and at the instant I did put the garter again into the water; thereupon he found his master without any pain at all. To be brief, there was no sense of pain afterwards; but within five or six days the wounds were cicatrized and entirely healed."

A contemporary of Sir Kenelm's was the celebrated *Valentine Greatrakes*,—the son of an Irish gentleman of good property, and himself of a cultivated mind and refined imagination. Falling at a comparatively early age into a species of religious hypochondria, he persuaded himself that God had gifted him with the power of curing certain diseases—especially those of a nervous or hysterical character. He began to practise as a Heaven-sent physician, and his patients having as much faith in his mission as he had, speedily recovered, so that

some surprising cures were actually effected. His success was bruited far and wide, and elevated him to the position of a prophet or an apostle, so that persons came from all parts of Ireland, and even from England, almost as much to worship as to experience his healing powers. In 1666 he removed to London, and performed some of his miracles before the court of Charles II., but the witty satellites of the merry monarch were too sceptical for Valentine Greatrakes, and he withdrew in dudgeon.

He was the true founder of the mesmeric doctrine, for his cures were performed by motions of the hand only. He laid his hand on the part affected, and so moved the disease downwards. Rust, Bishop of Dromore, says : —“I can as an eye-witness assert that Greatrakes cured dizziness, very bad diseases of the eye and ears, old ulcers, goître, epilepsy, glandular swellings, scirrhus indurations, and cancerous swellings. I have seen swellings disperse in five days that were many years old, but I do not believe by supernatural means ; nor did his practice exhibit anything sacred. The cure was sometimes very protracted, and the diseases only gave way through repeated exertions ; some altogether resisted his endeavours.”

Maxwell, a Scotch physician, was also a disciple of *Paracelsus*, and preached the mesmeric theory so plainly that his language may often be mistaken for that of Mesmer himself. And for his "spirit" and "spirituality" read "imagination," and you can easily understand the success of the mesmerizers in certain cases. "If thou canst avail thyself of this *spirit*, and accumulate it in particular bodies, thou wilt gain no trivial advantage from it, for therein consists all the *mystery of magic*." Undoubtedly: in the most powerful appeals to the imagination, in giving an appearance of reality to the unreal, in producing vivid effects by the excitement of the nerves and senses,—in this consists the "mystery of magic;" and the mystery of magnetism or mesmerism is to be found in the same causes.

One of the most celebrated of the magnetic philosophers was *Father Kircher*, who while repudiating all other forms of magic and necromancy, became a devout believer in the sovereign virtues of the magnet. There is much that is sound and valuable in his great work—"Athanasii Kircheri Magnes, sive De Arte Magnetica, opus tripartitum"—published at Cologne in 1643—but there is also a vast amount of absurdity, error, and prejudice.

Notwithstanding his scepticism in many things, he would swallow the most exaggerated stories. He is very learned on the attraction and repulsion of plants and animals, and believes even in the sympathetic qualities of minerals. He is of opinion that the sting or bite of a venomous creature can best be cured by an application of a part of the very animal from which the mischief has proceeded. Thus the bite of a viper is cured by eating viper's flesh. The scorpion cures the bite of the scorpion, as Kircher had himself witnessed. The great poisonous toad cures the plague-boil, being previously dried in the sun, and then laid upon it. Hence it follows that the true antidote of hydrophobia is in the animal whose bite produces the disease, which Lemnius also asserts ("Levinus Lemnius, de Occultis Naturæ Miraculis"), who recommends the patient to take some hairs ("a hair of the dog that bit you!"), or to eat some part of the same animal. Some years ago a Swiss physician tried it, and especially advised as a remedy a draught of the mad dog's blood. Such are the follies of the wise!

Our list of Paracelsians or magnetizers is not yet complete. Without reference to Cardanus or Baptista Porta, to the Austrian

Gassner—who performed many surprising cures—to Oswald, Croll, Dorn, Michael Toxites, Heinrich Kunnath, or the spiritual enthusiast, Swedenborg, we must devote a line to *Tenzel Wirdig*.

Wirdig was a professor of Rastock, who published in 1673 a book which produced a great sensation—"Tenzelius Wirdig, Nova Medicina Spirituum." In his wild extravagant pages the magnetic theory ran riot. He distinguished clearly the attraction and repulsion existing between the souls of all the bodies on earth and the stars in heaven. "Out of this relationship of sympathy and antipathy," he wrote, "arises a constant movement in the whole world, and in all its parts, and an uninterrupted communion between heaven and earth, which produces universal harmony. The stars, whose emanations consist merely of fire and spirits, have an undoubted influence on earthly bodies; and their influence on man demonstrates itself by life, motion, and warmth, those things without which he cannot live. The influence of the stars is strongest at birth. The new-born child inhales this influence, and on his first breath his whole constitution frequently depends; nay, even his whole life."*

* Quoted by Ennemoser, "History of Magic," ii. 271.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century the theory of magnetic-medicine was taken up by *Father Hehl*, a learned Jesuit, and a professor of astronomy at the University of Vienna. He obtained a considerable reputation by the surprising cures he effected; applying peculiarly-shaped steel-plates to those parts of the naked body which were afflicted with disease. In the year 1774 he initiated Anthony Mesmer into his system. But Mesmer was a man of fervent imagination and original mind, and soon developed for himself a new curative theory, which is known as MESMERISM, or ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

Anthony Mesmer was born at Mersburg, in Swabia, in May, 1734, of a respectable family. Having received a careful education, and displaying mental powers beyond the average, he was sent to study medicine at the University of Vienna, where he took his degrees in 1766. The peculiar bias of his intellect displayed itself in the thesis he delivered on receiving his diploma. He chose for its subject the influence of the planets on the human body, reviving the astral medicine of the early physicians, and protesting that "the sun, moon, and fixed stars mutually affect each other in their orbits; that they

cause and direct in our earth a flux and reflux not only in the sea, but in the atmosphere; and that they similarly influence all organized bodies through the medium of a subtle and mobile fluid, which pervades the universe, and associates all things together in mutual harmony and combination." This power operated mainly on the nervous system, and produced two states, which he called *intension* and *remission*. To these two states he attributed the periodicity of certain diseases.

Having met with Father Hehl, and been inoculated with his theories, Mesmer proceeded to experimentalize with the metallic plates, and was enabled by the excessive and imaginative faith of his patients to effect some wonderful cures. Of these, Father Hehl as the discoverer, claimed the credit. Mesmer, arrogant and haughty, was by no means inclined to yield it, and a wordy war (*rixa verborum*) broke out between the two philosophers, which afforded much amusement to calmer and less extravagant minds. But Mesmer soon soared beyond the dull conceptions of Father Hehl, and published to the world the remarkable system with which his name will always be associated.

Among his patients was a young lady named Æsterline, who suffered under a con-

vulsive disease. Its accesses were periodical, and known by a violent rush of blood to the head, which produced delirium, and was followed by syncope. These symptoms, says Mackay, he soon succeeded in reducing under his system of planetary influence, and imagined he could foretell the periods of intension and remission. Having thus satisfied himself respecting the origin of the disease, he became convinced that he could effect a decided cure if he could ascertain beyond doubt, what he had long believed, that there existed between the bodies which compose our globe an action equally reciprocal and similar to that of the heavenly bodies, by means of which he could artificially imitate the periodical returns of the flux and reflux already mentioned. He soon convinced himself that this action did exist. When experimenting with the metallic plates of Father Hehl, he thought their efficacy depended on their form; but he afterwards found that he could produce the same effects without using them at all, merely by passing his hands downwards towards the feet of the patient, even when at a considerable distance.

Thus was shadowed out the grand theory of Mesmerism! Its author, elate with pride and

satisfaction, immediately communicated it to the scientific societies of Europe, but alas for the obtuseness of these conservative and bigoted communities!—only the Academy of Sciences deigned to forward a reply, and that reply was by no means in accordance with the philosopher's wishes. Mesmer, however, reflected that no great truth had ever won its way to the acceptance of the world until after a long and desperate struggle with prejudice and ignorance, and continued to promulgate his discoveries wherever he could obtain an audience. He declared that the universe was full of the magnetic fluid; that it permeated every human body, and that one individual could communicate his excess or superabundance of it to another by an exertion of the will. He declared that it was almost identical with the electric fluid, and might be propagated in the same way, through the agency of intermediate bodies. He had charged jars with it in the same way as is done with electricity. "Paper," he said, "bread, silk, wool, leather, glass, steel, dogs, men, all might be rendered magnetic to such a degree that they should produce the same effect as the loadstone on diseased persons."

In spite of these philosophical meditations,

Mesmer was looked upon—by the literati of Vienna—as a quack. He was not: he was an enthusiast, and if he deceived others was himself the first deceived. He brooded over his fancies until to his excited imagination they became actual and irrefragable facts. But to escape the contempt and ridicule of the Viennese he quitted the Austrian capital, and travelled into Swabia and Switzerland. In the latter country he formed an acquaintance with Gassner, whose wonderful cures had gained him the reputation of a prophet or an apostle. Mesmer declared the cures were effected by means of the magnetic fluid, and experimenting on some of Gassner's patients, was as successful as the Swiss philosopher in his manipulations. Emboldened by these triumphs he ventured into the hospitals of Berne and Zurich, and cured a case of ophthalmia and another of gutta serena. Unfortunately, in the two latter cases his patients were not so satisfied with the cure as he was, and even protested that they could not see. But Mesmer returned to Vienna crowned with victory, and fully believing that he could convince or silence the most rampant scepticism.*

* Baron Dupotet's "Introduction to the Study of Animal Magnetism."

Vienna, however, betrayed no anxiety to give M. Mesmer the welcome due to his extraordinary genius! He was not fortunate either in the cures he attempted there; perhaps because the Austrians are not gifted with a sufficiently susceptible imagination. There was a Mademoiselle Paradis, who from her birth had been afflicted with blindness, and subject to violent convulsions. Her friends placed her in the hands of the magnetic philosopher, who manipulated her for several days, and then pronounced her cured. But unfortunately she could see nothing, and the convulsive fits were as numerous and as violent as before. Both her family, and an eminent oculist named Barth, declared that she had derived no benefit from Mesmer's manipulations. But Mesmer protested that she was cured; that she and her family and Dr. Barth had entered into a conspiracy to ruin his reputation. He would not sacrifice his theory to a fact, but endeavoured to warp the facts so as to subserve his theory. Heaven preserve *us* from a doctor with a theory! In the merciless hands of a theorist one becomes a helpless and most wretched victim!

Once more the *philosophe incompris* shook

the dust off his shoes at the gates of Vienna. He repaired to Paris (A.D. 1778), the city of cities for the empiric, the charlatan, and the enthusiast. There he proclaimed abroad the principles of his system, and finding the medical profession unwilling or unable to be convinced, prepared to attack the imaginations of the crowd. He furnished a large chamber in a style of great magnificence, and invited the world to witness the powerful effects of the magnetic fluid. Among other converts was M. d'Eslon, a physician of celebrity, and his accession to the ranks of Mesmer's disciples ensured the success of the new system. It became *the rage*. Fashion took it up as a new plaything, and rank and beauty were delighted with a theory that promised a fresh sensation. Everything that could charm the senses and influence the imagination was carefully studied by Mesmer; and his saloons were enriched with stained-glass windows, filled with the most delicious incense and the most fragrant perfumes, and pervaded with the sweet sounds of unseen but exquisite music. The débauché, the student, the idle, the inquisitive, the imaginative, the enthusiastic—all found in the new system a something adapted to their tastes, and willingly yielded themselves up to

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the moral and intellectual intoxication which Mesmer knew so well how to induce.

Fancy a saloon gorgeously adorned with the richest hangings and the most splendid and luxurious furniture—sweet sounds rising upon the air, and delicious odours—and a soft dim light streaming through the many-coloured glass. In the centre observe an oval vessel about four feet long and one foot deep. The bottles which it contains are filled with magnetic water, well-corked, and disposed with their necks upwards and outwards, while they are partially covered with water impregnated with iron filings. An attendant enters and places over the vessel an iron cover, pierced with many holes, which is called the *baquet*. A long moveable iron rod issues from each hole. The patients approach; seat themselves round the mysterious vessel; apply to the diseased limb an iron rod, and then clasp each other's hand, and press their knees as closely together as may be, in order to assist the transmission of the magnetic fluid. The music ceases and a solemn silence prevails.

Now glide into the silent chamber the *assistant magnetizers*; young, handsome, well-proportioned and vigorous men, who address themselves to the different patients—clasp

them by the knees—rub them gently down the spine—fix them by a powerful and steady glance—and softly press the bosoms of the females. Meanwhile, from a concealed instrument or singer breaks forth a wild strain of melting melody, until the imagination is sufficiently aroused, and the ladies especially lose their self-control. Some grow delirious; some fall into a fit of insensibility; others appear intoxicated; they give vent to their feelings in sobs and sighs and shrieks; their faces glow; their eyes gleam and flash; the scene assumes the aspect of a Bacchic revel.

Into this chaos of passion and emotion strides Mesmer, like an enchanter prepared to subdue the demons he has evoked. His brow is grave and lofty, and his eyes seem fixed in the stony glare of speculation. He wears a gorgeous robe of silk, embroidered with gold flowers, and carries in his hand a long white rod, which he waves to and fro with solemn gestures. Before the unutterable calmness of his mien the waves of passion gradually subside. The shriek and the sob are no longer heard. His eye controls the delirious and awes the ungovernable. Then he addresses himself to the insensible: he passes his hands over the eyebrows and down the spine;

traces mysterious figures with his rod upon the breast and abdomen ; and recalls them to life and action. Then the mad revel ceases, and each patient declares that from the magnetic wand flowed through all his body a current of cold vapour, and from Mesmer's hands a glowing kindling stream, so that his pangs were relieved, and his spirit possessed with an undefinable sensation of happiness.

It is no marvel that such séances as these should cause a surprising excitement through all Paris ; and that Mesmer should be no less the object of the admiration of one party than of the scorn and hostility of another. Some said he had sold himself to the devil ; others denounced him as a quack and fool ; but hundreds adored him as directly inspired by Heaven to work his miraculous cures. At the instigation of D'Eslon, Mesmer challenged the investigation of the Faculty of Medicine, proposing to select twenty-four patients, of whom he would treat twelve according to his own magnetic system, leaving the other twelve to the attentions of orthodox practitioners. But as Mesmer proposed that the inquiry should be directed not to the means by which his effects were produced, but to their efficacy in producing those effects, the Faculty of

Medicine declined so one-sided an examination. That Mesmer had effected some surprising cures could not be denied, but that they were due to any magnetic influence was more than doubtful. Imagination has sometimes a wonderful curative power. In fact, as Mr. Braid afterwards asserted, "the whole depended on the physical and psychical condition of the patient, and not at all on the volition or passes of the operator throwing out a magnetic fluid or exciting into activity some mystical universal fluid or medium." This condition he described as "a derangement of the cerebro-spinal centres and of the circulatory and respiratory and muscular systems, induced by a fixed state, absolute repose of body, fixed attention, and suppressed respiration, concomitant with that fixity of attention."*

An application to Marie Antoinette for her influence with the government was equally unsuccessful. The ministry indeed offered him a pension of twenty thousand francs, and an order of knighthood, if he had made any medical discovery, and would communicate that discovery to some physicians to be named by the king. But Mesmer shrunk from any practical test of his pretensions, and affecting

* Braid, "Neurypnology, or the Rationale of Nervous Sleep."

to be disgusted with the cold calculating spirit of the government, suddenly quitted Paris, and retired to Spa. During his absence a commission of savants and another of physicians—the one appointed by the Faculty of Medicine, the other by the Académie des Sciences—made a careful examination into the doctrines of magnetism and the procedure of the magnetizers. Mesmer hastily returned to Paris to gather in the harvest of credulity before the labours of the commissioners were terminated—which, as he foresaw, completely exposed the groundlessness of the new “science”—and having accumulated a fortune, betook himself to his native province to enjoy it in tranquillity. He died in 1815, at the advanced age of eighty-one.

Notwithstanding the blow administered to mesmerism by the reports of the French commissioners, it still found numerous enthusiastic votaries in France and Germany and Italy. Among these the most celebrated was the Marquis de Puysegur, who carried the theory of Mesmer to still greater extravagances, and discovered the condition of magnetic somnambulism. The Chevalier de Barbarin made another step in advance, and dispensed with the magnetic wand.

In England the new delusion was first promulgated about 1788 by Dr. Mainaudue, and found a number of eager disciples. One of the earliest publications on the subject was issued by Mr. Chenevix in 1829, and the experiments performed by that gentleman attracted the attention of Dr. Elliotson, who speedily became one of the high priests of the great mystery. From that time to the present scarce a year has elapsed without some fresh treatise on its marvels; and most impassionate inquirers will now allow that amidst a vast amount of error, extravagance, and falsehood, there are some undoubted facts sufficiently curious to excite the attention of the philosophical student.

From a careful survey of the various phenomena of animal magnetism, it seems evident that they may be classified under six distinct heads:—

1st stage: called *Waking*, in which the intellect and the senses remain unchanged.

2nd stage: *Half-sleep*, or *imperfect crisis*. The sense of vision is now impaired,—the eye withdrawing itself from the influence of the will, but most of the other senses preserving their activity.

3rd stage: The *magnetic* or *mesmeric sleep*.

The organs of the senses refuse to perform their respective functions, and the patient is in an unconscious state.

4th stage: The *perfect crisis*, or *simple somnambulism*. In this condition the patient is said to "wake within himself," and regains his consciousness. He is in a state which is neither sleeping nor waking, but something between the two.

5th stage: *Lucidity*, or *lucid vision*,—more commonly known as *Clairvoyance*; in Germany, *Hellsehen*. "In this state the patient is said to obtain a clear knowledge of his own internal mental and bodily state, is enabled to calculate with accuracy the phenomena of disease which will naturally and inevitably occur, and to determine what are their most appropriate and effectual remedies. He is also said to possess the same faculty of internal inspection with regard to other persons who ~~have~~ been placed in mesmeric connexion (*en rapport*) with him."

6th stage: *Universal Lucidity* (in German, *Allgemeine Klarheit*). In this condition the lucid vision becomes largely increased, and extends to objects whether close at hand or at a distance.

The reader who would wish to examine

further into this curious phase of human error may consult Lang's "Mesmerism—its History, Phenomena, and Practice;" Dr. George Winter's "History of Animal Magnetism;" and "Dr. Russell's History and Heroes of Medicine."*

* Carlyle's characteristic portrait of Mesmer may here be quoted:—"Observe Herr Doctor Mesmer, in his spacious Magnetic Halls. Long-stoled he walks; reverend, glancing upwards, as in rapt commune; an antique Egyptian Hierophant in this new age. Soft music flits; breaking fitfully the sacred stillness. Round their Magnetic Mystery, which to the eye is mere tubs with water—sit breathless, rod in hand, the circles of beauty and fashion, each circle a living circular *Passion-Flower*; expecting the magnetic afflatus, and new-manufactured Heaven-on-Earth. O, women! O, men! great is your infidel-faith! . . . Had not the Academy of Sciences, with its Baillys, Franklins, Lavoisiers, interfered! But it did interfere. Mesmer may pocket his hard money, and withdraw."—*The French Revolution*, book ii. c. 6.

THE END.

DIVINE CHARACTERS OF THE PLANETS.

[See vol. ii., page 65.]

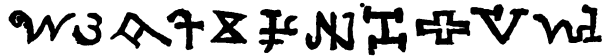
THE SUN.



THE MOON.



JUPITER.



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MERCURY.



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