The philosophy of mystery

Large Print



Walter Cooper Dendy

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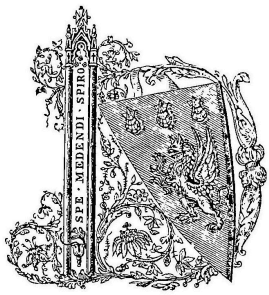
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THE PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTERY ***

THE

PHILOSOPHY

OF

MYSTERY.



“We so intreateth this serious and terrible matter of Spirites, that now and then insertyng some strange stories of counterfeyts, doth both very lybely display their falsehood, and also not a little recreate his reader: and yet in the ende he so aptly concludeth to the purpose, that

his hystories seeme not idle tales, or impertinent vagaries, but very truethes, naturally falling under the compasse of his matter."

THE

PHILOSOPHY

OF

MYSTERY.

BY

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TO HIS COUSINS,

STEPHEN DENDY, ESQ.

OF PARIS,

AND

CHARLES COOK DENDY, ESQ.

OF SOUTHGATE HOUSE, CHICHESTER;

AND TO HIS BROTHER,

EDWARD STEPHEN DENDY,

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,

IN TOKEN OF THE AFFECTIONATE REGARD

OF THE AUTHOR.

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THE

PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTERY.

THE CHALLENGE.

"There are more things in heav'n and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy."—HAMLET.

THERE was a shallop floating on the Wye, among the gray rocks and leafy woods of Chepstow. Within it were two fair girls reclining: the one blending the

romantic wildness of a maid of Italy with the exquisite purity of English nature; the other illuming, with the devotion of a vestal, the classic beauty of a Greek.

There was a young and learned bachelor sitting at the helm. Study had stamped an air of thoughtfulness on his brow; yet a smile was ever playing on his lips, as his heart felt the truth and influence of the beautiful life around him.

Listen, gentle reader, we pray thy courtesy and thy patience, as a rude unskilful pen traces the breathed thoughts of these wanderers of the Wye.

CASTALY. We have roamed, dear Ida, among the classic lands of the far-off Mediterranean: we have looked, from her pinnacles of snow, on the silvery gleaminess of Switzerland, and from purple sierras on the sunny splendour of Spain; yet these English meadows, with their fringes of wild bloom, come o'er the heart with all the freshness of an infant's dream. Yon majestic crag of Wyndcliff is flinging its purple shadows athwart the water, and floods of golden glory are streaming through the beech-woods of Piercefield: and see, our little sail, white as the wing of a swan, is wafting us towards Abbey Tintern, along this beautiful valley, where the river almost doubles on itself; meandering among its mead-flowers and its mosses, as loth to leave its luxuriant bed. Listen! the breath of evening is among the trees that dip in the ripple of the Wye their leaves of shivering gold. What a scene for minions of the moon to revel in! Say, shall we charm the lingering hours of this midsummer night among the ivied cloisters of the abbey? But where is Astrophel, our moon-struck student, who, like Chaucer's scholar, keeps

——"at his bed's head,
A twenty books clothed in black and red,
Of Aristotle and his philosophy?"——

They have not taught him courtesy, or he would not steal away from the light of our eyes to commune with owls and ivy-bushes.

Yet we promise him our smile for *your* sake, Evelyn. Indeed, I am thinking his mysteries will chime in admirably with the solemnity of this lone abbey. We appoint him master of our revels.

EVELYN. Let your smile be in pity, fair Castaly, on the illusions of Astrophel. Ensconced in his dark closet, within a charmed ring of black-letter folios, he has wofully warped his studies, and has read himself into the belief that he is a GIFTED SEER. Yet love him, lady, for his virtues; for his history is a very paradox. His heart is melting with charity for the beings of earth, yet his mind is half-weaned from their fellowship. At his imminent peril, he leaps into the Isis to save a drowning boy, and the world calls him misanthrope, withal. It is the fate indeed of many a cloistered scholar, whose

——"desires are dolphin like,
And soar above the element they live in."

Such is Astrophel.

IDA. He looks his part to perfection. There is a shadowy expression in his dark eye, as it were poring over the volume of his own thoughts. Beneath the slender shaft of yon eastern window, behold this proselyte to the sublime science of shadows. He approaches.

EV. The *hour* is on him yet.—Astrophel!

ASTROPHEL. Whisper, and tread lightly, Evelyn, for this is haunted ground. Underneath this velvet

turf rest the mouldering bones of a noble. I have held communion in my slumber with the spirit by which they were once animated and moved; and the mysteries of the tomb have been unfolded to me. The *eidōlon* of Roger Bigod has thrice come across my sight.

CAST. A ghost!

EV. And Astrophel believes the truth of this vision! Such phantasy might well become the Cistercian monks, who once stalked along these gloomy cloisters, but not an Oxford scholar.

ASTR. And why not an Oxford scholar, Evelyn? I *do* believe in the existence of beings out of the common course of nature; and, indeed, the history of the world has ever proved the *general* leaning to this belief, and my own mind feels that this universal adoption is a proof of *reality* of existence. Smile at, or reason with me, you will not shake my faith, for I believe it true; and even Johnson confessed, that "although all argument might be against it, yet all belief is for it."

EV. The diffusion of this fallacy, Astrophel, proves only the universal sameness of the constitution of mind. You may, indeed, cite the high authority of Johnson, that "a belief in the apparitions of the dead could become universal only by its truth." Yet, if this one word, *apparition*, be rightly interpreted, it will not imply the *existence* of real phantoms, however ethereal, *before* the eye, for the notion so construed would have been a grand error of Imlac; no, he adopts an *indefinite* expression, conscious that mere metaphysics were not illustrative of this subtle question.

There was one Theophilus Insulanus, who, I think, calls all those who have not faith in phantoms, *irreligious*, because, forsooth, "these ghosts are never

employed on subjects of frivolous concern." I may be under the ban of this flimsy enthusiast, but you will not gain me as a proselyte, Astrophel, for, like our great poet, I have seen too many ghosts myself.

Yet I know some few self-created wizards, who have solved to their hearts' content those two grand mysteries, the *real* existence and the *purpose* of ghostly visitations; who, like Owain Glyndwr, "can call spirits from the vasty deep," and even expect that they will "come when they do call for them." Others have laboured under self-glamourie, and believed themselves magicians, until put *to the proof*. I remember the painter, Richard Cosway, was under this illusion; and, when the old cynic Northcote desired him to raise Sir Joshua Reynolds, the pseudo-magus confessed himself foiled, by advancing this simple excuse, "I would, were it not *sinful*!"

It were well if these monomaniacs were laid in the famous bed of St. Hilary at Poitiers; for there, with the muttering of a prayer or two, as the legend tells us, madmen may be cured.

But, in truth, the light of divine reason has so far dispelled these fancies for the supernatural, that very few of *us*, I presume, are confident in the hope of raising a ghost when we want one; or of laying it in the Red Sea for a hundred years, by two clergymen, with "bell, book, and candle," and scraps of mystic Latin, when it becomes rude or troublesome.

IDA. Will you not concede that many visionaries have *believed*, and written from pure and even holy motives?

EV. There is no doubt of this, lady; yet while it has fanned the flame of superstition in minds of lower intellect, with many, the endeavour to *prove too much* has marred these motives, and weakened faith, even in the credulous; so that we may hope the

wild romances of Beaumont, and Burthogge, and Baxter, and Aubrey, and Glanville, and that arch-mystagogue Moreton (whose book is half full of prolix dialogues between ghosts and ghost-seers), will soon be mere objects of interest and curiosity to the black-letter bibliomaniac and the more erudite legend-hunter.

CAST. We will not submit to your anathema, Evelyn. This learned clerk has challenged our faith. What a treasury of secrets might he unfold to us from the mystic tomes of antiquity, the wonders of profane psychology; from the tales of Arabia to Vatheck and the Epicurean—from the classic mythology of Homer to the wild romances of his humble prototype Ossian.

Let it be a match: we will listen, Astrophel, while you "unsphere the spirit of Plato;" and here we sit in judgment, on the velvet throne of this our court of Tintern.

NATURE AND MOTIVES OF GHOSTS.

"In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
The graves stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets."

HAMLET, 4to. B.

ASTR. It is not from the sources of *mythology* alone, that I adduce my illustrations of the reality of ghosts, but from the myriads of *incidents* which ancient and modern *history* record. Yet may I well crave your courtesy for the scraps of fable, and perchance of imposture, that may unwittingly creep into my discourse. Listen to me.

It was believed by the ancients that each body possessed three ghosts—to be released on its dissolution. The *manes* at once emigrated to the region of Pluto: the *spiritus* ascended to the skies: the *umbra* or shade still wandered on the earth. Or, as the poet has more comprehensively sung,

"Bis duo sunt homini, manes, caro, spiritus, umbra;
Quatuor ista loci bis duo suscipiunt:
Terra tegit carnem, tumulum circumvolat umbra,
Orcus habet manes, spiritus astra petit."

Meaning that there are four principles in man, and this is their destiny:—the *flesh* to earth; the *ghost* to the tomb; the *soul* to Hades; and the *spirit* to heaven.

The queen of Carthage, confiding in this creed, threatens Æneas that her umbra will haunt him upon earth, while her manes will rejoice in his torments.

The notions of other mystic scholars are thus recorded by old Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy:" as those of Surius—"that there be certain monsters of hell and places appointed for the punishment of men's souls, as at Hecla in Iceland, where the ghosts of dead men are familiarly seen, and sometimes talk with the living. Saint Gregory, Durand, and the rest of the schoolmen, derive as much from Ætna in Sicily, Lipara, Hiera—and those volcanoes in America, and that fearful mount Heckleberg in Norway, where lamentable screeches and howlings are continually heard, which strike a terror to the auditors: fiery chariots are continually seen to bring in the souls of men in the likeness of crows, and devils ordinarily goe in and out." And then, to bring this phantasy to a climax by a pandemonium of ghosts, listen to Bredenbachius, in his "Perigranions in the Holy Land," where "once a yeare dead bodies arise about March, and walk, and

after awhile hide themselves again: thousands of people come yearly to see them." And this reminds me of the phantom of old Booty, who at the hour of his death in England was seen by the crew of a ship running into the crater of Stromboli in the remote Mediterranean,—a story which even in the present century was made the subject of discussion in a justice court.

Now, you must know, the ancients believed that only those who died of the sword possessed this privilege.

These are the words of Flavius Josephus: "What man of virtue is there that does not know that those souls which are severed from their fleshly bodies in battles by the sword are received by the ether, that purest of elements, and joined to that company which are placed among the stars:—that they become good demons and propitious heroes, and shew themselves as such to their posterity afterwards; while upon those souls that wear away in and with their distempered bodies, comes a subterranean night to dissolve them to nothing, and a deep oblivion to take away all the remembrance of them? And this, notwithstanding they be clean from all spots and defilements of this world; so that in this case the soul at the same time comes to the utmost bounds of its life, and of its body, and of its memorial also."

The mystery of the nature of these ghosts I may not presume to define; but there are many learned writers of antiquity who believed in their *materiality*, and broached the intricate question of their quality and formation.

The alchymist Paracelsus writes of the *astral element* or *spirit*—one of the two bodies which compose our nature: being more ethereal, it survived

some time after the death of the more substantial form, and sometimes became the familiar spirit of the magician. And what writes Lucretius the Epicurean to illustrate his credence in apparitions? That the surfaces of bodies are constantly thrown off by a sort of centrifugal force; that an exact image is often presented to us by this surface coming off as it were entire, like the cast skin of the rattle-snake or the shell of the chrysalis; and thus the ideas of our absent or departed friends *strike* on the mind.

The olden chymists, in the age of Louis XIV. accounted for spectral forms by the saline atoms of a putrid corpse being set free, and combining again in their pristine form. Listen, I pray you, to this grave philosophy of an abstruse essay, writ in 1794.

"The apparitions of souls departed do, by the virtue of their formative plastic power, frame unto themselves the vehicles in which they appear out of the moisture of their bodies. So ghosts do often appear in church-yards, and that but for a short time, to wit, before the moisture is wholly dried up."

"Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
Oft seen in charnel-vaults and sepulchres,
Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave."

And we read in the chronicles, that "during the time the ancients *burned*, not *buried* their dead, there was no such appearance of ghosts as is now."

Why waves the coarse grass ranker over the grave? It is touched by the larva of the rotting carcase, which, ascending from its putrid chrysalis, a butterfly, or Psyche, flits awhile like an ephemera, and drops again into the vault.

A sentiment something like this, I believe, was the grand cause of the enrolment of the mummies by the Egyptians; for they thought while the body

remained entire, the soul was flitting about it: and the early Christians even believed that a portion at least of the soul remained, uncorrupted by the body.

Evelyn will grant that among the Romans there was a devout wish to be buried near venerated beings and saints, an *emanation* from whose bodies, they believed, would inspire the hearts of the believers.

And here I will relate a story from the Dinan Journal of 1840, and also the fragment of a very mysterious tale told with all the solemnity of a faithful chronicle.

"We had the curious spectacle of a long procession of girls from Pleudiheus, passing through our streets to the chapel of Saint Anne, to offer up prayers for the repose of the soul of the mother of one of them, who has been dead twenty-two years, and who every five years has appeared to her daughter, urging her to have masses said for her. This time the troubled spirit prescribed the day, hour, and place of the service, and even the precise dresses she would have the votaries wear. Consequently, they were all lightly clothed in white, although the rain fell and the streets were full of mud.—Some of the inhabitants of Dinan affirm that they saw the ghost of the deceased, marching at the head of the procession to the door of the chapel, where it remained till the mass was finished, and then suddenly vanished."

Returning from the harbour to Cadiz with some Spanish doñas, the Baron Geramb heard a voice in French, crying, "Save me! Help, help!" but at the time he took little or no heed of the matter. On the morrow was seen on the shore of the harbour a body on a black board, with lighted tapers by its side, which was covered by the Baron's direction. During a

tempest in the evening, some secret impulse directed him again to the shore. Before his bewildered sight arose from the spot a shapeless phantom wrapped in the black winding-sheet which he had provided.

The phantom moved along with gigantic strides, assuming a globular form, and then, whirling in spiral circles, bounded off, and appeared at a distance like a giant. The spectre led the Baron to the streets of Cadiz, its course being accompanied by a noise as of the tinkling of autumnal leaves. In Cadiz a door suddenly opened with force, and the spectre rushed like lightning into the house, and plunged into the cellar. There was the sound of deep groaning, and the Baron descended into the vault: there lay the corpse naked and livid, and on it was prostrated an aged man, uttering the deep sighs of abject misery and despair. In a gloomy corner of this cave of death leaned the phantom, revolving in its spiral whirls, and then changing to a floating cloud of light; and then there beamed forth the pale features of a youth, undulating as if on the bosom of a wave, which murmured in the ear. Then came the chaunting of anthems and prayers for the dead, and a glittering young girl in white robes glided into the cellar, and knelt in devotion by the body.

The phantom—and so the legend proceeds.

There is a wondrous mystery, I grant, enveloping this story; but if there be any truth in that alchymic re-animation, *Palingenesy*—

"If chemists from a rose's ashes,
Can raise the rose itself in glasses;"

nay, if the sparkling diamond shines forth from a mass of charcoal, why may not the ashes of a body be made into a ghost, illustrative of the philosophy of substantial apparitions, adopted by Kircher,—a

body *rebuilt*, after being resolved, for a time, into its constituent elements? The Parisian alchymists of the seventeenth century, indeed, demonstrated this mystery, and raised a phœnix from its ashes. They submitted to the process of distillation some earth from the cemetery of the Innocents; during which ceremony, they were scared by the appearance of perfect human shapes, struggling in the glass vessels they were employing. And, lastly, Dr. Ferriar thus deposes:—A ruffian was executed, his body dissected, and his skull pulverised by an anatomist. The student, who slept in the chamber of experiment, saw, in the night-time, a progressive getting together of the fragments, until the criminal became perfect, and glided out at the door.

And here is a legend of deeper mystery still.

There was a merry party collected in a town in France, and amongst all the gay lords and ladies there assembled, there was none who caused so great a sensation as a beautiful young lady, who danced, played, and sang in the most exquisite style. There were only two unaccountable circumstances belonging to her: one was, that she never went to church or attended family prayers; the other, that she always wore a slender, black velvet band or girdle round her waist. She was often asked about these peculiarities, but she always evaded the interrogatories; and still, by her amiable manners and beauty won all hearts. One evening, in a dance, her partner saw an opportunity of pulling the loop of her little black girdle behind: it fell to the ground, and immediately the lady became pale as a sheet; then, gradually shrunk and shrunk, till at length nothing was to be seen in her place but a small heap of grey ashes.

And what think you now, Evelyn?

EV. I think your candle burned very blue, Astrophel, when you were poring over these midnight legends; yet, I believe, I may, by and by, explain the story of your Lady of the Ashes;—all, excepting the mystery of the sable girdle. But, methinks, you should not have stopped short of the qualities by which we may recognise the *genus* of these phantoms. There was once, as I have heard, a ghost near Cirencester, which vanished in a very nice perfume, and a melodious twang; and Master Lilly, therefore, concluded it to be a fairy: and Propertius, I know, writes of another; and he decided, that the scent diffused on her disappearance, proclaimed her to be a goddess! Glanville has set himself to argue upon, nay, demonstrate, all questions regarding materiality and immateriality, and the nature of spirits; puzzling us with mathematical diagrams, and occupying fifteen chapters on the nature of the witch of Endor: and Andrew Moreton, too, in his "Secrets," comments, with pedantic profanation, on the "infernal *paw-wawing* of this condemned creature." Coleridge, and even Sir Walter, who had a mighty love of legends, propose a question, whether she was a ventriloquist or an aristocratic fortune-teller, or an astrologer or a gipsy, imposing on the credulity of Saul. And yet that same Sir Walter very shrewdly suggested to Sir William Gell the *manufacture* of a ghost, with a thin sheet of tin, painted white, so that by half a turn the spectre would instantly vanish.

CAST. A ghost, I believe, according to the rules of phantasy, ought to be without matter or form, or indeed any sensible properties. Yet are very serious tales related of guns bursting when fired at them, and swords broken by their contact, and of loud voices issuing from filmy phantoms through which the moonbeams are seen to glimmer. A spirit ought,

of course, to communicate with us in another way than that which we know, and possess those ethereal faculties of creeping through chinks or keyholes, and of resuming its airy form, like the sylph of Belinda, when the "glittering forfex" had cut it in twain. An exquisite morceau of such a phantom just now flits across my memory. It is of two old ladies dwelling in two border castles in Scotland. One of these dames was visited by the spectre *bust* of a man; and the other by the *lower half* of him. Which had the better bargain, I know not, but I believe —

ASTR. Nay, it were not difficult, lady, to overwhelm me with tales like yours—the idle and unmeaning gossip of a winter's night: but there are many spectral visitations so intimately associated with events, that the faculty even of prophecy cannot be doubted. Bodine, as Burton writes, is fully satisfied that "these souls of men departed, *if* corporeal, are of some shape, and that absolutely round, like sun and moone, because that is the most perfect form: that they can assume other aërial bodies, all manner of shapes at their pleasure, appear in what likeness they will themselves: that they are most swift in motion, can pass many miles in an instant, and so likewise transform bodies of others into what form they please, and, with admirable celerity, remove them from place to place: that they can represent castles in the ayre, armies, spectrums, prodigies, and such strange objects to mortal men's eyes; cause smells, savors, deceive all the senses; foretel future events, and do many strange miracles."

Then the eccentric Francis Grose has thus summed up many of their wondrous attributes: —

"The spirit of a person deceased is either commissioned to return for some especial errand, such as the discovery of a murder, to procure

restitution of lands, or money unjustly withheld from an orphan or widow: or, having committed some injustice whilst living, cannot rest till that is redressed. Sometimes the occasion of spirits revisiting this world is to inform their heir in what secret place or private drawer in an old trunk they had hid the title-deeds of the estate, or where, in troublesome times, they had buried the money and plate. Some ghosts of murdered persons, whose bodies have been secretly buried, cannot be at ease till their bones have been taken up and deposited in sacred ground, with all the rites of Christian burial." The ghost of Hamlet's father walked on the platform at Elsineur, to incite his son to revenge his murder; and many modern phantoms have enlivened the legends of our local histories, bent on the same mysterious errand.

The mythology of the ancients, and the fairy superstition of our own land, are also replete with legends of these apparitions. The rites of sepulture were essential for the repose of the manes. If the body was not quietly entombed, the soul was wandering on the banks of Styx for one hundred years, ere it was permitted Charon to ferry it across the river. Thus spoke the shade of Patroclus to Achilles, in his dream:

"Thou sleep'st, Achilles, and Patroclus, erst
Thy best belov'd, in death forgotten lies.
Haste, give me burial: I would pass the gates
Of Hades, for the shadows of the dead
Now drive me from their fellowship afar."

And this is a prevailing sentiment among the North American Indians:

"The bones of our countrymen lie uncovered, their bloody bed has not been washed clean, their

spirits cry against us,—they must be appeased."

In the letter of Pliny the Consul, to Sura, we learn that there was at Athens a house haunted by a chain-rattling ghost. Athenodorus, the philosopher, hired the house, determined to quiet the restless spirit. "When it grew towards evening, he ordered a couch to be prepared for him in the fore part of the house, and, after calling for a light, together with his pencil and tablets, he directed all his people to retire. The first part of the night passed in usual silence, when at length the chains began to rattle. However he neither lifted up his eyes, nor laid down his pencil, but diverted his observation by pursuing his studies with greater earnestness. The noise increased, and advanced nearer, till it seemed at the door, and at last in the chamber. He looked up and saw the ghost exactly in the manner it had been described to him—it stood before him beckoning with the finger. Athenodorus made a sign with his hand that it should wait a little, and threw his eyes again upon his papers; but the ghost, still rattling his chains in his ears, he looked up and saw him beckoning him as before. Upon this he immediately arose, and, with the light in his hand, followed it. The spectre slowly stalked along as if encumbered with his chains, and, turning into the area of the house, suddenly vanished. Athenodorus, being thus deserted, made a mark with some grass and leaves where the spirit left him. The next day he gave information to the magistrates, and advised them to order that spot to be dug up. This was accordingly done, and the skeleton of a man in chains was there found; for the body having lain a considerable time in the ground, was putrified, and had mouldered away from the fetters. The bones, being collected together, were publicly buried; and thus, after the ghost was

appeased by the proper ceremonies, the house was haunted no more."

Yet, not only to entreat the rites of sepulture, the phantom will walk according to some law of those beings remote from the fellowship of human nature, —it may be to obtain readmission to that earth from which it was, by some fairy spell, in exile.

In the wilds of Rob Roy's country, there is many a Highlander believing still the traditions of the Daoine Shi, or Men of Peace: and among the legends of Aberfoyle there is one phantom tale that is apropos to my illustrations.

There was one Master Robert Kirke. He was one evening taking his night walk on a fairy hill, or dunshi, in the vicinity of his manse. On a sudden he fell to the ground, struck, as it appeared to many, by apoplexy: the seers, however, believed it to be a trance inflicted on him by the fairy people for thus invading the sacred bounds of their kingdom. After the interment, the phantom of the minister appeared to one of his relatives, and desired him to go to Grahame of Duchray, his cousin, and assure him that he was not dead, but was at that time a prisoner in elf land, and the only moment in which the fairy charm could be dissolved, was at the christening of his posthumous child. The counter-spell was this: that Grahame should be present at the baptism, holding a dish in his hand, and that when the infant was brought, he should throw the dish over the phantom; the appearance of which at that moment was faithfully promised.

When the child was at the font, and while the guests were seated, the apparition sat with them at the table; but fear came upon the Græme at this strange glamourie: he forgot the solemn injunction, and it is believed that Mr. Kirke, to this day, "drees

his weird in fairy land."

PROPHECY OF SPECTRES.

"I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound."

HAMLET.

EV. These are very meagre spectres, Astrophel, or accomplices, as the lawyer would say, *after* the fact.

ASTR. I have reserved Prophecies for this evening. In the earliest profane records of our globe, we read of the frequent visitations of prophetic phantoms. Listen, Evelyn, to a story of your own Pliny;—the legend of Curtius Rufus. When he was in low circumstances, and unknown in the world, he attended the governor of Africa into that province. One evening, as he was walking in the public portico, he was extremely surprised with the apparition of a woman, whose figure and beauty were more than human. She told him she was the tutelar power who presided over Africa, and was come to inform him of the future events of his life: that he should go back to Rome, where he should be raised to the highest honours, should return to that province invested with the proconsular dignity, and there should die. Upon his arrival at Carthage, as he was coming out of the ship, the same figure accosted him upon the shore. It is certain, at least, that being seized with a fit of illness, though there were no symptoms in his case that led his attendants to despair, he instantly gave up all hope of recovery, and this prediction was in all its points accomplished.

The shade of Romulus appeared to Julius Proculus, a patrician, foretelling the splendour of

Rome. The fate of the battle of Philippi was shown to Brutus in his tent, by the evil spirit of Cæsar; and Cassius also saw the phantom of Julius on his horse, prepared to strike him, shortly before his suicide. In the Talmud we read of the announcement of the Rabbi Samuel's death to two of his friends, six hundred miles off. Then, the host of legends in that 'treasure-booke' of mystery, "Wanley's Wonders;" the visions of Dion; of Alexander; of Crescentius; of the Pope's legate at the Council of Trent; of Cassius Severus of Parma; and myriads of analogies to these; nay, may we not believe that the Grecian bards wrote fragments of real history, when Patroclus foretels the death of Hector, Hector that of Achilles, and Mezentius of Orodes, or when Œdipus predicts the lofty fate of his family to Theseus?

But leave we the olden classics for the proofs of later ages. In the pine-forests of Germany, and in wild Caledonia, the legends of spirits and shadows abound in the gossip of the old crones, both in the hut of the jager and the sheiling of the Highland peasant.

The *Taisch* (like the *Bodach Glas* of Fergus Mac Ivor,) murmurs the prophecy of death, in the voice of the *Taishtar*, to one about to die; and the *Wraith*, *Swarth*, *Waft*, or *Death-Fetch*, appears in the *Eidōlon*, or likeness, of the person so early doomed, to some loved friend of the party, or sounds of wailing and prophetic voices scream and murmur in the mountain-blast. The wild romances of Ossian, and the shadowy mysteries so brightly illustrated in the poesy of the "Lay," the "Lady of the Lake," and "Marmion," prove how deeply the common mind of Scotland leans to her mysteries; how devoutly her seers foretell a doom. The evidence of Martin, the historian of the Western Isles, is clear and decisive

testimony of the possession of a faculty of foresight; and in the reflecting minds of many sages, who seek not to explain it by the term *coincidence*, or to impute the vision to mere national superstition. Indeed, in their records we have rules noted down, by which the seer may overcome the imperfections of his vision. If this be filmy or indistinct, the cloak or plaid must be turned, and the sight is clear; but then the fated seer is often presented with *his own* wraith.

In Aubrey's "Miscellanies" we read how Sir Richard Napier, immediately before his death, was journeying from Bedfordshire to Berks, and saw his own apparition lying stark and stiff on the bed; how Lady Diana Rich, the Earl of Holland's daughter, was met by her death-fetch in the garden at Kensington, a month ere she died of small-pox;—and listen to this legend of Aventine.

"The emperor Henry went down through the Strudel: in another vessel was Bruno, bishop of Wurtzberg, the emperor's kinsman. There sat upon a rock, that projected out of the water, a man blacker than a Moor, of a horrible aspect, terrible to all who beheld it, who cried out, and said to Bishop Bruno, 'Hear! hear! Bishop: I am thine evil spirit; thou art mine own; go where thou wilt, thou shalt be mine: yet, now will I do nought to thee, but soon shalt thou see me again.' The bishop crossed and blessed himself; but the holy sign was powerless. At Posenbeis, where dwelt the Lady Richlita of Ebersberg, the floor of the banqueting-room fell, in the evening: it was the death-fall of the bishop."

As the protector Seymour was walking with his duchess, at their country seat, they perceived a spectral bloody hand thrust forth from a wall; and he was soon after beheaded.

It is recorded, that, like Julius Cæsar, James of

Scotland had three warnings. The saintly man in Lithgow palace, and another phantom, in Jedburgh, warned King James of his fate: the latter wrote a Latin couplet on the mantel-piece in the hall: had he read it wisely, he had not died at Flodden.

The demon, or the guardian angel of Socrates, was also a prophetic mentor—not only to the sage himself, but even to his companions in his presence; and the slighting of its counsel often brought regret to those who were the subjects of its warning.

In the minds of Xenophon and Plato its influence was devoutly believed, and from the hive of the Attic bee I steal this honied morsel:—"One Timarchus, a noble Athenian, being at dinner in company with Socrates, he rose up to go away, which Socrates observing, bade him sit down again, for, said he, the demon has just now given me the accustomed sign. Some little time after, Timarchus offered again to be gone, and Socrates once more stopped him, saying, he had the same sign repeated to him. At length, when Socrates was earnest in discourse, and did not mind him, Timarchus stole away; and, in a few minutes after, committed a murder, for which, being carried to execution, his last words were, 'That he had come to that untimely end for not obeying the demon of Socrates.' "

When Ben Jonson was sojourning at Hawthornden, he told Mr. Drummond of his own prophetic vision, that, "about the time of the plague in London, being in the country at Sir Robert Cotton's house, with old Camden, he saw, in a vision, his eldest son, then a young child, and at London, appear unto him, with the mark of a bloody cross on his forehead, as if it had been cut with a sword; at which, amazed, he prayed unto God; and in the morning, he came to Mr. Camden's chamber, to tell

him, who persuaded him it was but an apprehension, at which he should not be dejected. In the mean time, there came letters from his wife, of the death of that boy in the plague. He appeared to him of a manly shape, and of that growth he thinks he shall be at the resurrection."

From Walton's Lives I select the following fragment: it is a vision of Doctor Donne, the metaphysician, whose wife died after the birth of a dead child. "Sir Robert (Drury) returned about an hour afterwards. He found his friend in a state of extasy, and so altered in his countenance, that he could not look upon him without amazement. The doctor was not able for some time to answer the question, what had befallen him; but, after a long and perplexed pause, at last said, 'I have seen a dreadful vision since I last saw you. I have seen my dear wife pass twice by me through this room, with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms: this I have seen since I saw you.' To which Sir Robert answered, 'Sure, Sir, you have slept since I went out, and this is the result of some melancholy dream, which I desire you to forget, for you are now awake.' Donne replied, 'I cannot be more sure that I now live, than that I have not slept since I saw you; and am as sure, that at her second appearing, she stopped, looked me in the face, and vanished.' "

There was a *promise* by Lord Tyrone to Lady Beresford of a visitation from the tomb. Even when the phantom appeared to her in the night, the lady expressed her diffidence in its reality, but it placed a mark upon her wrist, and adjusted her bed-curtains in some supernatural fashion, and even wrote something in her pocket-book: so that with earnestness she related to her husband in the

morning this impressive vision; and it was not long ere missives came, which by announcing the death of Lord Tyrone proved the spectre prophetic.

The tragedian John Palmer died on the stage at Liverpool. At the same hour and minute, a shopman in London, sleeping under a counter, saw distinctly his shade glide through the shop, open the door, and pop into the street. This, an hour or two after, he mentioned very coolly, as if Mr. Palmer himself had been there.

Cardan saw, on the ring-finger of his right hand, the mark of a bloody sword, and heard at the same time a voice which bade him go directly to Milan. The redness progressively increased until midnight: the mark then faded gradually, and disappeared. At that midnight hour his son was beheaded at Milan.

It was told by Knowles, the governor of Lord Roscommon when a boy, that young Wentworth Dillon was one day seized with a mood of the wildest eccentricity, contrary to his usual disposition. On a sudden he exclaimed, “My father is dead!” And soon after missives came from Ireland to announce the fact.

The father of Doctor Blomberg, clerk of the closet to George IV., was captain in an army serving in America. We are told by Doctor Rudge, that six officers, three hundred miles from his position, were visited after dinner by this modern Banquo, who sat down in a vacant chair. One said to him, “Blomberg, are you mad?” He rose in silence, and slowly glided out at the door. He was slain on that day and hour.

In the “Diary of a Physician” (an embellished record of facts), we read the story of the spectre-smitten Mr. M——, whose leisure hours were passed in the perusal of legends of diablerie and witchcraft. One evening, when his brain was excited by

champagne, he returned to his rooms, and saw a dear friend in his chair; and this friend had died suddenly, and was at that moment *laid out* in his chamber;—a combination of horrors so unexpected and intense, that monomania was the result.

May I also recount to you this vision from Moore's Life of Byron? "Lord Byron used sometimes to mention a strange story which the commander of the packet, Captain Kidd, related to him on the passage. This officer stated, that being asleep one night in his berth, he was awakened by the pressure of something heavy on his limbs, and, there being a faint light in the room, could see as he thought distinctly the figure of his brother, who was at that time in the same service in the East Indies, dressed in his uniform, and stretched across the bed. Concluding it to be an illusion of the senses, he shut his eyes and made an effort to sleep. But still the same pressure continued, and still as often as he ventured to take another look, he saw the figure lying across him in the same position. To add to the wonder, on pulling his hand forth to touch this form, he found the uniform, in which it appeared to be dressed, *dripping wet*. On the entrance of one of his brother officers, to whom he called out in alarm, the apparition vanished; but in a few months after, he received the startling intelligence, that on that night his brother had been drowned in the Indian seas. Of the supernatural character of this appearance Captain Kidd himself did not appear to have the slightest doubt."

From Dr. Pritchard, I quote this fragment:—"A maid-servant, who lived in the house of an elderly lady, some years since deceased, had risen, early on a winter's morning, and was employed in washing by candle-light the entry of the house; when she was

greatly surprised at seeing her mistress, who was then in a precarious state of health, coming down stairs in her night dress. The passage being narrow, she rose up to let her mistress pass, which the latter did with a hasty step, and walked into the street, appearing, to the terrified imagination of the girl, to pass through the door without opening it. The servant related the circumstance to the son and daughter of the lady, as soon as they came down stairs, who desired her to conceal it from their mother, and anxiously waited for her appearance. The old lady entered the room, while they were talking of the incident, but appeared languid and unwell, and complained of having been disturbed by an alarming dream. She had dreamed that a dog had pursued her from her chamber *down the staircase, and along the entry, and that she was obliged to take refuge in the streets*."

In the manuscripts of Lady Fanshawe, how evident is the fact of spectral prophecy! Sir Richard Fanshawe and his lady were sleeping in a baronial castle in Ireland, surrounded by a moat. At midnight she was awoke by a ghostly and fearful screaming; and, gleaming before the window in the pale moonlight, a female spectre hovered, her light auburn hair dishevelled over her shoulders. While the lady looked in mute astonishment, the spectre vanished, uttering two distinct shrieks. Her terrific story was told in the morning to her host, who evinced no wonder at the mystery, "Indeed," quoth he, "I expected this. This was the prophetic phantom of our house, the spectre of a lady wedded to an ancestor, and drowned by him in the moat from false notions of dignity, because she was not of noble blood. Since this expiation, the phantom appears before every death of my near relations, and one of

these died last night in my castle."—Here may be the prototype of the "White Lady of Avenel."

Among the most exalted families we have other confident records of the recurrence of prophetic phantoms, antecedent to great events. A spectre of this kind formed a part of the household establishment of the Macleans. During the peninsular war, at the moment that the head of the clan died at Lisbon, this wraith was seen to ride screaming along the shore in Scotland.

Arise Evans, in a 12mo. tract, "sold at his house in Long Alley in Blackfriars in 1653," entitled "An Echo from Heaven," foretold the restoration of Charles II.; and his true prophecy was based on the vision of a young face with a crown on, appearing after the shades of Fairfax and of Cromwell.

There is an incident in Roman history so impressive in its catastrophe, so exact in its periods, that few, I think, will deny the inspiration. At the moment that Stephanus stabbed Domitian in his palace at Rome, the philosopher Apollonius Tyaneus, in his school at Ephesus, exclaimed: "Courage, Stephanus! strike the tyrant home!" and a minute after, *when Parthenius completed this homicide*, he added, "he suffers for his crimes—he dies."

I have slightly sketched these illustrations, and I presume to term them prophecies. There are others so complex, yet so complete in every part, as to convert, I might hope, even the unbelief of Evelyn. To the relations of Sir Walter and Dr. Abercrombie, I will add one from Moreton, in his "Essay on Apparitions:" "The Reverend D. Scott, of Broad Street, was sitting alone in his study. On a sudden the phantom of an old gentleman, dressed in a black velvet gown, and full bottom wig, entered, and sat himself down in a chair opposite to the doctor. The

visitor informed him of a dilemma in which his grandson, who lived in the west country, was placed, by the suit of his nephew for the recovery of an estate. This suit would be successful, unless a deed of conveyance was found, which had been hidden in an old chest in a loft of the house. On his arrival at this house, he learned that his grandson had dreamed of this visit, and that his grandfather was coming to aid him in the search. The deed was found in a false bottom of the old chest, as the vision had promised."

In a letter of Philip, the second Earl of Chesterfield, is told the following strange story, which, although not a prophecy, cannot be within the pale of our philosophy. "On a morning in 1652, the earl saw a thing in white, like a standing sheet, within a yard of his bedside. He attempted to catch it, but it slid to the foot of the bed, and he saw it no more. His thoughts turned to his lady, who was then at Networth, with her father, the Earl of Northumberland. On his arrival at Networth, a footman met him on the stairs, with a packet directed to him from his wife, whom he found with Lady Essex her sister, and Mrs. Ramsey. He was asked why he returned so suddenly. He told his motive; and on perusing the letters in the packet, he found that his lady had written to him requesting his return, for she had seen a thing in white, with a black face, by her bedside. These apparitions were seen by the earl and countess, *at the same moment*, when they were forty miles asunder."

The miraculous spirit which the influence of Joan of Arc infused into the desponding hearts of the French army, is writ on the page of history. Before her proposition for the inauguration of Charles VII. at Rheims, she heard a celestial voice in her prayer, "Fille, va, va! je seray à ton ayde—va!" and her

revelation of secrets to the king, which he thought were locked within his own bosom, raised in the court implicit belief in her inspiration.

And now, Evelyn, I ask you,

> "Can such things be,
> And overcome us like a summer cloud,
> Without our special wonder?"——

Ere you smile at my phantasie, and overwhelm me with doubts and solutions, I pr'ythee let me counsel your philosophy. Dig to a certain depth in the field of science, and you may find the roots and the gold dust of knowledge: penetrate deeper, and you will strike against the granite rock, on which rest the cold and profitless reasonings of the sceptic.

CAST. You look on me, Astrophel, as on a bending proselyte. Yet, sooth to tell, it may be difficult to convert me, although I am half won to romance already by the witch-thoughts of him who gilded the science of the heart and mind, with all the iridescent charm of poesy; an *unprofessing* philosopher, yet with marvellous insight of human hearts,—my own loved Shakspere. And you listen to my Lord Lyttelton, he will tell you, in his "Dialogues of the Dead," that "in the annihilation of our globe, were Shakspere's works preserved, the whole science of man's nature might still be read therein." And so beautifully are his sketches of the heart and the fancy blended withal, that we hang with equal delight on the mystic philosophy of Hamlet, the witchcraft of Mab, and Ariel, and Oberon, with their golden wreaths of gay blossoms, as on the dying visions of Katherine, as pure and holy as the vesper-breathings of a novice. Yet the shade of superstition never darkened the brow of Shakspere. Therefore, plume not yourself on your hope of conquest, Astrophel: Evelyn may win

me yet. Philosophy may frown on the visions of an enthusiast, while she doth grace her pages with a poet's dream. But you will not wear the willow, Astrophel: there is a beam of pity for you in the eyes of yon pensive Ida.

IDA. You are a witch, Castaly. Yet *I* have as little faith in the quaint stories of Astrophel. A mystery must be purified and chastened by sacred solemnity, ere it may be blended with the contemplation of holy study. And yet there is an arch voluptuary, Boccacio, the coryphæus of a loose band of novelists, who has stained a volume by his profane union of holiness and passion. The scenes of his Decameron are played amidst the raging of the plague, by flaunting youths and maidens, but that moment arisen from the solemnity of a cathedral prayer!

ASTR. You will call up the shade of Valdarfar, Ida, that idol of the Roxburghe club, and printer of the Decameron ——

IDA. If he appear, he shall vanish at a word, Astrophel. Yet we may not lightly yield the influence of special visitations, even in our own days, when solemn belief is *chastened by holy motives*, and becomes the spring of living waters. Even the taint of superstition may be almost sanctified on such a plea; and Baxter may be forgiven half his credulity when he wrote his "Saints' Rest," and the "Essay on Apparitions," to convert the sceptics of London, who, in the dearth of signs and wonders, expressed their willingness to believe the soul's immortality, *if* they had proofs of ghostly visitations.

I will myself even quote a mystery, (I believe recorded in Sandys's Ovid,) for the sake of the moral which it bears. It is the legend of "The Room of the Ladyes Figure:" whether it be a tale of Bavaria, or a mere paraphrase from the Saxon Sabinus, I know

not.

This is the story of Otto, a Bavarian gentleman, of passionate nature, mourning for his wife. On one of his visits to her tomb, a mournful voice, which murmured, “A blessed evening, sir!” came o’er his ear; and while his eyes fell on the form of a young chorister, he placed a letter in his hands, and vanished. His wonder was extreme, while he read this mysterious despatch, which was addressed “To my dear husband, who sorrows for his wife,” and signed, “This, with a warm hand, from the living Bertha,” and appointing an interview in the public walk. Thither, on a beautiful evening, sped the Bavarian, and there, among the crowd, sat a lady covered by a veil. With a trembling voice he whispered “Bertha,” when she arose, and, with her warm and living arm on his, returned to his once desolate home. There were odd thoughts, surmises, and wonderings, passing among the friends of Otto, and suspicions of a mock funeral and a solemn cheat; but all subsided as time stole over, and their wedded life was without a cloud: until a paroxysm of his rage one fatal day was vented on the lady, who cried, “This to me! what if the world knew all!”—with this broken sentence she vanished from the room. In her chamber, whither the search led, erect, as it were gazing on the fire, her form stood; but when they looked on it in front, there was a headless hood, and the clothes were standing as if enveloping a form, but no *body* was there! Need I say, that a thrill of horror crept through all at the mystery, and a fear at the approach of Otto, who, though deeply penitent, was deserted by all but a graceless reprobate, his companion, and his almoner to many a stranger, who knew not the unhallowed source of bounty?

That belief cannot be an error, which associates

divine thoughts with the events of human life. I remember, as I was roaming over the wild region of Snowdonia, we sat above the valley and the lakes of Nant Gwinant, on which the red ridge of Clwd Coch threw a broad and purple shadow, while over Moel Elion and Myneth Mawr, the sun was bathed in a flood of crimson light. The Welsh guide was looking down in deep thought on Llyn Gwinant; and, with a tear in his eye, he told us a pathetic story of two young pedestrians, who were benighted among the mountains, on their ascent from Beddgelert. They had parted company in the gloom of the evening, and each was alone in a desert. On a sudden, the voice of one of them was distinctly heard by the other, in the direction of the gorge which bounds the pass of Llanberis, as if encouraging him to proceed. The wanderer followed its sound, and at length escaped from this labyrinth of rocks, and arrived safely at Capel Currig. In the morning, his friend's body was found lying far behind the spot where the phantom voice was first heard, and *away from the course of their route*. Was this a special spirit, a solemn instance of friendship after death, as if the phantom had been endowed with supernatural power, and become the guardian angel of his friend; or the special whisper of the Deity in the ear of the living? A belief in this spiritual visitation is often the consolation of pure Christianity, for "the shadow of God is light!" With some the hope of heaven rests on it; and holy men have thought, that the presence of a spirit may even sanctify the being which it approaches with an emanation of its own holiness. Nay, do we not witness a blessing like this in the common walks of life; as in that beautiful story (told by the Bishop of Gloucester) of the vision of her dead mother, by the daughter of Sir James Lee, in 1662?

Is not the effect of these visitations, to a chastened mind, ever fraught with good? It may be merely a wisdom or a virtue in decision; as when my Lord Herbert, of Cherbury, prayed to God to declare whether he should publish his book “De Veritate;” he heard a gentle voice from heaven, which answered his prayer, with a solemn approval of his design. It may be the checking of our pride of life, or our self-glory for success; a divine lesson that may counsel us against worldly wisdom, in this golden precept, “Seek to be admired by angels rather than by men.” So that complete *conversion* may follow the vision of a spirit. Doddridge has given us the stories of Colonel Gardiner and the Rev. Vincent Perronet; and in the “Baronii Annales” we read of Ticinus, a departed friend of Michael Mercator, then a profane student in philosophy, who, according to a preconcerted promise, appeared to him at the moment that he died, afar off in Florence. The vision so alarmed his conscience, that he at once became a devout student in divinity.

In the city of Nantes, as we see it written by William of Malmsbury, in the twelfth century, dwelt two young ecclesiastics. Between them was a solemn compact, that within thirty days after the death of either, his shade should appear, sleeping or waking, to the survivor, to declare if the true psychology was the doctrine of Plato, or of the Epicureans; if the soul survived the body, or vanished into air. The shade appeared like one dying, while the spirit passeth away; and discoursing, like the ghost of Hamlet’s father, of the pains of infernal punishments, stretched forth his ulcerous arm, and asked if “it seemed as light;” then, dropping the caustic humour from his arm on the temples of the living witness, which were corroded by the drop, he warned him of

the same penalties if he entered not into holy orders, in the city of Rennes. This solemn warning worked his conversion, and he became a pious and exemplary devotee, under the holy wings of Saint Melanius.

In these instances, is not the special influence of the Deity evident? and why will our profane wisdom still draw us from our leaning to this holy creed, causing us to "forsake the fountains of living water, and hew out unto ourselves broken cisterns that can hold no water?"

How awfully beautiful is the Mosaic picture of the first mortal communion with the Creator, when the vision of God was heard by Adam and Eve, walking in the garden in the cool of the day; or, when the Deity appeared to Abraham and to Moses, and his word came to Manoah, and to Noah, with the blessings of a promise; or, when his angels of light descended to console, and to relieve from chains and from fire; or, when the angel of the Lord first appears in the vision to Cornelius; and the trance, or rather the counterpart of the vision, comes over St. Peter, at Joppa; and the arrival of the men, sent by the centurion, confirms the miracle: and then, the last sublime revealings of the Apocalypse. You will not call it presumption, Evelyn, that I adduce these holy records to confirm our modern faith; and ask you, why philosophy will yet chain our thoughts to earth, and affirm our visions to be a meaningless phantasy?

ILLUSION OF SPECTRES.

"More strange than true. I never may believe
These antique fables."

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

Ev. Your holy thoughts, fair Ida, are but an echo of my own. The grand causes and awful judgments of the inspired æras of the world prove the truth by the *necessity* of the miracles, not only in answer to the Pharisees and Sadducees, who *required a sign*, but even before the eyes of the early disciples, whose apathetic hearts soon forgot the miracles, and their divine Master himself; for, as he was walking on the sea, "at the fourth watch, they thought he was a spirit."

I would fain, however, adopt the precept of Lord Bacon, to waive theology in my discussions and my illustrations, because I am unwilling to blend the sacred truths of spiritual futurity with arguments on the imperfection of material existence.

In the abstract spiritual evidence of all modern superstition, I have little faith. These records are scarcely more to be confided in than fairy tales, or fictions like those of many antique sages: as the rabbins, that "the cherubim are the wisest, the seraphim the most amiable, of angels;" or of the visionary Jew of Burgundy, whom, in 1641, John Evelyn spoke with in Holland,—"He told me that, when the Messias came, all the ships, barkes, and vessels of Holland should, by the powere of certaine strange whirle winds, be loosed from their ankers, to convey their brethren and tribes to the holy citty." Or even that of Melancthon, that his sable majesty once appeared to his own aunt in the shape of her husband, and grasping her hand, so scorched and shrivelled it, that it remained black ever after. These are fair samples of credulity.

You will call me presumptuous, but, believe me, Astrophel, it is superstition which is presumptuous and positive, and not philosophy; for credulity believes on profane tradition, or the mere assertion

of a mortal. But the glory of philosophy is humility; for they who, like Newton, and Playfair, and Wollaston, and Davy, look deeply into the wonder and beauty of creation, will be ever humbled by the contemplation of their own being,—an atom of the universe. A philosopher cannot be proud; for, like Socrates, he confesses his ignorance, because he is ever searching for truth. He cannot be a sceptic; for when he has dived into the deeps of science, his thoughts will ascend the more toward the Deity: he has grasped all that science can afford him, and there is nothing left for his mighty mind but divine things and holy hopes. Philosophy is not confident either, because she ever waits for more experience and more weight of testimony.

How often, Astrophel, must we be deceived, like children, by distance, until experience teaches us truth. By this we know that the turrets of distant towers are *high*, yet they dwindle in our sight to the mere vanishing point, *as the child believes them*. Such is the power of demonstration.

The ancient polytheists could not be other than idolaters and believers in prophecy. The rabbins were schooled, in addition to the books of Moses, in those of Zoroaster, in the Talmud, which was the magic volume of the Jews, and the Takurni, or Persian Almanac, the annual expositor of natural and judicial astrology in the clime of the sun.

The sages who lived immediately after the light of Christianity had been shed over the Holy Land, had not forgotten the miracles wrought in the holy city; but they profaned Omnipotence by making them purposeless.

Superstition then formed a part of the national creed: even a mere word, as “Epidamnum,” they dreaded to pronounce, as it was of such awful

import; and credulity and blind faith in the prophetic truth of omens and oracles prevailed. We read in Montfaucon, that twelve hundred believed in this miracle of Virgil:

"Captus a Romanis *invisibiliter* exiit, ivitque Neapolim:"

that he rendered himself *invisible* to the Romans and escaped to Naples. The influence of this blind infatuation was the spring of many actions, which, like the daring of the Indian fatalist in battle, were vaunted as deeds of heroic self-martyrdom.

Marcus Curtius, the trembling of the earth having opened a chasm in the Roman forum, leaped into it on horseback, when the soothsayers declared it would not close until the most valuable thing in the city was flung into it. And the two Decii offered themselves as the willing sacrifice, to ensure a victory for their country,—one in the war with the Latins, the other in that of the Etrurians and Umbrians.

Aristotle and Galen were exceptions. It is true, that Socrates believed himself under the influence of a demon, a sort of delegate from the Deity,—indeed, that God willed his death; for when his friend pressed him on his trial to compose his defence, he answered thus:—"The truth is, I was twice going about to make my apology, but was twice withheld by my demon." But remember, Astrophel, the Greek word which the philosopher employed, τὸ δαιμόνιον, and you will rather confess that it implies the *Deity*, as if some divine inspiration taught him; or perchance, as some of his commentators believe, this invisible monitor was merely the impersonation of the faculty of judgment, and of that deep knowledge and forethought with which his mind was fraught.

Cicero, too, is said to have written arguments to

prove the divine origin of the oracle of Delphi; but it is well believed by classics, that Addison has, in his letter in the Spectator, mistaken Cicero for Cato.

Recollect, Astrophel, this is an old point with us, when we were reading the subject of *Auguries*, in his book, "De Divinatione," in which he wonders "that one soothsayer can look another in the face without laughing;" and you remember Lucian ridicules ghost-seeing as the whim of imagination. You have cited Pliny. True,—Pliny is an interesting story-teller; although he warps somewhat the phantoms of his dreams. But what is the first sentence of his letter to Sura?—"I am very desirous to know your opinion concerning spectres; whether you believe them to have a real existence, and are a sort of divinities, or are only the visionary impressions of a terrified imagination."

And what did Johnson confess?—That "this is a question, which, after five thousand years, is still undecided; a question, whether in theology or philosophy, one of the most important that can come before the human understanding." So you see the vaunted creed of Johnson was at least like the coffin of Mahomet, poised between the affirmative and negative of the proposition. The sage was a strict spiritualist, and, as Boswell says, "wished for more evidence of spirit in opposition to materialism." On some points he was also mighty superstitious, and constantly affirmed his conviction that he should himself run mad. This augury failed, and therefore the prophetic nature of second sight needs more convincing proof than the creed of Johnson.—In his own words, "Foresight is not prescience."

As to the second sight of Caledon, he confesses that, although in his journey he searched diligently, he saw but one seer, and he was grossly ignorant, as

indeed they usually are. “He came away only *willing* to believe;” the learned and literary even in the far Hebrides, especially the clergy, being altogether sceptics.

In the consideration of this question in the study of psychology, it has been an error to conclude that, because in some certain works arguments are adduced by imaginary characters, in support of the appearance of departed spirits: such was the positive belief of their authors. If then, for instance, the arguments of Imlac, in Rasselas, which aim at the proof of spectral reality, or rather the appearance of departed beings, be adduced as an evidence of Johnson’s *own* belief, I might observe that it were equally rational to identify the minds or dispositions of Massinger and Sir Giles Overreach,—of Shakspere and Iago.

Like the Catholic priesthood, who rule the ignorant by the force of superstition, leaders have been induced to profess the possession of this faculty, to overawe their proselytes by their own deeper knowledge; as Numa vaunted his intimacy with the nymph Egeria at her fountain.

For this purpose, even the Corsican general, Pascal Paoli, assumed the profession of a seer, and the mystery of his prescience was on the lips of every Corsican. When Boswell asked, if the fulfilments of his prophecies were frequent, a Corsican grasped a bundle of his hair, and whispered, “Tante, tante, signore!”

But I will not play the dullard, Astrophel, while you, with your legendary romance, charm the listening ears of ladyes fayre. I will have my turn of story-telling, (avoiding the myriads of queer tales, told by superstitious and unlettered visionaries, on the look out for marvels, by servant maids and

rustics, and silly people, the chief actors in ghost stories). And therefore, in the face of these negative conclusions, even of Johnson, hear one unparalleled story, culled from the rich treasury of Master Aubrey's "Miscellanies." It was of an earl of Caithness, who, desirous of ascertaining the distance of a vessel which was laden with wine for his cellars, proposed a question to a seer. The answer was, "At the distance of four hour's sail." It may be some doubt was expressed of the truth of this oracle; for, to prove his gift of clairvoyance, he laid before the earl the cap of a seaman in the ship, which he had that moment taken off his head. The vessel duly arrived, and lo! a sailor claimed the cap in the seer's hand, affirming that, four hours before, it had been blown from his head by the gale. Is not this the very acme of effrontery?

Carolan, the inspired bard of Erin, confessed he could not compose a planxty for a certain lady of Sligo, even when he made an effort to celebrate her wondrous beauty; and one day in despair he threw away his harp and fell into a lament, that some evil genius was hovering over him: from his harp strings, (in contrast with those of Anacreon,) he could sweep only a mournful music, and he thence *prophesied*, and that truly, the death of the lady within the year.

Dubuison, a dentist of Edinburgh, on the day preceding the death of President Blair, met him in the street, and was addressed by the president with a *peculiar* expression. On the day before the death of Lord Melville, the dentist was met by him exactly on the same spot, and accosted by my lord in the very same words. On the death of Lord Melville, Dubuison exclaimed that he should be the third. He became immediately indisposed, and died within an hour.

In the "Miscellanies" of Aubrey, we read, that

John Evelyn related to the Royal Society the case of the curate of Deptford, Mr. Smith, who, in November, 1679, was sick of an ague. To this reverend clerk appeared the phantom of a master of arts, with a white wand in his hand, who promised that if he lay on his back three hours, from ten to one, his ague would leave him. And this prophecy was also to the very letter fulfilled.

Napoleon, when he was marching upon Acre, had a djerme, or Nile boat, with some of his troops, destroyed; the boat's name was *L'Italie*; and from this he said, "Italy is lost to France." And so it was.

During the siege of Jerusalem, for seven days a man paraded round the walls, exclaiming with a solemn voice, "Woe to Jerusalem!" and on the seventh day he added, "Woe to Jerusalem, and *myself*!" When, at the moment of this anathema, a missile from the enemy destroyed him.

Do you wonder that the prophecy of Monsieur Cazotte of his own decapitation, recorded in his "Œuvres de M. de la Harpe," should have been fulfilled? for in 1788, when this prophecy was uttered, the guillotine was daily reeking with patrician blood; and the Duchess of Grammont, Vicq d'Azyr, Condorcet, and Cazotte himself, among a host of others, were dragged to the scaffold.

When dark events were overclouding Poland, to Sorvenski the warrior, a convert to magnetism, it was imparted in a vision, that Warsaw should be deluged in blood, and that he should fall in battle. In two years these forebodings were fulfilled.

It is known that Lord Falkland and Archbishop Williams both warned Charles I. of his fate; but it required no ghost to tell him that. And I have known many deeply interested in the fate of absent friends; and knowing their circumstances and locality, so

prophesy, that they seemed to have all the faculty of clairvoyance. The young ladies of Britain, during the Peninsular war, were often dreaming of the apparitions of their lovers, *perhaps* at the hour of their expiring on the field of battle: coincidences that must make a deep impression on sensitive minds. Were I justified in divulging secrets and confessions, I might relate some curious stories of these inauspicious dreams.

At the moment of the duel between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Tierney, on Wimbledon Common, a lady of fashion in London exclaimed, “This is the important moment!”

Oliver Cromwell had reclined on his couch, and extreme fatigue forbad the coming on of sleep. On a sudden his curtains opened, and a gigantic female form imparted to him, that he should be the greatest man in England. The puritanical faith and ambition of Cromwell might have raised, during the distracted state of the kingdom, something even beyond this; and who may decide, if the spectre had whispered, “Thou shalt be king hereafter,” that the protector would have refused the crown, as, on the feast of Lupercal, it had been refused by Cæsar?

“General Oglethorpe,” writes Boswell, “told us that Prendergast, an officer in the Duke of Marlborough’s army, had mentioned to many of his friends, that he should die on a particular day. Upon that day a battle took place with the French; and after it was over, and Prendergast was still alive, his brother officers, while they were yet in the field, jestingly asked him, where was his prophecy now? Prendergast gravely answered, ‘I shall die, notwithstanding what you see.’ Soon afterwards there came a shot from a French battery, to which the orders for a cessation of arms had not yet

reached, and he was killed upon the spot!"

But can these shallow stories be cited as *prophecies*? The links in the chain of causation are evident, and the veriest sceptic cannot doubt their sequence, where there was so strong a probability. It is merely by reflecting on the past and judging the future by analogy. Natural events of human actions have laws to govern them, and there is seldom foresight without the reflection *on* these laws. Lord Mansfield, when asked how the French revolution would end, replied, "It is an event without a precedent, and therefore without a prophecy."

ASTR. Then you do not believe, where you cannot develop the *causes* of events. Like all *rational* philosophers, you must have demonstrative proof. In which class of sceptics shall I enrol you, Evelyn?—As a proselyte of Aristotle, who will deny not only the existence of spirits, but affirm heaven and hell to be a fable, and that the world is self-existent: or with the Epicureans, who believed the impious doctrine of blind chance,—that the sun and stars were vapours, and the soul perishable; or with the modern lights of reason,—Sir Isaac Newton, who confessed the Paradise Lost to be a fine poem, though it proved nothing; or the Abbé Lauguerne, who, for the self-same reason, despised the brilliancy of Racine and Corneille; or with the Sadducees themselves, who denied both prophecy and spirit?

EV. Perhaps the Sadducees might have referred visions to the *right* cause, for phantoms differ little from Locke's "substance which thinks." But the mere metaphysician blinks the question (as Lord Bacon does that of experimental chemistry,—"Vix unum experimentum adduci potest quod ad hominum statum levandum et juvandum spectat"); thus wofully depreciating the progress of chemical

science, as if the discoveries of Wollaston, of Davy, of Dalton, and of Faraday were fruitless. Remember, modern philosophers are not like Xenophon, who (says Socrates) called all *fools* who differed from his opinion.

Even Baxter confesses the frequency of imposture in ghost stories, yet leans to the belief of all which he *cannot account for*.

Now if philosophy had not doubted, science would be stationary. We might still believe, with Heraclitus, that the sun was only a foot in breadth; or, with Copernicus, that it revolved in its orbit, while the earth was at rest. Remember, Astrophel, the way to the temple of Science is through the portals of doubt: it is a mark of weakness, "jurare in verba magistri." Even the prince philosopher of Denmark doubted the prophetic truth of his father's ghost on its mere appearance—("The spirit I have seen may be a devil,")—until the scene of the play, and the stricken conscience of the king, and *then only*, he believed that "it was an honest ghost."

"It is true," as Lord Chesterfield wrote in 1653, "I know that God can make any such things to appear, but because he *can*, therefore to conclude that he *doth*, is ill argued: and though divers books are full of such stories, yet the soberest sort of men in all ages have doubted the truth of them." I might add to these the visions which have been so strangely warped to interpret a subsequent event. Those of William Rufus, and Innocent the Fourth, and Henry the Second of France, and a thousand others from ancient history, between the assumed prophecy and fulfilment of which, there is about as much truth as when Lady Seymour dreamt of having found a nest of nine finches, and soon after was married to Finch, Earl of Winchelsea, and was blessed with a brood of

nine children.

With the coincidences of life we have all been struck; the ignorant and timid and superstitious among us with wonder: but how comparatively trivial are these tiny drops in the wide ocean of events, and what myriads of dreams and visions from which there are no results!

A simple incident occurred to me in the autumn of last year, which was so complete in its association as to be for a moment startling to myself.

Influenced by a sort of veneration for the memory of the good Gilbert White of Selborne, I made a pilgrimage to that calm and rustic village, so exquisitely embosomed among green meads, and beech-crowned chalk hills, and forests embrowned with heath and fern.

On my entrance to the village, I was reflecting on the "idiot boy" who fed on honey which he pressed from the bees he caught, when lo! at the first door a figure, which grinned at me, and mowed and muttered, but without the slightest *verbal* utterance. He was an idiot, but not White's idiot; yet a visionary mind might readily for a moment believe it to be a phantom of the foolish boy, immortalized, as it were, in the "Natural History of Selborne."

There was an imposing occurrence also, during the funeral procession of Sir Walter Scott to Dryburgh. A halt took place for many minutes (in consequence of an accident) precisely on the summit of the hill at Bemerside, where a beautiful prospect opens, to contemplate which, Sir Walter was ever wont to rein up his horse.

"In 1811," writes Lord Byron in a letter to Mr. Murray, "my old school and form fellow Peel, the Irish secretary, told me he saw me in St. James's Street; I was then in Turkey. A day or two afterwards

he pointed out to his brother a person across the way, and said, 'There is the man I took for Byron:' his brother answered, 'Why, it is Byron, and no one else.' I was at this time *seen* to write my name in the Palace Book. I was then ill of a malaria fever. If I had died, here would have been a ghost story."

While Lord Byron was at Colonna, his dervish Tahiri, as we read in his notes to the "Giaour," who professed the faculty of *second hearing*, prophesied an attack of the Mainotes as they passed a certain perilous defile, but *nothing came of it*: the attack was not made; and it is probable that some ringing in the ears of the dervish, and a knowledge that the defile was a haunt of brigands, were the springs of this notion.

And there are events, too, which have all the intensity of romance and seem involved in the deepest mystery, and which, like Washington Irving's tale of the "Spectre Bridegroom," assume all the air of the supernatural, until the enigma is solved, and then we cry, "How clear the solution!"

Among the myriads of *explained* mysteries in the north, I will cite that of the farmer of Teviotdale, who, in the gloom of evening, saw on the wall of a cemetery a pale form throwing about her arms, and mowing and chattering to the moon. With not a little terror he spurred his horse, but as he passed the phantom it dropped from its perch, and, like Tam o' Shanter's Nannie, fixing itself on the croup, clasped him tightly round the waist with arms of icy coldness. He arrived at home; with a thrill of horror exclaimed, "Tak aff the ghaist!" and was carried shivering to bed. And what was the phantom? A maniac widow, on her distracted pilgrimage to the grave of her husband, for whom she had indeed mistaken the ill-fated farmer.

The president of a literary club at Plymouth being very ill during its session, the chair out of respect was left vacant. While they were sitting, his apparition, in a white dress, glided in and took formal possession of the chair. His face was “wan like the cauliflower;” he bowed in silence to the company, carried his empty glass to his lips, and solemnly retired. They went to his house, and learned that he had just expired! The strange event was kept a profound secret, until the nurse confessed on her death-bed that she had fallen asleep, that the patient had stolen out, and, having the pass-key of the garden, had returned to his bed by a short path before the deputation, and had died a few seconds after.

In the records of his life, by Taylor, we read of a trick of the great actor, who, like Brinsley Sheridan, had an inkling for practical jokes. It was on a professional visit of Dr. Moncey. “Garrick was announced for King Lear on that night, and when Moncey saw him in bed he expressed his surprise, and asked him if the play was to be changed. Garrick was dressed, but had his night-cap on, and the quilt was drawn over him to give him the appearance of being too ill to rise. Dr. M. expressed his surprise, as it was time for Garrick to be at the theatre to dress for King Lear. Garrick, in a languid and whining tone, told him that he was too much indisposed to perform himself, but that there was an actor named Marr, so like him in figure, face, and voice, and so admirable a mimic, that he had ventured to trust the part to him, and was sure the audience would not perceive the difference. Pretending that he began to feel worse, he requested Moncey to leave the room in order that he might get a little sleep, but desired him to attend the theatre, and let him know the result. As

soon as the Doctor quitted the room, Garrick jumped out of bed and hastened to the theatre. Moncey attended the performance. Having left Garrick in bed, he was bewildered by the scene before him, sometimes doubting and sometimes being astonished at the resemblance between Garrick and Marr. At length, finding that the audience were convinced of Garrick's identity, Moncey began to suspect a trick had been practised upon him, and instantly hurried to Garrick's house at the end of the play; but Garrick was too quick for him, and was found by Moncey in the same state of illness." These are truths which are indeed stranger than fiction.

Were a miracle once authenticated, our scepticism might cease, but we cannot be convinced of supernatural agency till something be done or known which could not be so by common means, or which through the medium of deception or contrivance *imposes* on the mind such belief; of which impression Alston the painter once told Coleridge a melancholy story. 'Twas of a youth at Cambridge, who dressed himself up in white as a ghost to frighten his companion, having first drawn the bullets from pistols which he kept at the head of his bed. As the apparition glided by his bed, the youth laughed and cried out, "Vanish! I fear you not." The ghost did not obey him, and at length he reached a pistol and fired at it, when, seeing the ghost immoveable and invulnerable as he supposed, a belief in a spirit instantly came over his mind, and convulsion succeeding, his extreme terror was soon followed by his death.

I have read (I believe in Clarendon), that the decapitation of Charles I. was augured (*after death*) from his coronation robes being of white velvet instead of purple; and this it was remembered was

the colour of a victim's death-garment; and in Blennerhasset's history of James II., that the crown at his coronation tottered on his head, and at the same moment the royal arms fell from the altar of some London church. All this is too childish to be spoken of seriously, and reminds me of the General Montecuculi, who on some saint's day had ordered bacon in his omelette. At the moment it was served, a peal of thunder shook his house, when he exclaimed, "Voilà bien du bruit pour une omelette!"

We wonder not to find Lily, into whose moth-eaten tomes I have sometimes peeped for amusement, prating thus of consequences. There is an old paper of his graced with "the effigies of Master Praise God Barebone," where, among other *judgments*, the blindness of Milton is recorded as a penal infliction of the Deity, for "that he writ two books against the kings, and Salmasius his defence of kings." But we do wonder at such a weakness in Sir Walter Raleigh, that he should thus write in his History of the World,—"The strangest thing I have read of in this kind being certainly true, was, that the night before the battle of Novara, all the dogs which followed the French army ran from them to the Switzers; and lo! next morning the Switzers were beaten by the French."

And yet a greater wonder is, that so many solemn stories should have crept into our national legends, in which there is *no truth*: in which philosophers and divines have very innocently combined to bewilder us.

There is an *assumed* incident associated with a melancholy event in the noble family of Lansdowne, most illustrative of my observation. In the "Literary Recollections" of the Rev. Richard Warner, is recorded the interesting story of the apparition of

Lord William Petty, at Bowood, related to Mr. Warner by the Rev. Joseph Townsend, rector of Pewsey in Wiltshire, and "confirmed by the dying declaration of Dr. Alsop, of Calne."

It is affirmed that Lord William Petty, who was under the care of Dr. Priestley, the librarian, and the Rev. Mr. Jervis, his tutor, was attacked, at the age of seven, with inflammation of the lungs, for which Mr. Alsop was summoned to Bowood. After a few days, the young nobleman seemed to be out of danger; but, on a sudden relapse, the surgeon was again sent for in the evening.

"It was night before this gentleman reached Bowood but an unclouded moon showed every object in unequivocal distinctness. Mr. Alsop had passed through the lodge-gate, and was proceeding to the house, when, to his astonishment, he saw Lord William coming towards him, in all the buoyancy of childhood, restored apparently to health and vigour. 'I am delighted, my dear lord,' he exclaimed, 'to see you, but, for Heaven's sake, go immediately within doors,—it is death to you to be here at this time of night.' The child made no reply, but, turning round, was quickly out of sight. Mr. Alsop, unspeakably surprised, hurried to the house. Here all was distress and confusion, for *Lord William, had expired a few minutes before he reached the portico*.

"This sad event being with all speed announced to the Marquis of Lansdowne, in London, orders were soon received at Bowood, for the interment of the corpse, and the arrangement of the funeral procession. The former was directed to take place at High Wickham, in the vault which contained the remains of *Lord William's mother*; the latter was appointed to halt at two specified places, during the two nights on which it would be on the road. Mr.

Jervis and Dr. Priestley attended the body. On the first day of the melancholy journey, the latter gentleman, who had hitherto said little on the subject of the appearance to Mr. Alsop, suddenly addressed his companion with considerable emotion in nearly these words: 'There are some very singular circumstances connected with this event, Mr. Jervis, and a most remarkable coincidence between a dream of the late Lord William and our present mournful engagement. A few weeks ago, as I was passing by his room door one morning, he called me to his bedside,—'Doctor,' said he, 'what is your Christian name?' 'Surely,' said I, 'you know it is Joseph.' 'Well, then,' replied he, in a lively manner, 'if you are a *Joseph*, you can interpret a *dream* for me, which I had last night. I dreamed, Doctor, that I set out upon a long journey; that I stopped the first night at *Hungerford*, whither I went without touching the ground; that I flew from thence to *Salt Hill*, where I remained the next night; and arrived at High Wickham on the third day, where my dear mamma, beautiful as an angel, stretched out her arms and caught me within them.' 'Now,' continued the Doctor, 'these are precisely the places where the dear child's corpse will remain on this and the succeeding night, before we reach his mother's vault, which is finally to receive it.' "

Now here is a tissue of events, as strange as they are circumstantial; and I might set myself to illustrate the apparition by the agitated state of Mr. Alsop's mind, were it not for the *utter fallacy* of this mysterious story, on which the late Rev. Mr. Jervis, of Brompton, whom I knew and esteemed, deemed it essential to publish "Remarks," in the year 1831. From these, you will learn that Mr. Warner is in error regarding the "address, designation, and age of the

Hon. William Granville Petty, the nature and duration of his disorder, and the name of the place of interment." And then it comes out that neither Dr. Priestley nor Mr. Jervis attended the funeral, nor conversed at any time on the circumstance. And, regarding Mr. Alsop's death-bed declaration, Mr. Jervis, who was in his intimate confidence, never heard of such a thing until Mr. Warner's volume was pointed out to him.

This strange story, believed by good and wise men, involved a seeming mystery, until we read in Mr. Jervis's "Remarks," one simple sentence in reference to the gentleman by whom it was first told, —that "the enthusiasm of his nature predisposed him to entertain some visionary and romantic notions of supernatural appearances."

PHANTASY FROM MENTAL ASSOCIATION.

"This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation, ecstacy
Is very cunning in."

HAMLET.

CAST. How delightful to wander thus among the reliques of that age, when her citizens, the colonists of Britain, migrated from imperial Rome, and built their Venta Silurum, or Caerwent, from the ruins of which these now mouldering walls were formed. As we trod those pictured pavements of Caerwent beneath the blue sky of yesternoon, I felt all the inspiration of Astrophel, and a pageantry of Roman patricians seemed to sweep along the fragments of those painted tesselæ.

"Lulled in the countless chambers of the brain,
Our thoughts are link'd by many a hidden chain;
Awake but one, and lo! what myriads rise,
Each stamps his image as the other flies."

There is a happy combination of antiquity and simplicity in this land of Gwent. Almost within the shadow of the Roman Caerleon, the Monmouthshire peasants, at Easter and Whitsuntide, assemble to plant fresh flowers on the graves of their relatives. How I love these old customs! the chanting of the carol at Christmas; its very homeliness so redolent of love and friendship: and that quaint old Moresco dance which was introduced to England by the noble Katherine of Arragon. Then the pastimes of Halloween and Hogmanay in Scotland, and the Walpurgis night of Germany, and the May-day in Ireland, the festival of their patron saint, and the Midsummer night when the bealfires cast an universal lumination over the fells of the green isle, and the still more sacred fire, lighted up in November in worship of their social deity, Samhuin, whose potent influence charms the warm hearts of all the maids of Erin around the winter hearth of their homes. I listen unto these pleasures as if they were mine own: as children associate all the legends of their school histories with themselves and their own time.

In every spot of this land of Wales the very names of the olden time are before us: the romaunt of Prince Arthur and his knights is ever present to our fancy, for he hath, as on the crag that towers over Edinburgh, a seat on many a mountain rock in Wales; as the Cadair Arthur over Crickhowel, and the semicircle on Little Doward, and Maen Arthur on the moors of Cardigan.

ASTR. I never look on scenes like this without the

echo of that beautiful apostrophe of Johnson, among the ruins of Iona, whispering in my ear.

Inspired by such an influence, I have roamed over the Isle of Elephanta, and gazed on its gorgeous pagoda hewn from the rock, and adorned by gigantic statues and mysterious symbols of the same eternal granite: on the beauteous excavations of Salsette: on the wonders of Elora, and on the classic reliques of Persepolis: on the beautiful columns of Palmyra, the Tadmor in the wilderness, where Solomon built his "fenced city;" as well as those arabesque and gothic temples, the abbeys and cathedrals of our own island. I too have almost dared to think that superstition and idolatry might be forgiven for the splendours of its architecture, even for the elevation of those giant blocks of Stonehenge and Avebury, the mouldering altars of the druidical priesthood, in the city consecrated to their god.

So do I feel in this court-yard of Chepstow Castle, whilom the Est-brig-hoel of Doomsdaye Booke, and in later times so blended with English history. See you not the Conqueror and his knights in panoply on prancing steeds before you? See you not Fitz Osborne and Warren, its former lords, loom out upon your sight? And, lo! the portal opens, and the dungeon of Henry Martin, the regicide, yawns like a bottomless pit before us. The shade of Charles Stewart rises; and again the phantom of Cromwell, uttering his epithets of scorn, as if the wanton puritan were about to dash the ink in the face of his colleague as he signed the death-warrant of the king. And now the scene changes, and behold the doomed one is chained to those massive rings of iron, and there with groaning dies.

Ev. I am most willing that you should thus indulge in your wild rhapsody, Astrophel, for it is the

happy illustration of one potent cause of spectral illusion—*association*. There are few whose minds are not excited in some degree when they tread the localities of interesting events. By memory and its combinations something like an inspired vision may often seem to come over us—a day-dream. Or, if we have been brooding over a subject or gazing on the relics of departed or absent love and friendship: or while we stand on a spot consecrated by genius, or when we have passed the scene of a murder, still will association fling around us its visionary shadows.

Shortly after the death of Maupertuis, the president of the Academy of Berlin, Mr. Gleditsch, the curator of natural history, was traversing the hall in solitude, when he saw the phantom of the president standing in an angle of the room with his eyes intensely fixed on him: an effect perfectly explicable by the association of intense impression of memory in the very arena of the president's former dignity.

You will remember the story of a rich libertine, told by Sir Walter Scott. Whenever he was alone in his drawing-room, he was so haunted by a spectral *corps de ballet*, that the very furniture was, as it were, converted into phantoms. To release himself from this unwelcome intrusion he retired to his country house, and here, for a while, he obtained the quiet which he sought. But it chanced that the furniture of his town house was sent to him in the country, and on the instant that his eyes fell on his drawing-room chairs and tables, the illusion came afresh on his mind. By the influence of association the green figurantes came frisking and capering into his room, shouting in his unwilling ears, "Here we are! here we are!"

It is not, however, essential that there be

substance at all to excite these spectres. *Idea* alone is sufficient.

Do you think it strange that a ghost should appear fleshless and shadowy without some supernatural influence? Be assured that the only influence exists in the sublime and intricate workings of that mind which in its pure state was itself an emanation from the Deity; which is only shadowed by illusion while in its earthly union with the brain, and which, on the dissolution of that brain, will again live uncombined, a changeless and eternal spirit.

It is as easy to believe the power of mind in conjuring up a spectre as in entertaining a simple thought: it is not strange that this thought may appear *embodied*, especially if the external senses be shut: if we think of a distant friend, do we not *see* a form in our mind's eye, and if this idea be intensely defined, does it not become a phantom?

"Phantasma est sentiendi actus, neque differt a sensione aliter quam fieri differt a factum esse."

"A phantom is an act of thinking," &c.

You have dipped deeply into Hobbes, Astrophel, and will correct me if I misquote this philosopher of Malmsbury.

It was in Paris, at the soirée of Mons. Bellart, and a few days after the death of Marshal Ney, the servant, ushering in the Mareschal *Aîné*, announced Mons. Le Mareschal *Ney*. We were startled; and may I confess to you, that the *eidōlon* of the Prince of Moskwa was for a moment as perfect to my sight as reality?

Now it is as easy to imagine a fairy infinitely small as a giant infinitely large. Between an idea and a phantom, then, there is only a difference in degree; their essence is the same as between the simple and

transient thought of a child, and the intense and beautiful ideas of a Shakspere, a Milton, or a Dante.

"Consider your own conceptions," said Imlac, "you will find substance without extension. An ideal form is no less *real* than material, but yet it has no extension."

You hear I adopt the word *idea*, as referring to the organ of *vision*, but sight is not the only sense subject to illusion. Hearing, taste, smell, touch, may be thus perverted, because the original impression was on the focus of all the senses, *the brain*.

Indeed, two of these illusions are often *synchronous*: as when a deep sepulchral voice is uttered by a thin filmy spectre, like the ghosts of Ossian, through which the moonbeams and the stars were seen to glimmer. But the illusion of the eye *is* by far the most common, and hence our adopted terms refer chiefly to the sight: as spectre, phantom, phantasm, apparition, *eidōlon*, ghost, shadow, shade.

The ghost then is nothing more than an *intense idea*. And as I have caught the mood of story-telling, listen to some analogies of those deep impressions on the mind which are the spring of all this phantasy.

That destructive brainworm, Demonomania, is often excited in the mind of a proselyte by designing religious fanatics. Let the life of the selected person be ever so virtuous and exemplary, she (for it is usually on the softer sex that these impostures are practised) becomes convinced of the influence of the demon over her, and she is thus criminally taught the necessity of conversion—is won over to the erroneous doctrine of capricious and unqualified election.

These miseries do not always spring from self-interested impostors. The parent and the nurse, in addition to the nursery tales of fairies and of genii,

too often inspire the minds of children with these diabolical phantoms. The effect is always detrimental,—too often permanently destructive. I will quote one case from the fourth volume of the Psychological Magazine, related by a student of the university of Jena.—"A young girl, about nine or ten years old, had spent her birth-day with several companions of her own age, in all the gaiety of youthful amusement. Her parents were of a rigorous devout sect, and had filled the child's head with a number of strange and horrid notions about the devil, hell, and eternal damnation. In the evening, as she was retiring to rest, the devil appeared to her, and threatened to devour her. She gave a loud shriek, fled to the apartment where her parents were, and fell down apparently dead at their feet. A physician was called in, and she began to recover herself in a few hours. She then related what had happened, adding, that she was sure she was to be damned. This accident was immediately followed by a severe and tedious nervous complaint."

The ghost will not appear to tell us what *will* happen, but it *may* rise, and with awful solemnity too, to tell us that which *has* happened. Such is the phantom of remorse,—the shadow of conscience,—which is indeed a natural penalty: a crime that carries with it its own consecutive punishment. Were the lattice of Momus fixed in the bosom, that window through which the springs of passion could be seen, there would be, I fear, a dark spot on almost every heart,—as there is, to quote the Italian proverb, "a skeleton in every house." Of these pangs of memory, the pages both of history and fiction are teeming. Not in the visions of sleep alone, but in the glare of noonday, the apparition of a victim comes upon the guilty mind, —

"As when a gryphon through the wilderness,
With winged course, o'er hill and moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian, who, by stealth,
Had from his wakeful custody purloined
The guarded gold."

Brutus, and Richard Plantagenet, and Clarence, and Macbeth, and Manfred, and Lorenzo, and Wallace, and Marmion, are but the archetypes of a very numerous family in real life,—for Shakspere, and Byron, and Schiller, and Scott, have painted in high relief these portraits *from* the life.

Many a real Manfred has trembled as he called up the phantom of Astarte; many a modern Brutus has gazed at midnight on the evil spirit of his Cæsar; many a modern Macbeth points to the vacant chair of his Banquo, the ghost in his seat, and he mentally exclaims,—"Hence, horrible shadow! unreal mockery, hence!"

IDA. Aye, and many a false heart, like Marmion, hears, as his life ebbs on the battle-field, the phantom voice of Constance Beverly:

"The monk, with unavailing cares,
Exhausted all the church's prayers.
Ever he said, that, close and near,
A lady's voice was in his ear,
And that the priest he could not hear,
For that she ever sung:
'In the lost battle, borne down by the flying,
Where mingles war's rattle with groans of the dying'—
So the notes rung."

We read in Moreton an exquisite story of the trial of a murderer, who had with firmness pleaded—"not guilty." On a sudden, casting his eyes on the witness-box, he exclaimed, "This is not fair; no one is

allowed to be witness in his own case." The box was empty, as you may suppose; but the eye of his conscience saw his bleeding victim glaring on him, and ready to swear to his murder. He felt that his fate was sealed, and pleaded guilty to the crime.

"——Deeds are done on earth,
Which have their punishment ere the earth closes
Upon the perpetrators. Be it the working
Of the remorse-stained fancy, or the vision
Distinct and real of unearthly being:
All ages witness that, beside the couch
Of the fell homicide, oft stalks the ghost
Of him he slew, or shows his shadowy wound."

It is this utter humiliation of the spirit, and the conviction of our polluted nature, that rankle so intensely in the wounded heart; and thence the repentant sinner feels so deeply that awful truth, that there is a Being infinitely more pure and godlike than himself.

Ev. A very fertile source of spectral illusion is the devotion to peculiar studies and deep reflection on interesting subjects. Mons. Esquirol records the hallucination of a lady, who had been reading a terrific account of the execution of a criminal. Ever after, in all her waking hours, and in every place, she saw above her left eye the phantom of a bloody head, wrapped in black crape,—a thing so horrible to her, that she repeatedly attempted the commission of suicide. And of another lady, who had dipped so deeply into a history of witches, that she became convinced of her having, like Tam O'Shanter's lady of the "cutty sark," been initiated into their mysteries, and officiated at their "sabbath" ceremonies.

Monsieur Andral, in his youth, saw in La Pitié the

putrid body of a child covered with *larvæ*, and during the next morning, the spectre of this corpse lying on his table was as perfect as reality.

We have known mathematicians whose ghosts even appeared in the shape of coloured circles and squares, and Justus Martyr was haunted by the phantoms of flowers. Nay, our own Sir Joshua, after he had been painting portraits, sometimes believed the trees, and flowers, and posts to be men and women.

I knew myself a bombardier, whose brain had been wounded in a battle. To this man a post was an enemy, and he would, when a sudden frenzy came on him, attack it in the street with his cane, and not leave it until he believed that his foeman was beaten or lay prostrate at his feet.

Intense feeling, especially if combined with apprehension, often raises a phantom. The unhappy Sir R—— C——, on being summoned to attend the Princess Charlotte of Wales, saw her form robed in white distinctly glide along before him as he sat in his carriage: a parallel, nay, an *explanation*, to the interesting stories of Astrophel.

Then the sting of conscience may warp a *common* object thus. Theodric, the Gothic king, unjustly condemned and put to death Boëthius and Symmachus. It chanced at that time, that a large fish was served to him at dinner, when his imagination directly changed the fish's head into the ghastly face of Symmachus, upbraiding him with the murder of innocence; and such was the effect of the phantom, that in a few days he died. But these spectral forms were seen, like the dagger of Macbeth, and the hand-writing on the wall, by none but the *conscience-stricken*, a proof of their being ideal and not real.

Not long after the death of Byron, Sir Walter

Scott was engaged in his study during the darkening twilight of an autumnal evening, in reading a sketch of his form and habits, his manners and opinions. On a sudden he saw as he laid down his book, and passed into his hall, the *eidōlon* of his departed friend before him. He remained for some time impressed by the intensity of the illusion, which had thus created a phantom out of skins, and scarfs, and plaids, hanging on a screen in the gothic hall of Abbotsford.

I learn from Doctor T. that a certain lady was on the eve of her marriage, but her lover was killed as he was on his way to join her. An acute fever immediately followed this impression; and on each subsequent day, when the same hour struck on the clock, she fell into a state of ecstacy, and believed that the phantom of her lover wafted her to the skies; then followed a swoon of two or three hours' duration, and her diurnal recovery ensued.

CAST. I know not if it will make me happier, Evelyn, but I have learned from your lips to believe that many of those legends which I held as poetic fictions, may be the stories of minds, in which, under the influence of devoted affection, the slightest semblance to an object so beloved may work up the phantom of far distant or departed forms. You may have read the romantic devotion of Henry Howard to the fair Geraldine, the flower of England's court, and the chivalrous challenge of her beauty to the knights of France. During his travels on the continent, he fell in with the alchymist Cornelius Agrippa, who by his sleight cunning showed in a magic mirror (as he said) to the doting mind of the earl, his absent beauty reclining on a couch, and reading by the light of a waxen taper the homage of his pen to her exquisite beauty. Then there was an archbishop of the Euchaites, a professor of magic in the ninth

century. The Emperor Basil besought this pseudo-magus Santabaran, for a sight of his long lost and beloved son. He appeared before the emperor in a costume of splendour and mounted on a charger, and sinking into his arms, instantly vanished. This phantasy, and the glamourie of the witch of Falsehope over Michael Scott, and the vision of the wondrous tale of Vatheck, and the legend of the Duke of Anjou in Froissart, might be the rude shadows of some slight phantasmagoria working on a sensitive or impassioned mind; may they not?

EV. I am proud of my proselyte, lady.

IDA. I presume these illusions may be wrought without the outlines of *distinct shapes*. I have ever thought the vision of Eliphaz the Temanite more solemn, because an *undefined* shadow: "A vision is before our face, but we cannot discern the form thereof." And where the *profane* poets have written thus mystically, they have risen in sublimity. Such is Milton's portraiture of death:

"——the other shape,
If shape it could be called, which shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
For each seemed neither."

And in the splendid vision of Manfred, whose thoughts were, alas! so polluted by passion—

"I see
The steady aspect of a clear large star,
But nothing more.

SPIRIT. We have *no form* beyond the elements,
Of which we are the mind and principle."

And the idolaters profanely adopted this mystic

metaphor when they inscribed their Temple of Isis, at Sais—

> "I am whatever has been, is, and shall be, and no one hath taken off my veil."

Ev. The phantom is often described as destitute of form. When Johnson was asked to define the ghost which appeared to old Cave, he answered: "Why, sir, something of a *shadowy* being." And there is a sublimity and a mystery in that which is indefinite. Two very deep philosophers have however differed in opinion regarding the effect of darkness and obscurity on the mind. Burke alludes to darkness as a cause of the sublime and terrific: (and he is supported by Tacitus—"Omne ignotum pro magnifico est:") Locke, as not naturally a cause of terror, but as it is associated by nurses and old crones with ghosts and goblins.

I will not split this difference, but I believe Burke is in the right. Obscurity is doubtless deeply influential in raising phantoms; that which is indefinable becomes almost of necessity a ghost. If the ghosts of Shakspere did not appear, the illusion would be more impressive. In darkness and night, therefore, the ghosts burst their cerements, the spirits walk abroad, and the ghost seers revel in all their superstitious glory. The druids, those arch impostors, acted their mysteries in the depth of shadowy groves: and the heathen idols are half hidden both in the hut of the American Indian and the temples of Indostan. It is true children shut their eyes when frightened, but this is *instinctive*, and because they think it real; but, in truth, they ever dread the notion of darkness. By the fancy of a timid mind, in the deepening gloom of twilight, a withered oak has been fashioned into a living monster; and I might occupy our evening in

recounting the tales of terror to which a decayed trunk once gave birth, among some village gossips in the weald of Sussex.

There are few who “revisit the glimpses of the moon,” whose romantic humour leads them abroad about nightfall, who have not sometimes been influenced by feeling somewhat like phantasy, during the indistinct vision of twilight; the dim emanations of the crescent, or the more deceptive illusion of an artificial luminous point irradiating a circumambient vapour. Through the magnifying power of this floating medium, the image may be fashioned into all the fancied forms of poetical creation.

At the midnight hour, by a blue taper light, and in a ruined castle, a simple tale will become a romance of terror.

I have spoken thus, to introduce an incident which occurred years ago, and yet my mind’s eye shows it to me as if it were of yesterday.

It was in the year ——, on the eve of my presenting myself at the college for my diploma. I had been deeply engaged during the day, in tracing, with some fellow students, the distribution of the *nervous ganglia*. The shades of evening had closed over us as our studies were nearly completed, and one by one my companions gave me good night, until, about ten o’clock, I was left alone, still poring over the subject of my study, by the dim light of a solitary taper. On a sudden I was startled by the loud pealing of a clock, which, striking twelve, warned me most unexpectedly of the solemn hour of midnight; for I was not otherwise conscious of this lapse of time. For a moment I seemed in utter darkness, until straining my eyes, a blue and lurid glimmer floated around me. A chilliness crept over me, and I had a strange indefinable consciousness of utter desolation

—of being immured in some Tartarean cavern, or pent among icy rocks, for the cold night-wind was sweeping in hollow murmurs through the vaults. In the blue half-twilight I was at length sensible that I was not alone, but in the presence of indistinct shadowy forms, silent and motionless as the grave; and by that awful sensation of the sublime which springs from obscurity, I conceived that I had suffered transmigration, or had glided unconsciously through the gates of Hades, and that these were the embodied spirits—the manes of the departed, in sleep; and then I thought the sounds were not those of the wind, but the hollow moaning of those restless spirits that could *not* sleep. By some species of glamourie which I could not comprehend, the gloom appeared to brighten by slow degrees, and the forms became more distinct. When we are involved in mystery, the sense of touch is instinctively brought to its analysis. I put forth my hand, and found that my eyes were not mocked with a mere vision; for it came in contact with something icy cold and death-like—it was an arm clammy and cadaverous that fell across my own; and as the smell of death came over me, a corpse rolled into my lap.

The moaning of the breeze increased, and the screech-owl shrieked as she flitted unseen around me. At this moment a scream of agony was heard in the distance, as of some mortal frame writhing in indescribable anguish, while a hoarse and wizard voice cried, “Endure! endure!” It ceased; and then I heard a pattering and flutter, and then a shrill squeaking, as of some tiny creatures that were playing their gambols in the darkness which again came around me. On a sudden all was hushed, and there was a glimmer of cold twilight, as when a horn of the moon, as Astrophel would say, comes out from

an eclipse; and then a brighter gleam of bluer light burst through the gloom, at which I confess I started, and my hand dropped into a pool of blood. Like the astonished Tam O'Shanter, it seemed that I was alone in the chamber of death, or the solitary spectator of some demon incantation or of some wholesale murder. There were some forms blue and livid, some cadaverous, of "span-long, wee, unchristened bairns," and others deluged in blood and impurity lay around me: one pale and attenuated form, that more than mocked the delicate beauty of the Medicean Venus, lay naked on the ground. On the athletic form of another the moonbeam fell in a glory, as if the fabled legend of Endymion was realized before my eyes.

ASTR. And——

EV. Ay, now for the secret—the *materiel* of this wild vision. The truth was, I had dropped asleep in the dissecting-room—the candle had burned out; and thus, with a copious supply of dead bodies, the howling of a tempest, the purple storm-clouds, the blue gleams of moonshine, and bats, and screech-owls, and the screams of patients in the surgical wards, and withal the hoarse voices of those croaking comforters, the night-nurses,—I have placed before you a harmony of horrors, that might not shame a legend of Lewis, or a Radcliffian romance.

Simple as this will be the explanation of many and many a tale of mystery, although fraught with accumulated horrors, like those of the "Castle of Udolpho;" and if, putting aside that ultraromantic appetite for the marvellous, we have courage to attempt their analysis, the pages of demonology will be shorn of half their terrors, the gulph of superstition will be illumined by the light of philosophy, and creation stand forth in all its

harmonious and beautiful nature.

PHANTASY FROM CEREBRAL EXCITEMENT.

——"A false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain."

MACBETH.

ASTR. I will grant the influence of all these inspiring causes, Evelyn, but it is not under adventitious circumstances *alone* that the gifted seer is presented with his visions, but also in the clear daylight, in the desert, or in a mountain hut; surrounded, too, by those who are content with the common faculties of man.

Among many of the Gothic nations especially, women were the peculiar professors of divination and magic. The Volva-Seidkona, the Fiolkyngi, the Visindakona, and the Nornir, were the oracular priestesses, the chief of whom was the Hexa. These had the faculty of insight into skulda, or the future, and foreknew the doom of mortals: either to the niflheimr, or hell, over which presided the half blue and half flesh-tinted Hela, the goddess of death, who, as the Cimbric peasants believed, diffused pestilence and plague as she rode over the earth on her three-footed horse Hellhest; or to the Valhalla, or paradise of Odin. And this we read in the "Edda."

EV. Gramercy, Astrophel, you run up the catalogue of these weird women as you were involved in their unholy league. Have a care, or we must have you caged. There was once a Dr. Fordage, a divine of Berkshire, (as it is recorded in a strange book, "Demonium Meridianum, or Satan at Noon-

day,") accused of seeing spectres, such as "dragons with tails eight yards long, with four formidable tusks, and spouting fire from their nostrils." Remember the peril, and beware.

ASTR. Oh, sir, you must impeach by wholesale, for clairvoyance or second sight prevails in some regions as a *national* faculty.

The courses of my travel have shown to me this inspiration, especially among the elevated parts of the globe. The Hartz and other forests in Germany, the Alps and Pyrenees, the Highlands of Scotland, the hills of Ireland, the mountains of the Isle of Man, and the frozen fields of Iceland and Norway, abound in ghostly legends. Among the passes of the Spanish Sierras, also, it is believed that the Saludadores and the Covenanters saw angels on the hill-side during their wanderings and persecutions.

EV. And how clear is the *natural* reason of this. As in the wide desert, so on the mountain, nature assumes her wildest form. Of the awful sublimity of clouds, and vapours, and lightnings, among the gorges of the giant rocks, of the Alps, and the Appenines, and the deep and dreadful howling of a storm in the icy bosom of a glacier, or bellowing among the crumbling walls of ruined castles, the lowlander can form no idea.

The mind both of the Bedouin Arab, and especially of the mountaineer, is thus cradled in romance. If that mind be rude and uncultivated, credulity and superstition are its inmates; ignorance being the common stamp of the seers, except in rare instances of deep reflectors or melancholy bookworms, whose abstractions, like those of Allan Bane and Brian and Mac Aulay, assume the prophetic faculty; the seer by its power perceiving, as he declares, things distant or future as if they were

before his eye.

The superstitious legends of Martin, the historian of the Western Isles, and the precepts for the practice and governance of this clairvoyance, prove a deep interest and impression, but not a mystery. Among the defiles of Snæfel, in Man, the belief is prevalent: "A Manksman amid his lonely mountains reclines by some romantic stream, the murmurings of which lull him into a pleasing torpor; half-slumbering, he sees a variety of imaginary beings, which he believes to be real. Sometimes they resemble his traditionary idea of fairies, and sometimes they assume the appearance of his friends and neighbours. Presuming on these dreams, the Manks enthusiast predicts some future event." Here is a local reason, as among the icy mountains of the north. Cheffer writes, that thus influenced, the melancholy of the Laplanders renders them ghost-seers, and the dream and the vision are ever believed by them to be prophetic.

CAST. It is the contemplation of these alpine glories, that gilds with so bright a splendour of imagery the romances of mountain poets,—the wild legends of Ossian, and those which spangle, as with sparkling jewels, the pages of the "Lay," the "Lady of the Lake," and "Marmion." It may excite the jealousy of a classic, but the ghosts and heroes of Ossian, as very acute critics decide, are cast in a finer mould than the gods of Homer.

You smile at me, most learned clerks of Oxenford, yet I believe the critics are correct. When I was prowling in the king's private library, in Paris, M. Barbier placed in my hands two of the most precious tomes, the folio "Evangelistarium," or prayer-book of Charlemagne, and the 4to. edition of Ossian. The one is sanctified by its subject, and rich beyond compare in illuminations of gold and colours, and priceless in

the eyes of the bibliomaniac. The other was *the favourite book of Napoleon*.

Fancy that you hear him in the solitude of St. Cloud, poring in deep admiration over passages like this:

"Fingal drew his sword, the blade of dark-brown Luno. The gleaming path of the steel winds through the gloomy ghost. The form fell shapeless into air, like a column of smoke as it rises from the half-extinguished furnace. The spirit of Loda shrieked, as, rolled into himself, he rose on the wind. Inistore shook at the sound. The waves heard it on the deep, and stopped in their course with fear."

And yet these beauties, like the pictures of Turner, are looked upon with a smile of wondering pity or of scorn, simply because these home-keeping critics have never scaled the mountain, or breasted the storm for its wild and purple glory.

Among the mountains of Wales it was my fortune to light on many a wild spot, where the poetry of nature fell like the sun-light on the heart of the peasant. In the beautiful vale of Neath there is the tiny hamlet of Pont-Neath-Vechan. I shall ever remember how fair and beautiful it seemed as I descended from the mountain rocks of Pen y Craig, the loftiest of the Alps of Glamorgan, which inclose Ystrad-Vodwg, the "village of the green valley." Around its humble cottages is spread the most romantic scenery of Brecknockshire. The tributaries of its rolling river there blend their waters—those torrent streams which Drayton has impersonated in the Polyolbion, as

> "Her handmaids Meltè sweet, clear Hepstè, and Tragath."

On the Meltè is the wondrous cavern of Porth-

Mawr, through which, in Stygian darkness, flows this Acherontic river. And on the clear Hepstè is that glittering waterfall which in the midst of leafy woods and bosky glens, throws itself, like a miniature Niagara, from the rock, forming an arch of crystal, beneath which the traveller and the peasant cross the river's bed on the moss-green and slippery limestone. Oh! for the pencil of a Salvator, the pen of Torquato, to picture the wild vision which was before my eyes when I sought shelter beneath this crystal canopy from the deluge of a thunder-cloud. The lightning flash gleamed through the waterfall, forming a prismatic rainbow of transcendent beauty, while the deep peal swept through the echoing dingles, and the crimson-spotted trout leaped in sportive summersaults over the water-ousel that was walking quietly on the gravel, deep in the water.

In this wilderness of nature, no wonder that legends should prevail: that fairies are seen sporting in the Hepstè cascades, and that in the dark cavern of Cwm-Rhyd y Rhesg, the ghosts of headless ladies so often affright the romantic girls of these wild valleys. No wonder that they believe the giant Idris, enthroned on his mountain chair, shook the three pebbles from his shoe into that pool which bears the name of the Lake of Three Grains; or that the shrieks of Prince Idwal are to this day heard by the peasants of Snowdonia, amid the storm which bursts over the purple crag of the Twll-dhu, and thunder-clouds cast a deeper and a darker shade over the black water of Lyn Idwal. Nay, I myself may confess, that as I have stood on the peaks of Y Wyddfa, while the white and crimson clouds rolled beneath me in fleecy masses, whirling around the cone of Snowdon, I have for a moment believed that I was something more than earthly. And when enveloped in the mysterious cloud

which rests on the head of Mount Pilate in Lucern, I gave half my faith to the legend of the guide, that storm and human trouble, and the perils of flocks in the vicinity of its triple peak, were the result of the self-immersion of Pontius Pilate in its lake, an act of remorse at his impious adjudication. This unhallowed water was regarded with dismay, and not a pebble might be cast to make a ripple on its surface and disturb the quiet of the traitor. But, lo! in the sixteenth century the spell was proved to be a fable by an assemblage of bold Switzers, who hurled rocks into the lake, and swam across its water without the slightest indication of displeasure from this kelpie of the Brundeln Alp.

Ev. The truth is sweeter on your lips than fiction, Castaly. Whisper again in the ear of Astrophel the penalties entailed on the *indulgence* of second sight. Dr. Abercrombie knew a gentleman who *could*, by his will, call up spirits, and seers have assured me that the sight is to a certain degree voluntary:—by fixing the attention on a subject during the dark hour, the power of divination may be increased, but it cannot be controlled. But those who indulge in those illusions are often driven on to a degree of frenzy equal to the agonizing penalty of Frankenstein; even as the witch of Endor trembled when she raised before Saul the spirit of Samuel, or the Iberian princess Pyrene, who, like Sin, fled from the child-serpent which was born from her dalliance with Hercules.

The effort of the seers, nay, the mysterious ordeal to which they submit themselves, are often so painful, that they gaze with strained eyeballs, and fainting occurs as the vision appears. When the dark hour is o'er, they will exclaim with Mac Aulay, "Thank God, the mist hath passed from my spirit!"

Indeed, Sir Walter Scott observed in those who presumed to this faculty, "shades of mental aberration which caused him to feel alarmed for those who assumed the sight." Archibald, Duke of Argyle, was a seer, and it is written that he was haunted by *blue* phantoms, the origin, I believe, of our epithet for melancholy—"blue devils."

At the foot of yonder purple mountains in Morgany, once lived Colonel Bowen, a doer of evil works, whose spectral visitations fill so many pages of Baxter's "Essay on the Reality of Apparitions." This deep historian of the realm of shadows tells that the wizard was worn down by the phantoms of his evil conscience; that he imprisoned himself and his boy, who was, I presume, a sort of *famulus*, in a small castle; that he walked and talked of diablerie, and I know not what miseries, in his sleep.

I have myself known those who see spectres when they shut their eyes, before an attack of delirium, which vanish on the re-admission of light; and in imaginative minds, under peculiar conditions, intense reading may so shut out the real world, that an effort is required to re-establish vision. In Polydori's "Vampyre" it is recorded that they had been reading phantasmagoria, and ghost stories in Germany, thereby highly exciting the sensitive mind of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Anon, on Byron's reading some lines of Christabel, Shelley ran from the room, and was found leaning on a mantel-piece bedewed with cold and clammy perspiration; and it is enough to read of the gloom which marked the minds of those geister-sehers, the proselytes of Swedenborg (among whom he ranked the King of Prussia), to reclaim all the converts to his strange religion.

ASTR. There is a bright side, Evelyn. In Germany, those children which are born on a Sunday are

termed “Sontag’s kind,” and are believed to be endowed with the faculty of seeing spirits; these are gifted with a life of *happiness*.

EV. And you believe it. Well, for a moment I grant its truth; but it is the reverse in Scotland; the vision is almost ever cheerless, and prophetic of woe. “Does the sight come gloomy o’er your spirit?” asks Mac Aulay. “As dark as the shadow of the moon when she is darkened in her course in heaven, and prophets foretell of future times.” And the anathema of Roderich Dhu’s prophet Brian is dark and gloomy as the legend of his mysterious birth, or its prototype, the impure fable of Atys, and the loves of Jupiter and Sangaris.

CAST. If I am the sylph to charm this moody gentleman from his reveries, I will warn him in the words of a canzonet, even of the 17th century:

“Yet, rash astrologer, refrain;
Too dearly would be won
The prescience of another’s pain,
If purchased by thine own.”

And I will tell him what Collins writes on the perils of the seer, in his “Ode on Highland Superstition,” —

“How they whose sight such dreary dreams engross,
With their own vision oft astonished droop,
When o’er the wat’ry strath or quaggy moss
They see the gliding ghosts embodied troop. —
They know what spirit brews the stormful day,
And, heartless, oft like moody madness stare
To see the phantom train their secret work prepare.”

He listens not to me. Nay, then, I will try the virtue of a *spell* that has oft shed a ray of light over the dark hour of the ghost-seer. I will whisper music in thine ear, Astrophel. The fiend of Saul was chased away by

the harp of David; the gloomy shadows of Allan Mac Aulay were brightened by the melody of Annot Lyle; and the illusion of Philip of Spain, that he was dead and in his grave, was dispelled by the exquisite lute of the Rose of the Alhambra.

ASTR. My thanks, fair Castaly; yet wherefore should I claim your syren spells. *My* visions are delightful as the inspiration of the improvisatore, and carry not the penalty of the monomaniac. But say, if there *be* (in vulgar words) a crack in this cranium of mine, may not this crack, as saith the learned Samuel Parr, "*let in the light*?"

If prophetic visions in the *early ages* came over the dying, why not in ours?

The last solemn speech of Jacob was an inspired prophecy of the miraculous advent:—"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come, and to him shall the gathering of the people be." And is it profanation to ask, why may not the departing spirit of holiness, even now, prophecy to *us*?

As we see the stars from the deep well, so may such spirits look into futurity from the dark abyss of dissolution. In some cases of little children, I have learned that this unearthly feeling has caused them to anticipate their dying. How pathetically does John Evelyn, in his Diary, allude to the anticipation of his little boy,—"an angel in body and in mind, who died of a quartan ague, in his fifth year. The day before he died, he called to me and told me that, for all I loved him so dearly, I should give my house, lands, and all my fine things, to his brother."

The dying seem indeed themselves to feel that they are scarcely of this world. Holcroft, a short time before his death, hearing his children on the stairs, said to his wife, "Are those *your* children, Louisa?"—

as if he were already in another existence. As if the human mind itself were perusing the celestial volume of the recording angel,—the awful book of fate.

When the Northern Indian is stretched on the torture, even amidst his agonies, an inspired combination of belief and hope presents him with vivid pictures of the blessed regions of the Kitchi Manitou. The faithful Mussulman, in the agonies of death, feels assured that his enchanted sight is blessed by the beautiful houris in Mahomet's paradise. The Runic warriors also, as the Icelandic chronicles record in their epitaphs, when mortally wounded in battle, "fall, laugh, and expire;" and in this expiration, like the dying warriors of Homer, predict the fate of their enemies.

As the venom of the serpent curdled the blood in the veins of Regner Lodbrog, the Danish king, he exclaimed with ecstasy,—"What new joys arise within me! I am dying! I hear Odin's voice; the gates of his palace are already opened, and half-naked maidens advance to meet me. A blue scarf heightens the dazzling whiteness of their bosoms; they approach and present me with the soul-exhilarating beverage in the bloody skulls of my enemies."

Ev. In that awful moment, when the spirit is

"Soon from his cell of clay
To burst a seraph in the blaze of day,"

the mind is prone to yield to those feelings which it might perhaps in the turmoil of the busy world and at another period deem superstition. There is something in the approach of death of so holy and so solemn a nature, something so unlike life in the feeling of the dying, that in this transition, although we cannot compass the mystery, some vision of

another world may steal over the retiring spirit, imparting to it a proof of its immortality. I do not fear to yield for once my approval of this devout passage of Sir Thomas Brown:—"It is observed that men sometimes upon the hour of their departure do speak and reason above themselves, for then the soul begins to be freed from the ligaments of the body, and to discourse in a strain above mortality." It is on the verge of eternity, and the laws and principles of vitality may be already repealed by the Being who conferred them.—The arguments, then, regarding the phenomena of life may fail, when life has all but ceased.

With this admission, I may counsel Astrophel as to the danger of adducing heathen history or fiction in proof of this solemn question.

CAST. And yet Shakspere, for one, with a poet's license, brings before us, as you do, the dying hour, as the *cause* of prophetic vision. John of Gaunt, on his death-bed, mutters, —

"Methinks I am a prophet new inspired,
And thus expiring do foretell of him,"

and then predicts the fate of Richard.

And remember, the dying Hotspur says, —

——"now could I prophecy,
But that the icy hand of death," &c.

EV. Well, I will not controvert your creed, Astrophel; rather let me illustrate some of your apparent mysteries by simple analogy.

As in these extreme moments of life, so in the hour of extreme danger, when an awful fate is impending, and the world and our sacred friendships are about to be lost to us, a vision of our absent

friends will pass before us with all the light of reality. We read in the writings of Dr. Conolly of a person who, in danger of being swamped on the Eddystone rock, saw the phantoms of his family passing distinctly before him; and these are the words of the English Opium-Eater:—"I was once told by a near relative of mine that, having in her childhood fallen into a river, and being on the very verge of death but for the critical assistance which reached her, she saw in a *moment* her whole life in its minutest incidents arrayed before her simultaneously, as in a mirror, and she had a faculty developed as suddenly for comprehending the whole and every part."

Now, although the coming on of death is often attended by that slight delirium indicated by the babbling of green fields, and the playing with flowers, and the picking of the bedclothes, and the smiling on the fingers' ends, yet in others some oppressive or morbid *cause of insanity* may be removed by the moribund condition. In the words of Aretæus,—"the system has thrown off many of its impurities, and the soul, left naked, was free to exercise such energies as it still possessed."

I will glance in illustration at these interesting cases:—from Zimmerman, of an insane woman of Zurich, who, "a few hours before her death, became perfectly sensible and wonderfully eloquent;"—from Dr. Perceval, of a female idiot, who, as she was dying of consumption, evinced the highest powers of intellect;—from Dr. Marshall, of the maniac, who became completely rational some hours previous to his dissolution;—and from Dr. Hancock, of the Quaker, who, from the condition of a drivelling idiot, became shortly before his death so completely rational, as to call his family together, and, as his

spirit was passing from him, bestow on them with pathetic solemnity his last benediction.

Thus your impressive records are clearly explained by pathology; and, perhaps unconscious of this, Mrs. Opie has a fine illustration in her "Father and Daughter:"—the mind of the maniac parent being illumined before his death by a beam of reason.

But in the languid brain of an idiot excitement may even produce rationality.

Samuel Tuke tells us of a domestic servant, who lapsed into a state of complete idiocy. Some time after, she fell into typhus fever, and as this progressed, there was a real development of mental power. At that stage when delirium lighted up the minds of others, *she* was rational, because the excitement merely brought up the nervous energy to its proper point. As the fever abated, however, she sunk into her idiot apathy, and thus continued until she died. It was but the *transient gleam* of reason.

PHANTASY FROM CEREBRAL CONGESTION.—OPIUM.

——"Have we eaten of the insane root,
That takes the reason prisoner?"

MACBETH.

EV. The contrasts to these phantoms of blind superstition, are those of the *overstrained* condition of the mind. The Creator has ordained the brain to be the soil in which the mind is implanted or developed. This brain, like the corn-field, must have its fallow, or it is exhausted and reduced in the degree of its high qualities. In our intellectual government,

therefore, we should ever adopt that happy medium, equally remote from the bigotry of the untutored, and the ultra refinement of the too highly cultivated mind.

It is not essential that I should now offer you more than a hint, that the essence of the gloomy ghosts of deep study, like the melancholy phantoms and oppressive demons of the night-mare, consists in the accumulation of black blood about the brain and the heart; and a glance at phrenology would explain to you how the influence of that blood on the various divisions of the brain will call up in the mind these "Hydras and Gorgons, and Chimeras dire."

The learned Pascal constantly saw a gulph yawning at his side, but he was *aware* of his illusion. He was, however, always strapped in his chair, lest he should fall into this gulph, especially while he was working the celebrated problem of the cycloidal curve.

A distinguished nobleman, who but lately guided the helm of state in England, was often annoyed by the spectre of a bloody head;—a strange coincidence with the phantom of the Count Duke d'Olivarez, the minister of Philip of Spain.

From Dr. Conolly we learn the curious illusion of a student of anatomy, who, during his ardent devotion to his study, confidently believed that there was a town in his *deltoid* muscle.

And, from Dr. Abercrombie, the case of a gentleman of high literary attainments, who, when closely reading in his study, was repeatedly annoyed by the intrusive visits of a little old woman in a black bonnet and mantle, with a basket on her arm. So *filmy*, however, was this phantom, that the door-lock was seen through her. Supposing she had mistaken her way, he politely showed her the door, and she

instantly vanished. It was the change of posture which effected this disappearance, by altering the circulation of the brain-blood, then in a state of partial stagnation.

My friend, Dr. Johnson, has told me of a gentleman of great science, who conceived that he was honoured by the frequent visits of spectres. They were at first refined and elegant both in manners and in conversation, which, on one occasion, assumed a witty turn, and quips, and puns, and satire, were the order of the evening; so that he was charmed with his ghostly visitors, and sought no relief. On a sudden, however, they changed into demoniac fiends, uttering expressions of the most degraded and unholy nature. He became alarmed, and depletion soon cured him of his phantasy.

A Scotch lawyer had long laboured under this kind of monomania, which at length proved fatal. His physician had long seen that some secret grief was gnawing the heart and sucking the life-blood of his patient, and he at last extorted the confession, that a skeleton was ever watching him from the foot of his bed. The physician tried various modes to dispel the illusion, and once placed himself in the field of the vision, and was not a little terrified when the patient exclaimed, that he saw the skull peering at him over his left shoulder.

The “Martyr Philosopher,” too, in the “Diary of a Physician,” saw, shortly preceding his death, a figure in black deliberately putting away the books in his study, throwing his pens and ink into the fire, and folding up his telescope, as if they were now useless. The truth is *he himself* had been engaged in that occupation, but it was his own disordered imagination that raised the spectre.

You will believe from these illustrations,

Astrophel, that Seneca is right in his aphorism, —

"Nullum fit magnum ingenium sine misturâ dementiæ."

And Pope also in his unconscious imitation, —

"Great wits to madness nearly are allied."

Lord Castlereagh, when commanding in early life a militia regiment in Ireland, was stationed one night in a large desolate country house, and his bed was at one end of a long dilapidated room, while, at the other extremity, a great fire of wood and turf had been prepared within a huge gaping old-fashioned chimney. Waking in the middle of the night, he lay watching from his pillow the gradual darkening of the embers on the hearth, when suddenly they blazed up, and a naked child stepped from among them upon the floor. The figure advanced slowly towards Lord Castlereagh, rising in stature at every step, until, on coming within two or three paces of his bed, it had assumed the appearance of a ghastly giant, pale as death, with a bleeding wound on the brow, and eyes glaring with rage and despair. Lord Castlereagh leaped from his bed, and confronted the figure in an attitude of defiance. It retreated before him, diminishing as it withdrew in the same manner that it had previously shot up and expanded; he followed it, pace by pace, until the original child-like form disappeared among the embers. He then went back to his bed, and was disturbed no more.

The melancholy story of the Requiem of Mozart is an apt and sublime illustration of this influence. It was written by desire of a solemn personage, who repeatedly, he affirmed, called on him during its composition, and disappeared on its completion. The requiem was soon chanted over *his own* grave; and

the man in black was, I believe, but a phantom of his own creation.

A step beyond this, and we have the spectres of the delirium of fever: the wanderings of typhus, in which the victim either revels with delight in the regions of fancy, a midsummer madness, or is influenced by gloom and despair, in which, with a consciousness of right and wrong, he is driven headlong to acts of ruin and devastation.

IDA. In this illusive condition of the intellect consists even the monomania of suicide; and the phrenologist will declare that torpor or excitement of the "organ of the love of life," will incite or deter from such an act. But surely this is error: it is certain that there was a *fashion* among the Stoics for this crime; and even in the early history of Marseilles, suicide was sanctioned, not only by custom, but by authority.

EV. It is a truth of history, but the *essence* of the crime is the predisposition in the brain. You will think to confute my position, Astrophel, by adducing Brutus and Cassius, and Antony and Cato, and a host of Roman heroes, in proof of the sanity of these suicides; but even in the case of Cato, if we read Plutarch and not Addison, who with Rousseau, Montaigne, and Shaftesbury, leaned toward a *sanction*, we shall believe that Cato was indeed a monomaniac. I speak this in charity.

And to all these morbid states we may still offer analogies. Such are the effects of opium.

The brilliancy of thought may be artificially induced, also, by various other narcotics, such as the juice of the American manioc, the fumes of tobacco, or the yupa of the Othomacoes on the Orinoco. To this end we learn from a learned lord, that even ladies of quality are wont to "light up their minds

with opium as they do their houses with wax or oil."

Indeed a kind of inspiration seems for a time to follow the use of these narcotics. The Cumean sybil swallowed the juice of the cherry laurel ere she sat on the divining tripod; and from this may have arisen those superstitious fancies of the ancients regarding the virtues of the laurel, and the influence of other trees, of which I remember an allusion of the excellent author of the "Sylva."

"Here we may not omit what learned men have observed concerning the custom of *prophets* and persons inspired of *old* to *sleep* upon the boughs and branches of *trees*, on *mattresses* and *beds* made of leaves, *ad consulendum*, to ask advice of God. Naturalists tell us that the *Laurus* and *Agnus Castus* were trees which greatly composed the *phrensy*, and did facilitate true *vision*, and that the *first* was specifically efficacious, προς τους ενθυσιασμους, to inspire a *poetical* fury: and *Cardan*, I remember, in his book *de Fato*, insists very much on the dreams of *trees* for portents and presages, and that the use of some of them do dispose men to visions."

During the reverie of the opium eater (not the deep sleep of a full dose, but the first and second stage ere coma be induced), he is indeed a poet, so far as brilliant imagination is concerned, but his scribbling is mere "midsummer madness," the phantoms of which are as wild as those of intoxication, dreaming, or insanity. But the philosophy, the metaphysics of poetry, are not the product of mere excitement: "Poeta nascitur, non fit." A poet's genius is born with him. The influence of opium on the philosopher or the orator is the same, but in them it does not usually elevate the force of imagination beyond that of judgment. The power of the faculties has been in fact exhausted by

thought or study; the stimulus of opium, then, restores that depressed energy to its proper level, leaving the judgment perfect, and not overbalanced. The celebrated Thomas Brown, during the composition of his Essay on the Mind, kept his intellect on the stretch by opium for several successive nights. Sir James Mackintosh (one of his favourite pupils) informed us, that on entering the doctor's library one morning somewhat abruptly, he overheard the following command addressed to his daughter: "Effie, bring me the *moderate* stimulus of a hundred drops of laudanum." So that the excitement be obtained, it matters not how, whether by the use of opium, or other "drowsy syrups of the East, poppy or mandragora," as in the case of some of our modern statesmen; or the free libation of brandy in certain orators, who were wont to stagger down to the House from White's or Brookes's, with those clubhouse laurels, wet towels, round their brows, and overwhelm Saint Stephen's by the thunders of their eloquence. Unless, indeed, this be carried to excess, and then we have two very interesting states of vision, as you may gather from the following witticism on two of these departed legislators, which was founded on a truth:

"I cannot see the Speaker, Bill, can you?
Not see him, Harry, d——e, I see two!"

For the effects of alcohol and opium are alike: the first degree is excitement; the second, reverie; the third, sleep, or stupor. "Ben Jonson," writes Aubrey, "would many times exceede in drink; Canarie was his beloved liquor: then he would tumble home to bed, and when he had thoroughly perspired, then to studie."

The *second* visions of that moral delinquent, the

practised opium-eater, like the cordial julep of Comus,

"Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams."

The phantoms of the *third* stage are often of unutterable anguish: visions of bright forms dabbled in blood, and scenes of crime and horror which are at once loathed and revelled in. The awful curse of Lord Byron's infidel—a vampyre—who, haunting the graveyard with gouls and afrits, sucks the blood of his race:

" 'Till they with horror shrink away
From spectre more accurs'd than they."

Thus for a moment of delirious joy, he yields up his mind to the agonies of remorse, his body to a slow poison, perhaps to a sinful dissolution.

IDA. The scenes which I gazed on among the opium-houses of Constantinople, ever excited my wonder and my pity. These slaves of pleasure, when they assemble and take their seats, are the perfect pictures of either apathetic melancholy or despair. As the potent poison creeps through the blood, they are lighted with unholy fires, until, these being exhausted, the vulture of Prometheus again gnaws their vitals, although the fire is not stolen from heaven.

Listen to the confessions of such a slave: —

"At last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were all the world to me, and clasped hands, and heart-breaking partings, and then everlasting farewells, and with a sigh such as the caves of hell sighed, when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of Death, the

sound was reverberated—Everlasting farewells."

"Whatsoever things capable of being visually represented I did but think of in the darkness, immediately shaped themselves into phantoms of the eye; and, by a process no less inevitable, when thus once traced in faint and visionary colours, they were drawn out by the fierce chemistry of my dreams, with insufferable splendour that fretted my heart."

Is there any earthly pleasure which will compensate the victim of this voluntary condemnation?

EV. And yet a visionary once thought of renting the Hummums in Covent Garden, and purchasing a large stock of opium, for the purpose of supplying us with visions. He would have succeeded, perhaps, if he had hired a second Helen to serve up this nepenthe to the guests.

The intense effect of opium is insensibility or death. Thus the Natches give narcotics to their victims, and the Brahmins to the suttee women, ere they ascend the pile, for the purpose of producing insensibility. Its mildest effects will be, if long continued, especially in early life, idiocy; and Oppenheim states that it is sometimes administered to adults by design, to substantiate a statute of lunacy.

ASTR. I cannot disprove your facts, Evelyn, nor do *they* yet disprove the rationality of my own faith. And is there not one illusion from opium-eating which seems to reverse your laws? From the tales of the Opium-Eater we learn, that the healthy thoughts of the mind seem to be frozen up in the brain, like the notes in the frozen horn of Munchausen, or the Irish echo which was so long in giving its answers, that if you had a concert, you should play and sing the airs *the day before* the assemblage of your

company. And then, when the effect was wearing off, these thoughts followed so copiously and fast, as that not one in a hundred could be recorded. Is this true?

Ev. It is a slight fact embellished. The action of opium, however, is not uniform: it may produce deep sleep, or insensible stupor; or it may quiet some of the faculties; and when it does so, it excites a dream of irregular associations.

The salts of morphia exert an especial influence over the organ of language; so that the orator in the fluency of his power of speech finds it difficult to stop. The *muriate* is the best preparation to induce fluency and confidence in speaking, or the mind to luxuriate throughout a night in delightful reverie: and in the morning, after this phantasy, the body will even rise *refreshed*.

In some cases, however, morphia will create a very strange illusion, *a spectral language*: so that, in reading or listening, we may feel or think that the words have lost their true meaning. This effect is, I am told, attended with severe headache.

The poem of "Kubla Khan," which Coleridge has termed a psychological curiosity, had its origin in the excitement of opium, a spinning out of a theme in "Purchas' Pilgrim," which he had been reading: it is an effort of the poet in recording the wild images which had been before presented to the mind's eye of the enthusiast,—the impression, indeed, of the pleasures and the pains of memory.

POETIC PHANTASY, OR FRENZY.

"The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth—from earth to heaven.
And as imagination bodies forth

The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothings
A local habitation, and a name."

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

ASTR. Is there so potent a charm in poppies, Evelyn? You will make us believe, soon, that opium can make a Shakspere, that genius can be imparted by a drug.

The ghosts of fairyland, those bright emanations of a poet's fancy, which are wafted through the air on the thistle-down, or swing to and fro on the filmy thread of the gossamer, sprang from a deeper source than this. The fairy mythology of Shakspere, the beautiful creations of the "Tempest" and the "Midsummer Night's Dream," are the very offspring of that *innate* genius, that "exhausted worlds, and then *imagined new*."

Those exquisite and tricksy spirits, the mischievous Puck and the delicate Ariel, indeed, the whole train of ghosts which appeared to Macbeth, and Richard, and Clarence, and Brutus, and Hamlet, and the spirits of the "Midsummer Night," the "Tempest," and "Macbeth," of Bolingbroke and Joan of Arc, could not have been so painted, unless they had stood before the mind of Shakspere as palpable as reality.

Look, too, on those splendid illustrations of the Gothic poets by the eccentric, or, as Evelyn would call him, the half-mad Fuseli. Look on the wild pencillings of Blake, another poet painter, and you will be assured that they were ghost-seers. An intimate friend of Blake, himself a reader of the stars, has told me the strangest tales of his visions. In one of his reveries he witnessed the whole ceremony of a fairy's funeral, which he peopled with mourners and mutes, and described with high poetic beauty. He

was engaged, in one of these moods, in painting King Edward I., who was sitting to him for his picture. While they were conversing, Wallace suddenly presented himself on the field, and by this uncourteous intrusion marred the studies of the painter for that day.

EV. A most unhappy comparison, Astrophel. The difference between Shakspere and Blake is *antipodean*. Blake was a visionary, and thought his fancies real—he was mad. Shakspere was a philosopher, and knew all his fancy was but imagination, however real might be the facts he wrought from. Ben Jonson told Drummond that he lay awake one whole night, gazing in mute admiration on his great toe; surrounding which, in miniature, appeared the inhabitants of Rome, and Carthage, and Tartary, and Turkey; but he also was aware of the illusion.

CAST. My most gracious smile is yours, Evelyn, for this honour to my sweet Shakspere. I pray you accord the same to the spectral visions of a poet, in whose beautiful Aminta each line is a breath of inspiration—the day-dreams of the elegant Tasso. Listen.

"At Bisaccio, Manso had an opportunity to examine the singular effects of Tasso's melancholy; and often disputed with him concerning a familiar spirit which he pretended to converse with. Manso endeavoured in vain to persuade his friend that the whole was the illusion of a disturbed imagination; but the latter was strenuous in maintaining the reality of what he asserted; and, to convince Manso, desired him to be present at one of these mysterious conversations. Manso had the complaisance to meet him the next day, and while they were engaged in discourse, on a sudden he observed that Tasso kept

his eyes fixed upon a window, and remained in a manner immoveable; he called him by his name several times, but received no answer. At last Tasso cried out, 'There is the friendly spirit who is come to converse with me: look, and you will be convinced of the truth of all that I have said.' Manso heard him with surprise: he looked, but saw nothing except the sunbeams darting through the window; he cast his eyes all over the room, but could perceive nothing, and was just going to ask where the pretended spirit was, when he heard Tasso speak with great earnestness, sometimes putting questions to the spirit, and sometimes giving answers, delivering the whole in such a pleasing manner, and with such elevated expressions, that he listened with admiration, and had not the least inclination to interrupt him. At last this uncommon conversation ended with the departure of the spirit, as appeared by Tasso's words, who, turning towards Manso, asked him if his doubts were removed. Manso was more amazed than ever; he scarce knew what to think of his friend's situation, and waived any further conversation on the subject."

Ev. I shall forfeit your smile, sweet Castaly, or change it, alas! for a frown. I have ever thought Tasso a monomaniac, for he yielded to his illusion. I can give you in a fragment from Lorry, the counterpart of Tasso's phantasy in a far different mind. "During these paroxysms she would talk, and was accustomed to address herself to some one individual present, with whom she conversed at first in an obscure voice, but afterwards in a distinct and audible manner. She evidently perceived him, and observed all his gestures; but all she said to him bore a reference to one idea, on which she was intent. In the mean time she appeared not to see or hear any

other person, even if he exerted his voice to the utmost to make himself heard. This fact I witnessed with the greatest astonishment, but many other persons are living who can attest it. The mother of this female died unexpectedly, after which the daughter used to hold conversations with her as if she was present. She would answer questions as if interrogated by her mother; would entreat her to take care of her health, and recommend some physician as more able to restore her than others. Moreover, she would talk to her mother of her destined marriage, although it had already been some time completed, in a manner perfectly like that of a sane and modest young woman, making some objections to it, and replying to others, and appeared to be revealing all her secret wishes; in a word, she seemed perfectly collected and rational, excepting the error respecting time, and the supposed presence of her mother. This woman had in other respects good health, but was afraid of the smallest noise, and was easily affected by any thing she saw or heard. At length she fell into a consumption."

In other cases, especially in accomplished minds, the phantasy is usually combined with *derangement of health*. A very ingenuous and elegant young lady, about the age of seventeen, was suddenly seized with catalepsy. It commenced with violent convulsions of almost every muscle of her body, and the most distressing hiccoughs. In about an hour came on a fixed spasm, one hand being placed against her head, and the other to support it. In about half an hour more, the spasm subsided, and then began the reverie in a moment, her eyes and expression indicating a fixed attention. She then conversed with imaginary persons, her eyes being wide open, and during this *ecstasy* she was completely insensible to

the most irritating, and indeed most violent *stimuli*.

Sir Henry Halford related to us, that on a visit to a person of exalted rank in his chamber, he heard him with great energy request Garrick to play a scene in "Hamlet," reminding him of the lines in Horace's Epistles:

"Haud ignobilis Argis,
Qui se credebat miros audire tragœdos,
In vacuo lætus sessor plausorque theatro."

In Dr. Darwin, too, we read of an epileptic girl, who during a fit of reverie, when insensible to all external *stimuli*, conversed fluently with imaginary people, and was surprised to hear of her illusions when fully awake.

And, in Andral, of a gentleman of distinguished ability, who believed that an absent friend was sitting among his guests, welcoming him to his table, and, with great courtesy, handing him a chair. You remember how pathetically Crabbe has illustrated this illusion in his poem of "Sir Eustace Gray."

CAST. Hark to the profane philosopher who associates poetry with madness! Tell me, Master Evelyn, while you wandered in the Water walks of Magdalene, with the balmy breezes of heaven around your brow, and the mellow sunbeam streaming through the green leaves upon your cheek, with the inspired volumes of Virgil, and Theocritus, and Bion, and Moschus, breathing nature in all the lines of their beautiful idylls—while Astrophel, perchance, was musing among cobwebs in Friar Bacon's study—tell me, felt you not the sublimity and truth of poesy? You remind me of the quaint tradition among the shepherds of Snowdonia, that if two persons lie down, on midsummer eve, to sleep upon a certain rock on Snowdon, one will wake a poet, the other a

maniac. I pr'ythee, think otherwise of Tasso, whose reveries were an ecstasy of bright thoughts. Even when the light of day is eclipsed, as when the senseless orbs of Homer and Milton were merged in "ever-during dark," the thoughts of a poet may be deeper and clearer for the gloom.

IDA. And so pure and holy withal. In the "Defensio Secunda," I remember this gem of sentiments:—"Involved in darkness, not so much from the imperfection of our optic powers, as from the shadow of the Creator's wings,—a darkness which he frequently irradiates with an inner and far superior light."

Never did poet feel more intensely than Milton the truth of that divine thought, that "the shadow of God is light."

CAST. And call up that glory of the Elizabethan age, Philip Sidney, whose life, in the words of Campbell, was "a poetry in action," and who more than embodied the brightest pictures of Tasso and Ariosto, and eclipsed the glory of that Chevalier Bayard, like himself, "sans peur et sans reproche."

EV. I cry you mercy, fairest ladies, I speak not of the light of poetry, but of its shadows. *Cheromania* is the first form of *monomania*, or the madness of one idea; and this is marked by cheerfulness and splendid ideas, which indeed often tend to mitigate the melancholy scenes of derangement, as if "the light that led astray was light from heaven." I will illustrate this by repeating to you the letter to his brother, of a young officer, whose progressive changes of mind, from excitement to confirmed mania, it was my duty to watch over.

December 4th, 1832.

"To ——, Esq.

"I am Lord President of the Counsil, a most honorable situation, and the richest gift of the Crown, which brings me in seven thousand pounds every year. The Counsil consists of Three Secretaries of State, of which I am one; and the Paymaster of the Forces. When the King William the forth shall die, then shall I be crowned King of England, and be crowned in Westermister Abbey, By The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury. I shall on the occasion of my coronation have placed in the different street of London one thousand pipes of wine for my people, and at night in the Hyde Park a magnificent display of Fireworks, and one hundred pieces of Artillery shall fire three rounds for the amusement of my people and subjects. I have only now to give you a list of my titles and honors:

"King of England.
First Heir Presumptive to the Crown.
Major General and Field Martial.
Duke of Leitzep.
Prince of Denmark.
Lord President of the Counsil.
Knight Banneret.
Lord Treasurer of the Exchequer.
Lieutenant Colonel ——, Lord and Baronet.
Aid de Camp to the King.
Champion of England.

"Dear ——, I wish to acquaint you that Windsor Castle belongs to me, that the palace of Brighton also belongs to me, also I

> purchased from the Duke of Wellington the splendid park and Palace of Stratfieldsea, wherein there are very extensive Forests of Oak and of Pines trees, together with a magnificent sheet of Water containing Ells and Salmon Trout.
>
> "Dear ——, I have to beg that you give my love and duty to your wife—and give this letter to read, I pray you, according to my desire and wish."

I may tell you that the very onset of frenzy is often but an elevated spirit of poesy, in which brilliancy and judgment shall be companions; but, like Æsop's bow, the mind shall be warped and wrung by being constantly bent on its subject; and thus the source of brilliancy and wit may be the source of madness. A change of subject will often do much to unbend such a mind, as a change of posture will relieve muscular fatigue, or as a sudden impression of fear or fright has thwarted a suicide on the moment of his self-attempt. Indeed mania will often appear to induce an almost inspired talent, which, I may hint to you, may be explained by the *oxygenizing* of the blood in the brain.

In Van Swiéten, we read of a working female who, during fits of insanity, displayed the faculty of rhyming, or poetic talent; and (as I am fond of analogy) in Pinel, of one who, during his insane moments, argued (as if from concentrated memory) in an acute and intelligent manner, on the events of the Revolution.

Then Haller tells us of an idiot, who was wounded on the head, and, during its healing, the intellect became lucid (and this on the principle of a counteraction); but, on the healing being completed,

again the creature was an idiot.

When we are roaming over the flowery fields of poesy, we are seldom inclined to reflect on the mental labour by which they are embellished. We may suppose that, whatever is born of the brain is ushered in by an easy birth; but poesy is often attended by a pang of parturition, and one single line may rankle in the brain for hours ere it struggle into light; and, perhaps, require a frontal blow, as violent as that which cleft the skull of Jupiter and gave birth to Pallas.

There are some minds which can support the effort of composition with impunity; but when we recollect the diseases which are entailed on genius—the melancholy of Cowper, and the distraction of the amiable Collins, who

> "passed in madd'ning pain life's feverish dream,
> While rays of genius only served to show
> The thick'ning horror, and exalt his woe;"

when we remember the gloomy setting of the brilliant sun of Scott, during the period of his apoplectic tendency, when his letter "filled the minds of his publishers with dismay," and he sunk into the delusive hope that his debts were liquidated to the full; when we are told that Ariosto was never seen to laugh, and rarely to smile; that Rousseau was ever restless, and on the verge of mania; when we reflect on the premature decay of unhappy White—

> "When science self destroyed her fav'rite son;"

on the painful conflicts of Byron, when his dark hour was on him; on Chatterton, "the sleepless boy who perish'd in his pride:" are incited, almost unconsciously to echo the apostrophe of

Wordsworth: —

"We poets in our youth begin in gladness,
But thereof comes in the end despondency and madness."

IDA. The laurel, then, contains more poison than that of prussic acid in its leaf. The perils of romance are not *ever* in these extremes; yet the mere indulgence of poetic thoughts may so raise the beau-ideal of beauty in the sensitive and youthful mind, as to unfit it for the common duties of life. Like Narcissus, the heart perishes for love of its own shadow. It becomes so acutely sensitive, as to "die of a rose in aromatic pain:" or like the Sybarite, it cannot sleep, because a crumpled rose-leaf lay beneath the pillow.

I have often thought that the secret of happiness may lie in this precept: "Take the *good* of life as it is, a divine gift, and not *an agreeable deception*;" when *evil* is in your path, search its cause, analyze its nature, and if you discover not that you have yourself to thank for it, at least you may prove that the evil *itself* is made up of mere trifles, and thus you will learn to be resigned.

And with the beauty and treasures of earth: if *you* possess them, enjoy them with a prudent and a grateful heart. If they belong to *others*, sigh not—pine not for them, but analyze them also, and you may find that the hope of their enjoyment was a phantom; for aggregated beauties are often made up of deformed or unlovely atoms.

I might illustrate my remarks by relating to you an episode of the life of my young friend Stanmore; from which I learned, with sorrow, that the heart may droop beneath its own excess of sensibility, (a mystery to those who were strangers to its secret,) and that the blossom of love may be *self-blighted*:

"His existence was a withered hope, that, like the icicle in the cup of the early flower, freezes the life-spring in which it is so deeply embosomed. In his mind was lighted a vision of Elysium, beyond what earth with all its virtue and beauty could give him: a spectral Utopia. His life was a blank. He found not happiness, *because* he knew not contentment. He was the leader of many a forlorn hope in Spain, and fell in a midnight enterprise among the guerillas in the Sierra Morena."

Ev. And had the sword spared him, he would have died a moral suicide.

What folly, thus to chase a butterfly, instead of yielding to the virtuous influence of woman, which, beyond aught else, softens and ennobles man's heart; entrancing it in floods of human passion, which, with all its pains, yields happiness a thousand-fold more than the maudlin sentiments of Rousseau, that, reducing love to a mere phantom, leave the lone heart to prey on its own sensibility.

Such was the romantic poet of Endymion, who for the phantom of his waking dreams, gave up the study of that science, which might have nursed and fortified a mind, so soon chilled to death by the icy finger of criticism. Erato was the mistress of John Keats; but while he wooed, he perished: like the Rosicrucian, who, to save the life of his lady, took the oath of celibacy, and thus lost her love for ever. Even in the lecture-room of Saint Thomas's, I have seen Keats in a deep poetic dream: his mind was on Parnassus with the muses. And here is a quaint fragment which he one evening scribbled in our presence, while the precepts of Sir Astley Cooper fell unheeded on his ear: —

"Whenne Alexandre the Conqueroure was wayfayringe in y^{e} londe of Inde, there mette hym a

damoselle of marveillouse beautie slepynge uponne the herbys and flourys. He colde ne loke uponne her withouten grete plesance, and he was welle nighe loste in wondrement. Her forme was everyche whytte lyke y^{e} fayrest carvynge of Quene Cythere, onlie thatte y^{t} was swellyd and blushyd wyth warmthe and lyffe wythalle.

"Her forhed was as whytte as ys the snowe whyche y^{e} talle hed of a Norwegian pyne stelythe from y^{e} northerne wynde. One of her fayre hondes was yplaced thereonne, and thus whytte wyth whytte was ymyngld as y^{e} gode Arthure saythe, lyke whytest lylys yspredde on whyttest snowe; and her bryghte eyne whenne she them oped, sparklyd lyke Hesperus through an evenynge cloude.

"Theye were yclosyd yn slepe, save that two slauntynge raies shotte to her mouthe, and were theyre bathyd yn swetenesse, as whenne bye chaunce y^{e} moone fyndeth a banke of violettes and droppethe thereonne y^{e} sylverie dewe.

"The authoure was goynge onne withouthen descrybynge y^{e} ladye's breste, whenne lo, a genyus appearyd—'Cuthberte,' sayeth he, 'an thou canst not descrybe y^{e} ladye's breste, and fynde a simile thereunto, I forbyde thee to proceede yn thy romaunt.' Thys, I kennd fulle welle, far surpassyd my feble powres, and forthwythe I was fayne to droppe my quille."

PHANTASY FROM SYMPATHY WITH THE BRAIN.

"My eyes are made the fools o' the other senses."

MACBETH.

ASTR. I marvel not, lady, that those pencilled brows do frown upon the ruthless scholar, who thus dares to dismantle the fair realm of poesy, and bind the poppy, and the cypress, and the deadly nightshade, with the myrtle and the laurel.

We shall have, ere long, a statute of lunacy against the poet and the seer; or hapless, he will imprison thee, fair creature, within a cloven pine: and like Prospero, I must break my wand and bury it certain fathoms in the earth; and, deeper than ever plummet sounded, drown my books. The pages of Ptolemy, and Haly, and Agrippa, and Lily, will be but bygone fables: and the metaphysics of the mighty mind will be controverted by the slicing of the brain and marrow with the knife of these anatomists. Nay, we must devoutly believe what they so learnedly give out, that frontal headaches in the locality of *form*, *colour*, and *number*, and forsooth in the *organ of wonder* too, often accompany spectral illusions, and that white or grey ghosts result from excited form and deficient colour!!

Martin Luther, who was a believer in special influence, quarrelled with the physician, who referred its mystic signs to natural causes. I am not so uncourteous, yet express my wonder, Evelyn, at the confidence with which you presume to the discovery of a *material* reason and a cause, for all the phenomena of our mysterious intellect.

EV. And why should I not, dear Astrophel, if I search for and discover it in the studies of that sublime science, the meditation on which inspired Galen with this pious sentiment: “Compono hic profecto canticum in Creatoris nostri laudem.”

Is it more profane to think that the Deity should speak to us through the medium of our senses, than by the agency of a spirit? Recollect, I have presumed

neither to enter deeply into metaphysical reasoning, nor to describe, minutely, the condition of the brain; and I have alluded but slightly to the supposed function of its varied structures. Lord Bacon has observed: “He who would philosophize in a due and proper manner must *dissect* nature, but not *abstract* her, as they are obliged to do who will not dissect her.” Dissection, however, in its *anatomical* sense, has not, perhaps cannot, elucidate the coincidence of symptom and pathology in cases which so seldom prove fatal, and the causes of which may be so evanescent. Still, it is only by a combination of metaphysical argument and anatomical research, with the essential aid of *analogy*, that the phenomena and disease of mind can be fairly investigated.

In the important question of insanity, there is an error among the mere metaphysicians that is fraught with extreme danger—the abstract notion of *moral* causes being the chief excitement of mania. This error has led to that melancholy abuse of the coercive treatment and excitement of fear in a maniac; as if a savage keeper possessed the wondrous power of frightening him *into* his wits. Hear what the magniloquent Reil writes on this point: “The reception of a lunatic should be amid the thunder of cannon; he should be introduced by night, over a drawbridge, be laid hold of by Moors, thrust into a subterranean dungeon, and put into a bath with eels and other beasts!”

And Lichtenberg, another *moral* philanthropist, sanctioned by the divine axiom—“the rod helps God,” urges the employment of coercion and cruelty for this sublime psychological reason: that under the infliction of the lash and the cane, “the soul is forced to knit itself once more to that world, from which the *cudgels* come!” Think ye that these moralists, if not

hood-winked by false metaphysics, would have so closely copied the malevolence of an inquisitor or a devil?

We must believe that each illusive representation is marked by *some* change in some certain portion of the brain, the function of which bears a reference to the subject or nature of the illusion: it may be so minute as not to be recognized by our vision. Indeed, if the bodily sensations of every human passion be faithfully analyzed, it will be proved that there is an *unusual feeling* in some part, when even a thought passes through the mind, under these definitions:—*a thrill*, *a creeping*, *a glow*, *a flush*, *a chill*, *a tremor*,—nay, even fainting, convulsion, death.

Now the brain feels, and thinks, and wills; but the blood is also essential to these faculties. If part of the brain is changed, or its circulation deranged, in that instant an *effect unlike health* is produced: and such is the illusion of the ghost-seer. Or if the substance of the organ of sense, as the eye, be altered, its function is deranged, and an illusive spectrum appears to float before it. Nay, we are assured by Tiedeman and Gall, (opinions of high value,) that they have known patients who (smile as you please) were mad only on *one side* of the brain, and perceived their madness with *the other*; and *I* may assure you, too, that there have been persons who really thought with half the brain only.

I will again claim the courtesy of these fair dames, while I offer another glimpse of the dull cold region of physiology.

Recollect the illustrations I have adduced in allusion to those classes, on whose privacy the ghost has the privilege of intrusion. I will now offer illustrations of those *remote influences* which work these seeming mysteries in the sensitive or diseased

brain.

A patient of Dr. Gregory, at the hour of six, *one hour after dinner*, was daily visited by a hag, or incubus, which confronted him, and appeared to strike him with a crutch. Immediately on this he would fall from his chair in a swoon. This gentleman was relieved by bleeding and abstinence.

The Abbé Pilori, in Florence, invariably saw the phantom of scorpions around him, after he had partaken of luncheon.

There was a gentleman in Edinburgh, learned in fourteen languages, of the age of seventy-six. In 1819, he began to see strange faces, in old dresses, like paintings, and his own face changing from young to old; and these phantoms came at his call. Wine drinking increased especially these spectres, during the twelve years that the illusion continued; yet his mental faculties were not much impaired. When eighty years old, he came to London to dine with the Knights of the Bath, and went back at the rate of a hundred miles a-day. His language latterly was a *patois* of fourteen. One night he saw his dead wife's shadow, and jumped after her out of the window, and ran after her through the conservatory; yet he remembered, when told that his wife was dead, and was then quiet. Disordered digestion aggravated his case extremely. Mr. Gragg's opinion was, that "his thinking was correct, but the *expression* of thought wrong." On examination, the *dura mater* was found adherent to the skull: in parts there was a thick effusion and vascularity over the brain, and the *carotids* were partially ossified.

In a mind excited or exhausted, the natural sympathy between the *brain* and the *stomach* is wrought up to an extreme. And in the two most interesting cases of spectral illusion on record, this

instance is beautifully illustrated. The bookseller of Berlin, Nicolai (whose phantasms are become so hackneyed a tale in the records of Psychology), had been thus mentally excited. It were long to repeat the circumstantial and scientific detail of his waking visions: of his ghosts of departed friends, and of strangers to him, and of the groups of shadowy figures which glided through his chamber at these spectral levees; and how his philosophic mind distinguished the intrusion of the spectre at the door and the real friend to whom its opening gave admittance; and how they disappeared when he shut his eyes, and came again as he opened his lids; or how he was at last amused by his analysis of all these illusive spectra. But the sympathy to which I have alluded will be efficiently proved by one quotation from the Prussian's recital. During the time leeches were applied to his temples, his chamber was crowded with phantoms. "This continued uninterruptedly till about half-past four o'clock, when my digestion commenced. I then fancied that they began to move more slowly: soon after, their colour began to fade, and at seven o'clock they were entirely white: then they seemed to dissolve in the air, while fragments of some of them continued visible a considerable time." On other occasions, they attempted to re-appear, and changed to white, more and more faintly as his health improved.

There is equal interest, both for science and curiosity, in the illusion of Mrs. A. (as told by Brewster, in his "Natural Magic"), and which sprung from the like causes. The sympathetic sensitiveness of this lady was so acute, that an expression of pain in another produced it in the *corresponding* part of herself. And she, too, was intruded on by spectres of men and women, and cats and carriages, and by

corpses in shrouds peering over her shoulder at her toilet-glass, and ghastly likenesses of gentlemen in grave-clothes, sitting unceremoniously in arm chairs in her drawing-room. And yet the perfect restoration of the lady's health was coincident with her *complete* freedom from these spectral visitations.

You will read in the Anatomie of Melancholy, that "Eremites and anchorites have frequently such absurd visions and revelations, by reason of much fasting." In exhaustion, too, or on the approach of vertigo, if we shut our eyes, we seem as if turning round ourselves, and if we open them, then this whimsical movement is referred to the chairs and tables in our chamber.

These, then, are the remote sympathies with the organs of digestion; and this chiefly by the derangement of the circulation of the blood, between the brain and the heart.

In the case of an enlarged heart, Dr. Kelly discovered that a dark spectrum was perceived *synchronous* with the *systole*, or contraction of *its ventricles*; so that the patient could count his pulse merely by watching the motion of this illusive shade on the white ceiling of his room.

The study of these false perceptions, which result from derangement or disease of the eye, are replete with interest. You are aware that the function of a nerve of sensation is so deranged by disease, that in some cases of paralysis cold bodies will appear heated. So, by analogy, is the function of a nerve of *sense* deranged, if its *fibrillæ* be disordered.

We have *Myopia*, or short sight; *Presbyopia*, or long sight; *Chrupsia*, or coloured vision. We have night-blindness, or dim vision, and day-blindness, or intolerance of light,—as in the albino, or owl. I had, and I have now, a second relative, whose vision is

insensible to certain colours; and the chemist, Dalton, we know, could not distinguish blue from pink.

In a Glasgow Medical Journal, I read this statement by a patient:—"No colour contrasts to me so forcibly with black as azure blue, and as you know that the shadows of all objects are composed of black, the forms or objects which have acquired more or less of this blue hue, from being distant, become defined and marked by the possession of shadows, which are invisible to me in the high-coloured objects in a foreground, and which are thus left comparatively confined and shapeless masses of colour."

The eye may be curtailed of half its object. Mr. Abernethy and Dr. Wollaston were both often in this dilemma of a sense, so that only one-half of a person or a name, on which they were looking, was visible to them. Mr. Abernethy, in his facetious way, referring to his own name, told us he could see as far as the *ne*, but could not see a bit of the *thy*. This illusion is at once explained by anatomy. The optic nerve, at one point, interlaces some, and crosses other of its fibres: thus *one* nerve chiefly supplies *one-half of both eyes*. Disease of nerve may thus paralyse *one-half* of each *retina*: the *other* half only perceiving half the object or word.

In many cases of disordered sensibility of the retina, it is influenced by the minute *villi* or vessels in the *tunics* of the eye. In the case of exhausted energy of this retina, usually accompanied by night-blindness, where there is no vision but in a strong light, floating specks termed *muscæ volitantes* often become so numerous, as to impart a notion of films floating in the watery humour of the eye, or before the *cornea*. It is a curious question, in what portion of

the retina the *spectra* of *muscæ volitantes* are excited. They appear in or near the axis of vision; but as they do not interrupt the *visual rays* from *material objects*, it is possible they may arise on that spot considered to be destitute of vision, with regard to *external* impression. Or they may be produced by detached parts only of the objects, which impinge on the retina, reaching the brain. If the integrity of certain of its fibres, which by converging form the optic nerve, be destroyed, distorted or imperfect objects will be presented. This speck may be a *musca volitans*.

ASTR. The original impressions in all cases are, I presume, from *without*: how is the *internally* excited idea presented as a prominent image *before* the eye?

EV. That form of disordered vision to which I allude, occurring so often in nervous persons, or resulting from close application to study, does not often appear to depend on a *turgid* condition of the vessels of the *choroïd coat* or *retina*. It is usually relieved more by *tonics* than by depletion; and very strange illusions of sight will sometimes be produced merely by depressing medicines, especially the preparations of antimony. Yet these dark specks appear to be floating *before*, and often at some distance *withoutside* the eye. Therefore we may believe that excited images or *more perfect forms* may also appear before the retina, *palpable*. Between the first impression and its recurrence, a long period may have passed (memory being unlimited); and it is sufficient that one sole idea be excited to produce a succession; as a *spark* of fire will ignite a *train* of gunpowder; or as an electric spark will discharge a whole battery.

In the curious case of *photopsia*, or *suffusio scintillans*, we have a series of illusive spectra, in the

forms of “lucid points,” and “yellow flames,” and “fiery veils,” and “rings of light.” In some cases of ophthalmia, and in acute inflammation of the brain, the candles and other bright objects in the chamber will look like blood. Beguelin, as we read in the “Berlin Memoirs,” by straining his eyes on a book, always saw the letters red.

There is a story in Voltaire, that the Duke of Florence threw the dice with a field-officer of his enemy. The spots on the dice seemed, to his *excited brain*, like drops of blood: he instantly ordered a retreat of his army. And this is not wonderful; it is but excited sensibility, of which many analogies indeed may be artificially produced, as the flash of light from the pricking of the retina with a fine needle, and the beautiful *iris* which is formed by pressure on the globe of the eye. In the very interesting history of the prisoner in the dungeon of the Chatelet at Paris, the *phosphorescence* of the eye was itself the source of light, in this instance so powerful as to enable the prisoner to discern the mice that came around him to pick up the crumbs, although the cell was pitchy dark to others.

There are many curious illusions resulting from over-straining or over-excitement of the eye.

Dr. Brewster, in the Edinburgh Journal of Science, vol. iii. says, “If in a fine dark night we unexpectedly obtain a glimpse of any object, either in motion or at rest, we are naturally anxious to ascertain what it is, and our curiosity calls forth all our powers of vision. Excited by a feeble illumination, the retina is not capable of affording a permanent vision of the object; and while we are straining our eye to discover its nature, it will entirely disappear, and afterwards *re-appear* and *vanish* alternately.”

A friend of Buffon had been watching the progress of an eclipse through a very minute aperture. For three weeks after this there was a perfect spectrum of the lucid spot marked on every object on which he fixed his eyes.

Dr. Brewster had been making protracted experiments on some brilliant object, and for several hours after this a dark spectrum, associated with intense pain, floated constantly before his eye.

In the third volume of his Physiology, Dr. Bostock thus concludes the account of his own ocular spectra: "It appeared as if a number of objects, principally human faces or figures, on a small scale, were placed before me, and gradually removed, like a succession of medallions. They were all of the same size, and appeared to be all situated at the same distance from the face. After one had been seen for a few minutes, it became fainter, and then another which was more vivid seemed to be laid upon it, or substituted in its place, which in its turn was superseded by a new appearance."

Coloured vision may arise from permanent defect or from acute disorder: from some peculiar refraction of a ray of light on the lens of the eye, or by the optical laws of the *accidental* colours.

The ray of white light consists of the three prismatic or primitive colours. Now, if the eye is fatigued by one of these colours, or it be lost, mechanically or physiologically, the impression of *two* only will remain, and this accidental or complementary colour is composed of the two remaining constituents of the white ray. Thus, if the eye has been strained on a *red* colour, it is insensible to this, but perceives the *blue* and the *yellow*, the combination of which is *green*. So, if we look long on a *green* spot, and then fix the eye on *white* paper, the

spectrum will be of light *red*. A *violet* spot will become *yellow*; a *blue* spot *orange-red*: a black spot will entirely disappear on a *white* ground, for it has *no* complementary colour; but it appears *white* on a *dark* ground, as a white spot will change to black.

By this law I may explain the impression made by black letters on the red ground of a play-bill, which appear *blue*. The accidental colour of orange-red is blue; that of black is white. By looking on this, the black letter first becomes white, and the accidental colour of the red—*blue*, is transferred to the white ground of the letters.

ASTR. Then, as D'Agessau recommended the parliament of Paris to leave the demoniac of our times to the physician and not the divine, you would delegate the management of all those, to whom the mysterious world of shadows is unfolded, to the sapient leech with his phials and his lancet.

EV. Nay, I presume not to so potent a faculty. Many of the slight imperfections of vision are, as I have confessed, merely exaggerations of romantic ideas floating in the memory; and this is not a novel notion, for Plato and other philosophers held it long before our time.

Muscæ volitantes are usually, though not always, *substantial*: i.e. depending on *points* or *fibres* in the axis of vision, on *congestions*, or *varicose* states of the vessels of the *choroïd* or *retina*, or of atoms floating in the *humours*. These specks, which do not appear alike in the eyes of all, and the brilliant beams in the *suffusio scintillans*, so varied and so whimsical, might be readily moulded into human form, by the imagination of an enthusiast, or the feelings of the ghost-seer, who is usually morose and melancholy, in a state of *longing* for a ghost or a mystery.

But when many of the more confirmed illusions

are depending on structural disease in the membranes and humours of the eye, I am confident in the resources of our science to relieve, if not to remove. Coleridge indeed has expressed his belief, that by some convulsion of the eye, it may see projected before it part of its own body, easily magnified into the whole by slight imagination. If this be true, the whole mystery of the Death-fetch is unravelled.

The nerves and their *ganglia* are often diseased, when we least suspect: and *calcareous* and *scrofulous* tumours, pressing on the *optic axis*, in the brain, or on the *pneumogastric* nerve above its *recurrent* branch, and disease in the bronchial glands around the cardiac plexus, may exist, with the very slightest sensations of pain. Even in extreme *disorganization* of the brain, there may be *remissions* of painless repose; and in other cases, where *pain* is *synchronous* with illusion, the illusion may subside although the pain remains; an indication, or proof, indeed, of *structural* cause for the phantasy. And this discrimination, Astrophel, of the line of distinction between sanity and derangement, is often of a hair's breadth; and the law confesses here the high value of pathology, seeing that, in cases of suicide or of idiocy, and other states which involve the rites of sepulture, the conveyance of entailed estates, or personal responsibility, the judgment of the physician is held to be *oracular*.

MYSTERIOUS FORMS AND SIGNS.

"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."

JULIUS CÆSAR.

ASTR. Methinks you claim too much homage from our courtesy to your philosophy, Evelyn. Can we believe that all these wondrous forms and shadows are but an illusion of the eye, or of the mind's eye? And, if I grant this truth in regard to the eye of *one* mind, can we so easily libel the evidence of a multitude, to whom the world of shadows is unlocked?

We are now wandering in the very land of omens; and will this cold philosophy of thine presume to draw aside the veil of mystery, which hangs over the mountain and the cataract of yon wild principality?

E'en now the legends of many climes crowd on my memory; and, while this purple cloud is o'er the sun, listen, I pr'ythee, to the traditions which I have gathered; muse on the *sequences* of these strange appearances, and you will at length confess, with the Benedictine Calmet—"Realité des apparitions est prouvée par l'événement des choses prédites."

The Tan-we or Tan-wed are streams of lucid fire, rolling along the lands of a freeholder, who, warned of his coming fate, immediately makes his will, and shortly after *dies*.

Among the gloomy gorges of Preselle, in Pembrokeshire, comes dancing on that blue wild-fire the "Canwyl y Cyrph," or "Corpse-candle." As the shades of evening are approaching, the spectre of the doomed comes flitting before us, with a lighted taper in its hand, and with a solemn step halts not until it rests on its destined grave, in the church-yard ground. If dignities and fortune have been the earthly lot of this doomed mortal, then is there shadowed forth an awful pageantry of hearse and ghostly steeds, and mute mourners, all gliding away

to the place of the tomb, and, like the phantoms of the Aensprecker, in Holland, (a funeral procession of no less fatality,) they foretell the doom of some ill-fated friend.

Among the dingles of the Bachwy, in Radnorshire, amid scenery of wild and lonely beauty, a few rugged stones denote the site of an ancient castle of a Welsh prince; it is the ruin of the "Black Rock." The opposing masses of this eternal rock, tapestried with deep green moss and lichen, fold in upon the stream directly over its matchless cataract, which falls abruptly from the upper to the lower valley into this gloomy gorge; the sunbeam playing on the upper ledge of the waterfall, while its deep basin is shrouded in Stygian darkness. Into this gulph it was the pleasure of the prince to hurl from his castle walls, those whom fate had made his prisoners. Often since the era of these cruelties, (as I learned from the oral legends of the peasants,) before a death, a strange unearthly groaning is heard, the "Kyhirraeth," becoming fainter and fainter until the last gasp of the mortal whose doom it forebodes.

There is the dead-bell, which the Scottish peasants believe to foretell the death of a friend; and the death-cart of Lancashire, which is heard rattling along the streets like a whirlwind; and the Owke Mouraske, a demon of Norway, which never enters a house but some one of the family dies within the year. We are assured also by the Saxon, Cranmer, that ere one of the electoral house of Brandenburgh dies, a woman in white appears to many throughout the dominions of Prussia.

The wild mountains that surround us are prolific in the "Anderyn y Corff," or "Corpse-bird," and the "Cwm Amon," or "Dogs of Hell," which are believed to be demons of death, in the shape of hounds, and,

like the mongrel of Faust, marked by a train of fire. These howl forth their awful warning, while the death-peal rings in the ears of the nearest kin of one about to die.

There is the legend of the "Ellyllon," a prototype of the Scotch and Irish "Banshie," which appears as an old crone, with streaming hair and a coat of blue, with her boding scream of death. The "Gwrach y Rhibyn," or "Hag of the Dribble," whose pastime is to carry stones in her apron across the mountains, and then to loosen her apron-string, and by the shower of stones to make a "dribble." This hag, at twilight, flaps her raven wing against the chamber window of a doomed creature, and, with a howl, cries out, "A a a ui ui Anni."

In the wilderness of Zin, which stretches between Palestine and the Red Sea, both the Bedouin Arab and the traveller are greeted by the sound of *matin* bells, like the convent peal which calls the nuns to their devotion; and this, according to tradition, has been heard ever since the crusades.

Then there is a fatal spirit of the desert, which, like an ignis fatuus, lures men to destruction, by

"Airy tongues that syllable men's names."

The Venetian traveller, Marco Polo, writes of those who, wandering unwarily from the track of the caravans in Tartary, hear the phantom voice of some dear friend (who indeed sometimes appears in person), which entices them from the route, and they perish in the desert.

And Lord Lindsay, in his travels through Egypt and the defiles of Edom, tells us one circumstantial story from Vincent de Blanc, of a man decoyed away from the caravan of an Arabian merchant by the entreaties of a phantom voice.

Before an heir of Clifton sleeps in death, a sturgeon is always, it is affirmed, taken in the river Trent. This incident, like many others, becomes important from its consequence.

The park of Chartley is a wild and romantic spot, in its primitive state, untouched by the hand of the agriculturist, and was formerly attached to the royal forest of Needwood, and the honour of Tutbury, of the whole of which the ancient family of De Ferrars were once the puissant lords. Their immense possessions, now forming part of the duchy of Lancaster, were forfeited by the attainder of Earl Ferrars, after his defeat at Burton Bridge, where he led the rebellious barons against Henry III. The Chartley estate, being settled in dower, was alone reserved, and handed down to its present possessor. In the park is preserved, in its primitive purity, the indigenous Staffordshire cow, small in stature, of a sand-white colour, with black ears, muzzle, and tips at the hoofs. In the year of the battle of Burton Bridge, a black calf was born, and the downfall of the great house of Ferrars happening at the same period, gave rise to the tradition, which to this day has been held in veneration by the common people, that the birth of a party-coloured calf from the wild breed in Chartley Park, is a sure omen of death within the same year to a member of the lord's family. A calf of this description has been born whenever a death has happened in the family of late years. The decease of the last earl and his countess, of his son Lord Tamworth, of his daughter, Mrs. William Jolliffe, as well as the deaths of the son and heir of the present nobleman and his daughter, Lady Frances Shirley, have each been forewarned by the ominous birth of a spotted calf. In the spring of a late year, an animal perfectly black was calved by one of

this weird tribe, in the park of Chartley, and this birth also has been followed by the death of the countess.

In the beautiful chapel of Rosslinne, founded by William Saint Clair, prince of Orkney, there is a legend of the spectral light, which illumined its gothic beauty, on the eve of a death among his descendants. And my sweet Castaly will remember how pathetically Harold sings the fate of Rosabelle Saint Clair.

In other districts, on the coming of such an event, these lights are seen of various colours, and are termed "Dr' Eug,"—"the Death of the Druid;" and *they* also marshal the funeral procession to the very verge of the grave.

Dr. Caldicot solemnly writes, that when a Christian is drowned in the Dee, a light appears over the spot, by which the body is easily discovered; and hence the river is called "Holy" Dee.

The mysteries of the "Skibbereen Lights" are recorded by an honourable gentleman of Ireland, and ladies and philosophers journeyed far to behold them, and *believed*.—In a cottage in a marshy flat near Bantry lived a man named Harrington, a perfect *anatomie vivante*, and bedridden,—his heart devout, —his books all of a religious kind. In his chamber, strange lights soon appeared, at first like the dim moonlight on the wall, deepening often into *yellow* light, and flickering round the room. There was often a group of literati and fashion assembled there, on whom the light danced and displayed all the various emotions of the parties. Once at noon, but mostly at midnight, the light appeared; and on all occasions Harrington seemed to anticipate before others beheld them. Science has searched for causes; but neither in the arts of an impostor, or the natural exhalation of

luminous gases, has been yet discovered a solution of this mystery.

In the wild country around Dolgelly, where Cader Idris frowns upon the floods and fells of Merioneth, —where the Mawddach, after its magnificent fall, rolls its waters through the brown and purple valley to join the Wonion, and then expand into the mountain estuary of Abermaw,—the wanderer will hear from many lips this current story.

On a dark evening, a few winters ago, some persons were returning to Barmouth, on the south or opposite side of the river. As they approached the ferry-house at Penthryn, which is directly opposite Barmouth, they observed a light near the house, which they conjectured to be produced by a bonfire; and greatly puzzled they were to discover the reason why it should have been lighted. As they came nearer, however, it vanished; and when they inquired at the house respecting it, they were surprised to learn, that not only had the people there displayed no light, but they had not even seen one, nor could they perceive any signs of it on the sands. On reaching Barmouth, the circumstance was mentioned, and the fact corroborated by some of the people there, who had also plainly and distinctly seen the light. It was settled, therefore, by some of the old fishermen, that this was a “death token;” and sure enough the man who kept the ferry at that time was drowned at high water a few nights afterwards, on the very spot where the light was seen. He was landing from the boat, when he fell into the water, and so perished.

The same winter the Barmouth people, as well as the inhabitants of the opposite banks, were struck by the appearance of a number of small lights, which were seen dancing in the air at a place called

Borthwyn, about half a mile from the town. A great number of people came out to see these lights, and after a while they all but one disappeared, and this one proceeded slowly towards the water's edge, to a little bay where some boats were moored. The men in a sloop which was anchored near the spot saw the light advancing; they saw it also hover for a few seconds over one particular boat, and then totally disappear. Two or three days afterwards the man to whom that particular boat belonged was drowned in the river, while he was sailing about Barmouth harbour in that very boat.

On a lofty mountain, rising over Marbach in Austria, stands the church of Maria-Taferl; and miracles on miracles are related of this sacred spot, since the time when the "Vesperbild," an image of the Virgin, was fixed on its oak. Even angels have visited the shrine. In the 17th century these angelic visitants appeared in processions bearing a red cross, while stars shone around the head of the Virgin. On one occasion a red cross was borne along and a taper was lighted, *by no mortal hand*, at the feet of the Vesperbild; and this is recorded and attested by the crowd who gazed in wonder on the miracle.

The trials of the two divines, John Huss and Wickliffe, were marked by awful and impressive phenomena. While the tribunal was sitting in judgment on Wickliffe, the monastery in which the English monks had assembled was nearly overwhelmed by an earthquake. And it chanced, that while the council were in high assembly at Constance, which condemned Huss to the stake, the eclipse, which over that city was nearly total, occurred, and the consternation of the people, at that time prone to the belief of miracles, was extreme.

"The night had wan'd; but darkness and dismay
Rose with the dawn, and blotted out the day.
The council's warder, struck with sudden fear,
Dropt from his palsied hand th' uplifted spear.
Aghast each gazer saw the mystic power,
That rob'd in midnight's pall the matin hour;
While hurrying feet, and wailings to and fro,
Spread the wild panic of impending woe.
The prince and prelates shudder'd at the sign:
The monk stood dumb before the darken'd shrine:
With faltering hand uprais'd the cross on high,
To chase that dismal omen from the sky."

The wonders told me by one of my reverend ancestors of the "Aurora," years ago, are so circumstantial, and withal so prophetic, that well might she, like the Lady of Branxholme, believe that "spirits were riding the northern blast."

Speed repeats a record in the "Ypodigma Neustriæ" of "Walsingham," that the rebellion of the Percies was preceded by spectral battles in Bedfordshire, "sundry monsters of divers colours and shapes issuing from woods," &c.

Remember, it is a matter of history, that phantasms were seen by numbers in Whitehall during the Commonwealth. And the wondrous narrative of *The Just Devil of Woodstock*, which was writ in 1649, by Master Widows, the learned clerk of Woodstock, "who each day put in writing what he heard from the mouths of the commissioners, and such things as they told to have befallen them the night before; therein keeping to their own words:"—the coney-stealers were so alarmed that they left their ferrets beyond Rosamond's well. And this he saith also, that "At Saint James's the Devil so joaled the centinals against the sides of the Queen's Chappell doors, that some of them fell sick upon it, and others, not taking warning by it, killed one

outright; and all other such dreadful things those that inhabited the royal houses have been affrighted with."

I remember not the source from which I gleaned some mysteries of "The Lyffe of Virgilius," a professor of the occult sciences, alluded to, I believe, in Gower's "Confessio Amantis," and identified with the Mantuan poet,—a magus, who "dyd many marvayles in hys lyfe tyme by whychcrafte and nygramancye thorowgh the helpe of the devyls of hell." One of these marvels I well recollect. This Virgil was cut up, salted and pickled, at his own request, in a barrel; and when the emperor discovered him, he slew Virgilius' man, and "then sawe the emperoure and all his folke a nakyd chylde, three tymes rennynge aboute the barell, sayinge the wordes, 'Cursed be the tyme that ye cam ever here;' and with those wordes vanyshed the chylde away."

Then in the associations of lucky days and influential colours, is there not often a striking truth?

Sir Kenelm Digby, writes Master Aubrey, among other wonders of his "Miscellanies," was born, fought, and conquered at Scanderoon, and died,—on the 11th day of June.

In a book, printed in 1687, we learn that the fourteenth of October was a lucky day for the princes of England. On it William the Conqueror won the crown: Edward III. landed: and James II. was born.

In the eventful life of Napoleon, the number *eighteen* was associated with so many important events, that you will scarce deny something more than casualty. Such were, the engagement from which he assumed the consulate: that of Torlina on the river Beresina: the battles of Leipsic and of Waterloo: which were all fought on the 18th of the month. On that day also his corpse was landed on St.

Helena: and on the 18th also the “Belle Poule” sailed with his remains for France.

As of the Emir of the East, green was the favourite colour of the “Daoine Shi,” or men of peace, in Scotland; and the Druids waved a green standard, as we read in the Scandana, when they fought with the Fingallians. From some cause, perchance from *their* adoption of it, this colour was fatal to the clan “Grahame.” The Highlanders believe to this day that the field of Killicrankie was lost because Dundee was habited in green uniform; and an old Græme, when his horse stumbled at a fox-chace, referred his disaster to his *green* whip-cord.

Do not so many *sequences* prove a consequence?

Ev. You do not mince the matter, Astrophel; indeed, from the boldness of your display, I might think you had kissed the *blarney-stone*, by which charm, the Irish believe you will ever after be free from bashfulness.

But coincidence, and the natural leaning of the mind to superstition, will unfold all your mysteries: and these your illustrations (I cannot term them arguments,) are even weaker than the former. Remember, that the mind of some beings is impressible as the yielding wax, and especially, if under the constant influence of other minds; which, as continual dropping will wear away a stone, first tends to bewilder, and, at length, to convince. And as to the special trifles to which you allude, although it is certain a sparrow falls not to the ground without a Providence, and the hairs of our head are all numbered, I cannot believe that the Creator will thus *alter a gigantic law* for an atom.

ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATION OF

SPECTRAL ILLUSION.

"The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them."

MACBETH.

EV. You are a most industrious gleaner among the sheaves of history, Astrophel. But why, in all these seeming prophecies, seek to thwart the harmonious course of nature? Leave superstition to the heathen and the savage: be assured, in the words of Principal Robertson, that a vain desire of prying into futurity is the error of the infancy of a people, and a proof of its weakness.

From this weakness proceeded the faith of the Americans in dreams, their observation of omens, their attention to the chirping of birds and the cries of animals, all which they supposed to be indications of future events. And if any one of these prognostics was deemed unfavourable, they instantly abandoned the pursuit of those measures on which they were most eagerly bent.

I wonder you brought not some *classic* proofs of this credulity, for such were all-prevalent in Judæa and the Eternal City.

Thus, on February the thirteenth, the Romans were conquered by the Gauls: henceforward important acts were never undertaken on its anniversary: nor on August the tenth by the Jews, because their first temple was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the other by Titus, long afterwards, on that day of the month.

I am not, however, without some curious stories of very modern date; one anecdote may be recognised on the Stock Exchange. A wealthy Hebrew, who was wont to fling his gold even into

the lap of kings, was once standing on a certain stone, at the Post Office, when he received a letter, on which he speculated, and lost 20,000*l.* On this he cautioned his friends never to stand on that stone, lest a similar ill-fortune should attend *them*.

The mind of this man was a storehouse of superstition—an omen was his leading star. A drove of pigs would check the completion of a mighty bargain, and a flock of sheep would prompt him to sign his name to a million.

The three brothers of his great house were once on their way to Lord Liverpool, in order to the completion of a loan to the Treasury; when, lo! an army of swine met them on their way. There was no more progress to Downing Street that day; but they retired to Stamford Hill, and the Lord Treasurer waited twenty-four hours for the Hebrews' gold.

With Brinsley Sheridan, *Friday* was a sort of holiday; neither journeys were undertaken, nor new plays allowed to be produced, on that day.

I presume you were ashamed to adduce ornithoscopy, or the divination by birds, as an illustration. Do you forget the mystic influence of three crows on man's destiny? But I will tell you an oriental fable; how an accomplished Jew, named Mosollam, puzzled an augur, by shooting a beautiful bird, from which the augur was about to prophecy on the fate of an expedition. "Why," said Mosollam, "did not the bird foreknow the fate which awaited it? why did it not fly away—or why come at all?"

ASTR. I believe the augur did or might answer, that "a prophet may be ordained to tell the fate of nations, but *not his own*."

EV. Another vague supposition, Astrophel: there is much virtue in these *may be's*.

I have listened to your legends, and you will now

listen to me, while I presume to illustrate my own proofs, searching for my causes in the beautiful eccentricities of nature alone; and a scholar like yourself, Astrophel, with whom I have so often chopped Oxford logic, will grant it is a precept in philosophy not to seek for more causes, than the explanation of the fact requires.

On this scroll I have sketched an arrangement of phantoms or ghosts, in two grand classes.

GHOSTS OF THE MIND'S EYE,
or
PHANTASMA.

Illusive *per*ception, or ocular spectra. { *Conversion*
phanto

Illusive *con*ception, or spectral illusion. { *Creation* of

GHOSTS OF THE EYE,
or
OPTICAL ILLUSION.

Atmospheric. { Refraction.
{ Reflection.

Gases.

Lenses and mirrors.

Disease of the eye.

In the first class there is no real or palpable object, or, if there be, it is not what it appears; the illusion is but the reality of romance, depending altogether on excited or disordered conditions of the mind: the source, therefore, either of bright or gloomy phantoms, as the mood may be.

On this scroll I have recorded those *moods of mind*, which, excited by memory or association, or influenced by such casualties as solitude, moonlight darkness, or localities of interest, or the poring over tales of horror at midnight, may be considered the *predisposing causes* of illusion. Such are: —

Temperament	Credulity, Enthusiasm, Superstition, Timidity, Imagination, Poetic frenzy.
Excitement	Sympathy, Exalted joy, Deep grief, Love, Hatred, Protracted anxiety, Delirium of fever, Delirium of alcohol, Delirium of narcotics, Exhaustion, Disease of the brain.

The second class, which are spectres or ghosts of the eye, may be scientifically explained by the laws which govern the *material world*. These are the only substantial ghosts which I can grant to my friend. The objects themselves exist, and are exactly as they appear. The philosopher regards them as interesting exceptions to general rules, from *peculiar* combinations of *natural* causes. The unlearned will term them preternatural *phenomena*, simply because they are of uncommon occurrence. But which among the works of divine creation is not a phenomenon? We may think we know a law of nature, but can we

analyse it? Novelty and magnitude astonish, but that which is familiar excites not our surprise. We gaze with delight on the progress of an eclipse; we watch with wonder the eccentric course of the comet; but we look on the sun in its meridian glory with a cold and apathetic indifference. Yet do they all alike display Divine Omnipotence, and the expansion of a vegetable germ, the bursting of a flower, is as great a miracle as the overwhelming of a deluge, the annihilation of a mighty world.

To discriminate between these classes is not difficult: we may prove their nature by simple experiment. *Optical illusions* will be *doubled* by a straining or altering of the axes of the eyes; and, by turning round, as they are removed from the axis of vision, they will disappear.

So, indeed, will those of the second class, which are *real* objects converted into phantoms by mental excitement or disorder.

But in the purely *metaphysical ghost* or phantom, the change of position or locality will not essentially dispel the illusion, (the spectrum following, as it were, the motion of the eye;) because it exists in the mind itself, either as a faint or transient idea, or a mere outline, fading perhaps in a brighter light, or as the more permanent and confirmed impression of insanity, (unchanged even by “brilliant glare,”) or from the day-dream of the castle-builder, to the deep and dreadful delusion of the maniac.

Among the mute productions of nature, there are eccentricities and rarities, which, in default of analysis or explanation, would not fail of being referred to some supernatural agency: as Leo Afer, according to Burton, accounts for the swarms of locusts once descending at Fez, in Barbary, and at Arles, in France, in 1553. “It could not be from

natural causes; they cannot imagine whence they come, but from heaven. Are these and such creatures, corn, wood, stones, worms, wool, blood, &c. lifted up into the middle region by the sunbeams, as Baracellus the physician disputes, and thence let fall with showers, or there engendered? Cornelius Gemma is of that opinion, they are there conceived by celestial influences: others suppose they are immediately from God, or prodigies raised by arts and illusions of spirits which are princes of the ayre."

Over Languedoc there once burst an awful and supernatural cloud, from which fell immense snow-flakes like glittering stars. There is nothing strange in this, for the shape of the snow-flake is ever that of an *asteroïd*. But then there came pouring down gigantic hail-stones, with their glassy surface impressed with the figures of helmets, and swords, and scutcheons. This too may be the effect of very sudden and irregular congelation; but this law was not known, and therefore its result was a mystery.

Among the wonders seen by the great traveller, Pietro della Valla, was the *bleeding* cypress-tree, which shadows the tomb of Cyrus, in Italy. Under the hollow of its boughs, in his day, it was lighted with lamps and was consecrated as an oratory. To this shrine resorted many a devout pilgrim, impressed with a holy belief in the *miracle*. And what was this but the glutinous crimson fluid, exuding from the diseased alburnum of a tree, which the woodmen indeed term *bleeding*, but which the ancient Turks affirmed, or believed, to be converted on every Friday into drops of real blood?

The red snow, which is not uncommon in the arctic regions, is thus tinted by very minute cryptogamic plants; and the fairy ring is but a circle of herbage poisoned by a fungus.

In Denbighshire (I may add) the prevalent belief is, that the *shivering* of the aspen is from *sympathy* with that tree in Palestine, which was hewn into the true cross.

The simple stratification of vapours, especially during sudden transitions of temperature, may produce very interesting optical phenomena; not by refraction or reflection, but merely by partial obscuration of an object. We have examples of these illusive spectra in the gigantic icebergs seen by Captain Scoresby, and other arctic voyagers, which assumed the shape of towers, and spires, and cathedrals, and obelisks, that were constantly displacing each other in whimsical confusion and endless variety, like the figures of a kaleidoscope. Phipps thus describes their majestic beauty: “The ice that had parted from the main body, they had now time to admire, as it no longer obstructed their course; the various shapes in which the broken fragments appeared were indeed very curious and amusing. One remarkable piece described a magnificent arch, so large and completely formed, that a sloop of considerable burden might have sailed through it without lowering her masts. Another represented a church, with windows, pillars, and domes.”

We may scarcely wonder at the mystifications of nature, when she assumes these gorgeous eccentricities, as have been witnessed also in the barren steppes of the Caraccas, on the Orinoko, where the palm-groves appear to be cut asunder; in the Llanos, where chains of hills appear suspended in the air, and rivers and lakes to flow on arid sand; in the lake of the Gazelles, seen by the Arabs and the African traveller; and the lakes seen by Captain Munday, during his tour in India.

The very clearness of the atmosphere, like that which floats around the Rhine, renders distance especially distinct; but mountainous regions, from the attraction of electric clouds, afford the highest examples of atmospheric beauty and effect. London and other cities, however crowded with lofty buildings, are not deficient in these aërial illusions. Even from the bridge of Blackfriars I have seen a cumulo stratus cloud so strangely intersect the steeples and the giant chimneys of London, as distinctly to represent a sea-port, with its vessels and distant mountains.

We have among us several minor illusions, which are only less imposing because more familiar; and though often occurring, few are recorded with scientific accuracy. The phosphorescence of the marshes, the ignis fatuus, Will o'Wisp, Jack o' the Lanthorn, or Friar Rush, and the corpse-candles, are mere luminous exhalations, strained into the marvellous by the vulgar, and thus set down as heralds of mortality. The dancing-light of luminous flies has been termed the *green light of death*; and, if you wish for more, Astrophel, read the "Armorican Magazine" of John Wesley, or the quaint volume of Burton, and thereabouts where he writes in this fashion: "The thickness of the aire may cause such effects, or any object not well discerned in the dark, fear and phantasie will suspect to be a ghost or devil. Glowwormes, firedrakes, meteors, ignis fatuus, which Plinius calls Castor and Pollux, with many such that appear in moorish grounds, about church-yards, moist valleys, or where battles have been fought, the causes of which read in Goclenius, Velcurius, Finkius, &c."

The Parhelia, or mock suns, are produced by the reflection of the sun's light on a frozen cloud. How

readily these phenomena are magnified you may learn from ancient and modern records. In 1223 four suns were seen of crimson, inclosed in a wide circle of crystal colour. This is natural: but then comes the miracle. In the same year two giant dragons were seen in the air, flapping their monstrous wings and engaging in single combat, until they both fell into the sea and were drowned! Then, in 1104, there were seen four white circles rolled around the sun: and in 1688, two suns and a reversed rainbow appeared at Bishop's Lavington, in Wiltshire: and in February, 1647, there is an account and sketch of three suns, and an inverted rainbow, which Baxter terms "Binorum Pareliorum Φαινομενον." And because there were two lunar and one solar eclipses in 1652, it was called, as Lily records, "Annus tenebrum," or "the dark year."

The Corona, or halo around the sun, moon, and stars, is easily illustrated by the zone formed by placing, during a frost, a lighted candle in a cloud of steam or vapour.

The Aurora Borealis is *arctic electricity*, and is beautifully imitated by the passage of an electric flash through an exhausted glass cylinder.

The rainbow is a combination of *natural prisms* breaking the light into colours; and it may be seen in the cloud, or in the spray of the ocean, or in the beautiful cascades of Schaffhausen, Niagara, or Terni, or indeed in any foaming spray on which the *meridian* sunbeams fall, or even in the dewy grass, lying, as it were, on the ground.

When the sun shines on a cloud, there is always a bow produced visible to all who are placed at the proper angle. The lunar rainbow is achromatic, or destitute of colour, because reflected light is not easily refracted into colour. In a brilliant sunset the

floods of light around him often indicate the gradation of prismatic colouring.

CAST. In some waterfalls I have seen the Iris form a complete circle; as in the Velino at Terni, and in others, especially in Ionia and Italy. A perfect illusion is produced, for the bow seems to approach the spectator and then recede, as if Juno were sending her messenger on some special mission. There are many minds which would yield with delight to this conviction, and such probably was the illusion of Benvenuto Cellini—was it not? "This resplendent light is to be seen over my shadow till two o'clock in the afternoon, and it appears to the greatest advantage when the grass is moist with dew. It is likewise visible in the evening at sunset. This phenomenon I took notice of when I was at Paris, because the air is exceedingly clear in that climate, so that I could distinguish it there much plainer than in Italy, where the moists are much more frequent, &c." A consciousness of superior talent, and probably the homage which was paid him even by the members of the holy conclave, were the springs of this flattering vision.

IDA. The beauty of these must light up even the fancy of a child, yet a holier feeling will ever inspire a Christian philosopher, when the bow is seen in the cloud, for it was the sign of the covenant. There is, indeed, something in the glories of the firmament which never fails to elevate my own thoughts, and I can readily sympathise with the Spanish religionists of the fifteenth century, and with the North Americans, who gaze upon the beautiful constellation of the "Southern Cross," insulated as it is from all other stars in its own dark space; in solemn belief that it is the great symbolical banner held out by the Deity in approval of their faith.

EV. The "Fata Morgana," in the straits of Reggio, presents a perfect scene of enchantment; when the shouts of "Morgana, Morgana," echo from rock and mountain, as the wondering people flock in crowds to the shore. During this splendid illusion, gigantic columns, and cloud-capt towers, and gorgeous palaces, and solemn temples, are floating on the verge of the horizon, and sometimes beneath this picture of a city, on the very bosom of the water, a *fainter* spectrum may be seen, which is a reflected image of the other. These spectra are usually *colourless*, but if certain watery vapours are floating in the air, they are beautifully fringed with the three primitive colours of the prism. Such also is the illusion of the Calenture, or *sylvan scenes* of the ocean.

CAST. Let us seek these wonders of the waters, Astrophel; perchance we might, in some enchanted hour, see even beneath yon Severn flood the grotto of Sabrina, with its green and silver weeds, its purple shells and arborescent corallines; and, if we dive into the depths of the sea, might we not light on the palace of Amphitrite, and, while the Nereids and Tritons were mourning over the desolation of a shipwreck, hear the echo of some Ariel's song "full fathom five," undulating through the water; or realise the overwhelming of Maha-Velipoor, in the curse of Kehama:

"Their golden summits in the noontide ray,
Shone o'er the dark green deep, that roll'd between;
For domes, and pinnacles, and spires were seen
Peering above the sea."

Or the legend of *Thierna Na Oge*, in Lough Neagh, in Ireland; for Moore has sung—

"On Lough Neagh's banks, when the fisherman strays,
He sees the round towers of other days;"

and why may not *we*?

Who that has wandered among the dark mountains of Brecon, remembers not the blue pool of Lynsavaddon, and has not listened to the tales of the mountaineers, of the city over which to this day its waves are rolling? and in the beautiful vale of Eidournion, in Merioneth—but listen to a fragment of a romance of this valley, which from memory I quote: —

There was a proud and wealthy prince in Gwyneth, when the beautiful isle was under the rule of the Cymri. At his palace gate a voice was once heard echoing among the mountains these words: 'Edivar a ddau'—Repentance will come. The prince demanded 'When?' and in the rolling thunder the voice was again heard, 'At the third generation.'

Nothing daunted, the wicked lord lived on, committing plunder and all evil excesses, and laughing to scorn the holy hymns in the churches. A son and heir was born to him, and there was a gorgeous assemblage in the hall of beautiful ladies and high-born nobles, to celebrate the festival of his birth.

It was midnight, when in the ear of an old harper, a shrill voice whispered, 'Edivar, Edivar;' and a little bird hovered over him, and flew out of the palace in the pale moonshine: and the harper and the little bird went together into the mountains. The bird flitted before him in the centre of the moon's disc, and warbled its mournful cry of 'Edivar' so plaintively, that the old man thought of the shriek of his little child Gwenhwyvar, as she sunk beneath the waters of Glaslyn.

On the top of the mountain he sank down with

weariness, and the little bird was not with him; all was silent, save the cataract and the sheep-bells on the mountain side. In alarm at the wild solitude around him, he turned towards the castle, but its lordly towers had vanished, and in the place of its woods and turrets there was a waste of rolling waters —with his lone harp floating on their surface.

Ev. I am unwilling to check your flight, fair Castaly, but my illustrations are not yet exhausted.

The "Spectre of the Brocken" is a mere shadow of the spectator on a gigantic scale. This phantom, the "Schattenmann," according to vulgar tradition, haunts the lofty range of the Hartz mountains, in Hanover. It is usually observed when the sun's rays are thrown horizontally on thin fleecy clouds, or vapour of highly reflective power, assuming the shape of a gigantic shade on the cloud.

The romantic region of the Hartz was the grand temple of Saxon idolatry, the very hot-bed of terrible shadows; the first of May especially being the grand annual rendezvous of unearthly forms. Even now, it is affirmed, Woden, known in Brunswick as the Hunter of Hackelburgh, (whose sepulchre, an immense rough stone, is shown to the traveller,) is still influential in the Oden Wald and among the ruins of Rodenstein: even as in our own Lancashire, a dark gigantic horseman rushes on a giant steed in stormy nights, over "Horrock Moor;" indeed, a spot or tomb is still shown where he used to disappear.

Thus are the "Spectres of the Brocken" invested with supernatural dignity, in the minds of credulity and ignorance. And no wonder, for, although the discoverer of this gigantic illusion, Mr. Jordan, might convince the Germans of the nature of this shadow, how could the credulous believe, when they beheld a *second figure*, a faint refracted spectrum of the

shadow, that it was any other than the shadow king of the Brocken himself, frowning defiance on intruders.

And this reminds me of the confession of Gaffarel, in his "Unheard of Curiosities" of the seventeenth century; in his quaint chapter on the "readynge of the cloudes and whatever else is seene in the air, and of hieroglyphicks in the cloudes."

Among other miraculous illusions, as recorded by Cardanus, "An angel once wafted on the cloudes above Millane, and great was the consternation at its appearance, until Pellicanus, a philosopher, made it plainly appear, that this angel was nothing else but the reflection of an image of stone, that was on the top of the church of Saint Godart, which was represented in the thick cloudes as in a looking-glasse."

While I was in South Wales, in 1836, I conversed with a labourer in the Cyfarthfa works at Merthyr Tydvil, an illiterate seer, who saw, three times appearing before him, an unsubstantial tram-road; and on it a train drawn by a horse, and in this, the dead body of a man. Twice this *shadow* emerged from the earth, and on the third ascent he looked on it, and recognized the well-known face of a comrade. The man was horror struck, but his friend lived to laugh *at him*.

When my friend, Mr. David Taylor, ascended the mountain that rises over Chamouni, on the opposite side of the valley to Mont Blanc, his magnified shadow was distinctly seen by him on the vapoury cloud that floated between these giant rocks.

In February 1837, two gentlemen, on whom I confidently trust, were standing on Calton Hill while a murky cloud hung over Edinburgh. Above this veil Arthur's Seat peeped out like a rocky island beneath

two white arches, like the lunar bows; and on the cloud itself, each gentleman saw the shadow of his companion magnified to gigantic proportions.

The aeronaut, among other glories of his ascent, may by chance be gratified by the shadow of his balloon on the face of a cumulus cloud; thus did the Duke of Brunswick, who ascended with Mrs. Graham, in August 1836. And this is the analogous recital of Prince Puckler Muskau, in his "Tutti Frutti."

"We dipped insensibly into the sea of clouds which enveloped us like a thick veil, and through which the sun appeared like the moon in Ossian. This illumination produced a singular effect, and continued for some time, till the clouds separated, and we remained swimming about beneath the once more clear azure heavens. Shortly after we beheld, to our great astonishment, a species of 'Fata Morgana,' seated upon an immense mountain of clouds the colossal picture of the balloon and ourselves surrounded by myriads of variegated rainbow tints. A full half hour the spectral reflected picture hovered constantly by our side. Each slender thread of the network appeared distended to the size of a ship's cable, and we ourselves two tremendous giants enthroned on the clouds."

The phantom, which rode side by side with Turpin, might be a mere reflected shadow in the mist; indeed, Burton writes that "Vitellio hath such another instance of a familiar acquaintance of his, that after the want of three or four nights' sleep, as he was riding by a river-side, saw another riding with him, and using all such gestures as he did, but when *more light appeared, it vanished*."

The principles of refraction are the sources of many an illusion, which is startling even to those

who are aware of them. The sea, the vessels floating on its surface, the rocks and buildings on its shores, often appear elevated far beyond their usual position: things are thus presented to the eye which, in the direct course of the rays, would be completely out of sight; and the praises bestowed on the Irish telescope may not have been a bull, although we are assured that we may *see through it round the corner*.

Baron Humboldt, Mr. Huddart, Professor Vince, Captain Scoresby and others, will entertain you with these natural eccentricities, if you read the learned letter of Sir David Brewster, on "Natural Magic;" and he will teach you how easy is the solution of all these marvels, on the principles of atmospheric reflection. Yet how many are there who are not contented with the light of our philosophy, though it may fall like a sunbeam on the mind. Like the recorder of the "Unheard-of Curiosities," they, at one time, confess the *optical illusion*, as when the Romans "saw their navy in the clouds;" at another, as when Constantine professed to see the "Crosse shining most gloriously in the aire," marked with the motto, "In hoc signo vinces,"—philosophy was silent, and they believed it *might* be divine.

But a mind in its *state of nature* cannot know all this. If a savage looked on the two white horses cut on the chalk hills of Berkshire and of Wiltshire, on the white cross of the Saxons on the Bledlow Ridge in Buckinghamshire, and on the white-leaf cross near Princes Risboro',—would he not deem them deities, or the work of a magician or a devil?

When the sailors of Lord Nelson saw the bloated corpse of the murdered Prince Caraccioli floating erect in the water directly towards their ship, can we wonder they should deem it a *supernatural* visitation?

When Franklin set his bells a ringing, by drawing

down the electric fluid from the thunder-cloud, and when Columbus foretold to the hour the sun's eclipse;—can we wonder that the transatlantic Indians listened, as to one endued with preternatural knowledge, or that the other might be thought superhuman? And when the king of Siam was assured that water could be congealed into ice, on which the sounding skate could glide,—can we wonder that he smiled in absolute disbelief of such a change, and called the tale a lie.

Thus, when the peasants of Cardigan, who were not versed in Pontine architecture, looked on the bridge which the monks of *Yspitty C'en Vaen* had thrown across the torrent of the *Monach*, they could not believe it a work of human, but of *infernal*, hands, and called it the "Devil's Bridge."

On my ascent of the Vann mountain in Brecon, there often came a mass of limestone rolling down the precipice. "Ah sure," said the old shepherd, who was watching his fold on the mountain-side, "the fairies are at their gambols, master, for they sometimes do play at bowls with these chalk stones." Such was his explanation; but, on my gaining another ridge of the Brecon Beacon, I startled a whole herd of these fairies, who scudded off as fast as their legs could carry them, having first changed themselves into a flock of sheep.

There was once a caravan journeying from Nubia to Cairo, which met the Savans attending on the expedition of Napoleon into Egypt, among whom was Rigo, the painter. Struck with the deep character of expression in the face of one of the Nubians, Rigo induced him, with gold, to sit for his portrait. The African sat calmly perusing its progress until the laying on of the *colours*, when, with a cry of terror, he rushed from the house, and, to his awe-struck

companions, affirmed that his head and half his body had been cut off by an enchanter. And this impression was not solitary, for an assemblage of the Nubians were equally terror-struck, and (somewhat like those *monomaniacs* who refuse to drink water which reflects their faces, believing that they are *swallowing their friends*,) could never be dispossessed of the notion that the picture was formed of the loppings and toppings of the human frame.

We believe these influences the more, because we see that, even to some few men wiser than they, a leaning to superstition will warp a simple fact into a wonder; and that mere sensitiveness of mind may work as great a fear.

Suetonius tells us that Caligula and Augustus were the most abject cowards in a thunder-storm; and the bishop of Langres D'Escaro fell in a fainting-fit whenever an eclipse took place,—a weakness which at length proved his death.

There was an old house in Angoulême, the "Chateau du Diable," on the spot where the sable fiend was wont to repair to enjoy his moonlight walk. The house was never finished, for the devil, jealous of this usurpation, like Michael Scott's spirit, destroyed every night the walls which had been erected during the day. At length the men abandoned their work in despair. On the twenty-fifth night in May (1840), the ruined windows seemed on an instant in brilliant illumination, which struck the inhabitants of the little village of "Petit-Rochford" with wonder and dismay. Some dauntless heroes, however, sallied forth with weapons to storm the enchanted castle. In an upper room, lighted by eight blood-red wax candles, they discovered a man of a strange and melancholy aspect, tracing cabalistic figures on the sanded floor. He was conveyed to the

maire, and was proved to be a poor sawyer, named Favreau, who, bound by a superstitious oath, self-administered, had thus created a sensation of terror throughout a whole community.

In the records of the Harleian Miscellany, the curious reader may discover one which might impress his mind with some terrific ideas of the natural history of the south of England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is styled, "The True and Wonderful." The portion of the MSS. to which I allude is the "Legend of the Serpent of St. Leonard's Forest." This terrific legend of my own native town was a favourite of my boyish days; it has moulted some feather of its once awful interest, and is now but the shadow of a memory; and those who were once converts to its reality, now laugh the legend to scorn.

ILLUSIONS OF ART.

"If in Naples
I should report this now, would they believe me?"
TEMPEST.

EV. The science of chemistry has unfolded most of the secrets of *material* miracles, as Psychology those of the intellect and senses.

Not that I would attempt thus to *explain* your wonders of Palingenesy, Astrophel; I will rather favour you with another batch, for I was once fond of unkennelling these sly foxes.

It is solemnly attested by the noble secretary of a Duke of Guise, that, in company with many scientific men, he saw the face of a person in his blood, which had been given by a bishop, for experiment, to La

Pierre, the chemist, of Le Temple, near Paris.

There is an old book of one Dr. Garmann, "De Miraculis Mortuorum," and thus *he* writes:—"When human salt, extracted and depurated from the skull of a man, was placed in a water dish, there appeared next morning in the mass, figures of men fixed to a cross;" and "when human skulls, on which mosses had vegetated, were pounded, the family of the apothecary who pounded them were alarmed in the night by strange and terrific noises from the chamber."

The body of the Cid, Ruy Diaz, as we read in Heywood's "Hierarchie," sat in state at the altar of the cathedral at Toledo for ten years. A Jew one day attempted, in derision, to pull him by the beard; but on the first touch, the Cid started up, and in high resentment scared the Israelite away by the unsheathing of his mighty sword. And Master Planche has brought you legends from the church of Maria Taferl, in Lower Austria, and other noted spots on the Danube.

When Bernini's bust of Charles I. was being conveyed in a barge on the Thames, from a strange bird there descended a drop of blood on the bust, *which could never be effaced.*

This is nothing but a fact in nature *mystified*, and (like the growth of the Christmas flowering thorn of Glastonbury, from the *walking-staff* of Joseph of Arimathæa) is too glaring to be misconstrued.

Other of these blood miracles are still more easy of solution. The blood spots from David Rizzio are *shown* to this day in Holyrood: and it was believed, that after the Irish massacre the blood of the victims then slain on Portnedown Bridge, has indelibly stained its battlements. But these spots are nothing but the brown vegetative stains which geology has

discovered on many fossils.

Now listen to Father Gregory of Tours. “A thief was committing sacrilege at the tomb of Saint Helius, when the saint caught him by the skirt, and held him fast.” Probably his garment hitched on a nail. Another old man, while removing a stone from the grave of a saint, was in a moment struck blind, dumb, and deaf. Probably the mephitic gases exhaling from the tomb were the source of all this mystery.

Then, as to the impositions of the priesthood. In Naples was the blood of Saint Januarius concealed in a phial, and on certain solemn days this so called blood really became liquified; but it was effected secretly, by chemical means; and I remember, the archbishop who confessed the secret to the French general Championet, was exiled by the Vatican.

In the reign of Henry VIII. too (I quote from Hume), other bloody secrets of this sort were unfolded. “At Hales, in the county of Gloucester, there had been shown during several ages the blood of Christ brought from Jerusalem; and it is easy to imagine the veneration with which such a relic was regarded. A miraculous circumstance also attended this relic. The sacred blood was not visible to any one in mortal sin, even when set before him; and, till he had performed good works sufficient for his absolution, it would not deign to discover itself to him. At the dissolution of the monastery the whole contrivance was detected. Two of the monks, who were let into the secret, had taken the blood of a duck, which they renewed every week; they put it in a vial, one side of which consisted of thin and transparent crystal, the other of thick and opaque. When any rich pilgrim arrived, they were sure to show him the dark side of the vial till masses and

offerings had expiated his offences, and then, finding his money, or patience, or faith, nearly exhausted, they made him happy by turning the vial."

But there is no end to relics in Italy. Even two hundred years ago, John Evelyn makes out this catalogue of those he saw in St. Mark's, at Venice.

"Divers heads of saints, inchased in gold; a small ampulla, or glass, with our Saviour's blood; a great morsel of the real cross; one of the nails; a thorn; a fragment of the column to which our Lord was bound when scourged; a piece of St. Luke's arm; a rib of St. Stephen; and a finger of Mary Magdalene!"

Among the more innocent illusions of art, I may remind you of concave and cylindrical mirrors and lenses, the magic lanthorn, "les ombres chinoises,"and the phantasmagoria of Cagliastro, by which daggers appear to strike the breast of the spectator, and images of objects in other rooms are thrown on the walls of that in which we are sitting. A mirror, thus accidentally placed, has afforded the evidence of murder within our own time.

The duration of impressions on the eye, is another source of illusion. An image remains on the retina, I believe, about the eighth of a second; as it departs, if another object supplies its place in quick succession, the two images form, as it were, a union, and become blended. A knowledge of this law, in the ages of blind superstition, would have placed an overwhelming weapon in the hands of priestcraft; in our day, it is the source of rational and innocent pleasure, by the invention of optical toys.

The whisking of an ignited stick produces a fiery circle—why? Because from *excessive rapidity* the rays from one point remain impressed on the retina, until the revolution completes the circle.

The *Thaumatrope*, or wonder-turner, and the

Phantasmascope, are ingenious illustrations of this law of impression; so also is the *whirling machine*, which so beautifully evinces the fact of white being compounded of all the prismatic colours, blended in certain proportions. The prismatic Iris is painted on a revolving circle; by excessive rapidity of revolution, the colours are actually blended (as if mixed in a vessel) on the retina, and the surface of the machine is white to the eye.

To these may be added the combustion of phosphorus and other substances, in oxygen: red, green, and blue lights, which change the angel face of beauty into the visage of a demon; and the inhalation of noxious fumes and gases, creating altogether a new train of phantoms in the world of experimental magic, and developing the formerly occult mysteries of the art of incantation.

Chance may also involve a seeming mystery of very awful import. Some years ago the town of Reading was thus bewildered. On the loaves were seen the most mysterious signs. On one, a skeleton's head and cross-bones; on another, the word "resurgam;" on another, a date of death was marked in deep impressions. The loaves of course were, by some mysterious influence, the vehicles of solemn warning from the Deity.

The baker was *churchwarden* of St. Giles's; his oven needed flooring, and, winking at the sacrilege, he stole the flat inscribed tombstones from the church-yard, and therewith floored his oven. From the inscriptions of these stones the loaves took their mystic impressions.

In the reign of Edward the Martyr, during one of the synods assembled by Dunstan, the floor of the chamber suddenly gave way, involving the death of many of its members. It chanced that Dunstan had on

that day warned the king not to attend the synod, and the only beam which did not give way was that on which his own chair was placed. This might be coincidence merely, although I believe it was discovered that it was a concerted trick; but the preservation of the king and the priest were, of course, attributed to special interference of the Deity.

But there is one phenomenon in animal chemistry so rare, and indeed so wonderful, that there are few even among philosophers who can give it credence. This is "spontaneous combustion," the result of an evolution of phosphorated hydrogen from the blood; the remote cause of which may be traced in some cases to the free use of alcohol. The records of these cases are very circumstantial, especially the two most remarkable—that of the Contessa Cornelia Bandi, of Cerena; and of Don Bertholi, an ecclesiastic of Mount Valerius. But I check my wanderings into this maze of mystery, in pity to your patience, fair ladies; for I perceive Astrophel is again out of our sphere, and, enveloped in the cloud of his own mystic meditations, will not know that this spontaneous combustion is almost as wondrous a tale as his "Lady of the Ashes."

ILLUSTRATION OF MYSTERIOUS SOUNDS.

"The isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs, that give delight and hurt not.
Sometimes a thousand twangling instruments
Will hum about mine ears: and sometimes voices."

TEMPEST.

EV. So, you see, the effect of novelty is never

more powerfully displayed than by unusual impressions on the finer senses; that appearances which the eye perceives, and which the mind cannot explain, become phantoms, involving some special motive of wonder or dismay.

So eccentric impressions on the mechanism of the internal *ear* may be equally illusive. We have ghosts of the ear as well as of the eye.

As ignorance has often warped the optical phenomena which certain atmospheric changes may produce, so peculiar and unusual sounds may be accounted for on equally erroneous principles, especially if they chance to resemble sounds which are the effects of daily or common causes.

As the Hebrew bards hung their harps by the waters of Babylon, the Irish were wont, during their mourning for the death of a chief, to loosen their harp-strings, and hang them on the trees; and while the wind swept the strings, they ever believed that the harp itself sympathized in their sorrow.

Thus, when the lament, or "ullaloo," of these wild Milesians boomed along the mountain glens, mingled with the coione, or funeral song, and the poetical cadence blended with the winds, how easy to impart to it a more than human source; and thus the dismal coronach among the Scottish Highlands may be mystified into the "boding scream of the Banshee."

It is a classical question whether the rebel giant, Typhœus, was crushed by Jupiter beneath the island of Inarime, or Mount Ætna; but it might readily be believed by the Sicilian, who had read this mythological tale, that the volcanic convulsions arose from the vain struggles for freedom of this monster, who sent forth flames from his mouth and eyes.

Within a mountain of Stony Arabia, to the north

of Tor, very strange noises are often heard as of the striking of an harmonic hammer, or the sound of a humming-top, which completely infuriate the camels on the mountain when they hear it. The Arabs believe these sounds to proceed from a subterranean convent of monks, the priest of which, to assemble them to prayer, strikes with a hammer on the nakous, a metallic rod suspended in the air. M. Teetzen, who visited the spot, assures us that the cause of all this is the mere rolling of volumes of sand from the summit and sides of the mountain.

In the last century, I remember there was a legend current in the west of England, of the "Bucca," a demon whose howling was heard amid the blast which swept along the shore. It was a sure foreboding of shipwreck. The *prophecy* was often but too fully verified, but the voice of the demon was merely the premonitory gale from one certain quarter, which is always the *avant-courier* of a tempest.

I remember, when I was a child, the prevalent belief in Horsham, that, at a certain hour of the night, the ghost of Mrs. Hamel was heard groaning in her vault, beneath the great eastern window, and it required some self-possession to walk, at midnight, around this haunted tomb; for few would believe that the noises were nothing more than the wind sweeping along the vaulted aisles of the church.

Those very extraordinary impositions on the sense of hearing at Woodstock, in the truth of which, Astrophel, your faith was so firm, were resorted to to create terror, and effect a political purpose. In "the genuine History of the good Devil of Woodstock," written in 1649, we are told of the pealing of cannon, the barking of dogs, and neighing of horses, and other mysterious sounds, which certainly created

the greatest wonder and anxiety, until “funny Joe Collins” explained and demonstrated all the mechanical process of this imposture. You will find also the account of these gems of marvellous history in Sinclair and Plott, and the chronicles of those days, which eclipse the haunted house of Athenodorus in Pliny.

In the 16th century, Master Samuel Stryck discussed the whole question regarding these haunted houses, and warnings of ghosts, and belief in the reality of apparitions, in his work published at Francofurt, “De Jure Spectrorum,” and thus he runs up the question of damages: “If the house be haunted, the tenant might bring in a set-off against his rent, thus—‘Deduct for spectres in bed and bed-room, and elsewhere, 5*l.* 10*s.*’ ”

The drama of the Drummer, by Addison, I believe was founded on the mystery of the “Demon of Tedworth,” which beat the drum in the house of Mr. Mompesson. This also was the source of extreme wonder, until the drummer was tried, and convicted, and Mr. Mompesson confessed that the mystery was the effect of contrivance.

The author of the Pandemonium, or Devils’ Cloyster, garnished his book with tales of this nature. In 1667, when he slept in “my Lady chamber,” in the house of a nobleman, he was waited on by a succession of spectral visitors; the explanation of which Ferriar and Hibbert, and others, have wrought for you, if you deign to turn over the leaves of their natural philosophy.

The impostures of the Stockwell miracles of 1772 are recorded, with other curiosities, in the “Every-day Book” of Hone, the skilful and unwearied collector of our ancient mysteries.

The Cock-lane ghost is another instance of

illusion in the ears of the credulous. Although Dr. Johnson, the Bishop of Salisbury, and other learned Thebans, sat in solemn judgment to develop its mystery, I believe many were so in love with the marvellous, that they regretted the unravelling of the plot, and still believed; as Commodore Trunnion, in despite of evidence as to the fluttering in his chimney, swore that he knew a devil from a jackdaw, as well as any man in the kingdom.

ASTR. I wonder, Evelyn, at your veneration for the classics; for are they not replete with stories, which, if true, (and I believe them so,) will undermine all your philosophy? When Pausanias writes of the ghosts at Marathon, of horses and men who were heard rushing on to battle four hundred years after they were slain; and Plutarch of the spectres and supernatural sounds in the baths at Chæronea, the scene of bloodshed and murder;—what may be their motives, but the record of acknowledged incidents?

EV. The classics, if they might rise up and listen, would believe me, dear Astrophel, so clear and simple is the source of these illusions.

Of the credulity of the Romans I have spoken; but even in minds not prone to superstition, deep mental impression, or constant dwelling on a subject of interest, will effect this illusion of a sense.

In Holy Island, near the ruins of the convent (in the dungeons of which romance has decided the fate of Constance Beverley), was a small fortress of invalid soldiers. One of them once conducted a visitor to a steep rock, under which, he said, there must be a profound cavern, as the sound of a bell was distinctly heard every night at twelve o'clock, deep in the bowels of the earth. The traveller soon discovered that the mysterious sound had *never been*

heard by the oldest inmates, *until* the poem of "Marmion" appeared, in which the condemnation and the death of Constance in the dungeons of the cathedral are so forcibly described. This is, however, a *metaphysical* source of mystery.

In volcanic regions, as in that of the Solfatara, near Naples, these strange and subterranean sounds are not unfrequently heard; and in the rocky and caverned coasts of our own island also, where dwell the unlettered and the superstitious, by whose wild and romantic fancy these noises are readily magnified into the supernatural.

Camden, in his "Britannia," informs us,—"In a rock in the island of Barry, in Glamorganshire, there is a narrow chink, or cleft, to which if you put your ear you shall perceive all such sorts of noises as you may fancy smiths at work under ground, strokes of hammers, blowing of bellows, grinding of tools." At Worm's Head, in the peninsula of Gower in Glamorganshire, these sounds are, even now, often heard; and it requires but a moderate stretch of imagination to create all this cyclopean imagery, when the sea is rolling in cavities under our feet, and the tone of its voice is magnified by confinement and repercussion. From some such source probably sprung the fable of "the Syrens," two solitary maidens, who, by their dulcet voices, so enchanted the navigators who sailed by their rocks, that they forgot home and the purpose of their voyage, and died of starvation. Ulysses, instructed by his mother Circe, broke the spell, and the ladies threw themselves into the sea with vexation. This fable, like many of the classic mysteries, may be thus topographically explained.

In the grand duchy of Baden, near Friburg, is a very curious example of an Æolian lyre, constructed,

as the traditions of the mountains will have it, by the very *genius loci* himself.

In a romantic chasm of these mountains, most melodious sounds are sometimes heard from the top of fir-trees overhanging a waterfall. The current of air, ascending and descending through the chasm, receives a counter impulse from an abrupt angle of the rock, and, acting on the tops of the string-like branches of the trees, produces the soft tones of the Æolian harp, the effect of which is much enhanced by the gushing of the waterfall.

There may be in these natural sounds the source of many fables of the ancients: the moaning of the wind among the branches of a pine-grove might be the wailing of a hamadryad.

Among the granite rocks on the Orinoco, Baron Humboldt heard the strangest subterranean sounds; and at the palace of Carnac, some of Napoleon's *savans* heard noises exactly resembling the breaking of a string. It is curious that Pausanias applies exactly this expression to the sounds of the Memnonian granite,—the colossal head of Memnon, which was believed to speak at sunrise. He writes, —"It emits sounds every morning at sunrise, which can be compared only to that of the breaking of the string of a lyre."

Juvenal has the same notion, but he has multiplied the sounds.

The mystery of Memnon may be readily explained, by the temperature and density of the *external* air differing from that *within* the crevices, and the effort of the current to promote an equilibrium; yet these simple sounds were in course of time warped into articulate syllables, and at length obtained the dignity of an oracular voice. And in these illustrations, fair Castaly, you have the clue

to all the mysteries of demonia and fairyland.

To these natural illusions, let me add the triumphs of phonic mechanism and the peculiar faculty of the ventriloquist, the secrets of which the science of Sir David Brewster has so clearly developed. The wondrous heads of Memnon, and Orpheus, and Æsculapius, the machines of Albertus Magnus, and Sylvester, are now held but as curious specimens of art, and are indeed eclipsed by the speaking toys of Kratzenstein, and Kempelin, and Willis, and Savart, and the ingenious instruments of Wheatstone.

Of ventriloquism, it is not my purpose to speak; but there is a wonder of our time in the person of young Richmond, which, with many distinguished physiologists, I examined at the *conversazione* of Dr. E——, in C—— Street.

When Richmond sat himself to *perform*, we heard a subdued murmur in his throat for about half-a-minute, when suddenly a sound issued of the most exquisite and perfect melody, closely resembling, but exceeding in delicacy, the finest musical box. The mouth was widely open, and the performance was one of considerable effort. The sounds were a mystery to us at the time, for they were perfectly unique, and are yet not satisfactorily explained. It is decided, however, by some, that the upper opening of the windpipe may be considered as a Jew's-harp, or Æolina, of very exquisite power, *behind* the cavity of the mouth, instead of being placed *between the teeth*.

ASTR. And thus concludes our lecture on special mechanics.

EV. I professed no more, Astrophel. It may be the privilege of the *sacred poet* to soar beyond the confines of our own planetary system:

"Into the heav'n of heav'ns he has presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air."

But the study of philosophy is nature and nature's *known laws*. If we lean, for one moment, to the credence of a *modern* miracle, there is an end to our philosophy. Revealed truth, and the immaterial nature of the mystical essence within us, we may not lightly discourse on. The sacred histories of Holy Writ, and the miracles recorded in its pages—the hand-writing in the hall of Belshazzar, the budding of Aaron's rod, the standing still of the sun upon Gibeon, and, above all, the miracles of the Redeemer, are of too holy a nature to be submitted to the test of philosophical speculation: they rest on the *conviction* of conscience and the heart; a proof far more sublime than may ever be elicited by the ingenuity of man, or the workings of his sovereign reason.

FAIRY MYTHOLOGY.

"I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee."
MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

ASTR. Why so thoughtful, fair Castaly? I fear Evelyn has clipped your sylphid wings, and made a mortal of you.

CAST. Your finger on your lips, Astrophel; for the world, not a syllable of confession to Evelyn.

I could think I heard the murmurs of a host of fairies streaming up to earth from elf-land, in fear of libels on their own imperial sovereignty by this matter-of-fact scholar.

ASTR. Why did we listen to his philosophy? why

not still believe the volumes of our antique legends; that those which tell the influence of fairies and demons on man's life, have their source in the real history of a little world of creatures more ethereal than ourselves? Perhaps even the bright thoughts of a poet's fancy are not his own creation.

CAST. We must hear no more, although Evelyn will still convert syrens into rocks and trees, and make a monster out of a mist or a thunder-cloud. The sunlight is sleeping on Wyndcliff, and the breeze, creeping among the leaves, seems to me a symphony meet to conjure the phantoms of romantic creatures. Evelyn is far away among the rocks; let us steal the moment to revel in our dreams of faëry. Even now, are we not in a realm of Peristan? Yon mossy carpet of emerald velvet, strewed with pearls and gold, may be the presence-chamber of Titania; and fays are dancing within their ring, which the silvery beech o'ercanopies so shadily; and the chaunting of their *viralays*, or green-songs, comes like the humming of a zephyr's wing flitting o'er the mouth of a lily. Ariel is lying asleep in her cinque-spotted cowslip bell, and the fays are feeding on their fairy-bread, made of the pollen of the jasmine; and Oberon quaffs to his queen the drops that hang on the purple lip of the violet, or glitter in the honied bell of the hyacinth, or that purest crystal of the lotus, that brings life to the fainting Indian in the desert, or the liquid treasure of the *nepenthe*.

We pray you, Astrophel, recount to us, now we are in the humour, the infancy of bright and dark spirits; for you have dipped deep, I know, into the Samothracian mysteries.

ASTR. Know, then, that the birth-time of mythology and romance was in the primeval ages of man. The ancient heathens believed in the legends of

their deities, as we have credence in modern history and biography; indeed, the *romance* of the moderns was with the ancients *truth*. They had implicit faith in the presence of their gods, and that they might perchance meet them in the groves and hills, which were consecrated to their worship, and adorned with sculpture and idols in honour of the deities. Hence the profusion of their names and nature, recorded in the pages of the olden time, when the scribe traced his reed letter on the papyrus.

From the climes of the sun came the orient tales of genie, and deeves, and peris; and of naiad, and nereid, and dryad, and hamadryad, from Greece and Rome. In the Koran shone forth the promised houris of Mahomet's paradise; and its mysteries were echoed to us from the lips and tables of pilgrims and crusaders, who had blazoned their red cross in the holy wars. Thus was romance cradled and bosomed in religion.

From the legends of the East, spring the fairy romances of our own days. The *Peri* of Persia was the denizen of Peristan, as the *Ginn* of Arabia was of Ginnistan, and the *Fairy* of England of Fairyland; and we have their synonyms in the *Fata* of Italy and the *Duerga* of northern Europe.

These spirits of romance are almost innumerable; for thus saith the "Golden Legend:" that "the air is full of sprites as the sonnebeams ben full of small motes, which is small dust or poudre."

The alchemyst Paracelsus asserts that the elements were peopled with life; the air with *sylphs* and *sylvains*, the water with *ondines*, the earth with *gnomes*, and the fire with *salamanders*. And Martin Luther coincides with these assertions; nay, hath not Master Cross of Bristol illustrated the creed, and shown, by his galvanic power, an animated atom

starting forth, as if by magic, from a flint, a seeming inorganic mass?

The sagas, or historical records of Scandinavia, of the Celtic, Scaldic, and Runic mythology, assert that the duergas or dwarfs, which are the Runic fairies, sprang from the worms in the body of the giant Ymor, slain, according to the Edda, by Odin and his brother; and Spenser has left a very interesting genealogical record of the faëry brood, in that romantic allegory of the Elizabethan age, the "Faëry Queen." Elf, the man fashioned and inspired by Prometheus, was wandering over the earth alone, and in the bosky groves of Adonis he discovered a lady of marvellous beauty—Fay. From this romantic pair sprang the mighty race of the fairies, and we have wondrous tales of the prowess of their heroic princes. Elfiline threw a golden wall round the city of Cleopolis; Elfine conquered the Gobbelines; Elfant built Panthea, of purest crystal; Elfan slew the giant twins; and Elfinor spanned the sea with a bridge of glass.

CAST. Spenser, I presume, borrowed *his* romance from Italy. We read that the rage and party spirit of the potent Guelphs and Ghibellines rankled even in their nurseries. The nurses were wont to frighten the children into obedience with these hated names, which, corrupted to the epithets of elf and goblin, were hence-forth applied to fairies and phantoms.

ASTR. This story is itself a mere fiction. Ere the period of these feuds of party, the term *Elfen* (and Dance identifies this with the Teutonic *Helfen*,) was a common epithet of the Saxon spirits: Weld-elfen were their dryads; Zeld-elfen their field-fairies, &c.

The American Indians to this day have faith in the presidencies of spirits over those lakes, trees, and mountains, and even fishes, birds, and beasts, which

excel in magnitude. The orient Indian, too, at this hour, peoples the forests with his gods; and peacocks, and squirrels, and other wild creatures, are thus profanely deified.

The legends of later days have quaintly blended the classic with the fairy mythology. Hassenet tells us that Mercurius was called the Prince of Fairies; and Chaucer sings of Pluto, the King of Fayrie; and, in the romance of the Nine Champions, Proserpine sits crowned among the fairies. The great zoologist, Pliny, writes in his Natural History, that "you often encounter fairies that vanish away like phantasies." And Baxter believed that "fairies and goblins might be as common in the air, as fishes in the sea."

As the Peri could not enter Paradise in consequence of the errors of her "recreant race," so the elves could not enjoy eternity without marrying a Christian; and on this plea they came up to the daughters of men. And we read, in the tenets of the Cabala, that, by these earthly weddings, they could enjoy the privileges and happiness of each other's nature. But these unnatural unions were not always happy. There is, in our old chronicles, a tradition of a marriage between one of the counts of Anjou and a fair demonia, which entailed misery and commission of crime on the noble house of Plantagenet.

Now there are appointed times when the influence of the spirit fades for a season. It was the moment of the eclipse, among the American Indians and the African blacks; in Ireland, it is the feast of the Beltane; in Scotland, this immunity came over the mortal life on Hogmanay, or New-year's Eve, and during the *general assemblies* of these mystic spirits of the world.

In Britain, it was on the eve of the first of May, the second of November, and on All Souls' Day. At

these times, indeed, they might be induced to divulge the secrets of their mysterious freemasonry.

In Germany, on May-day, when the unearthly rendezvous was on the dark mountain of the Hartz, and on Halloween, in Caledonia, even the secrets of time and futurity were unfolded by the spirits to a mortal, if one were found so bold as to repair on these festivals to their unhallowed haunts.

If a mortal enters the secret abodes of the Daoine Shi, in Scotland, and anoints his eyes with their charmed ointment, the gift of seeing that which is to all others invisible is imparted; but this must be kept secret, for the Men of Peace will blind the second-sighted eye, if once they are recognized on earth by a mortal.

In the gloomy forests of Germany rose the legends of *Kobolds*, and *Umbriels*, and *Wehrwolves*, the *Holts Konig*, the *Waldebach*, the *Reiberzahl*, and the *Schattenman*, the *Hudekin*, the *Erl Konig*, and the beautiful naiad, the *Nixa*. The devil himself was believed to be a gnome king; for when the Elector of Saxony offered Martin Luther the profit of a mine, he refused it, "lest by accepting it he should tempt the devil, who is lord of those subterraneous treasures, to tempt *him*."

Then we have the *Putseet*, or Puck of the Samogitæ, on the Baltic; the *Biergen Trold*, or *Skow*, of Iceland; and those mermaids which gambol around the Faroe Islands. We read in the *Danske Folksaga*, that these "merrows" cast their skins like the boa, and in that condition are changed into human beings, till their scales are restored to them. And the Shetlanders implicitly believe that awful storms instantly arise on the murder of one of these sea-maids.

There was the Norse goddess, Freya, which, like

the Dragon of Wantley, and the Caliban of the "still vexed Bermoothes," blasted the fair face of nature, and far eclipsed the giant-serpent off Cape Saint Anne, or the *kraken* of Norway; and even that monstrous sea-snake, the *jormungandz* (so conspicuous among the wild romances of the Edda), whose coils entwined the globe. Thor angled for this snake with a bull's head, but it was not to be caught, being reserved for some splendid achievement in the grand conflict which is to herald the *Ragnarockr*,—the twilight of the gods.

Among the mountains of our own island we have a profuse legion. In Wales, the *Tylwth Tag* and the Pooka; and many a hollow in the mountain where these strange animals resort, is called *Cwm Pooka*; and the wondrous cavern of the Meltè, in Breconshire, was believed to be haunted by this little pony.

In Ireland, they have a *Merrow*, the Runic sea, or oigh-maid; the *Banshee*, or fairy prophet; the *Fear-Dearg*, the Irish Puck; the *Clurricane*, a sottish pigmy; and the *Pooke*, the wild pony.

CAST. These must have been a prolific as well as a wandering brood, for I also have seen many caverns in the rocky districts, called *Poola Phouka*, in which these mischievous little creatures concealed themselves.

ASTR. In Man there is a hill called the "Fairy Hill," a tumulus of the Danes, which is thought to be a nocturnal revel-place for the Man fairies which preside over their fisheries.

Scotland was a fertile mother of monsters: the *Ourisks* or *Uriskin*, the goblin-satyrs or shaggy men; the *Brownies*; the *Kelpies*, or river-demons; the *Bargheists*; the *Red-cap*; the *Daoine Shi*, or Men of Peace; the *Glaslic*, or noontide hag, which haunted

the district of Knoidart; and the *Lham-Dearg*, or red-hand, in the forests of Glenmore, and Rothiemurchus; the *Bodach-Glas*; and the *Pixies*, or small grey men.

CAST. There is an islet among the Scottish Hebrides, which is called the Isle of Pigmies; and I remember a chapel there, in which very minute human bones were some time ago discovered. Think you, Astrophel, that these were the skeletons of pixies?

ASTR. I cannot think the notion irrational; there are dwarfs and giants even in our days. The *Bosgismen* of the Cape, and the Patagonians of South America, prove the existence of beings of another stature; and perchance of another *nature*, in days long agone. The Laplander and Bushman of the Cape are little more than three feet high; and that there were giants *too*, is proved by the fossil bones which have been found in the strata of our earth.

CAST. Then we have really dwindled in our growth, and Adam was really a hundred and twenty-three feet nine inches high, and Eve a hundred and eighteen feet nine inches and three quarters, as we are solemnly informed by our profane chronicles? Nay, even the story may be true of the Pict, who bit off the end of the mattock, with which some slave of science was opening his coffin, and thundered forth this exclamation: "I see the degeneracy of your race by the smallness of your little finger."

IDA. If Evelyn were here, he would ask why we have no skeletons of giants as of lizards in our secondary rocks; and he would tell this learned Theban, Castaly, that Cuvier decided these fossils, which seemed to be the *débris* of a giant race, to be the bones of elephants. The legends of Athenæus are probably a fable, and the fossils of the pigmies were,

I dare say, the petrified skeletons of "span-long, wee unchristen'd bairns."

Your allusion to the brownies, reminds me of the monstrous errors which have crept into our legends from the mingling of *two stories*, or the warping of plain facts in natural history. And indeed I interrupt you to recount, in proof of this, some fragments from "Surtees' Durham."

"Every castle, tower, or manor-house has its visionary inhabitants. 'The Cauld Lad of Hilton' belongs to a very common and numerous class, the brownie or domestic spirit, and seems to have possessed no very distinctive attributes. He was seldom seen, but was heard nightly by the servants *who slept in the great hall*. If the kitchen had been left in perfect order, they heard him amusing himself by breaking plates and dishes, hurling the pewter in all directions, and throwing every thing into confusion. If, on the contrary, the apartment had been left in disarray, (a practice which the servants found it most prudent to adopt,) the indefatigable goblin arranged every thing with the greatest precision. This poor *esprit folet*, whose pranks were at all times perfectly harmless, was at length banished from his haunts by the usual expedient of presenting him with a suit of clothes. A green cloak and hood were laid before the kitchen fire, and the domestics sat up watching at a prudent distance. At twelve o'clock the spirit glided gently in, stood by the glowing embers, and surveyed the garments provided for him very attentively, tried them on, and seemed delighted with his appearance, frisking about for some time, and cutting several summersets and gambados, till on hearing the first cock, he twitched his mantle tight about him and disappeared with the usual valediction:

" 'Here's a cloak, and here's a hood,
The cauld lad of Hilton will do no more good.' "

The genuine Brownie, however, is supposed to be, *ab origine*, an unembodied spirit; but the boy of Hilton has, with an admixture of English superstition, been identified with the apparition of an unfortunate domestic, whom one of the old chiefs of Hilton slew at some very distant period, in a moment of wrath or intemperance. The baron had, it seems, on an important occasion, ordered his horse, which was not brought out so soon as he expected. He went to the stable, found the boy loitering, and seizing a hay-fork, struck him, though not intentionally, a mortal blow. The story adds, that he covered his victim with straw till night, and then threw him into a pond, where the skeleton of a boy was (in confirmation of the tale) discovered in the last baron's time.

I am by no means clear that the story may not have its foundation in the fact recorded in the following inquest:

"Coram Johannem King, coron., Wardæ de Chestræ,
apud Hilton, 3 Jul. 7 Jac. 1609."
(And here follows a report in Latin.)

Nevertheless, I strongly suspect that the unhousel'd spirit of Roger Skelton, whom in the hay-field the good Hilton ghosted, took the liberty of playing a few of those pranks which are said by writers of grave authority to be the peculiar privilege of those spirits only who are shouldered untimely by violence from their mortal tenements.

"Ling'ring in anguish o'er his mangled clay,
The melancholy shadow turn'd away,
And follow'd through the twilight grey."

A free pardon for the above manslaughter appears on the rolls of Bishop James, dated 6th September, 1609.

I will only add that, among the Harleian MSS., the same legend is told with some variations, in which this "cauld lad" is termed the "*Pale Boy* of Hilton."

This confusion of *our* mythology is as conclusive of the fiction of all the mysterious legends of the moderns, as the jumble which the classic poets have made of *their* monsters. If we read Lempriere, the genealogy of the classic monster is involved in a maze of impious confusion; and the mythology of *Chimera*, and *Echidna*, and *Typhon*, *Geryon*, and *Cerberus*, and the *Hydra* and *Bellerophon*, and *Ortha* and the *Sphynx*, and the *Nemæan Lion*, and the *Minotaur*, and the demoniac records of their origin, it is almost profanation even to reflect on.

But when Martianus Capella tells us that devils have aërial bodies, that they live and die, and yet, if cut asunder, soon re-unite; and when Bodine asserts, in his "Solution of Natural Theology," that spirits and angels are *globular*, as being of the most perfect shape, I confess I feel more disposed to smile at their imposture than to frown, were it not for their utter worthlessness.

Yet all the allegories which adorn our legends are not so remote from truth or nature. The vampires are said to have gloated over the sacrifices of human life, while the gouls and afrits, the hyenas in human shape, not only fed on dead carcases, but, by a special transmigration, took possession of a corpse. On this fable is founded the monstrous legend of "Assuet and Ajut." I confess it monstrous; but indeed there is little exaggeration even in these tales of horror, if we may believe, for once, Master Edmund

Spenser, in that part of his record of the rebellion of Desmond, in Ireland, which treats of the Munster massacre:—"Out of every corner of the woodes and glennes, they came creeping forth upon their handes, for their legges could not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death; they spake like ghostes, crying out of their graves: they eat the dead carrions—happy were they could they find them—yea, and one another soon after, insomuch as the very carcases they spared not to scrape out of their graves." That episode also, in the "Inferno" of Dante, in which Count Ugolino wears out days and nights in gnawing the skull of an enemy, may well seem a fiction; but even this hellish repast is but a prototype of the savage rage for scalping and cannibalism among the Indian hordes of America.

DEMONOLOGY.

"Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape—"

HAMLET.

ASTR. Now from the holy records, from the creed of the Magus Zoroaster, from the Greek, and Roman, and other legends, how clear is the influence of ethereal beings, of angels and demons, on man's life; and of the imparted power of *exorcism*! In allusion to this divine gift to Solomon, Josephus has the following story:—"God also enabled him to learn that skill which expels demons, which is a science useful and sanative to men. And this method is of great force unto this day, for I have seen a certain man of my own country, whose name was Eleazer, releasing people that were demoniacal in the

presence of Vespasian, and his sons, and his captains, and the whole multitude of his soldiers. The manner of the cure was this. He put a ring, that had a root of one of those sorts mentioned by Solomon, to the nostrils of the demoniac, after which he drew out the demon through his nostrils; and when the man fell down immediately, he adjured him to return into him no more, making still mention of Solomon, and reciting the incantations which he composed. And when Eleazer would persuade and demonstrate to the spectators that he had such a power, he set a little way off a cup or bason full of water, and commanded the demon, as he went out of the man, to overturn it, and thereby to let the spectators know that he had left the man."

The gods of the Greeks and the Latins, the *lares* and *lemures*, or hearth-spirits, the pagan and the Christian elves, were ever held as delegated agents of the Deity, who worked, not by a fiat, but by an instrument. Such were the *Cemies* of the American islanders, and the *Kitchi* and *Matchi Manitou* of the Indians; and, if we consult Father Borri, we shall learn that in Cochin China *Lucifer* himself promenaded the streets in *human* shape.

Psellus records six kinds of devils; and the arrangements of Agrippa, and other theologians, enumerate nine sorts of evil spirits, as you may read in one of old Burton's eccentric chapters.

The mythology of the *Baghvat Geeta*, the sacred record of the Hindoo theists, is based on the notion of good and evil spirits, the emblems of virtue and of vice under the will and power of Brahma. Indeed, the Hindoo mythology is but that of the classic in other words. *Agnee*, the god of fire, *Varoon*, the god of the ocean, *Vayoo*, the god of the wind, and *Cama*, the god of love, are but other names for Jupiter, and

Neptune, and Œolus, and Cupid.

The creed of Zoroaster asserts a perpetual conflict between the good and evil deity, the types of religious knowledge and ignorance. The southern Asiatics are people of *good* principle, and the northern nations people of *evil* principle. And why may not the Persian thus coincide with Bacon himself, who in his book "De Dignitate," confesses his belief in good and bad spirits, in charms, and prophecies, and the varieties of natural magic. Or is it inconsistent that the Hindoos should incarnate the malignant disease, small pox, in the person of the deity *Mah-ry-umma*, of whose lethal influence they lived in abject fear.

IDA. In the holy records, it is true, we read that demons were even permitted to enter the bodies of other beings, and that when they had so established a possession, by divine command they went out of those possessed, as, for sacred example, into the herd of the Gadarenes; that they were also commissioned, for the fulfilment of the inscrutable will of the Creator, to try the endurance of Job, and even to tempt the divinity of the Saviour, and that they were the immediate cause of madness and other sad afflictions.

I do fear, Astrophel, that there is much danger, *now*, in this *embodying* of a demon; and that we too often model our modern principles, on the proud presumption of still possessing that miraculous power of exorcism. With sorrow may I confess, that the holy truths of Scripture, so clearly evincing a *special* purpose, should have been ever warped, by worse than inquisitorial bigotry, into the motive for cruelties unparalleled. From the Scripture histories of demoniac possession have arisen the coercion and cruelties, which once marked with an indelible stain

the records of our own madhouses; where chains and lashes, inflicted by the demons of science, have driven the moody wretch into a raving maniac, when a light hand and a smile would have brought back the angel reason to the mind.

Impersonation is the grand source of many similar errors. The demon, which, since the light of the Christian dispensation has brooded in man's heart and mind, is his own base passion, which incites him to shut his eyes to this holy light, and follow deeds of evil; to be a slavish worshipper in the hall of *Arimanes*. With this profane homage, we court our evil passions, to betray and destroy the soul. And this is the interpretation of an allegory in the profane legends of the Talmud—that Lilis, the wife of Adam, ere the creation of Eve, brought forth none but demons; the origin, indeed, of moral evil.

There are many popular stories which bear a moral to this end: that the evil spirit is powerless over the heart, if it be not encouraged and invited; and, alas! the alluring masque under which evil looks on us, is often but too certain to charm us to its influence, or we are too thoughtless to beware the danger. Thus the disguised enchanter enters into the palace of the Sultan Mesnar, (in "The Tales of the Genii,") and thus the gentle Christabel of Coleridge leads the false Geraldine over that threshold, which she could not cross without the help of confiding and unsuspecting innocence.

CAST. The crones of retired villages have not yet yielded their belief in fairy influence.

Among the low Irish it is believed that (as the *nympholepts* of old who had looked upon Pan, sealed an early doom), the paralytic is *fairy-struck*; and superstition has inspired them with a belief in the influence of the *evil eye* or *glamourie*, especially in the

vicinity of Blackwater.

I remember, when our wanderings among the Wicklow mountains led us through the dark glen of the Dargle, the implicit faith of the Irish women in the charm of amulets and talismans. Like the fabled glance of the basilisk, the evil eye is bestowed on some unhappy beings from their very birth; nay, the spell infests the cabin in which they herd. To avert this fatal influence from the children, a charm is suspended around their necks, which when blessed by the priest is called a "gospel."

When a happy or evil star shines at a birth, it is the eye of a cherub or a demon, smiling or frowning on the destiny of the babe; and when happiness or misery predominates in a life, it is a minister of good or ill that blesses or inflicts. There is one beautiful scrap of this mythology—the thrill of holy joy which the Irish mother feels when her infant smiles in its sleep; for she *knows* it is a holy angel whispering in its ear.

In our own island they are often celebrated as the very pinks of hospitality.

In Cornish history, we read how Anne Jeffries was fed for six months by the small green people. And in yonder forest of Dean, (as writeth Gervase, the Imperial Chancellor, in his "Otia Imperialia,") "In a grovy lawn there is a little mount, rising in a point to the height of a man, on which knights and other hunters are used to ascend, when fatigued with heat and thirst, to seek some relief for their wants. The nature of the place and of the business is, however, such, that whoever ascends the mount must leave his companions and go quite alone. When alone, he was to say, as if speaking to some other person, 'I thirst,' and immediately there would appear a cup-bearer in an elegant dress, with a cheerful countenance,

bearing in his outstretched hand a large horn, adorned with gold and gems, as was the custom among the most ancient English. In the cup, nectar of an unknown but most delicious flavour was presented; and when it was drunk, all heat and weariness fled from the glowing body, so that one would be thought ready to undertake toil, instead of having toiled. Moreover, when the nectar was taken, the servant presented a towel to the drinker to wipe his mouth with, and then, having performed his office, he waited neither for recompense for his services, nor for questions, nor inquiry."

This frequent and daily action had, for a very long period, of old times taken place among the ancient people, till one day a knight of that city, when out hunting, went thither, and having called for drink, and gotten the horn, did not, as was the custom, and as in good manners he should have done, return it to the cup-bearer, but kept it for his own use. But the illustrious Earl of Gloucester, when he learned the truth of the matter, condemned the robber to death, and presented the horn to the most excellent king, Henry the Elder; lest he should be thought to have approved of such wickedness, if he had added the rapine of another to the store of his private property.

But the fairies might rue their kindness, if you frowned so darkly on them, Astrophel. They would fear the influence of your spells, for there is blight and mildew in that glance. At the banquet of the fairies, if the eye of the *seer* but look on them, the romance is instantly at an end: the nymphs of beauty are changed into withered carles and crones, and the splendour of Elfin-land is turned to dust and ashes.

IDA. As a set-off against the *virtues* of your fairies, Castaly, you forget there was a propensity to

mischief. They were rather fond, like the Daoine Shi, of stealing unchristened babes, and of chopping and changing these innocents, thence called *changelings*. On this fable your own Shakspere has wrought the quarrel of Oberon and Titania: —

"A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king;
She never had so sweet a changeling."

I am willing, dearest, that the *poet* shall make a good market of these fictions; but superstitious ignorance may make a sad and cruel work of it, even among your romantic Irish peasantry.

A few months since, on the demesne of Heywood (as we learn from the "Tipperary Constitution"), the death of a child, six years old, was accomplished with a wantonness of purpose almost incredible. Little Mahony was afflicted with spinal disease, and, like many other deformed children, possessed the gift,—in this case the *fatal* gift,—of acute intellect. For this quality, it was decided that he was not the son of his reputed father, but a fairy changeling. After a solemn convocation, it was decreed that the elfin should be scared away: and the mode of effecting this was, by holding the child on a hot shovel, and then pumping cold water on his head! This had the effect of extorting a confession of his imposture, and a promise to send back the *real* Johnny Mahony; but ere he could return to elfland and perform this promise, *he died*. But who is he sitting at your ear, Castaly?

CAST. Sir, is this fair? You have played the eavesdropper. Why come you here?

EV. To counsel you to silence on these mysteries, sweetest Castaly: remember the fate of Master Kirke, of Aberfoyle, for his dabbling in elfin matters, which you may read in Sir Walter's "Demonology." Yet I

will not flout all your fayrie legends; there may be *innocent* illusions, that carry with them somewhat of morality and retribution,—seeing that there are good and bad spirits, which reward and punish mortality. But, in sooth, I never think of fairyland, without remembering that good Sir Walter, as sheriff of Selkirkshire, once took the deposition of a shepherd, who affirmed that he saw the good neighbours sitting under a hill-side: when, lo! it was proved that these were the *puppets of a showman*, stolen and left there by some Scotch mechanics. And, better still, the story of the Mermaid of Caithness, as related to Sir Humphrey Davy, and recorded in his "Salmonia;"—the mermaids, as I take it, being nearly allied to the *Nereid*, or Sea-fairy, and the reality of one about as true as that of the other.

Nature is wild and beautiful enough, without these false creations. Read her *truth*, fair lady, and leave the *fables* to the fairies. There is not a ripple or a stone that is not replete with scientific interest, and yields not a study that both ennobles and delights the mind.

The doublings, or *horse-shoes*, of this Wye, or *Vaga* as the Romans named it, within its circle of rocks, so exquisitely fringed with green and purple lichens (like the Danube, round the castle of Hayenbach in the gloomy gorge of Schlagen, or the Crook of Lune, in Westmoreland, and many others), illustrate at once the nature of the stratification on the earth's surface; even the varied tints of these mountain streams may read the student a practic lesson in geology.

From the lime-rock springs the azure-blue, as the Glaslyn stream, at Beddgelert, the Rhone, and the Traun in Styria; from the chalk ripples the grey water of the Dee and the Arve; from the clay hills the

stream comes down yellow, as “the Derwent’s amber wave;” and where the peat-mosses abound, especially in the autumnal flood, the stream is of a rich and dark sienna brown, as the Conway, and the Mawddach, in Merioneth; or even of transparent black, as the Elain, which flows down through the white schist rocks of Cardiganshire.

CAST. And is there wisdom, Evelyn, in thus

“Flying from Nature to study her laws,
And dulling delight by exploring the cause?”

I do fear that this analytic study of nature destroys the romance of life which flings around us its rainbow beauty.

Oh, for those halcyon days of infancy, when every thought was a promise; when hope, the *dream* of waking men, was lost in its fulfilment; and even fear itself was a thrill of romance!

Behold yon silver moon! it is, to the *poet’s eye*, an orb of unsullied beauty, and the planets and their satellites glitter like diamond studs in the firmament. Yet shift but the lens of the star-gazer, and lo! dark and murky spots instantly shadow o’er its purity; nay, have I not read that one deep astronomer, Fraüenhofer, has discovered mountains and cities; and another, Sir John Herschell, the laying down of rail-roads in the moon? So the optics of Gulliver magnified the court beauties of Brobdignag into monsters, and the auburn tresses of a maid of honour into a coil of dusty ropes!

EV. A truce, fair Castaly. If science discovers defects, does it not unfold new beauties, a new world of animated atoms, endowed with faculties and passions as influential as our own? Nay, science has thrown even a *poetry* around the blue mould of a cheese-crust; and in the bloom of the peach the

microscope has shown forth a treasury of flowers, and gigantic forests, in the depths of which the roving animalcule finds as secure an ambush as the lion and the tiger within the gloomy jungles of Hindostan. In a drop of liquid crystal the water-wolf chases his wounded victim, till it is changed to crimson with its blood. Ehrenberg has seen monads in fluid the 24,000th part of an inch in size; and in one drop of water 500,000,000 creatures—the population of the globe! I hope, Castaly, you will not, like the Brahmin, break your microscope, because it unfolds to you these wonders of the water.

Then, by the power of the telescope, we roam into other systems—

"World beyond world in infinite extent,
Profusely scattered o'er the blue expanse,"

and orbs so remote as to reduce to a mere span the distance between us and the Georgium Sidus; and revel in all the gorgeous splendour of rings, and moons, and nebulæ, the poetry of heaven.

Is there not an exquisite romance in the closing of the barometrical blossoms; of the white convolvulus, and the *anagallis* or scarlet pimpernel; of the sun-flower, and the leaves of the *Dionœa* and *mimosa*?

Is there not poetry in the delicate nautilus, with its arms dropped for oars; in the *velella* and purple *physalia* expanding their membranous sails; and the beautiful fish-lizard, the *Proteus* of transparent alabaster, found in the wondrous cavern of Maddalena, among the Styrian mountains; and even in the *Stalactytes* of Antiparos, as glittering as the gems and crystal pillars of Aladdin's palace? Are not these more beautiful because they are *true*, and better to be read than all the impersonations of mythology, or that voluptuous romance which would

endow a flower with the fervour of sense and passion?

IDA. I have ever wondered that a scholar, like Darwin, should have so wasted time with his "Loves of the Plants." For the study of nature and the discoveries of science are ever vain, if they lift not the heart in adoration. The insect, that fans the sunbeam with its golden wing, or even the flower that opes its dewy eyes to the light, are unconscious worshippers of the Divine Being.

The Epicurean, who weeps for a decaying body, but mourns not for a lost soul, will enjoy these beauties of nature with a heart faithful to his creed, that pleasure is the only good; but the Christian feels that, when he chips a stone, or culls a flower, he touches that which comes fresh from the hand of its Creator.

How full is nature, too, of mute instruction! the simplest incident is a lesson, if we will but learn it. You see that fading blossom floating on the surface of the stream. That inanimate type of decaying beauty shows, to the reflective mind, that even in the summer of life the flower of existence will lose its youthful lustre, and float down the stream of time into the depths of eternity.

But tell me, Evelyn, may not the influence of that science that magnifies the lights of heaven (created to *rule day and night*) into habitable worlds, weaken the influence of faith in holy writ?

May we not fear that, like the Promethean Preadamites of Shelley, the Cain of Byron, the fabled beings of Ovid, and the mythology of Milton, will be the vaunted discoveries of the geologist, in controversion of the Mosaic records, of the creation and the deluge; proving the wisdom of Bacon, that to associate natural philosophy with sacred cosmogony,

will lead to heretical opinions? Indeed, I remember in the *Zendavesta* of Zoroaster, the chronicle of the Magian religion (supposed to be a piracy from the book of Genesis), the sun IS created *before light*.

EV. Fear not this, fair Ida. Rather believe with Bouget, that philosophy and *natural* theology mutually *confirm* each other. The latter teaches us that which it is our duty to believe; the former to believe more firmly. And Lord Bacon himself, in his "Cogitata et Visa," deems natural philosophy "the surest antidote of superstition, and the food of religious faith."

The belief in existence of a preadamite world, presumes not to controvert the Mosaic record of the development of the globe, the creation of Adam, or the fall of man. Modern geology has peopled this preadamite world with *saurians*, or lizards, a race of beings *not concerned in the punishment of that delinquency*. Of the existence of these creatures there is no doubt; the discovery of their fossil remains, without a vestige of the human skeleton, marks the period of their destruction, and that the crust of the globe enveloping these relics, might have been reduced to that chaos when "the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep;" and from which our beautiful world was fashioned by a fiat.

The truth of holy Scripture is too clear even to be disturbed by a sophist. You may recollect that Julian, the apostate, contemplated the reconstruction of the Temple of Jerusalem, in order to confute the prophecies; but Julian failed, and misfortune was the lot of all who were leagued in the impiety.

As to natural laws, think me not so profane as to cite such as the superstitious alchemyst, Paracelsus, in proof of their use in the working of a miracle; who

says that "devils and witches raise storms by throwing up alum and saltpetre into the air, which comes down as rain-drops!"

And it were reversing this solemn argument were I to confess the doctrines of the Illuminaten, who, taught by Jacob Boehmen, and the mysticisms of his "Theosophia Revelata," explained all nature's laws by warping texts of Scripture to their purpose. Yet it is clear that even the miracles of the prophets may have been sometimes influenced by established laws. Elisha raised the Shunamite's son by placing mouth to mouth, as if by inhalation.

Believe not then, fair Ida, that philosophy is set in array against religion, when the student of nature endeavours to explain her phenomena by physical laws, *for those laws the great Creator himself hath made*.

NATURE OF SOUL AND MIND.

"And for my soul, what can it do for that,
Being a thing immortal?"

HAMLET.

CAST. We have risen with the lark to salute you, Astrophel. And you have really slept in Tintern Abbey? Yet not alone; "I see queen Mab hath been with you," and brushed you with her wing as you lay asleep.

ASTR. Throughout the live-long night, sweet Castaly, I have revelled in a world of dreams. My couch and pillow were the green grass turf. No wonder that tales of the times of old should crowd on my memory, that elfin lips should whisper in my ear —

CAST. “The soft exquisite music of a dream.”

IDA. Talk not of dreams so lightly, dear Castaly; the visions of sleep are among the most divine mysteries of our nature: these transient flights of the spirit in a dream, unfettered as they seem by the will, are, to my own mind, among the most exalted proofs of its immortality. Is it not so, Evelyn?

EV. The mystery which you have glanced at, Ida, is the most sublime subject in metaphysics. Yet in our analysis of the phenomena of intellect, it is our duty to discard, with reverential awe, many of the notions of the *pseudo psychologists* in allusion to that self-evident truth, that requires not the support of such arguments.

In tracing the mystery of a dream to its association with our immortal essence, reason will at length be involved in a maze of conjecture. True philosophy will never presume to *explain* the mystical union of spirit and of flesh; she would be bewildered even in their *definitions*, and would incur some peril of forming unhallowed conclusions. Even the *nature* of the rational soul will involve him in endless conjecture, whether it be *fire*, as Zeno believed; or *number*, according to Xenocrates; or *harmony*, according to Aristoxenus; or the lucid fire —the Creator of all things, of the Chaldean astrologers.

He who aspires to a solution of the mystery, may wear out his brain in the struggle, as Philetas worked himself to death in a vain attempt to solve the celebrated “Pseudomenos,” the paradox of the stoics; or, like the gloomy students of the German school, he might conclude his researches with a question like this rhapsody—unanswerable.

“But thou, my spirit, thou that knowest this, that speakest to thyself, what art thou? what wast thou

ere this clay coat was cut for thee? and what wilt thou be when this rain-coat, this sleeping-frock, fall off thee like a garment torn to pieces? Whence comest thou? where goest thou? Ah! where from and to, where darkness is before and behind thee? Oh ye unclothed, ye naked spirits, hear this soliloquy—this soul-speech. Know ye that ye be? Know ye that ye were, that ye are as we are or otherwise, in eternity? Do ye work within us, when a holy thrilling darts through us like lightning, where not the skin trembles but the soul within us? Tell us, oh tell us, what then is death?"

Now, if we reflect on the psychology of the Greeks, can we discern their distinctions of νους, πνευμα, ψυχη, σωμα, of soul or spirit—of spiritual body, or of idol and of earthly body; or of θυμος, ψυχη, and νους, ψυχη, and so forth?

This fine distinction may be reduced to one simple proposition:—that soul and mind are the same, under different combinations: mind is soul evinced through the medium of the brain; soul is mind emancipated from matter. This principle, if established, might associate the anomalies of many sophists; the existence of two minds, the sensitive and intellectual, taught by the Alexandrian philosophers, or the tenets of Bishop Horsley, in his sermon before the Humane Society, the separation of the life of *intellect* from *animal* life; and it might reconcile the abstract reasoning of medical philosophy, with the pure but misdirected arguments of the theological critic.

We believe the spirit to be the essence of life and immortality; and it signifies not whether our words are those of Stahl—that it presided over the animal body; or those of Galen and Aristotle—that it directed the function of life. It is enough that we

recognize the πνοη ξωης, or that *breath of life*, which the Creator breathed into none *but* man; and the εικων θεου, the *image of God*, in which he was created. In this one proposition all the points of this awful question are comprehended. And it is on this *combined* nature that we must reason, ere we discourse on *sleep* and *dreams*.

CAST. I condole with you, Astrophel; you must forget the splendour of your dreams, and listen to their dull philosophy.

ASTR. We may indeed sympathize with each other, Castaly; we are threatened with another abstruse exposition of the mind, although we are already sated with the contrasted hypotheses of our deepest philosophers: the *cogitation* or self-reasoning of Descartes, (the essence of whose "Principia" was "*Cogito, ergo sum*;" and it is an adoption of Milton's Adam, "That I *am*, I know, because *I think*:" forgetting that the very *ego* which thinks, is a proof of prior existence;) and of Malebranche, who believed they existed because they thought; the abstract *spiritualism* of Berkley, who believed he existed merely because others thought of him; the *consciousness* of Locke; the *idealism* of Hume; the *material psychology* of Paley; the *mental corporeality* of Priestley; and the absolute *nonentity* of Pyrrho.

EV. I leave these hypotheses to speak for themselves, Astrophel; my own discourse will be wearying enough without them.

Over the intricate philosophy of mind, Creative Wisdom has thrown a veil, which we can never hope to draw aside. True, the beautiful mechanism of its *organ*, the brain, is apparent; and we can draw some analogies from inspection of the brain of a brute, and its progressive development in *fœtal* life, in reference to comparative simplicity and complexity; but its

phenomena are not, like most of the organic functions of the body, *demonstrable*.

Now, although we know not the *mode* of this mutual influence, the *seat* of mind is a subject of almost universal belief; not that Aristotle, and Ætius, and John Locke, are our oracles on this point, although they have even identified the *spot*, terming the *ventricles* the mind's presence-chamber, while Descartes decided on the *pineal gland*. It is, however, into the *brain* that the nerves of all the senses enter, or from which they emanate: the senses constitute the *media* by which the mind gains its knowledge of the world, and therefore we regard the brain as its seat.

We believe that the mind may possess *five* faculties; perception, association, memory, imagination, and judgment, and their focus or concentration is in the brain. We may argue long on the *earthly* nature of mind, contrasted with that of matter; yet, in the end, we commonly thus define it: *a combination of faculties, and their sympathy with the senses*.

That to different parts of this organ are allotted different functions cannot be doubted, when we look at its varied structure, its intricate divisions, its eccentric yet uniform cavities, its delicate and almost invisible membranes; and, indeed, physiological experiments are proof of it.

ASTR. Then there is some truth in the whimsical localities in the "Anatomy of Melancholy," and the pictures of the tenants and apartments of the brain in the ingenious romance of the "Purple Island" of Fletcher.

EV. Although I grant that these eccentric writers evince much reading, I am not sure that their impersonations (like the "Polyolbion" of Drayton,)

do not tend to confuse, rather than elucidate, a natural subject.

Of a plurality of organs in the brain, I have been convinced, even from my own knowledge and dissections. I have seen that very considerable portions of the *cerebrum* may be removed, the individual still existing. The *vital* functions may continue, the *animal* functions are deranged or lost. The most extensive injuries of the brain, too, are often discovered, which were not even suspected; and the converse of this is often observed,—the diseases of the brain being commonly found in an *inverse ratio* to the severity of the symptoms. When chronic tumours and *cysts* of water are *gradually* formed, the extreme danger is averted by the balancing power of the circulation of the brain's blood; without which its incompressibility would subject it to constant injury.

In *tubercles* of the brain, it is curious that *memory* is the faculty chiefly influenced; it is sometimes rendered dull, while the fancy is vivid,—often more perfect and retentive.

Brain, however, can no more be considered as mind itself, than *retina* sight, or than the sealing-wax can be identical with the electricity residing in it. For if we look at the brain of a brute, we see how closely it resembles our own; then, if we reflect on human intellect and brute instinct, we must all believe at once that there is some diviner thing breathed into us than the *anima brutorum* of Aristotle, something more than the mere vitality, —

"Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem."

Brain is therefore the *habitat* of mind, the workings of which cannot be indicated without it;

for, as the material world would be intact without a sense, so there can be no mortal evidence of mind without a brain, which is indeed the sense of the spirit. Thus, without adopting the creed of the *Hyloist*, the *moderate* materialist,—that the mind cannot have, during the life of the body, even a momentary existence independent of matter,—I believe, that when this matter is in a state of repose, mind is perfectly passive to *our cognizance*.

IDA. It is with diffidence, Evelyn, that I enter this arena with a physician, learned in the body; but is there no danger in this doctrine? does it not imply the office of a *gland*,—that brain is the *origin* of soul, and that its function was the *secretion of thought*.

EV. Such is the timid error of the mere metaphysician, Ida. There is no such danger; for, remember, if there *be* secretion, it is the *soul* which *directs*. Many a thought is referred to things which we cannot bring into contact with our consciousness, —*except by the brain*.

Dr. Gall writes of a gentleman, whose forehead was far more elevated on the right side than the left; and he deeply regretted that with this left side he could never think. And Spurzheim, of an Irish gentleman, who has the left side of the forehead the least developed by four lines,—he also could not think with that side, as indeed I have before hinted.

I may tell you the brain is *double*, and *one* healthy *hemisphere* is sufficient, as the organ of mind, if pain or encroachment of the opposite, when diseased, does not destroy life, and this especially when it is a *chronic* change, or exists from birth; so that I have often seen one hemisphere of the brain a pulpy bag of water, and yet vitality and many signs of intellect may still exist; nay, even if the *whole* brain be reduced to one *medullary* bag, *animal* life shall for

some time be preserved.

To oppose this blending of mind and matter, Lord Brougham (in his Natural Theology) likens the marble statue hewn into beauty, to the perfect arrangement of organization in a being. While I admire the idea, I may observe that he forgets this truth,—that the maker of the one was a mere *statuary*, without even the fabulous power of Prometheus, or Pygmalion, or Frankenstein; the other, the *Creator* of all things, who *breathed a breath of life into the shape he had made fitted to receive it.* My lord thus halts at the threshold of discovery: mind is not the *product* of organization, but it works *by* and *through* it; and therefore, for its *earthly* uses, cannot be independent of the qualities of matter. We may as well agree with Plato, in endowing the soul with "a plastic power, to fashion a body for itself, to enter a shape and make it a body living." I remember Plutarch (in his Quæst. Platon.) makes him say, that the soul is older than the body, and the source of its existence, and that the intellect is in this soul. But where is the sacred evidence of this? for, even in our *antenatal* state, we live, and yet there is probably no consciousness; there is vitality, at least, without the *consciousness* of an intellect.

ASTR. As the creation of light was *before* that of the sun, its reservoir, so the creation of the soul might be before the brain, in which the Creator *subsequently* placed it.

EV. For this there *is* sacred evidence, Astrophel. There *was* light, ere the sun was created as its reservoir; but the soul was breathed into the body, which was already then created.

ASTR. This is a specimen of your special pleading, Evelyn, allied to that perilous error of Priestley, that supposed function and structure to be identical,

because they are influenced by the same disease, and seem to live and die, flourish and decay, *together*. Democritus also has written his belief that, "as the smell of a rose exists in the bloom, and fades as that dies, so the soul of an animal is born with its birth, and dies with its death." You have conceded to me (and we must all be conscious of) the great difficulty of conceiving the *nature* of *spirit*; but, if we are required to prove its existence, we may answer, by analogy, that we cannot always palpably prove the existence of *matter*, although we *know it* to exist. The *electric fluid* may remain for an indefinite period invisible, nay, may never meet the sight,—it may even traverse a space without any evidence but that of its wonderful influence, and at length be collected in a jar.

As light, existing in remote stars, has not yet reached our earth, so the electricity is now residing in myriads of bodies, which will never be elicited; and thus (if I may extend the simile) the principle of life, whatever it be, may have an independent existence during life, may leave the body and yet not perish. Is not this a fine illustration of the living of the soul without the body; for here even a grosser matter, yet invisible, is evinced by its passage from one thing to another, although it is inert when involved in the substance?

IDA. May I not fear that the errors of philosophy, grounded on the difficulty of conceiving the nature of a self-existent spirit, will not stop until they lapse into the belief of annihilation?

For there are many suspicious sentiments even in the pages of well-meaning writers; such are the dangerous sentiments which Boswell has ascribed to Miss Seward: "There is one mode of the fear of death which is certainly absurd, and that is the dread of

annihilation, which is only a pleasing sleep without a dream."

There may be nothing terrible in the condition of annihilation, yet the moral effect is deplorable; indeed, to doubt the eternal existence is to argue that man's life is but a plaything of the Deity. The notion of annihilation is so abhorrent, that he who believes it dooms himself indeed to a miserable existence; for the crowning solace of a Christian life is holy hope, and belief in the priceless gift of immortality.

"Know'st thou th' importance of a soul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory—worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp: redouble this amaze!
Ten thousand add; and twice ten thousand more;
Then weigh the whole; one soul outweighs them all,
And calls th' astonishing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor."

Would that Priestley had read wisely that prophetic truth in Ecclesiastes: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

EV. I do not approve his latitude of thought, yet it were severe to think this, even of Priestley, merely because he disbelieved *separate* spiritual existence; for Aristotle also asserts, that "the soul could not exist *without the body*, and yet that it was not the body, but a part of it." Zeno, and the Stoics, termed that which was called a spirit *material*; and not only Ray and Derham, but even Paley, and Johnson, disbelieved the separate existence. The archdeacon's opinion, that we should have a *substantial* resurrection, is founded on New-Testament evidence, and expressed in his discourse on a future state. The apostle's simile of the wheat implies a *death* of the grain: it dies, but there is no *remodelling*, for it is the

germ that lives and grows; so, although the body may not be restored, there is a development of *its* germ in the transit or resurrection of *its* spirit. The sage thought also the simile of St. Paul should be taken *literally*, and not *figuratively*: and yet he qualifies it thus: "We see that it is not to be the same body, for the Scripture uses the illustration of grain sown (which in its exact sense implies an offspring, and not a resurrection), and we know that the grain which grows is not the same with what is sown. You cannot suppose that we shall rise with a diseased body; it is enough if there be such a sameness as to distinguish identity of person."

Blumenbach believed that when the soul revived, after death, the brain would equally revive; and there is, indeed, nothing very irrational in all this, for death is, even to our senses, not an annihilation, but only a new combination of matter. The Greek sceptics thought that the teeth would remain perfect, if all else was decomposed and lost; and the rabbins conferred this perpetuity on *one* bone of the *spinal column*, which they called LUZ. These strange notions of the mystic union may explain to us that diversity of custom, in various nations, as to the disposal of the dead. While the Irish papists, with a superstitious reverence for inanimate clay, celebrate their wakes with rites often as licentious as they are profane; the cannibal *Calatiæ* thought it more respectful to *eat* the bodies of *their* departed friends, at least so writes Herodotus; and the filial love of other Indian tribes invites the children to strangle their aged parents, as they sit in their fresh-made graves.

It is certainly more consolatory to associate our thoughts with the *immortal* part of a lost friend; to believe the *spirit* to be in celestial keeping, and that it still hovers around us. The collapse and change of

features prove that the *body* is then but as the dust from which it was first formed. I would not wish, like Socrates, to have my limbs scattered over the earth, because

"Cœlo tegitur qui non habet urnam;"

but, as the body *must* be consumed, were it not better and safer, as the Greeks did, to *burn* the dead, to resolve the corpse, as soon as possible, into its constituent elements. I shall ever remember with horror the scenes which I witnessed in Naples, when a *pile of bodies*, collected from the chapels by the dead carts, which go round the city at night, was thrown by irreverent hands into the public cemetery of the Campo Santo.

The fiat of the Creator MAY at once produce a reconstruction of the body, however widely scattered its particles, and the return of the soul to the brain, from which it had once departed; but is it not somewhat irrational to think that we should again be endowed with organs, without the functions and passions to which they are subservient?

IDA. It may be a bliss to gaze even on the *shadows* of those we love. There is a beautiful allegory of this solemn question told in the "Spectator," which, as Addison approves, it cannot be profanation to admire. It is the Indian legend of "Marraton and Yaratilda," in which the devoted husband comes unawares on Paradise, and sees the shadowy *forms* of his wife and children, without their *substance*. The story exquisitely blends the fond wish of Marraton to die, that he may be again admitted to the holy communion of those so fondly loved; for Paradise is painted in the mind's eye even of the heathen, although, in his dearth of revelation, he associates the joys of his elysium with the sensual pleasures of

terrestrial life. The Indian dreams of his dogs, believing that the greatest hunters shall be in the highest favour with Brahma; the proselytes of the prophet die in a vision of their houri's beauty; and the warriors of Odin already drink the honey-water from the skulls of their enemies, served up to them by the beautiful "Valkhas" of the "Valhalla." Thus even the creed of infidels is not atheism. What thinks Evelyn?

EV. As you do, Ida. As to the atheist, one, perchance, may have *lived*, if we rightly interpret the sentiments of Diogenes, and Bion, and Lucian, and Voltaire; but, I believe, one never *died*. My solemn duty has summoned me to the death-bed of more than one reputed infidel, who have in health reasoned with fluency and splendour, and have penned abstruse theses on life and the world's creation. But, when danger lay in their path of life, their stoic heroism fled, and left them abject cowards. They looked not even on the lightning's flash without trembling, and the vision of death was a sting to the conscience. I have seen many a death-bed like that of Beaufort, who made "no signal of his hope," not because he disbelieved a God, but because a conviction of his sin left him without a hope and faith in the promises.

Of course there cannot be an *Euthanasia* where irreligion has marked a life, but, believe me, there would be no *fear* of death in an atheist.

ASTR. The mythologist and pagan may cite their tables, and worship their idols in the recesses of their pagodas and choultries; but some idea of the Deity has been unfolded to the mind of all. Even the eastern princes have had some glimpses of the true faith, and shahs and caliphs were once engaged in building their Nestorine or Christian churches.

The profane Chinese has, it is true, called his realm the *celestial empire*; Fohi, who is believed to have reigned three thousand years before Christ, established his "Iconolatria" or "idolatry," and Si Lao Kiun struck at the establishment of *polytheism*, but the purer theology of Confucius prevailed over his rival.

The Deity, indeed, is the essence of every creed, for all believe in a great spirit as well as an immortal mind and a paradise. Like the reasonings of natural philosophy, our notions and epithets of the great Creator certainly differ, but in all there is faith in his perfection. Xam Ti is the great spirit of the Chinese, as Woden is the god of the Gothic races, and Brahma, or Alla, or the Kitchi Manitou, or even the sun, the source of light, and heat, and joy to the creation, are the deities of other nations. Nor may we wonder more that the Ghebir, and the Peruvian, and the Natches should worship their orb of fire, than that the Irish should, on the morning of their *Beltane*, light their peat fires to the sun.

The doctrines of the Brahmins all attest their creed of *theism*, if we interpret aright the evidence of the learned *Pundits* of Benares, especially in the Gentoo code; and the records of Abul Fazel in the "Baghvat Geeta," an episode in the poem of the "Mahabarat," written to prove the unity. The devout Christian will deem this creed a woful error, but he will confess his admiration of their sublime notion of the divine attribute, which Colonel Dow has thus imparted to us: "As God is immaterial, he is above all conception; as he is invisible, he can have no form; but from what we behold of his works, we may conclude that he is eternal, omnipotent, knowing all things, and present everywhere."

I will grant that the oriental notions of

cosmogony, or the creation of the world, are a blot on their scripture page: because the pagan theologians were shorn of the light of Christianity, they were prone to refer creation to natural causes within their own comprehension, and their ideas were fabulous and impure. Thus, among the Hindoos and Egyptians, there is a mass of obscenity adduced to account for the development of the globe, in the associations of *Vishnu* and *Siva*, and *Osiris* and *Isis*; and the temples of Elephanta and Elora are adorned with symbolic paintings of this incarnation of Vishnu. Yet, with all this error, there is in the "Vedas" or Hindoo scriptures, a not remote analogy to the Bible itself; and, granting that the cosmogony of Phœnicia is little more than a mysterious romance; yet, whether the great cause be the *demiurgic spirit* uniting with desire, or the being "That" of the Hindoos, the essence of all these mysteries still combines the grand scheme of the creation,—the formation of a beautiful world from a chaos of wide and dark waters.

IDA. You are wandering very far eastward, Astrophel: I will propose this question to Evelyn.

If it is so evident that the brain and mind, although not identical, exist in a most intimate union, may we not undervalue their relative influence by adducing the energy of intellect and brilliancy of conception possessed by many in advanced life? Remember the green old age of Plato, and Cicero, and Newton, and Johnson, and, above all, Goëthe, whose last work was brilliant as his first. And all this, coincident with that love of Infinite Wisdom that exists, (as we read in the "Consolations of a Philosopher,") "even in the imperfect life which belongs to the earth, *increases with age*, outlives the perfection of the corporeal faculties, and, at the

moment of death is felt by the conscious being." Does this imply decay?

Ev. The retentive powers of old age, are the *exception* to a rule, which the ultra spiritualist assumes as a *general* rule, in attempting to disprove the growth and decay of mind, according to the age of the body. But as *lives* are of different duration and *constitutions* vary, so may *mental powers* indicate different degrees of vigour. If mind *in*creases, no doubt it *de*creases; and I have known many, who retain every faculty but *memory*, which is the first to decay and indicate failing power; and so also is it with idiots, in whose *memory*, usually, the greatest defects appear; the faculty of counting numbers reaches only to three, and of letters to C, the third letter in the alphabet.

Ida will grant that there is no more impressive lesson of humility than the dwindling and decay of genius, when, in the words of the Athenian misanthrope —

"Nature, as it grows again toward earth,
Is fashion'd for the journey, dull and heavy."

Reflect on the painful end of Sheridan and other brilliant wits of their day; that

"From Marlborough's eyes the streams of dotage flow,
And Swift expires a driveller and a show;"

and we may almost wish that biography should begin at each end, and finish in the middle, or zenith of a life.

IDA. If the fact be so, I grant the lesson to our pride, Evelyn; and we may dwell with fervent admiration on the divinity of that mind, which can ennoble and consecrate our body, so fraught as it is with basest passions, and so decayable withal.

NATURE OF SLEEP.

"——Sleep, gentle sleep!
Nature's soft nurse."

HENRY IV. Part ii.

IDA. I begin to perceive the importance of this digression on the nature of mind. You wish us to believe, there is a temporary desertion of the spirit from the body, and *therefore* the body sleeps?

EV. Not absolute desertion, but a limit to its influence. Many have thought in conformity to your question; and indeed, Ida, it is a belief so holy, that I may feel it to be almost an impiety to differ.

From the time of Aristotle to Haller, the term "Sleep" expresses that condition which is marked by a cessation of certain mental manifestations,

coincident with the degree of oppression; for it is an error to say that the *body* sleeps,—it is the *brain* only, perhaps I may say, the *cerebrum*, or the *fore* lobes; for I believe the lower part of it (that which imparts an energy to the process of breathing and of blood circulation) is never in a complete sleep, but merely in a state of languor, or rather of repose, sufficient for its restoration,—if it were to sleep, *death* would be the result.

This repose is in contrast with a state of *waking*, that activity of mind in which ideas are constantly chasing each other like the waves of ocean; the mode of displacing one idea being by the excitement of another in its place.

In that state of sound sleep which overcomes children, whose tender brains are soon tired, or old persons whose brains are *worn*, and in persons of little reflection,—the mind is perfectly passive, and its manifestations cease.

So writes Professor Stewart,—that there was a total suspension of volition during sleep, as regards its influence over mental or corporeal faculties; and I may even adduce a scrap from Burton, although I am an admirer of the quaint old compiler for little else than his measureless industry:—

"Sleep is a rest or binding of the outward senses, and of the common sense, for the preservation of body and soul. Illigation of senses proceeds from an inhibition of spirits, the way being stopped by which they should come; this stopping is caused by vapours arising out of the stomach, filling the nerves by which the spirits should be conveyed. When these vapours are spent, the passage is open, and the spirits perform their accustomed duties: so that *waking* is the *action* and *motion* of the senses, which the spirits, dispersed over all parts, cause."

ASTR. But is volition always suspended even in sound sleep? Was it not the opinion of Berkley, that the mind even then was *percipient*? How else can we account for the waking exactly at one predetermined hour? If we retire to sleep at the latest hour, or oppressed with fatigue, so strong an impression is produced in our mind, that the breaking of our sleep is almost at the given moment.

EV. I will answer you at present, Astrophel, only by analysis; it is not yet time to *explain*.

I may grant that there is some *latent* effect,—*passive* memory, if you will,—for we do not *count* the hours in sleep, and calculate our time *by the clock*; but we wake, and soon the bell strikes.

We have on record some very curious instances of the periodical recurrence of ideas in a waking state, the measurement of time being referrible to mental impression, mechanically established by constant habit.

There was an idiot once, who was in the habit of amusing himself constantly by counting the hours as they were struck on the clock. It chanced, after some time, that the works of the clock were injured, so that the striking for a time had ceased. The idiot, notwithstanding, continued to measure the day with perfect correctness, by counting and beating the hour. This is a story of Dr. Plott's, in his History of Staffordshire.

There is one of more modern date, somewhat analogous to this.

I may quote Holy Writ in support of this passive condition of true sleep; nay, even its similitude to death. How often do we find allusions to sleep and death as synonymous! Sir Thomas Brown was impressed so deeply with this *likeness*, that he "did not dare to trust it without his prayers." And the

Macedonian, who wished for more worlds to conquer, confessed his sleep proved to him his mortality. I may quote ancient poetry also in my support. Homer and Virgil describe sleep as the "Brother of Death;" and, among the profane poets of later times, the same sublime association is traced of this

"Mortis imago—et simulacrum."

Among the ancient allegories, sleep is portrayed as a female, with black unfolded wings,—in her left hand, a white child, the image of Sleep; in her right, a black child, the image of Death.

On the tomb of Cypselus, according to Pausanias, *night* is thus personified.

CAST. How true, then, was the thought of the first deep sleeper, on the sensation of slumber: —

"——There gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
My drownéd sense, untroubled; tho' I thought
I then was passing to my former state,
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve."

But how fearful is this resemblance which changes "tir'd nature's sweet restorer" into a type of death! Pr'ythee, Evelyn, do not affright me thus, by clothing sleep with terror, as if it were disease and danger.

EV. Why tremble for the mortal sleep of the just and good, who will feel, with William Hunter, on their death-bed, "how *pleasant* and easy it is to die;" and with another moralist, —

"Oh what a wonder seems the fear of death,
Seeing how gladly we all sink to sleep;
Night following night!"

Fear not, Castaly; I do not term *slumber* and *gentle* sleep disease, but signs of health. Not so, however, many a *profound* sleep, and its advances towards *coma*; those results of exhaustion from excess, or from intense and direct narcotics, as opium sleep, and the paralyzing senselessness from extreme cold, as in the story of Sir Joseph Banks and Dr. Solander in the antarctic regions.

You are aware that many *remedies* in medicine may be so intense as to cause fatality: inflammation, too, is the restorative process of wounds, but if in *excess* it is fatal. Appetite also, to a certain degree, is healthy; but craving and thirst, its extremes, are proved, by *suffering*, to be morbid.

If the mind is composed to perfect rest, it is lulled to senselessness; then metaphysically we are said to sleep: the mind is not excited by thought, and, in consequence, its supply of *arterial* blood is less, the more *rapid* flow of which would be the cause of waking.

Within certain limits sleep is a *remedy*; but it becomes perilous when intense, or too much indulged. One eccentric physician, as we read in the learned Boërhave, even fancied sleep the *natural* condition of man, and was wont to yield to its influence during eighteen of the twenty-four hours; but apoplexy soon finished his experiment.

This *negative* quiescence (for sleep is not a *positive* state) allows the restoration of energy, and then we wake. Even the senses accumulate their power in sleep; the eye is dazzled by the light when we wake, from the sensitiveness imparted by this accumulation.

The conceits regarding the cause of sleep are so various, that if I were to discuss their merits I should only weary your patience, as I perceive I have

already done.

Some have thought that sleep arose from certain conditions of the blood in the vessels and nerves of the brain; its congestion in the *sinuses*; or a *reflux* of a great portion of it towards the heart: the result of depressed nervous energy—exhaustion, fatigue, cold, and the influence of powerful narcotics, or the combustion of charcoal. Others, that sleep arises from the deposition of fresh matter on the brain, and its sudden pressure. Then we have the cerebral collapse of Cullen, and of Richerand; the deficiency of animal spirits of Haller; the diminished afflux of blood to the brain of Blumenbach; and the exhausted irritability of the Brunonian theory adopted by Darwin.

Where the truth lies I presume not to decide, but it is clear there is a necessity for the occasional repose of the mental organ:

"Non semper arcum
Tendit Apollo."

Watchfulness invariably reduces, even in the brute: the wild elephant is tamed by the perseverance of the hunter in keeping it constantly awake.

The mind, then, as it is manifested to us (for deeply important is it that we confound not the perfect and pure, because unembodied essence of the soul, with its *combined* existence in the brain—that union from which a *thought is born*), the mind cannot exert itself beyond a certain period without a sensation of fatigue in the brain, as palpable as the exhaustion from excessive muscular exertion. And this depends on a natural law, that organs after acting a certain given period, flag and lose their energy. Thus the first harbinger of sleep is the *closing*

of the lids from languor, and relaxation of the muscles. Muscular fibre will, however, regain its expenditure by simple rest, requiring a certain period for this re-accumulation, like the charging of an electrical jar. Sleep, however, is not always a sequence of exhausted irritability of muscle; we may be *too tired* to sleep; and thought and memory also will keep the mind awake, and prevent nervous energy from renewing corporeal vigour.

The excitement of thought beyond certain limits is both painful and destructive, evincing its effects by various grades of mental disorder, from simple headache to confirmed mania. Our first ray of hope, in fever, is often the coming on of a quiet sleep, and in the sad cases of *delirium tremens* we must either *sleep or die*; the effort of philosophical determination to overcome the depression only adding to its intensity, as in the case of a person worn out by labour, in attempting to labour on. This conflict cannot be more pertinently exemplified than by some passages in the life of Collins, by one who knew him well:—

"He languished some years under that depression of mind which unchains the faculties without destroying them, and leaves reason the knowledge of right without the power of pursuing it. These clouds which he perceived gathering on his intellects, he endeavoured to disperse by travel, and passed into France; but found himself constrained to yield to his malady, and returned. His disorder was no alienation of mind, but general laxity and feebleness, a deficiency rather of his vital than intellectual powers. What he spoke wanted neither judgment nor spirit, but a few minutes exhausted him, so that he was forced to rest upon the couch, till a short cessation restored his powers, and he was again able to talk

with his former vigour."

I believe that sensibility and fatigue of mind, by inducing sleeplessness, may often be the source even of mania.

The sleep of animals is usually *light*, especially that of birds, and they are easily startled when at roost. The cackling of the geese on their awaking, you know, saved the Roman capitol. Yet sleep is altogether very nearly balanced with waking. Some animals sleep often, like the cats, but they are long awake, and prowling in the night. The python and the boa are also long awake, and then sleep for many days during the process of digestion. Indeed, all the *ferœ* fall into sound sleep after feeding; while the ruminants scarcely sleep at all; nor do they crouch like the *ferœ*, with the head between the legs: but then their whole life is one scene of quiet; rumination is a mindless reverie. The West Indian slaves and the Hottentots, or woolly bipeds, resemble the brute animal in this, that they fall asleep as soon as their labour is concluded.

That activity of mind in excess may induce even mania, I may offer two impressive, although negative, proofs, from the records of Dr. Rush.—"In despotic countries, and where the public passions are torpid, and where life and property are secured only by the extinction of domestic affections, madness is a rare disease. Dr. Scott informed me that he heard of but one single instance of madness in China."

"After much inquiry, I have not been able to find a single instance of fatuity among the Indians, and but few instances of melancholy and madness."

I may add, that Baron Humboldt assures us of this immunity among the wild Indians of South America.

IDA. And may not this melancholy effect be averted by caution and rule? We have a saying in

Herefordshire, that “Six hours are enough for a man, seven for a woman, and eight for a fool.”

Ev. There cannot be a fixed rule on that point, except the prevailing law of nature,—the feeling of necessity; but this may often lead astray.

It is calculated that one half of a child’s life is passed in sleep, and one quarter to one sixth of the adult existence; but for old age there is no essential period or limit. Old Parr slept almost constantly about the close of his life; while Dr. Gooch records the case of one whose period of sleep was only one quarter of an hour in the twenty-four. It is well to inure an infant to a *gradual* diminution of its time of sleep, so that at ten years old its period should be about eight hours.

The strength or energy of brain will, when aided by custom, modify the faculty of controlling the disposition to slumber. Frederick the Great, and our own Hunter, slept only five hours in the twenty-four; while Napoleon seemed to exert a despotic power over sleep and waking, even amid the roaring of artillery. Sir J. Sinclair slept eight hours, and Jeremy Taylor three. As a general precept, however, for the regulation of sleep in energetic constitutions, I might propose the wise distribution which Alfred made of his own time into three equal periods,—one being passed in sleep, diet, and exercise, one in despatch of business, and one in study and devotion. Careful habit will often produce sleep at regular and stated periods, as it will render the sleeper insensible or undisturbed by loud noises; the gunner will fall asleep on the carriage amid the incessant discharge of the cannon; and, if I remember right, the slumbers of the bell-ringer of Notre Dame were not broken by the striking of the quarters and the hour close to his ear.

IDA. And at what seasons should we wake and sleep? It seems to me, that the Creator himself has written his precepts in the diurnal changes of this world, that are still so healthfully observed by the peasant, but so strangely perverted by the capricious laws of fashion, and even by the romantic

"sons of night,
And maids that love the moon;"

always excepting Astrophel and Castaly. It moves my wonder that they who have looked upon the beauty of a sunrise from the mountain, or the main, can be caught sleeping, when such a flood of glory, beyond all the glare of peace-rejoicings and birth-lights, bursts upon the world.

EV. The wisest have thought with you, Ida, although there was one idle poet, even Thomson, who confessed he had "noe motive for rising early." It was the custom of Jewel and Burnet to rise at four; and Buffon, we are told, rewarded his valet with a crown, if he succeeded in getting him up before six.

It is to slight the creation, not to enjoy the beauties of daylight; and it is the *natural* time for sleep, when the dews of night are on the earth. The proof of this:—There were two French colonels who were marching their troops, one by day, the other by night; and the loss in men and horses was very far greater among the night marchers.

CAST. I believe it was Panza, who "never desired a second sleep, because the first lasted from night till morning,"—that immortal Sancho Panza, whose quaint rhapsody we must all echo so gratefully, —"Blessed is he that first *invented* sleep." The eulogies of this blissful state, and the wailings of a sleepless spirit, have ever been a favourite theme of the poet, and our own ancient dramatists,—as

Beaumont and Fletcher, in the play of “Valentinian,” and Shakspere, from the lips of Henry IV. in his beautiful invocation, and Young, and many others.

Ev. Sleeplessness is one of the severest penalties of our nature. In the darkness and silence of night the wakeful mind preys on itself; the pulse is rapid, it is a throb of anguish,—to the wearied thought there is no conclusion, and the parched tongue prays in vain for the morning light. In the curse of Kehama, I think the sleepless lid is one of the most cruel inflictions; and in the severe disorder which we term *hemicrania*, this curse is to a degree realized.

The sleeplessness of Caligula is related by Suetonius. In Bartholinus, we read of one who slept not for three months, and he became a melancholy hypochondriac. And Boërhave, from intense study, was constantly awake during six weeks.

Ida. We are happy in our quiet minds, are we not, dear Castaly? Yet, if we are ever summoned to the couch of one wearied by night watching, Evelyn will tell us how we may soothe the pillow of a sleepless mind, to which the secret of inducing slumber would be a priceless treasure.

Ev. Study the causes of *insomnia*, or sleeplessness, Ida; as those which excite nervous irritability,—coffee, green tea, *small* doses of opium, the protracted use of antimony, &c.; and believe not in the virtues of vulgar remedies, often as dangerous as they are ridiculous. There is a batch of these which Burton has gleaned from various authors; as a sample,—nutmegs, mandrakes, wormwood; and from Cardan and Miraldus,—the anointing the soles of the feet with the fat of a dormouse, and the teeth with the ear-wax of a dog, swine’s galls, hares’ ears, &c.

I might offer to you many plain precepts for the alleviation of the *light* causes of sleeplessness; and

while I dole them out to you in very dullness, you will fancy my gold-headed cane to my chin, and other essential symbols of an Esculapius of the olden time. Adopt, then, a free ventilation in summer, and airing in winter, of the chamber. This should never be a mere closet, always above the ground floor, neither very light nor dark, the window not being close to the bed, and, above all, not in the vicinity of stoves, ovens, and large kitchen fires. Do not allow the windows to be open throughout the night, to admit the cold dew or air; and, in winter, the basket-fire should be placed there for an hour before you enter your chamber. A slight acceleration of the circulation may be produced by gentle exercise before rest; and two or three wafer biscuits or spring water, to prevent the wakeful effects of both chilliness and hunger. A light woollen sock may be worn, which is unconsciously displaced when sleep comes on, and the night-cap should be little more than a net, except during the very cold months. The position of the body should be that which is the easiest, except the supine, which induces congestion and often "night mare;" and if there be much sensitiveness of the surface, the hydrostatic bed should be employed, but that not too long, as it will become heated by protracted pressure. Children should not be enveloped in clothes, nor crowded in bed; nor should infants be shaken, or tossed, or patted, as foolish nurses too often do.

There are many simple modes of inducing slumber: I allude not to poppy and henbane, nor to the pillow of hops, which, in the case of the third George, was the charm that sealed up the lids of the king; but to other modes, such as a tedious recital, (something like my own dull prosing,) the gentle motion of a swing, a cot or cradle, the ripple of a

stream, and the dashing of a waterfall, the waving of a fan, the caw of rooks, the hum of bees, the murmur of an Æolian harp—

CAST. So gracefully wound up in that quaint *morceau*, the "Fairy Queen," when Archimago sends the spirit to fetch a dream from Morpheus—

"Cynthia still doth steepe
In silver dew his ever-drooping head,
Whiles sad night over him her mantle black doth spred.

And more to lull him in his slumber soft,
A trickling stream, from high rocke tumbling downe,
And ever dringling rain upon the loft,
Mix'd with a murmuring winde, much like the soune
Of swarming bees, did cast him in a swoune."

SUBLIMITY AND IMPERFECTION OF DREAMING.

"We are such stuff
As dreams are made of, and our little life
Is rounded by a sleep."

TEMPEST.

EV. In the transition *to* and *from* the repose of sleep, the mind is sinking into oblivion, and thought is fading, and the senses and sensation are overshadowed in their regress to insensibility: even instinct is well nigh a blank. This is the state of *slumber*. Then, I believe, and only then, are we ever wandering in the ideal labyrinth of DREAMS.

There is a curious calculation of Cabanis, that certain organs or senses of the body fall asleep at regular progressive periods; some, therefore, may be *active* while others are *passive*, and in this interesting

state, I may hint to you, consists the essence of a dream. It seems that in *dreamless* sleep, the senses fall asleep altogether, as in the case of Plutarch's friends, Thrasymenes and Cleon, and others who *never dreamed*.

ASTR. So there is some truth in the fanciful conceit of Cardanus, that "Sleep is the rest of the spirits,—waking their vehement motion, and dreaming their tremulous motion."

CAST. And philosophy plumes herself on her wonderous intuition for this *discovery*. Let her blush, and kneel before the shrine of poesy. The poets, even of a ruder age than ours, have thought and written before you, Evelyn, and have unfolded these *arcana*. How doth Chaucer usher in his "Dreme?" —

"Halfe in dede sclepe, not fully revyved;"

and again:

"For on this wyse upon a night
As ye have herd withouten light,
Not all wakyng ne full on slepe,
About such hour as lovirs wepe;"

and in "La Belle Dame sans Mercy," there is the same thought:

"Halfe in a dreme, not fully well awaked;"

and in Sir Walter's "Antiquary:" "Eh, sirs, sic weary dreams as folk hae between sleeping and waking, before they win to the long sleep and the sound." So will your philosophy dwindle somewhat in its consequence, Sir Clerke.

EV. We are not jealous of these *glimpses* of a poet, Castaly; they impart a value to their rhymes: we enrol *such* poets in the rank of philosophers.

IDA. Solve me this question, Evelyn: is there any relative difference between the subjects of dreams *before* and *after* sleep?

EV. It has been thought that there is more reference to reality in the *first*, and more confusion and wandering of imagination in the *second*; but as nature is often *excited* rather than exhausted at night, there may be equal brightness with the morning dream, occurring after the recreation and refreshment of sleep.

CAST. We may concede, then, some wisdom to the Sybarites, who destroyed their morning heralds, the cocks, that they might enjoy their matin dreams undisturbed. And I remember one of Pope's allusions to the virtues of this υπαρ, or morning dream:

"What time the morn mysterious visions brings,
While purer slumbers spread their golden wings."

ASTR. We have often discoursed on the psychology of Locke, Evelyn, and we are now involved in one of its most interesting points—*innate idea*. Is the dreamer *conscious* of his dream? It has been asserted, especially by two profound metaphysicians, Beattie and Reid, that they *persuaded* themselves in their dreams that they *were* dreaming, and would then attempt to throw themselves off a precipice; this awoke them, and proved the impression a fiction. Were there not present in this, volition and consciousness; and is it not an evidence of an innate idea without sensation?

EV. No. A train of thought and passive memory may take place without volition, even in a waking mind; a train of *reasoning* cannot. So feeling and *passive* thought may in the mere dream, but not a *conscious acting* on it. The phenomena, and the expressions used to describe these impressions, are

precisely illustrative of another condition of sleep, to which we have not yet pointed. This notion of Beattie was but an echo of Aristotle. The Stagyrite himself was subject to dreams of danger, and, after a while, he used to whisper to himself: “Don’t be frightened,—this is only a dream:” the glaring proof that it was *not*; and yet psychologists still talk of the *management* of a dream.

The fairest explanation is, that there has been a predetermination on some point, and *unconscious* ideas on the same point are elicited, or may be the first to present themselves to the mind in the morning, *at the moment* we awaken, and thus it is the first which the judgment acts on in its reverie; that is, the line between dreaming and being awake. If there be many organs asleep, there is still some *clouding* of this judgment; but if that be asleep also, there is an absolute dream.

If we *know* that we are dreaming, the faculty of judgment *cannot* be inert, and the dream would be *known* to be a *fallacy*. We might, by thinking, render our dream what we pleased, and be sure we should never wish for devils or dangers. The essence of the dream is that it is *uncontrolled*: other states are not dreaming. Above all, if judgment influenced the dream of Beattie, who was not a madman, would he have *wished* to have toppled down headlong from a rock? Listen to Johnson on this point. “He related that he had once, in a dream, a contest of wit with some other person, and that he was very much mortified by imagining that his opponent had the better of him. Now.” said he, “one may mark here the effect of sleep in weakening the power of reflection; for had not my judgment failed me, I should have seen that the wit of this supposed antagonist, by whose superiority I felt myself

depressed, was as much furnished by me as that which I thought I had been uttering in my own character."

Nay, in the words of Beattie himself, in his "Essay on Truth,"—

"Sleep has a wonderful power over all our faculties. Sometimes we seem to have lost our moral faculty; as when we dream of doing that without scruple or remorse, which, when awake, we could not bear to think of. Sometimes memory is extinguished; as when we dream of conversing with our departed friends, without remembering any thing of their death, though it was, perhaps, one of the most striking incidents we had ever experienced, and is seldom or never out of our thoughts when we are awake."

Even the most sensitive and amiable girls will dream of committing murder, or the most awful crimes, without any sense of compunction. We feel no surprise at the working of our own miracles; and we know not how to avoid danger. I have myself dreamed of occurrences long past, as if they were of to-day; have fretted in my sleep, on ideal events, and on waking was for a moment wretched. But I have reflected, *awake*, on these very events, and have not only felt resigned, but deemed them benefits.

There was in the university of Gottingen the physician Walderstein. He was a constant dreamer, and this is his account of one of these illusions. "I dreamt that I was condemned to the stake, and during my execution I was perfectly composed, and indeed *reasoned* calmly on the mode in which it was conducted;—whispering to myself, 'Now I am burning, and presently I shall be converted into a cinder.'" It seems that he was dissatisfied with his dream, on account of this apathetic calmness; and he

concludes: “I was fearful I should become all thought, and no feeling.” *I* would say, he was all illusion and no judgment.

It is but lately that I dreamed I was reciting a metaphysical poem, which my vanity whispered me possessed a deal of merit. During the recitation I thought there was a turning up of noses, and of tongues into cheeks—a very expressive sign of incredulity and satire. At length a general murmur ran through the assembly that it was a complete “boggle.” Nothing daunted, I assured them that it was a very abstruse passage, and the fault was in the shallow comprehension of my audience. Need I add, that I should blush at such an evasion in my waking judgment?

How different also is our dream from a waking thought, in which we can control the fancy!

If in the dream the chain be abruptly broken, the waking mind does not then carry on the train, and if any thing occur in waking, associating with the dream, to join the broken link, the dream is not completed, but the ideas *revert*, or are retraced, to their source; and if any idea at the origin of the dream be *re-excited*, there will be no consistent continuance of it beyond the dream itself, or, if there be, it will bear the stamp of reasoning, losing all connexion with the illusion. On the contrary, if we read as we are falling asleep, we continue *in the dream* the subject of our study, but *erroneously*; and if we then start and wake, we shall find that at the moment of slumber we had *changed the integrity* of our thinking. Be assured, then, that Virgil is correct in this—

> “She seems alone
> To wander in her sleep, through ways unknown,
> *Guideless* and *dark*.”

CAST. And now, Sir Knight, deign to look on the other side of the shield. Answer me with sincerity,—if your words be true, is not this a high privilege of imaginative minds, to lift themselves out of the gloomy atmosphere of this world of woe; to soar with fancy, not to drudge with fact? How do I envy a romantic dreamer, like him of whom Master Edmund Spenser writes, —

"——at length, some wonted slepe doth crowne
His new falne lids, dreames straight, tenne pound to one,
Out steps some faëry with quick motion,
And tells him wonders of some flourie vale."

Sleep is indeed the reality of another existence.

ASTR. So breathed the thought of Heraclitus, in words like these,—that "all men, whilst they are awake, are in one common world; but that each, when he is asleep, is in a world of his own." The fairies are his boon and chosen compeers, and the sylphs are as much his handmaidens, as those around the toilet of Belinda. We are indeed the happy children, and, like them, our existence is a dream of felicity,—one long and happy thought of the *present*, with no reflection or forethought to mar its blisses.

Then the shades and memory of departed friends and lovers, are they not around us as true and as beautiful as when they lived? The common sentiment of enamoured dreamers is —

"I hear thy voice in dreams upon me softly call;
I see thy form as when thou wert a living thing."

In the dream, ambition is lifted to the loftiest pinnacle of her high aspirings; and power and riches are showered in profusion in the path of their votaries from the cornucopia of fancy; and all this

with a depth and intensity that gilds for a time the moments of waking life. And I agree with Saint Augustine, that if we sleep and dream in Paradise, our existence will be perfectly felicitous.

But then, alas! the cruel waking from this world of pleasure. I have breathed many a sigh of sympathy with Milton's dream of his dead wife, and with Crabbe, in his "World of Dreams."

You remember, Evelyn, how oft you have wondered at my absence from our college cœna. You thought not that I was then deeply studying how I might gain a victory over my thoughts in sleep. As my waking memory would, from some indefinite cause, be re-excited after it had seemed to fade and die, so the subject of my dreams has been resumed after many months, without any chain of relative thoughts in the interval. I believed then that this might be a dream; that I had dreamt the same before; but on the morning of the *second* dream, reflection assured me that on the morning of the *first* I had known and thought on it. I was waiting for a golden hour of inspiration, and it was granted me. One night came o'er my slumber a dream of beauty: there was an innocent happiness, a sense of purest pleasure, that might be the beatitude of a peri ere she lost her place in Eden. In the morning, the dream was a part of my being; I nursed it throughout the live-long day, and at night lay me down to slumber, and again with the sleep came the dream. I was thus the monarch of an ideal world: the dream was my life, so long as my thoughts were on it concentrated, and even study was a *Rembrandt* shadow on its brightness.

In a moment of rapture, I cried, —

"We forget how superior, to mortals below,
Is the fiction they dream to the truth which they know."

I opened the leaf of a volume, in which an accomplished pen had traced an episode so like my own, as to make me wonder at its truth.

It was of a visionary German, who, like myself, commanded the phantasie of sleep's own world, bringing one night thus in connexion with another. He fashioned, like Pygmalion, his idol, Love, and nightly met and wooed, till he won her to his heart, and then he cried,—"What if this glorious sleep be a real life, and this dull waking the true repose?" At length his ideal of beauty, his *dream*, died, stung by a serpent. And then the order of the vision was reversed; the dream lay again before him, dead and withered; he saw his idol only when he was awake, and this was to him a dream. He pined in thought, and died,—sleeping.

Was not the sleep of this man his real life, and a scene of happiness? Could *he* wish for reality who had enjoyed such a dream? For if in life there were equal sleep and waking, and the sleep were all a happy dream, this would indeed be a happy life.

May I tell you, Evelyn, that I enjoyed a deep sublimity of feeling, a consciousness of that mental emancipation which devout philosophers have more than glanced at?

IDA. Although you have again rather run wild, Astrophel, I agree with you in thinking that, under this influence, the dream may be an illustration of Plato's notion, regarding the existence of eternal forms, independent of matter,—an emanation of the divine mind imparted to that of human beings; that *innate idea*, if you will, by which the mind views at large —

"The uncreated images of things."

And I therefore revere the opinion of Sir Thomas

Brown, the ingenious author of the "Religio Medici," (with whom believed Sir Henry Wotton, Bossuet, and other good men,) "That we are somewhat more than ourselves in our sleeps, and the slumber of the body seems to be but the waking of the soul. It is the legation of sense, but the liberty of reason; and our waking conceptions do not match the fancies of our sleeps." And also the sentiment of Addison, that "there seems something in this consideration, that intimates to us a natural grandeur and perfection of the soul."

CAST. In your temple of transcendental philosophy you will leave a niche for Shakspere, dearest Ida, who, even in one of his lightest characters, forgets not this perfection of our emancipated spirit. Lorenzo whispers to the fair Jewess, in the garden at Belmont —

"Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heav'n
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold!
There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st,
But in his motion, like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubims.
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But, whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

PROPHECY OF DREAMS.

"I have heard, the spirits of the dead
May walk again: if such things be, thy mother
Appeared to me last night; for ne'er was dream
So like a waking."

WINTER'S TALE.

ASTR. Evelyn, you have argued fluently on the

nature of mind contrasted with that of matter; but, if desired to *define* it, how will you answer?

EV. That it is a *combination of faculties*, and their *sympathy with the senses*. But this definition presumes not to decide in what intimate part or texture of the brain is seated the essence itself, as we may imagine, of the mind—the principle of *consciousness*; whether this be the "elementary principle" of Stewart, or the "momentary impression of sense or sensation" of Brown, or the "something differing from sensation" of Reid, or the "power of feeling that we differ from the matter around us" of some one else.

ASTR. Yet on this point, (if, indeed, such point be more than imaginary,) the whole phenomena of intellect must turn. But even if you can ever hope to determine this locality, it will be long, very long, ere the student of psychology will rise from his studies, with the triumphant exclamation, "Τελος!" ere he conclude his deepest researches, without the humiliating confession that his philosophy wears fetters.

Yet you consider our visions as one tissue of morbid phenomena; although there are myriads even of profane visions and warning legends, which bear the certain impress of a prophecy. I never listen to those who laugh at our interpretations, without remembering that melancholy story of a youth of Brescia, by Boccaccio, where Andreana, I think, is relating to her betrothed Gabriello, an ominous dream of the stars, and of a shadowy demon, which had made her sad and spiritless, and for which she had exiled her lover for a whole night from her bosom. The youth smiled in scorn of such a presage; but, in relating a dream of his own to illustrate their fallacy, fell dead from her enfolding arms.

For once I will grant you, merely for the sake of

argument, that there may be exaggeration in many a legend. I will even yield to your immolation the host of specious dreams in "Wanley's Wonders;" you may pass your anathema on the volumes of Glanville, and Moreton, and Aubrey, and Mather, and Berthogge, and Beaumont, as a tissue of imposture; call them, if you will —

"A prophet's or a poet's dream,
The priestcraft of a lying world."

I will ensconce myself snugly behind the *classic* shields, and ask you if the pages of Pliny, of Cicero, of Socrates, are mere legends of fiction or credulity; nay, if the books of mythology and oriental legends are not many of them founded on real events?

It is clear that there was ever implicit and extensive faith in the East; the definition of ον ειρω, *I speak the truth*, implies faith in a dream. The office of the oneirocritic was a profession. Amphyction was the first (according to Pliny) of the profane expositors, Hieronymus the most profuse interpreter, and Lysimachus, the grandson of Aristides, expounded dreams, for money, at the corners of the streets of Athens. The doors of Junianus Majus, the tutor of Sanagorius, and Alexander ab Alexandro, were besieged with dreamers in quest of expositions.

The Romans worshipped with divine honours Brizo, the goddess of dreams; and the Galeotæ, so named from Galei, a Hebrew word signifying to reveal, flourished in Sicily. So impressed were the Jews with the importance of the dream, that they convoked a tryad of friends, and went through certain ceremonies, (as writes Josephus in his twelfth book,) which they called the benefaction of a dream.

The orientals, the Greeks, and the Romans, then, were all confident in the truth of these omens. When

Nestor urges his army to battle because Agamemnon had dreamed of such a course, it is but a picture of the common mind of Greece. Indeed, on great emergencies, it was the custom to solicit the inspiration of the dream, by first performing religious rites, and then in the temple, (it may be of Esculapius or Serapis,) to lie down on the reeking skins of oxen or goats, sacrificed by the priests.

I may not hope, Evelyn, to convert or alarm you, or I would warn you of the penalty incurred by the slighting of a vision. You may read in Livy, that Jupiter imparted his displeasure at the punishment of a slave, during a solemn procession in the forum to Titus Antinius. But Titus scorned the vision; when, lo! his son was struck dead at his feet, and his own limbs were at once paralyzed. In a mood of penitence, he was borne on a couch to the senate, and after a public confession of his crime, his limbs immediately began to recover their energy, and he walked to his house unassisted, amidst the wonder of the people.

In Cicero's essay on "Divination," we read the story of two Arcadian travellers. On their arrival at Megara, these two friends slept in different houses. In the night a dream came to one of them: the phantom of his companion appeared to him, and imparted to him that his landlord was *about* to murder him. He awoke, and feeling assured that the idea was but a dream, fell quietly again to sleep; but then came over him a second dream, and again the phantom *was* in his chamber, and told him that the deed of blood was committed, that he was murdered: and in the morning he learned that the vision was prophetic, and told him truth.

But the records of antiquity teem with tales of fatal prognostics to heroes, kings, and emperors,

whose deaths, indeed, seldom took place without a prophecy. From Aristotle we learn that the death of Alexander was foretold in a dream of Eudemius, and that of Cæsar by his wife Calphurnia. The emperor Marius dreamed that he saw Attila's bow broken, and the Hun king died on the same night. And Sylla (according to Appian) died on the night succeeding that on which he dreamed of such a fate.

Valerius Maximus records the death of Caius Gracchus, immediately after a dream of it by his mother.

Caracalla (as we learn from Dion Cassius) foretold his own assassination in a dream.

Cyrus (writes Xenophon) dreamed of the exact moment in which he died.

And the death of Socrates was foretold to him in a dream, by a white lady, who quoted to him the 363rd line of Homer, in the ninth book.

Of remarkable events there are many strange forebodings; as the dream of Judas Maccabeus when about to engage the Syrian army; of Sylla before his engagement with Marius; of Germanicus on the night before his victory over Arminius (as Tacitus records); and of Masilienus, the general sent by the emperor Honorius to oppose Gildo, and regain the possession of Africa. To him St. Ambrose, the late bishop of Milan, appeared in a dream, and striking the ground at the scene of the vision thrice with his crozier, said, "Here and in this place;" and on the same spot, the following morning, Gildo was conquered by Masilienus. Such are a few of the *fatal* prophecies of old.

There are others of illustrious *births* in the olden time, of which I will recount a few.

Plutarch writes of the dream of Agariste, announcing the birth of her son Pericles.

Sabellus, of the dream of Accia, the mother of Augustus.

The splendid impostures, as I confess them, of Mahomet, were ushered in by a dream of Cadiga, that the sun entered her house, and that his beams illumined every building in Mecca.

In later days, the mother of Joan of Arc dreamed that she brought forth a thunderbolt; and Arlotte, the mother of the Conqueror, that her intestines covered the whole land of Normandy.

But I waive a host of ancient dreams, as those of Astyages, the last king of Media; Ertercules, and Antigonus, and Simonides, and others, for I study to be brief, and pass to the professors of more modern belief.

Of Pascal Paoli, Boswell, in his account of Corsica, thus writes:

"Having asked him one day, when some of his nobles were present, whether a mind so active as his was employed even in sleep, and if he used to dream much; Signor Casa Bianca said, with an air and tone which implied something of importance, 'Si, si sogna,' Yes, he dreams. And upon my asking him to explain his meaning, he told me that the general had often seen in his dreams what afterwards came to pass. Paoli confirmed this by several instances. Said he, 'I can give you no clear explanation of it,—I only tell you facts. Sometimes I have been mistaken, but in general these visions have proved true. I cannot say what may be the agency of invisible spirits; they certainly must know more than we do; and there is nothing absurd in supposing that God should permit them to communicate their knowledge to us.' "

In Walton's life of Sir Henry Wotton, we read that his kinsmen, Nicholas and Thomas Wotton (whose family, by the by, were celebrated for their

dreamings) had foretold their death most accurately.

In the beginning of the 18th century, a person in the west of England dreamed that his friend was on a journey with two men, whose persons were strongly pictured in his dream, and that he was robbed and murdered by these companions. It chanced that in a short time he was about to journey with two men, the *very prototypes* of his friend's dream. His earnest caution against this expedition so planned was slighted, and, on the spot marked in the dream, was this traveller robbed and murdered, and by the vivid description of the dreamer, the two men were identified and executed.

In other cases, the dream has been the means of retribution; for instance, by the discovery of a murderer. In "Baker's Chronicle" we read of the conviction of Anne Waters, for the murder of her husband, through the circumstantial dream of a friend.

I believe the fate of Corder was decided by a dream; and I may add, that Archbishop Laud dreamed himself that in his greatest pomp he should sink down to h—ll.

There is a chain of impressive visions, prophetic of the death of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, as if some little spirit were flitting to and fro on a special mission from the realm of shadows.

The sister of the duke, the Countess of Denbigh, dreamed she was with him in his coach, when the people gave a loud shout, and she was told it was a cry of joy at the dangerous illness of the duke. She had scarcely related her dream to one of her ladies, when the bishop of Ely came to tell her, her brother was murdered by the dagger of Felton. Shortly before this, a Scotch nobleman asked a seer from the Highlands what he thought of this Villiers, Duke of

Buckingham, then the court favourite: “He will come to naught,” said he, “for I see a dagger in his heart.”

But the most impressive presage were the visions of an officer of the wardrobe to the king, as related by the Earl of Clarendon and others. Parker had been an old *protegé* of Sir George Villiers, the duke’s father. On a certain night, in Windsor Castle, he saw, or dreamed of, an apparition of Sir George Villiers, who entreated him to warn his son not to follow the counsels of such and such persons, and to avert in every way the enmity of the people, as he valued his life. A second and a third night this vision was repeated, and at the last, the phantom drew a dagger from his gown, and said, “This will end my son, and do you, Parker, prepare for death.” On a hunting morning this vision was imparted to Buckingham, at Lambeth Bridge, and, after the chase, the duke was seen to ride, in a pensive mood, to his mother’s in Whitehall. The lady, at his departure, was found in an agony of tears, and when the story of the murder was told, she listened with an apathetic calmness, as if the brooding over the prophecy had half dulled her heart to the reality. Well, *the duke was murdered, and Parker soon after died.*

On that night when the Treasury of Oxford was broken open, Sir Thomas Wotton, then in Kent, dreamed circumstantially of the event, and, I believe, named and described the burglars.

A clergyman, whose name I forget, was once travelling far from his home, when he dreamed his house was on fire. He returned, and found his house a smoking ruin.

I may here cite a very curious dreaming, which, though not exactly fulfilled, displayed at least a strange coincidence in three minds. The mother of Mr. Joseph Taylor dreamed of the apparition of her

son, who came to take leave as he was going a long journey. She started, and said, “Dear son, thou art dead.” On the morrow, a letter came from his father, expressive of anxiety on account of this dream. The son instantly remembered his own dream, at the same hour, of having gone to his mother’s room to bid farewell.

There are many warning visions, which, being happily regarded, were blessed by the preservation of human life.

When our own Harvey was passing through Dover, on his continental travels, he was unexpectedly detained for a night by the order of the governor. On the next day, news came that the packet, in which Harvey was to have sailed, was lost in a storm; and then it came out, that his excellency had, on the night before his arrival, a phantom of the doctor passing before him, which besought him to detain *his substance* in Dover for a day.

Alderman Clay, of Newark, dreamed twice that his house was on fire. From the second dream, he was induced to quit with his family; and, soon afterwards, it was burned by the engines of Cromwell, which were bombarding the town. For this providential salvation, an annual sermon is preached, and bread given to the poor, in Newark.

The lady of Major Griffiths dreamed thrice of her nephew, Mr. D. The first vision imparted his intention of joining a party of his companions on a fishing excursion; the second, that his boat was sinking; the third, that it was actually sunk. At her entreaty, this gentleman was induced to remain on land; and, in the evening, it was learned, that his ill-fated friends had been all drowned, by the swamping of the boat.

CAST. I pr’ythee, Astrophel, draw not too largely

on our faith; reserve yourself for a struggle, for I see in the glance of Evelyn's eye, that he has taken up your glove.

MORAL CAUSES OF DREAMING.

> "I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was. Man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream."
>
> MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

EV. Listen,—it is my turn to speak.

Like confirmed insanity, the essence of the dream is usually *a want of balance between the representative faculty and the judgment*; being produced, directly or indirectly, by the excitement of a chain of ideas, rational or probable in parts, but rendered in different degrees extravagant, or illusive, by imperfect association,—as in the dream of the "Opium Eater:"—"The ladies of Charles I.'s age danced and looked as lovely as the court of George IV.; yet I knew, even in my dream, that they had been in the grave for nearly two centuries."

The relative complexity of these combinations includes the two divisions of dreams,—the *plain*, θεωρηματικοι; and the *allegorical*, or images presented in their own form, or by similitude.

If we grant that certain faculties or functions of the mind are the result of nervous influence, we can as readily allow that an *imperfection* of these manifestations shall be the result of derangement of equilibrium in this influence, as the *material* function of muscle shall be disturbed by primary or secondary disease about the brain; of which we have daily examples among the spasmodic and nervous diseases

of the body.

Referring to the calculation of Cabanis, on the falling to sleep of the senses, I can readily carry on this analogy to the faculties of mind. We may suppose that the faculty of judgment, as being the most important, is the first to feel fatigue, and to be influenced in the mode which I have alluded to by slumber. It is evident, then, that the other faculties, which are still awake, will be uncontrolled, and an *imperfect association* will be the result.

Thus the ideas of a dream may be considered as a species of delirium; for the figures and situations of both are often of the most heterogeneous description, and both are ever illusive, being believed to be realities, and not being subject to the control of our intellect. Yet, if the most absurd dream be *analyzed*, its constituent parts may consist either of ideas, in themselves not irrational, or of sensations or incidents which have been individually felt or witnessed.

So the remembered faces and forms of our absent friends, faithful though a part of the likeness may be, are associated with the grossest absurdity.

"Velut ægri somnia, vanæ
Fingentur species, ut nec pes nec caput uni
Reddatur formæ."

Or, as Dryden has written,—

"Dreams are but interludes which Fancy makes:
When monarch Reason sleeps, this mimic wakes;
Compounds a medley of disjointed things,
A mob of cobblers, and a court of kings.
Light fumes are merry, grosser fumes are sad,
Both are the reasonable soul run mad;
And many monstrous forms in sleep we see,
That neither were, nor are, nor e'er can be."

The little variations in the tissue of a dream are not *rectified* by judgment. So the vision may have led us to the very consummation of the highest hopes with love and beauty, and then, if an object even of degradation or deformity shall cross the dream, an association shall be formed imparting a feeling of loathing and horror.

You may take Hobbes' illustration, Astrophel, which you will probably prefer to mine. Hobbes says of the compositions of phantoms, "Water when moved at once by divers movements, receiveth one motion compounded of them all; so it is in the brain, or spirits stirred by divers objects; there is composed an imagination of divers conceptions that appeared single to the sense; as sense at one time showeth the figure of a mountain, at another of gold, and the imagination afterwards composes them into a golden mountain."

I believe Parkhurst also will tell you, that the Hebrew word for dream, refers to things *erroneously viewed* by the senses; for each may assume, individually, an intimate accordance with another, although the first and last appear perfectly incongruous, as the Chinese puzzle will be a chaos, if its pieces be wrongly placed; a *faulty rejoining*, in fact, of scenes and objects reduced to their constituent elements.

"I dreamed once," said Professor Maass, of Halle, "that the pope visited me. He commanded me to open my desk, and he carefully examined all the papers it contained. While he was thus employed, a very sparkling diamond fell out of his triple crown into my desk, of which, however, neither of us took any notice. As soon as the pope had withdrawn, I retired to bed, but was soon obliged to rise on account of a thick smoke, the cause of which I had

yet to learn. Upon examination, I discovered that the diamond had set fire to the papers in my desk, and burnt them to ashes."

This dream deserves a short analysis, on account of the peculiar circumstances which occasioned it. "On the preceding evening," continues Professor Maass, "I was visited by a friend, with whom I had a lively conversation upon Joseph II.'s suppression of monasteries and convents. With this idea, though I did not become conscious of it in the dream, was associated the visit which the pope publicly paid the emperor Joseph at Vienna, in consequence of the measures taken against the clergy; and, with this again was combined, however faintly, the representation of the visit which had been paid me by my friend. These two events were by the subreasoning faculty compounded into one, according to the established rule—that things which agree in their parts, also correspond as to the whole; hence the pope's visit was changed into a visit paid to me. The subreasoning faculty, then, in order to account for this extraordinary visit, fixed upon that which was the most important object in my room, namely, the desk, or rather the papers it contained. That a diamond fell out of the triple crown, was a collateral association, which was owing merely to the representation of the desk. Some days before, when opening the desk, I had broken the glass of my watch, which I held in my hand, and the fragments fell among the papers; hence no farther attention was paid to the diamond, being a representation of a collateral series of things. But afterwards, the representation of the sparkling stone was again excited, and became the prevailing idea; hence it determined the succeeding association. On account of its similarity, it excited the representation of fire,

with which it was confounded; hence arose fire and smoke. But, in the event, the writings only were burnt, not the desk itself, to which, being of comparatively less value, the attention was not at all directed."

Impressions of memory may not perhaps appear consistent with imagination, but, on the principle I have advanced, it will be found that, although the idea excited by memory be consistent, these ideas may, by fanciful association, become imagination; appearing, on superficial view, to illustrate the doctrine of innate idea. But is this doctrine proved? We may seem to imagine that which we do not remember, *as a whole*; but, as a curve is made up of right lines,—as a mass is composed of an infinity of atoms,—so may it follow, that what is termed "innate idea," if minutely divided, may be *proved* to arise from memory; made up of things, however minute, which we have *seen or heard of*. Analysis may thus unravel many a "strange mysterious dream."

IDA. I have ever believed that there were incidents recorded, which left no doubt of the truth of innate idealism. Dr. Beattie has observed: "Men born blind, or who have lost all remembrance of light and colours, are as capable of invention, and dream as frequently, as those who see."

EV. These, fair lady, are surely very imperfect data. If a person loses remembrance of *individual* colour, he does not lose the power of comparing or of judging *variety* of colour. And, again, although he may be congenitally blind, yet if there be any *other sense* but sight, through which the mind can perceive or receive external impression, the objection must fail.

There are very strange communities of the senses,

which you may smile at, yet are they perfectly true.

Dr. Blacklock, (who was very early in life struck blind,) expressed his ideas of colour, by referring to a peculiar sound, the two being as it were *synonymous* to him. And he fancied also, in his dreaming, that he was connected to other bodies by myriads of threads or rays of feeling.

I may assure you, too, that on the loss of any one sense, the subsequent dreams, after a lapse of time, will not be referred to *that* sense.

Dr. Darwin will supply you with very illustrative instances of this; from which you will learn, that after blindness had afflicted certain persons, they never dreamed that they *saw* objects in their sleep: and a deaf gentleman, who had talked with his fingers for thirty years, invariably dreamed also of *finger-speaking*, and never alluded to any dreaming of friends having *orally* conversed with him.

ASTR. I believe that a black colour was disagreeable to Cheselden's blind boy, *from the moment he saw it.*

EV. Because, from certain laws of refraction, the effect was instantly *painful* to his eye.

ASTR. I remember, Sir Walter Scott, in his "Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft," informs us that "those experienced in the education of the deaf and dumb find that their pupils, even *cut off from all instruction* by ordinary means, have been able to form, out of their own *unassisted* conjectures, some ideas of the existence of a Deity, and of the distinction between the soul and body."

EV. And do you not see, dear Astrophel, the dilemma of this argument? Before the deaf and dumb pupil can adopt a language, by which to make his preceptor sensible of his thoughts or sentiments, he must have had certain facts or knowledge imparted

to *him*, by *signs* or other modes of instruction. The modes of mutual understanding must first emanate from the tutor, and with these ideas may be excited, which, at first sight, may seem to be innate or *unassisted*.

Believe not that I deny a moral consciousness of the existence of the Deity and of our immortality; but how can we *prove* it, in those who have no sense to explain it?

If it were possible to find a creature so wretched as to be endued with no external sense from his birth, such a being would neither dream nor think; he would lead the life almost of a zoophyte, ceasing, of course, to be a responsible agent!

Caspar Hauser never dreamed, till he slept at Professor Daunay's, and had been introduced to intellectual society, and been *taught*; and then, even, he could not comprehend the *nature* of his dreams.

The arguments in the "Phædo" of Plato point to this truth, that the *germ* of all ideas is *sown* in the mind by the *senses*. So, also, the metaphysics of Kant teach that the senses are feelers or conductors, by which we obtain materials of our knowledge; and indeed that matter and sensation are synonymous; that matter exists *à priori* in the mind. This was the belief of Coleridge, that there can be nothing fancied in our dreams, without an *antecedent quasi cause*, a Roman having written, before him, the same sentiment: —

"Nihil in *intellectu*, quod non prius in *sensu*."

Remember still that this philosophy is apart from revelation.

I am aware that among the deaf and dumb high moral sentiments may exist. But if they can read essays, these sentiments may be imbibed in their

reading. And yet a very learned lord has asserted, that a being, doomed to absolute solitude and estrangement from his very birth, could discover the principles of algebra! At this sophism, oh shade of Epictetus! thou mightest rise, to vindicate the importance of our beautiful senses; of the eye, beyond all, that achromatic globe of brightest crystal, the contemplation of which first convinced thee of *design* in the Creator, and prompted thee to pen the first "Bridgewater Treatise."

On the opening, or even the restoration of a sense, in this forlorn "plant animal," all his associations would be erroneous. He would, at first, *see double*; he would, like children, consider all bodies, however distant, within his grasp; and, like the idiot, draw all his figures *topsy-turvy*, as they are really painted on the retina, until judgment and practice rectified his error.

I do not reason hypothetically, for these truths were illustrated in the youth whose pupils were opened by the operation of Cheselden.

There are romantic stories, not foreign to this subject, in which the creation of a Caliban is almost a truth; and which exemplify to us the accordance of nature with habit and circumstance, and the dearth of mind when deprived of the light of instruction.

I allude to those unhappy creatures who, with the form and organs of man, have run wild in the woods, and fed on husks, and berries, and herded with the brute. We have some very curious histories of these beings, especially in the 17th and 18th centuries. Two were discovered in the Forest of Lithuania; one in the Forest of Yuary, in the Pyrenees, by M. Le Roy; two wild girls by a nobleman, near Chalons, in Champagne; and Peter the wild boy, found by the escort of George I. in the woods of Hertswold, in

Hanover. In these cases disease *might have been* discovered; yet the effect of partial civilization, even in minute points, indicates some power of *acquiring* ideas not congenital.

But as to these dreaming flights of the spirit of good Sir Thomas Brown, I may confess, Astrophel, that you have some poets and metaphysicians, and even a few philosophers, on your side. You may read in Plato's "Phædo," that "the body is the prison of the soul; that the soul, when it came from God, knew all; but, inclosed in the body, it forgets and learns anew." And in Seneca:

"Corpus hoc animi pondus est."

And in Petronius:

"——Cum prostrata sopore,
Urget membra quies, et mens sine pondere ludit."

This sentiment Addison has very readily adopted; prating about "the amusements of the soul when she is disencumbered of her machine," and so forth. And yet Addison, I remember, thus qualifies his creed: —"I do not suppose that the soul, in these instances, is entirely loose and unfettered from the body; it is sufficient if she is not so far sunk and immersed in matter, nor entangled and perplexed in her operations, with such motions of blood and spirits, as when she actuates the machine in its waking hours. The corporeal union is slackened enough to give the mind more play," &c.

In this conceit, deficient both in philosophy and psychology, you perceive the speculator draws in his horns, and concludes with that which *means nothing*. It is, indeed, a mere compromise; an endeavour to extricate from their perilous dilemma the

metaphysical pathologists who talk so fluently of the *diseases* of the immaterial mind, forgetful, it would seem, of this truth—*that* which is diseased may die; a consummation which would undermine the Christian faith, and blight the holiest hope of man—the prospect of immortality.

And yet my Astrophel will lean to the vagaries of our pseudo-psychologists, who believed the dream to be the flight of the soul on a visit to other regions; and its observation of their nature and systems from *actual survey*. Of the fruits of this ethereal voyage the dreamer, I presume, is made conscious when the soul returns to the brain, its earthly pabulum or home. Were this so, it should enjoy visions of unalloyed beatitude; and even were there a limit to its excursions, a thing so pure and perfect would select angelic communion only. I do not aver that such things *are not*, but that we *cannot know it here*. We have no satisfactory remembrance of cities and temples thus surveyed, more gorgeous than the waking conceptions of the thousand and one nights; or the legends of the genii; no wonders or eccentricities which eclipse the exploits of Gulliver, Peter Wilkins, Friar Bacon, or Baron Munchausen.

Lavater carries out this caprice, by a very fine metaphysical thought, to illustrate the night-apparition. That it is their "transportive or imaginative faculty that causes others to appear to us in our dreams." And I myself was once gravely told by a visionary, that he dreamed, one night, of a certain old woman; and *she* afterwards told *him*, that she dreamed she was, on that very night, *in his chamber*. So, you perceive, her imago, or material thought, entered into his mind, and caused his dream.

Is not this sublime?

Now it is clear that these illusions cannot tend to advance the dignity of mind. Nothing can be more convincing to prove a suspension of judgment. Remember that during this life,—the incorporation of the soul,—we are conscious of it *only through the brain*. It is not yet emancipated; and it is an error to think, because sometimes we have a brilliant vision, that *therefore*, if the body were more inactive, the soul would be more ethereal.

ASTR. And yet we are assured that Alexander, and Voltaire, and La Fontaine, and Condillac, and Tartini, and Franklin, and Mackenzie, and Coleridge, were wont to compose plans of battles, and problems, and poems, in their *dreams*, with a degree of vigour and facility, far exceeding their waking studies.

EV. This very facility proves that there was association from memory, without volition or effort; the mind being in a state of *reverie*, and the senses quiescent. In this consists the vivid and delightful visions lighted up by our memory in slumber, especially when there is darkness and silence, so that there is no perception; or when the mind is concentrated, and has been reposing, so that its fancy is a novelty.

But this identifying, by Sir Thomas Brown, of reason and fancy, is itself a proof of error. The energy of the first is exercised on *data* or *facts*; that of the second, in mere *hypothetic* amusement.

It were indeed much better that we established either the material hypothesis of Priestley, or his antipodes, Berkeley,—that nature was but a compound of spirits, ideas unfettered by matter; or the visionary scheme of Hume (borrowed indeed from the Hindoo philosopher, Abul Fazel), that there is nought but impression and idea in nature; or even the absolute scepticism of Pyrrho;—than that we

should favour the rhapsody of Brown, that the consciousness of *waking* moments should thus deteriorate reason, and render the mind incompatible with sublunary duties.

CAST. Coleridge, I believe, was so impressed with his own dreaming compositions, that he said, "the dullest wight might be a Shakspere in his dreams." What may he deserve for such presumption?

EV. Coleridge was an opium-eater, and the whole intellectual life of this mighty metaphysician was a dream. And you may forget that Coleridge was *already* a poet, and reasons thus from impressions in his *own* visions, during the elysium of his anodyne. But the *contrasted* feelings of Coleridge's nights at once confirm the monomania of his dreaming; and if you read his "Pains of Sleep," Castaly, you will not deem them a *slight* penalty, even for his libel on your sweet Shakspere.

But the conclusions of three sage grave men on this subject will impress your belief more than mine. The mentor of Rasselas, Johnson himself, speaks by the lips of Imlac. —

"All power of Fancy over Reason is a degree of insanity. By degrees, the reign of Fancy is confirmed; she grows first imperious, and in time despotic. Then fictions begin to operate as realities, false opinions fasten upon the mind, and life passes in dreams of rapture, or of anguish."

And so convinced was the learned Boërhave of this, that he even held imagination and judgment to have different localities, because *this* influenced the mind *asleep*, and *that, awake*.

And *why*, Astrophel, dream we of strange things? Because we cannot *compare* illusion with reality. So we may reverse the doctrine of Pyrrho (who doubted his own existence), and imagine ourselves possessed

of ubiquity. We may fancy we are both old and young at the same moment, nay, that we *are* and *are not*; possess the hundred eyes of Argus, or the hundred arms of Briareus; that Zoroaster, and Virgil, and Shakspere, and ourselves, are co-existent. Indeed, our thoughts and actions are all modelled on a principle of paradox,—as wild even as the visions in the "Confessions of an Opium-Eater."

Then turn to the words of Marmontel, which identify the wanderings of a dream with the flitting fancies of a mind prostrate from the effect of disorder. These words were written under *extreme indisposition*: —

"I was reduced so low, that I could read nothing but the Arabian Nights' Entertainments; and it is extraordinary that often, while every other faculty, judgment, the will, association, perfection, even the memory itself, is in a state of almost total re-action, this volatile thing, imagination, should be the most robust and active; it seems to rejoice at the release from companionship with its fellows, and darts off on seraph-wings, rambles through all space, visits all places, turning, and tossing, and jostling all things in its progress, or conjoining them in the most grotesque shapes. The imagination in *madmen* is often of this description; and there may be

> "A pleasure in madness, that none but madmen know."

Then we may dream *ourselves* to be *others*,—an ideal transmigration; this is error. We wake to a sense of our own reality; this is truth.

CAST. Yet this truth may be often withheld by potent impression, as in the illusion of Rip Van Winkle, and the trances of Nourjahad. I believe the waking mind of Caspar Hauser knew not the

difference between dream and reality; he related his dream as *fact*.

EV. If there were ever such a being as Caspar Hauser, his *life* was a *dream*; for, without the culture of his mind, he would be reasonless.

ANACHRONISM AND COINCIDENCE OF DREAMS.

"*Rom.* I dreamt a dream to night.
Merc. And so did I.
Rom. Well, what was yours?
Merc. That dreamers often lie."
ROMEO AND JULIET.

ASTR. Then we are to learn that the mind is ever *imperfect* in a dream. But, Evelyn, is not that rather perfection, which magnifies space and time a million-fold, completing the labours of years in a second? The time occupied with the dream must be limited, often far short of the seeming duration of a scene. Like the wonderful velocity of atoms of light, the crude and heterogeneous ideas succeed each other with incalculable rapidity. We appear to have travelled over a series of miles, or to have existed for a series of years, during a very minute portion of the night,—how minute it is perhaps impossible to determine. I believe it is the Opium-Eater, still, who thus confesses:—"I sometimes seemed to have lived for seventy or a hundred years, in one night; nay, sometimes, had feelings representative of a millennium passed in that time, or however of a duration far beyond the limits of any human experience."

This may be, as your smile implies, the dream of

opium madness; but let this dream of Lavalette, also, prove some truth in my illustration.

The count, during his confinement, had a frightful dream, which he thus relates: “One night, while I was asleep, the clock of the Palais de Justice struck twelve, and awoke me. I heard the gate open to relieve the sentry, but I fell asleep again immediately. In this sleep I dreamed that I was standing in the Rue St. Honoré, at the corner of the Rue de l’Echelle. A melancholy darkness spread around me; all was still. Nevertheless a low and uncertain sound soon arose. All of a sudden I perceived, at the bottom of the street, and advancing towards me, a troop of cavalry; the men and horses, however, all flayed. The men held torches in their hands, the flames of which illumined faces without skin, and with bloody muscles. Their hollow eyes rolled fearfully in their large sockets; their mouths opened from ear to ear, and helmets of hanging flesh covered their hideous heads. The horses dragged along their own skins in the kennels, which overflowed with blood on both sides. Pale and dishevelled women appeared and disappeared alternately at the windows in dismal silence; low inarticulate groans filled the air, and I remained in the street alone, petrified with horror and deprived of strength sufficient to seek my safety by flight. This horrible troop continued passing in rapid gallop, and casting frightful looks on me. Their march, I thought, continued for five hours, and they were followed by an immense number of artillery waggons, full of bleeding corpses, whose limbs still quivered. A disgusting smell of blood and bitumen almost choked me. At length the iron gate of the prison, shutting with great force, awoke me again. I made my repeater strike,—it was no more than midnight, so

that the horrible phantasmagoria had lasted no more than *ten minutes*; that is to say, the time necessary for relieving the sentry and shutting the gate. The cold was severe and the watchword short. The next day the turnkey confirmed my calculations. I nevertheless do not remember one single event in my life, the duration of which I have been able more exactly to calculate."

CAST. You are modest, Astrophel. Think of the wonders of fairyland. Our dainty Ariel will "place a girdle round the world in forty minutes." And, even more wonderful still, I have read, in the "Arabian Tales," of a monarch who immersed his head in a water bucket, and imagined he had in one minute traversed a space of infinite extent; and (though perchance I should crave pardon for any thing Evelyn may term an imputed miracle, or imposture, yet) for a moment listen to that exquisite passage in the "Spectator," which Addison pretends to have gathered from the Koran, although I believe there is in that book no such story. "The angel Gabriel took Mahomet out of his bed one morning to give him a sight of all things in the seven heavens, in paradise, and in hell, which the prophet took a distinct view of, and after having held ninety thousand conferences with God, was brought back again to his bed. All this was transacted in so small a space of time that Mahomet, at his return, found his bed still warm, and took up an earthen pitcher, which was thrown down at the very instant that the angel Gabriel carried him away, *before the water was all spilt*."

EV. If all the circumstances of these dreams were rational, I might agree with you, Astrophel; but the ideas are irrational which *so far* outstrip the facts of our experience; except in *their* estimation who, like

the Hibernian, would value their watch because it went *faster than the sun*. Now the extent of velocity in the ideas of *insane* minds is equally extreme; and, when these anachronisms occur in dreams, the ideas are, I believe, ever false. Deeply interesting, however, are tales of such curiosities of dreaming, as those which the two Scottish physicians, Abercrombie and Gregory, have recorded.

"A gentleman dreamed that he had enlisted as a soldier; that he had joined his regiment; that he had deserted; was apprehended and carried back to his regiment: that he was tried by the court-martial, condemned to be shot, and was led out for execution. At the moment of the completion of these ceremonies, the guns of the platoon were fired, and at the report he awoke. It was clear that a loud noise, in the adjoining room, had both produced the dream and, almost at the moment, awoke the dreamer."

There was another gentleman who for some time, after sleeping in the damp, suffered a sense of suffocation when slumbering in a recumbent position; and a dream would then come over him, as of a skeleton which grasped him firmly by the throat. This dream became at length so distressing, that sleep was to him no blessing, but a state of torture; and he had a centinel posted by his couch, with orders to awake his master when slumber seemed to be stealing o'er him. One night, ere he was awakened, he was attacked by the skeleton, and a long and severe conflict ensued. When fully awake, he remonstrated with the watcher for allowing him to remain *so long* in his dream, and, to his astonishment, learned that his dream had been *momentary*, and that he was awoke *on the instant* that he had begun to slumber.

But granting your notions of dreaming

perfections, Astrophel, there are, to a certain extent, even here, *analogies*. You forget that in our waking moments our ideas are often so fleet as to be profitless to our judgment; and why not in a dream? In the estimation of distance, with what velocity the train of reasoning passes through the mind! Ere we have formed our notions of an object, how instantaneous our reflections on all its qualities—its brilliancy of colour, its apparent magnitude, its form, &c., and the angle of inclination in regard to the axis of the eye; and our conclusions (for judgment is awake) are echoes of the truth. But *in the dream* is it so? No. We get the idea (as Mr. Locke has written) of time or duration by reflecting on that train of ideas which succeed each other in the mind. In waking hours the judgment clearly regulates this; but in dreams this course of reflection is *impeded*, and the measurement of time is imperfect and erroneous, so that it is the common characteristic of a dream, that there is *no idea of time*; the past and the future are equally present.

Start not, if to strengthen this my illustration, I lead you again into the mad-house; again unconsciously combine a dream with insanity, in quoting these expressions of the Rev. Robert Hall (from "Green's Reminiscences"), in allusion to his first attack of mania. "All my imagination has been overstretched. You, with the rest of my friends, tell me that I was only seven *weeks* in confinement, and the date of the year corresponds, so that I am bound to believe you, but they have appeared to me like seven *years*. My mind was so excited, and my imagination so lively and active, that more ideas passed through my mind during those seven weeks than in any seven years of my life. Whatever I had obtained from reading or reflection was *present to*

me."

IDA. The apparent anachronism of such dreams, Evelyn, refers to *imperfect* function. Yet he will remember we are reasoning as *finite beings*. True, Malebranche has asserted, that "it is possible some creatures may think half an hour as long as we do a thousand years, or look upon that space of duration which we call a minute, as an hour, a week, a month, or a whole age. But in regard to the prospect of futurity, of a more perfect state, who of us can decide that this seeming illusion is not one evidence of the divine nature of mind; a remote resemblance, if I may presume so to say, of one attribute of the Creator, to whom a thousand years are as one day?"

I have learned from your own theory, Evelyn, that mind is either imperfect or passive in the dream. Does not this passive condition itself imply inspiration? For is not that, in which are produced *results*, while itself is *inactive*, under the special influence of some high power, as were the visions of the holy records?

Although I may not yield my entire belief in the fallacy of modern inspiration because it is not *proved*, yet I have not listened to your learning, Evelyn, without some leaning to the apparent truth of your dissertations. I might hesitate to confess myself your pupil; still, the incidents you have adduced will make me pause, ere I again blend profane arguments with the truths of holy writ. Yet I cannot yield the feeling, that the dream is an *emblem*, at least, of immortality.

As a beautiful illustration of such philosophy, I remember (in Fulgosius) a legend told by Saint Austin to Enodius: —

There was a physician of Carthage, who was a sceptic regarding immortality and the soul's separate existence. It chanced one night that Genadius dreamt

of a beautiful city. On the second night, the youth who had been his guide reappeared, and asked if Genadius remembered him; he answered, yes, and also his dream. 'And where,' said the apparition, 'were you then lying?' 'In my bed, sleeping.' 'And if your mind's eye, Genadius, surveyed a city, even while your body slept, may not this pure and active spirit still live, and observe, and remember, even though the body may be shapeless or decayed within its sepulchre?'

The dreams of Scripture, those "thoughts from the visions of night, when deep sleep came upon men," were associated with the mission of an angel, or immediate communion with the Deity. For He has said, in the twelfth of Numbers, that he would "speak to his prophets in a dream:" from the first and self-interpreting dream of Abimelech, the visions interpreted by the inspired propounder Joseph, the first dream of the New Testament, the fulfilment of the Annunciation, the impressive trance of Peter, in coincidence with the visions of the centurion, even to the holy visions of the Apocalypse.

Indeed, the surpassing evidence and truth in all, but especially in the inspired interpretation of Joseph of the dream of Pharaoh, and those of the still *more* inspired oneirocritic, Daniel, cannot be compared with aught profane.

The prophet not only *expounded*, but *reminded* Nebuchadnezzar of his dream, when he himself had forgotten it. This was the result of special prayer to the Deity; and, remember, without this, the Chaldeans failed in their efforts. Even Josephus informs us, that Daniel "foretold good things and pleased, so that he was deemed divine." And you have read, that Saul also prayed for a dream, but HE *dreamt not*, because he was not holy. And there are

holy precepts regarding dreams, which are recorded to curb our superstitious reliance on *all*. We have assurances of true dreamers in the first chapter of Matthew, the second of the Acts, in Deuteronomy, and the thirty-fourth of Ecclesiasticus; the language of the son of Sirach was, that "*common* dreams only serve to lift up fools." With these reservations, I do believe that the real inspiration of a spirit is the gift only of the holy and the good; so that the presumption of divination and prophecy by *profane* dreamers is an illusion; yet, I acknowledge with John Wesley, that many have been converted by a dreaming conscience; as we read of impressive dreams, which have effected the conversion of others by the mere recital. Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, was a sceptic; but, as we are informed by Burnet in his "Life and Death," his mind was first led to the conviction of an immaterial spirit, by the prophetic dream of his mother, the Lady de la Warre, foreboding truly his own death.

And I must ever admire the moral wisdom of Zeno, which (according to Plutarch) induced him to regard a dream as the test of virtue; for, if in his dream his heart did not *recoil* from vicious suggestions, there was an immediate necessity of self-examination and repentance. I cannot forbear adding, that there is much wisdom in the estimation of his vision, by one of the shepherd kings of Egypt, Sabaco. He dreamed that the tutelary deity of Thebes enjoined him to kill the priests of Egypt, and, for this unmerciful injunction from the gods, that *they deemed him unfit for the throne*, he went into self-exile, to Æthiopia.

Ev. The conclusions of these moralists from dreaming impressions were somewhat straightlaced: yet *your* reflections, Ida, point to the safest mode by

which we may reconcile the conflict of the divine and the physiologist, and, above all, evince our devotion to the Creator; namely, to argue on creation as we *see it*, and on revelation as we *see it recorded*.

Yet, with a mock solemnity, dreams and apparitions have been first adduced as proofs of the soul's immortality; and then, in the same argument, are themselves proved *by* this immortality; the points of the syllogism are reversed, and we have *petitio principii*, a begging of the question.

This hypothesis of dreaming has formed the basis of certain religious impostures. Among others, of Dubricius and Comedius; and, above all, the fanatical visions of Emanuel Swedenborg, who founded his especial sect, by the declaration of having visited Paradise.

In our analysis of revelation, the conflict of two powerful minds might, on doctrinal points, attack, and in the end annihilate, the faith of each, in their struggle for the victory; which may remind you of the murders both of Protestants and Papists, especially in Ireland, resulting from the wild excitement of fanaticism and bigotry; and the persecutions which have, as history records, sprung from debates on holy subjects. Remember the martyrdom of the amiable and beautiful Anne Ascue, who was burnt at the stake for dissenting from the theological tenets of Henry VIII., regarding the real presence. On the rack, her silence was a model of heroism, for she might have impeached the queen and her ladies; and Wriothesly, the chancellor, it is said, in his rage to extort the secret, *himself* stretched the wheel, so as almost to tear her body asunder.

And then the blasphemy of that convocation, summoned in the reign of Mary Tudor, to renew the discussion on that sacred point of transubstantiation,

between the Protestants and the Romanists;—but I leave this topic to the mild theologian, who will confess it would have withheld a stain from the page of history, had these mock religionists acknowledged, with the pious Pascal, that "the sublime truths of our religion and the essence of the immortal spirit are inexplicable by the deepest research of wisdom, and are unfolded only by the inspired light of revelation."

Now it was clear that the dreams of the classic poets were not *all* truly prophetic; and in accordance with this are their delineations of the house of sleep. Indeed we may almost fancy, for a moment, that there might be some reality in these poetical surveyors, until we reflect that the Roman notions were plagiaries from the Greeks.

It is true, the locality of this Palace of Somnus, like the site of Troy, is not a little diversified by Homer and the rest; but, whether it be Lemnos, or Æthiopia, or Cimmeria, these are its descriptions:

First, of Homer,—

"Immur'd within the silent bower of sleep,
Two portals firm the various phantoms keep:
Of iv'ry one, whence flit, to mock the brain,
Of winged lies a light fantastic train.
The gate oppos'd, pellucid valves adorn,
And columns fair incased with polish'd horn;
Where images of truth for passage wait,
With visions manifest of future fate."

And Virgil's is a close copy.

In the "City of Dreams," of Lucian, the blasphemer (whose beauties are stained by their impieties), these eternal gates are again alluded to. But the dreams in this city are all deceivers; for when a mortal enters the gates, a circle of domestic dreams

in a moment unfold to him a budget of intelligence, which proves to be a tissue of lies.

Tertullian, and many others, have argued the notion of a *special purpose* of the Deity in *every dream*. And the "New Moral World" of the visionary Owen, asserts, that "one chief source of our knowledge is dreams and omens."

In the eras of inspiration, few will be sceptical enough to doubt the occurrence of divine mediations; or not to believe, with Socrates, and other sages, in the divine origin of dreams and omens.

The evidence of Holy Scripture again proves the *occasion*, indeed the *necessity*, for such communication; but, in our own time, I deem it little less than profaneness, to imagine that the Deity should indicate the future occurrence of common-place and trivial incidents through the medium of an organ, confessedly in a state of *imperfection*, at the moment when the faculties of mind are returning from a state of temporary suspension,—a death-like sleep.

Even John Wesley believed dreams to be "*doubtful* and *disputable*;" and adds, with a half-profanation,—"they *might* be from God, or might not."

The Emperor Constantine, you know, denounced death to all who dared to look seriously into the secrets of futurity.

When we reflect that the proportion of events, seemingly the fulfilment of a dream, is to the myriads of forebodings which never come to pass (as the dreams recorded with some solemnity by Herodotus, of Alcibiades; of Crœsus, regarding his son Atys; of Astyages and the vine; of Cambyses, respecting Smerdis; and of Hamilcar, at the siege of

Syracusa;) as a drop in the ocean, the fallacy of the doctrine must be evident. I marvel much that credulity, in this reflecting age, can gain a single proselyte.

The magi of Persia and the soothsayers of Greece and Rome were *constantly in error*; and Artemidorus Miraldus, who in the reign of Antoninus wrote his voluminous book "Oneirocriticus," has given us the most ridiculous interpretations.

When the pagan priesthood of old lay down on the reeking skins of their victims to rouse the inspiration of their dreams, it was to cheat their proselytes. Such were the mummeries in the Temple of Æsculapius. The devotees were first purified by the "lustral water;" and then divine visions came over them, and priestesses in snowy robes, and a venerable priest in the habit of Æsculapius, paraded round the altar, and the charm was complete.

You may learn from Martin something about the modern influence of such a charm.

"Mr. Alexander Cooper, present minister of North-uist, told me that one John Erach, in the Isle of Lewis, assured him that it was his fate to have been led by his curiosity to some who consulted this oracle, and that he was a night within the hide as above mentioned, during which time he felt and heard such terrible things that he could not express them; the impression it made on him was such as could never go off, and he said for a thousand worlds he would never again be concerned in the like performance, for this had disordered him to a high degree. He confessed it ingenuously and with an air of great remorse, and seemed to be very penitent under a just sense of so great a crime: he declared this about five years since, and is still living in the Lewis for any thing I know."

In imitation of this spell for the divine inspiration of a dream, the modern Franciscans, after the ceremony of mass, throw themselves on mats already consecrated by the slumber of some holy visionary, and with all this foolery, they vaunt the divine inspiration of *their* dream.

Cicero, and Theophrastus, and many other sages, were sceptical of these special visitations, and explained *rationally* dreams and divinations, as Cicero his dream at Ætina, on his flight from Rome.

Then there is this anathema of Ennius: —

"Augurs, and soothsayers, astrologers, diviners, and interpreters of dreams I never consult, and despise their vain pretence to more than human skill." And also this caution bequeathed to you by Epictetus: "Never tell thy dream; for though thou thyself mayest take a pleasure in telling thy dream, another will take no pleasure in hearing it."

ASTR. Epictetus was himself a dreamer in this; for the story of a dream is ever listened to with interest. And what would Epictetus think, were I to tell him that broad lands and mitres have been gained before now by the shrewd *putting of a dream*?

EV. I confess, as in the illusion of phantoms, there are records of very strange coincidences in dreaming, which may be startling to many superficial minds.

Pereskius, the friend of Gassiendi, after a severe fever, in 1609, was engaged in the study of ancient coins, weights, and measures. One night, he dreamed he met a goldsmith at Nismes, who offered him a coin of Julius Cæsar for four *cardecues*. The next day this incident was repeated to him *in reality*. But *he* was a philosopher, and deemed it, as it was, but a rare coincidence.

There were two sisters, who (as a learned physician has recorded) were sleeping together

during the illness of their brother. One of these ladies dreamed that her watch, an old family relic, had stopped, and, on waking her sister to tell of this, she was answered by her thus: "Alas! I have worse to tell you: *our brother's breath is also stopped*." On the following night, the same dream was repeated to the young lady. On the morning after this second dream, the lady, on taking out the watch, which had been perfect in its movement, observed that it had indeed stopped, and at the same moment she heard her sister screaming; the brother, who had been till then apparently recovering, had just *breathed his last*.

These are sequences, and not *con*sequences: and I might adduce a mass of these mere coincidences, which have been stretched and warped, to make up a prophecy. Such as the following legend of Sergius Galba, told by Fulgosius: "Galba had coquetted with two marble ladies,—the Fortune, at Tusculum, and the Capitoline Venus; and, to adorn the neck of the first, he had purchased a brilliant diamond necklace. But the charms of the Venus of the Capitol prevailed over her rival, and the necklace was at length presented to the goddess of beauty. At night, the form of Fortune appeared to him in his sleep, upbraiding him with his falsehood, and telling him that he should be deprived of all the gifts she had lavished on him, and Galba, as the story goes, soon after died."

But, if dreams are essentially prophetic, why are they not *all* fulfilled? and if *one* is not fulfilled, how know we if *all* will not be equally fallacious? The argument for the prophetic nature is merely *à posteriori*, the shallow "post *hoc*, *ergo* propter *hoc*," of the sophist. On the occurrence of any important event, all the auguries and dreams which bear the slightest semblance to a prophecy are immediately

adduced, and stretched and warped *to suit* the superstition; as the whimsical mother will account for the marks on her child by frights and longings. When we know that myriads of enthusiasts and hypochondriacs have, by the failure of their predictions, deserved the stigma of false prophets, we may surely class these phantasies among the popular *errors* of the time.

Yet the fulfilment of a prophecy *may be* consequence; and that without the imputation of falsehood or imposition, or of any special interference. (I am not recanting my opinions, Astrophel.)

1st. Through the effect of an *imparted impetus*.

2nd. *Foresight*, from the study of events and character.

3rd. Constant *thinking* on one subject.

4th. *Impressions* of terror or alarm, from spectres, sybils, &c.

As there are dreams from impressions on the body during sleep, so are there diseased tissues in the brain, which light up phantoms of terror and death perfectly prophetic. But wherefore so? Merely because they are *induced* by that disease which usually terminates *in* death. Such were the dreams during the nightmare which preceded, and, I believe, still precede, the epidemic fevers in Rome, and in those of Leyden, in 1669, when the patient fell asleep, and was attacked by *incubus* before each exacerbation. The *impersonation of death* was the prevailing phantom of their dream, and in reality death soon followed.

Among those heathen tribes, where superstition and ignorance form part of a national creed, there is a degree of blindness and inconsistency that may truly be termed *mania*. It is the doctrine, not of

prophecy, but of debased and absolute fatalism. The North American Indians not only regard the dream as prophetic, but often receive it as a solemn injunction, and are themselves the active agents in its fulfilment. "In whatever manner," says Charlevoix, "the dream is conceived, it is always looked upon as a thing sacred, and as the most ordinary way in which the gods make known their will to men. Filled with this idea, they cannot conceive how we should pay no regard to them. For the most part they look upon them either as a desire of the soul, inspired by some genius, or an order from him, and, in consequence of this principle, they hold it a religious duty to obey them. An Indian, having dreamt of the amputation of his finger, had it really cut off as soon as he awoke, first preparing himself for this important action by a feast!"

Among more enlightened people there may be an inducement to action from the impression of a dream; here, also, the consequence is the fulfilment of the prophecy. Such, Astrophel, were the dreams of Arlotte and Cadiga; of Judas Maccabæus; of Sylla; of Germanicus; and of Masulenius; and the dream of the priestess of Proserpine, on the eve of Timoleon's expedition from Corinth to Syracuse, that Ceres volunteered to be his travelling companion into Sicily. The dream of Olympia, that she was with child of a dragon, might both have suggested the mode of education, and incited the warlike spirit of Alexander.

We know that the city of Carthage was rebuilt by Augustus Cæsar, in consequence of the dream of his uncle Julius.

And we read in the travels of Herbert, that Cangius, the blacksmith of Mount Taurus, aspired to, and gained dominion over the Tartars from a similar

influence, and from his name has the title of “Chan” been since conferred on some of the most warlike monarchs of the East.

There was a dream of Ertercules that was warped, by Edebales, into the interpretation, that Oman should be born to him, and become a great conqueror.

I have known the dreams of young ladies often prove the inducement to their marriage.

I may remind you, too, that even a simple waking incident will impart this power of action. It is a record of history, that Robert Bruce slept, during his wandering, in the barn of a cottage. As he was lying, he saw a spider attempt to climb to the roof; twelve times the insect failed ere it gained its point. This potent lesson of perseverance instantly flashed across his mind, and in a few days was won the field of Bannockburn. Be sure the *seers* termed this an *omen*.

The seduction of Helen was the result of a dream of high promise, made to Paris by the phantom of Venus.

Scott (who was executed at Jedburgh, in 1823, for murder) confessed that he had dreamed of such a crime for many years ere its committal.

Of the result of *constant dwelling on an interesting subject*, I may add these illustrations.

Antigonusa, King of Macedonia, anticipated (according to Plutarch) the flight of his prisoner Mithridates to the Euxine.

Of such a nature were the dreams of the Emperor Julian and of Calphurnia, if indeed these were more than fable; and such was the dream of Cromwell,—that he should be the greatest man in England. In all these, and a thousand more, the mere constant thinking excited the dream. The ambitious thought of Cromwell was constantly haunting his waking

moments, pointing to personal aggrandisement, and, of consequence, imparted a like character to the dream of his slumbers. Could we have penetrated the privacy of Ireton, and Lambert, and other Presbyterian leaders, we should discover that such ambitious prepossessions were not confined to the bosom of the Protector.

The grandfather of the poet Goëthe, on the death of an old counsellor at Frankfort, assured his wife of his confident belief, that the golden ball, which elected the vacant counsellor, would be *drawn for him*. And this belief arose from a dream; in which he went in full costume to court, when the deceased counsellor rose from his seat and begged him to occupy the chair, and then went out of the door. Goëthe *was* elected.

And yet divines especially are determined to look beyond nature for causes, and refer all this to *divine foreknowledge*, imparted to the mind of man. There is a solemn letter, written in 1512, by Cardinal Bembo, to one of the Medici, recounting how he was opposed in a suit against one Simon Goro, by Giusto, and how his mother dreamed that Giusto wounded him in the right hand, and besought him not to have altercation with him. It chanced that Giusto, who, it seems, was somewhat deranged, snatched Bembo's papers from his hand, and afterwards, by the Rialto, wounded him in the second finger of the right hand. Now is not this a very shallow incident? and yet the sapient cardinal deems it essential to *confirm his tale* by a solemn attestation, thus: "The dream of my mother I look upon as a revelation; and I declare to you, magnificent lord, by that veneration which we owe to God himself, that this recital is the pure and single truth."

The proofs of an apparent prophecy from

foresight may be seen in those, who by reflection have attained either a worldly or a *weather* wisdom. The sea captain, who has looked out upon the sky at night, and has learned the foreboding signs of a storm, will often dream of shipwreck; and the politician will dream of events, as well as predicate consequences, from an *enlightened reflection* on the motives of the human mind, and the general laws which indeed influence its actions. So that, with a little latitude, it were easy enough for us all to construct an almanac column, especially if there be granted to us a liberal allowance of "more or less about this time."

Above all, it is our duty to *avert the impressions of evil* from the superstitious mind. The *apprehension* of a misfortune or fatality may prove its *cause*. Ay, and if the intellect were really gifted with prescience, how oft would the happiness of life be blighted?

The allegory of the tree of knowledge is a practic precept for our lives.

ASTR. And yet Virgil has thus alluded to the delight of peeping into futurity:

"Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas."

EV. *I* would rather echo the benevolent precept of Horace, to ensure the bliss of ignorance on this point:

"Tu ne quæsieris, scire (nefas) quem mihi, quem tibi,
Finem Dii dederint."

in other words: "Seek not to know the destiny that awaits us."

And Milton's wisdom, too:

"Let no man seek
Henceforth, to be foretold what shall befall
Him or his children: evil, he may be sure,

Which, neither his foreknowing can prevent;
And he the future evil shall, as less
In apprehension than as substance, feel
Grievous to bear."

Listen to the melancholy influence of the dream and death of Glaphyra, as told by Josephus:

"She was married when she was a virgin to Alexander, the son of Herod, and brother of Archelaus, but since it fell out so that Alexander was slain by his father, she was married to Juba, the King of Lydia; and when he was dead, and she lived in widowhood in Cappadocia with her father, Archelaus divorced his former wife Mariamne, and married her, so great was his affection for this Glaphyra, who during her marriage to him saw the following dream: —she thought she saw Alexander standing by her, at which she rejoiced and embraced him with great affection, but that he complained of her, and said to Glaphyra: 'Thou provest that saying to be true, which assures us that women are not to be trusted. Didst not thou pledge thy faith to me? and wast thou not married to me when thou wast a virgin? and had we not children between us? Yet hast thou forgotten the affection I bare to thee out of a desire for a second husband. Nor hast thou been satisfied with that injury thou didst me, but thou hast been so bold as to procure thee a third husband, and hast been married to Archelaus—thy husband and my brother. However, I will not forget my former affection for thee, but will set thee free from every such reproachful action, and cause thee to be mine again as thou once wast.' When she had related this to her female companions, in a few days' time she departed this life."

The fatality which coincided with the prophetic warning of Lord Lyttelton, might well be adduced as

another illustration, were it not for some imputation of suicidal disposition in that nobleman, which would more forcibly invalidate the prophetic dignity of his dream.

I may relate another story, not remotely illustrative of this influence, from Brand's "Popular Antiquities."—"My friend, the late Captain Mott, R. N., used frequently to repeat an anecdote of a seaman under his command. This individual, who was a good sailor and a brave man, suffered much trouble and anxiety from his superstitious fears. When on the night watch, he would see sights and hear noises, in the rigging and the deep, which kept him in a perpetual fever of alarm. One day the poor fellow reported upon deck, that the devil, whom he knew by his horns and cloven feet, stood by the side of his hammock on the preceding night, and told him that he had only three days to live. His messmates endeavoured to remove his despondency by ridicule, but without effect. And the next morning he told the tale to Captain Mott, with this addition, that the fiend had paid him a second nocturnal visit, announcing a repetition of the melancholy tidings. The captain in vain expostulated with him on the folly of indulging such groundless apprehensions. And the morning of the fatal day being exceedingly stormy, the man, with many others, was ordered to the topmast to perform some duty among the rigging. Before he ascended, he bade his messmates farewell, telling them that he had received a third warning from the devil, and that he was confident he should be dead before night. He went aloft with the foreboding of evil on his mind, and in less than five minutes he lost his hold, fell upon the deck, and was killed upon the spot."

Were an aversion to these gloomy fancies

inculcated, it might avert many a fatal foreboding, which, even in our own enlightened era, has closely resembled the fate of the African victims of Obi; that magic fascination, which its Syriac namesake, Obh, works by spell, until the doomed one pines to death, with the deep conviction that he is under the ban of an enchanter.

MATERIAL CAUSES OF DREAMS.

"*Iago.* Nay, this was but his dream.
Othello. But this denoted a *foregone conclusion*;
'Tis a shrewd doubt, tho' it be but a dream."
OTHELLO.

ASTR. We looked for more from you, Evelyn, than these *proofs of a negative*.

I presume still to think your philosophy is very weak in controversion of the *inspiration* of a dream, and its supernatural causes. *I* cannot but believe, with Baxter, that dreams may be "spirits in communion with us."

EV. And you will define these shadowless ministers in the fashion of Master Richard Burthogge, Medicinæ Doctor, (in his book, printed by Raven, in the Poultry, in 1694.) I have a smack, you see, of medical bibliomania, Astrophel. Burthogge, although one of the most rational interpreters of dreams and spectres, thinks their internal causes *purely metaphysical*; and then refutes his own opinion point blank by this sophistry,—that "there are things *incorporated*, but *invisible*, which we call spirits;" as who should say, with Shakspere's fairies, "We have the gift of fern seed; we are invisible."

No; we will account for the causes of dreams, Astrophel, without the ministry of spirits.

Analyzing, then, the notions of all, it is clear that the essence of the dream is *recurrence of ideas*. In the words of Walpole,—"The memory retains the colouring of the day."

Now memory is the first faculty to fail in age, and you know old people seldom dream: the same objects

are applied, but there is little or no association, for the brain is dull and feeble; imbecility, indeed, is *mad memory*.

The two common periods associated with the dream, are the past and the future, involving memory and prognostication; the latter being but the *memory of an intention*,—an image excited in the mind by analogy. Even when *present* sensations excite the dream, it is ever associated, as you remember, with something *before seen or felt*.

The waking thought will thus again modify the dream; and Dr. Abercrombie has a curious illustration of this combining of two minds,—one waking subject, one dream, and one disturbing cause.

The French invasion was the universal topic in Edinburgh; and the city was, indeed, one company of volunteers. It was decided that the tocsin of alarm on the approach of the enemy, was to be the firing of the castle guns, followed by a chain of signals. At two, an officer was awoke from a vivid dream of guns and signals, and reviews of troops, by his lady, who herself was affrighted by a similar dream, with a few associations of a *different* nature. And whence all this alarm?—*the falling of a pair of tongs on the hearth*, the noise of which was quite sufficient for the production of their dreaming associations.

ASTR. It would seem to me that Evelyn was too anxious to find employment for the brain, in thus imputing so much to *substantial* causes.

There is a funny scrap, I remember to have read, and of which I may shrewdly suspect my friend to be the scribbler. “Whence we may compare the powers of mind to a court of judicature:—the outward senses being as the solicitors that bring the causes; the common sense, as the master of requests, who

receives all their informations; and phantasy (or imagination), like the lawyers and advocates that bandy the business to and fro in several forms, with a deal of noise and bustle; reason, as the judge, that having calmly heard each party's pretensions, pronounces an upright sentence; and memory, as the clerk, records the whole proceedings." But say, if the dream is but the memory of an impression, are metaphysics to be counted as a *cypher*, in our discussion of the nature of intellect?

Ev. Nay, the psychologist must ever call metaphysics to his aid, especially when speaking of the health or disorder of mind: there is an intimate blending of metaphysics and philosophy. But believe not, Astrophel, that I presume to develope that mysterious influence which is going on between mind and matter, so essential to the manifestation of the former, *during its earthly condition*. The mystery will ever be a sealed letter to the intellect. It is enough that we have evidence of its existence without yearning for deeper insight of *final causes*. I have assured you that I do not believe thought or reflection, or any act of mind to be *material*, and speak even with all due courtesy to the abstract metaphysician, and the divine who, doubtless from pure and holy motives, would seek to cut the Gordian knot of this sublime enigma.

Even Dr. Abercrombie is content with observing that the correction of illusions by the sane mind is by the comparing power of reason, but he leaves the *illusion itself unexplained*. Indeed, the most luminous of pathologists have ever feared to touch organization; Sir Humphrey Davy leaves his beautiful imaginings vague and inconclusive, because he stops short of the brain.

The mere psychologist will ever persevere in

placing even the *palpable* causes of illusion beyond the reach of our inquiries.

Thus the rhapsodies of Lucretius were a series of professed fables, and the theories of Macrobius a tissue of capricious distinctions, as you may learn from his classification.

1st. ονειρος, *somnium*, dream. A figurative vision to be interpreted.

2nd. ορμα, *vision*. A vision which has afterwards been exactly fulfilled.

3rd. χρηματισμος, *oraculum*. An intimation in sleep of what we ought to do.

(I suppose as the shade of Hector appeared to Æneas, warning him, the night before, to escape from the flames of Troy.)

4th. ενυπνιον, *insomnium*. A sort of night-mare.

5th. φαντασμα, *visus* and *incubus*.

Here is a perfect jumble of classification, the first three only being vaunted as prophetic, or inspired; the fourth a night-mare; and the fifth, if it be any thing, a spectral illusion.

Others have deemed themselves mighty wise in discovering dreams to be the "action of intellect on itself."

Abercrombie, the most learned analyst of the mind since Reid and Stewart, has four varieties of the dream:

1st. From wrong association of new events.

2nd. Trains of thought from bodily association.

3rd. Revival of old associations.

4th. Casual fulfilment of a dream!

You perceive the first and third are merely memory, with right and wrong arrangements; the second, excitement of ideas from present sensations; the fourth, if it be not a mere coincidence, is the result, as I have explained, of imparted impetus, or

deep thinking on *subjects presented to the mind*. The eccentricities of dreaming are not more curious than those of the reminiscent faculty when *awake*; indeed, memory itself may seem to be sometimes dreaming, and at others even *fast asleep*. Those who survived the plague in Athens (as we read in Thucydides), lost for a time the recollection of names, their own and those of their friends, and did not regain it until their health was re-established.

Mori, during his frequent moods of excitement, quite lost his memory of music, so that, for many minutes, he could neither read a note nor play from memory.

There have been persons who have very suddenly forgotten their own names, which they were about to announce on a visit to a friend.

"Mr. Von B——, envoy to Madrid, and afterwards to Petersburg, a man of a serious turn of mind, yet by no means hypochondriacal, went out one morning to pay a number of visits. Among other houses at which he called, there was one where he suspected the servants did not know him, and where he consequently was under the necessity of giving in his name, but this very name he had at that moment entirely forgotten. Turning round immediately to a gentleman who accompanied him, he said, with much earnestness, 'For God's sake, tell me who I am.' The question excited laughter, but as Mr. Von B—— insisted on being answered, adding that he had entirely forgotten his own name, he was told it; upon which he finished his visit."

The eccentric impressions of this faculty will be often *intermittent*, or marked by sudden yet regular remissions.

There is a very curious case on record, of a lady whose "memory was capacious, and well stored with

a copious stock of ideas. Unexpectedly, and without any forewarning, she fell into a profound sleep, which continued several hours beyond the ordinary term. On waking, she was discovered to have lost every trait of acquired knowledge; her memory was a blank. All vestiges, both of words and things, were obliterated and gone; it was found necessary for her to learn every thing again. She even acquired by new efforts the art of spelling, reading, writing, and calculating, and gradually became acquainted with the persons and objects around, like a being for the first time brought into the world. In these exercises she made considerable proficiency; but, after a few months, another fit of somnolency invaded her. On rousing from it, she found herself restored to the state she was in *before the first paroxysm*; but she was wholly ignorant of every event and occurrence that had befallen her afterwards. The former condition of her existence she now calls the *old* state, and the latter the *new* state; and she is as unconscious of her double character as two distinct persons are of their respective natures. For example, in her old state, she possesses all her original knowledge; in her new state, only what she acquired since. If a lady or gentleman be introduced to her in the old state, and *vice versâ* (so indeed of all other matters), to *know them* satisfactorily she must learn them in both states. In the old state she possesses fine powers of penmanship, while in the new she writes a poor awkward hand, not having had time or means to become expert! During four years and upwards, she has had periodical transitions from one of these states to the other. The alterations are always consequent upon a long and sound sleep. Both the lady and her family are now capable of conducting the affair without embarrassment; by simply

knowing whether she is in the old or new state, they regulate the intercourse, and govern themselves accordingly!"

Other instances are more protracted; the impressions *previous to a certain moment* only being capable of renewal.

Mrs. S——, an intelligent lady, belonging to a respectable family in the state of New York, some years ago undertook a piece of fine needle-work. She devoted her time to it almost constantly for a number of days; but before she had completed it she became suddenly delirious. In this state, without experiencing any material abatement of her disease, she continued for about seven years, when her reason was suddenly restored. One of the first questions which she asked on this convalescence *related to her needle-work*. It is a remarkable fact that, during the long continuance of her delirium, she said nothing, so far as was recollected, about her needle-work, nor concerning any such subjects as usually occupied her attention when in health.

We read in Dr. Abercrombie, of a lady reduced by disease, in whose mind the *memory of ten years was lost*. "Her ideas were consistent with each other, but they referred to things as they stood before her removal (to Edinburgh)."

In these instances it is probable that the fault may be referred to the *original* impression, some disorder or state of the brain causing it to be only *superficially* impressed during these ten years of oblivion.

There is a curious story in the history of the Royal Academy of Sciences, which Beattie has recorded in these words: —

"A nobleman of Lausanne, as he was giving orders to a servant, suddenly lost his speech and all his senses. Different remedies were tried, without

effect, for six months; during all which time he appeared to be in a deep sleep or deliquium, with various symptoms at different periods, which are particularly specified in the narration. At last, after some chirurgical operations, at the end of six months his speech and senses were suddenly restored. When he recovered, the servant to whom he had been giving orders when he was first seized with the distemper, happening to be in the room, he asked whether he had executed his commission; not being sensible, it seems, that any interval of time, except, perhaps, a very short one, had elapsed during his illness."

IDA. I have read two stories of melancholy romance, which are not *mal-à-propos* to your arguments, Evelyn, in which the memory of one intense impression has "gone into a being," influencing the current of every after-thought, and the mind seeming ever after unconscious of all past or present, *but the incident of one moment*.

A gentleman, on the point of marriage, left his intended bride for a short time. He usually travelled in the stage-coach to the place of her abode; but the last journey he took from her was the last of his life. Anxiously expecting his return, she went to meet the vehicle, when an old friend announced to her the death of her lover. She uttered an involuntary scream, and one piteous exclamation, "He is dead!" From this fatal moment, for *fifty years*, has this unfortunate female daily, in all seasons, traversed the distance of a few miles to the spot where she expected her future husband to alight from the coach, uttering, in a plaintive tone, "He is not come yet; I will return to-morrow."

A young clergyman, on the eve of marriage, received a severe injury. During his future life of

celibacy, which was protracted to the 80th year, this one idea only possessed his mind, that his hour of happiness was approaching, and to the last moment he talked of his marriage with all the passion of a devoted lover.

EV. Thanks to your *own* memory, Ida, for these incidents. That the possession of the faculty of this *impression* of memory can be demonstrated, we might doubt, were *verbal* description *only* employed; but when we see the artist trace the features of a person long lost to us *from memory*, we know that such ideas existed, and were then *re-excited* in his mind.

The power of the intellect in retaining these impressions is wonderful. Cyrus is said to have remembered the names of all his soldiers, and Themistocles those of two thousand Athenians.

We have records from Seneca and others, that some will remember, after one perusal or hearing, very long poems; and even have repeated, word for word, the unconnected jumble of a newspaper. Pascal, as we are told by Locke, *never forgot anything*. Almost equally retentive was the memory of my excellent teacher, Sir Astley Cooper, and hence his nearly unexampled accumulation of facts. The memory of Ben Jonson was retentive to perfection, until the fortieth year of his age. In his youth, he could repeat an entire volume after its perusal; nay, even the *whole* of his own works, or as he quaintly writes, "All that ever I made." We know that Bloomfield composed his "Farmer's Boy" in the bustle of a shoe manufactory, and wrote from his memory.

ASTR. I have heard that the particles of the body are constantly changing: if so, how can memory *exist* in the brain?

EV. The answer is easy. Because particles of exact

similarity are deposited as others are removed. The parts thus regenerated, of whatever *structure* they may be, still being identical and unchanged in function.

If the dream *be* an inspiration, Astrophel, it is like "a spirit of the past," and does not "speak like sybils of the future."

But ere I offer some analogies of *waking* memory, in illustration of the causes of the dream, I must again fatigue you by a glance at the physiology of memory; the origin or mode of impression of a sense, and the mode of recurrence of such impression, *i.e.* the *excitement of the dream*.

Aristotle has asserted that senses cannot receive material objects, but only their *species*, or ειδωλον; and Mr. Locke entertained the same idea. For this effect, however, matter must have *touched a sense*, and its impression, as Baron Haller thought, must have been mechanical. For instance, the rays emanating from a body, and impinging on the retina, or an undulation of sound on the labyrinth of the ear, *stamp an image on the brain*, by which, (in accordance with a prior observation on illusion,) some minute change is inevitably effected; some minute *cerebral atoms* are displaced.

If you propose to me that curious physiological question,—in what consists the function of a nerve—in oscillation, or in undulation of a fluid, in electricity, or in magnetism? or how the nerve carries this impression to the brain? or if you desire me to meet the subtle objection, which Dr. Reid advanced against the opinion of Aristotle and of the more modern psychologists,—I might weary you with conjectures like those of Newton and Hartley, that some ethereal fluid was, by the impulse of peculiar stimulus to its nerve, the cause of the senses;

or that the mental phenomena are an imparting, or influence of the immaterial soul by corporeal vibration; or that dreams are "*motions of fibres*:" and at length, with humility confess this to be a mystery we cannot yet fathom. And this I do the more willingly, as it may prove my devotion to the *proper limits of our study*; moreover, the question itself is not essential to my argument.

Yet it is certain that external impressions of every object or subject, reach the brain through the medium of a nerve; and when the *same fibrils* of those nerves, or *that spot* of brain on which the original image rested, are *again* irritated by their proper stimulus, or by the same or a similar body, *an association is produced, and memory is the result*.

For the insurance of this sense of touch, and feeling, and perception, it is essential that the impression at the end of a nerve shall be perfectly transmitted along its course to the brain, so that the brain shall be *conscious*, or sensible of this impression. For if a nerve be cut asunder, or a ligature be placed on any portion of it between the skin and the brain, *the sensation instantly ceases*. It is not essential, however, that the contact should take place at the moment of the perception; and the explanation of this involves one of the most curious phenomena of the body's feeling; and, indeed, the metaphysical mystery of the nature of memory, which is too abstruse a point to be touched by us here. After amputation, the patient may still complain of pain, and heat, and cold, *in the dissevered limb*; he experiences the memory of a sensation; he feels, as it were, the ghost of his arm or leg. On the night succeeding the operation, the groaning patient has often cried out to me, with pain in the toe or finger of that limb; and when he is moved or shifts

his position, he will attempt to hold his leg, or will beg his nurse to take care that she does not touch or run against it. Nay, I have frequently, on asking a patient how he felt, even after the lapse of many months from the operation, been answered, that he was well, but had not lost the pain in his leg; or that his leg or his arm were lying by his side, when perhaps the limb was undergoing the process of maceration in the dissecting-room, or the bones were bleached and dangling in the museum.

The pain, or common feeling of the limb, has stamped an image or *eidōlon* on the brain, which is not easily effaced; there remains an *internal sensibility* on this point of memory. If the subject be subsequently presented to the mind by a touch at the end of the stump, or even by a thought, the idea of the limb that had lain dormant, will be re-excited by that wondrous sympathy of brain and nerve, and the result will be a consciousness of having once possessed, or of having experienced a pain in this leg.

And, on this principle of the force of memory, we may explain many of our excited feelings: those which remain after we have been wafted in a boat, or rolled along in a carriage, or whirled aloft in a swing; the nervous impression in the brain is re-excited ere it was exhausted.

Now, an image may be stamped on the brain, *in a tumult*, without our cognizance or perception, and then revived in slumber;—we wake in wonder at having seen what we never saw or thought of before. Such is the dream of Lovel, in the “Antiquary;” and such the *rationale* of that tale of mystery, respecting the £6. in the Glasgow bank, which a dream seems certainly to have developed.

And it is evident that these impressions may recur

the easier in slumber, because there is no *fresh* impression on the senses to produce confusion. But then all these images may be presented at *one* time; so that we may have either a chaos, or a correct concatenation,—an incident, which Hobbes and other early metaphysicians confess to be inexplicable to *them*.

In the words of Spurzheim, "Memory is the reproduction of a perception;" and Gall believed that "Remembrance is the faculty of recollecting *that we have perceived* impressions; and memory, the recollection of the *impressions themselves*."

I read, that Esquirol has drawn a distinction between hallucination and illusion,—the first is from within, the second from without. The argument I have adduced of memory and impression,—the one at the beginning, the other at the end, of nerves,—will, I think, illustrate this perfectly. Hallucination, being *internal*, is of the *past*; illusion, *external*,—of the *present*.

Another metaphysician, Bayle, it is clear, was not ignorant of the basis of phrenology, or of this difference, when he alludes to "certain places on the brain, on which the image of an object, which has no real existence *out of* ourselves, might be excited."

INTENSE IMPRESSION.—MEMORY.

"The dream's here still: even when I wake, it is
Without me as within me; not imagined, felt."

CYMBELINE.

EV. I believe, then, that waking and slumbering association is *memory*; and I have interposed the glimpse of metaphysics to break the monotony of my

illustrations, for they are not yet exhausted.

A gentleman, as we read in Dr. Pritchard's work, was confined, after a severe accident, for several weeks, and the accident was not once during this period remembered by him; but, on his convalescence, he rode again over the same ground, and all the circumstances instantly flashed across his mind.

In their youth, Dr. Rush escorted a lady, on a holiday, to see an eagle's nest. *Many years* afterwards, he was called to attend her in the acute stage of typhus; and, on his entrance into her chamber, she instantly screamed out, "Eagle's nest!" and it is said, from this moment, the fever began to decline.

We ourselves have witnessed these flashes of memory more than once, during the acuteness of brain fever, where journeys, and stories, and studies, have been renewed after they had been long forgotten.

There are many romantic incidents in illustration which have been beautifully wrought into a poem, or drama, as that play of Kotzebue, written to illustrate the happy success of the Abbé de l'Epée in France, in imparting knowledge and receiving sentiments from the deaf and dumb. In this, the young Count Solar, by gestures, unfolds, step by step, his birth-place, and at length screams with joy, as he stands before the palace of his ancestors.

Then there is the story of little Montague, who was decoyed by the chimney sweep. Some time after this, the child was engaged to clean the chimney of a mansion, and, descending into a chamber, which had been indeed his own nursery, lay down, in his sooty clothes, on the quilt, and, by this happy memory, discovered his aristocratic birth. This is the incident

which still enlivens the pageantry of May-day.

These reminiscences will occur sometimes in the most sudden and unexpected manner. In one of the American journals, we are told of a clergyman, who, at the termination of some depressing malady, had completely lost his memory. His mind was a blank, and he had, in fact, to begin the world of literature again. Among other of his studies was the Latin language. During his classical readings with his brother, he one day suddenly struck his head with his hand, and stated that he had a most *peculiar feeling*, and was convinced that he had *learned all this before*.

Boërhave, in his "Prelectiones Academic. Institut. Med.," relates the case of a Spanish tragic writer, whose memory, subsequently to an acute febrile disease, was so completely impaired, that not only the literature of various languages he had studied was lost to him, but also their elements, the alphabets. When even his own poetic compositions were read to him, he denied himself to be the author. But the most interesting feature of the case is this: that, on becoming *again* a votary of the Muse, his recent compositions so intimately resembled his original productions in style and sentiment, that he no longer doubted that both were the offspring of his own imagination.

Even Priestley's master-mind was sometimes sleeping thus, being subject (to quote his own words) "to humbling *failures of recollection*;" so that he lost all ideas of things and persons, and had so forgotten his own writings, that, on the perusal of a work, he sat himself to make experiments on points which *he had already illustrated*, but on which his mind was then a "*tabula rasa*."

Above all, the superlative memory of Sir Walter

lay in a deep sleep, after a severe indisposition. It is recorded by Ballantyne, that when "the Bride of Lammermoor, in its printed form, was submitted to his perusal, he did not recognize, *as his own*, one single incident, character, or conversation it contained; yet the original tradition was perfect in his mind. When Mrs. Arkwright, too, sung some verses *of his*, one evening, at Lord Francis Egerton's, the same oblivion was o'er his mind, and he whispered to Lockhart, 'Capital words;—whose are they? Byron's, I suppose; but *I don't remember them*.' "

My friend, Dr. Copland, informed me (in May, 1839) of a lady of fifteen, Miss D——, who, in consequence of extreme exhaustion from disorder, forgot all her accomplishments, and had to begin her education afresh.

The Countess of Laval had, in her childhood, been taught the Armorican of Lower Brittany (which is a dialect of the Welch), but had, as she believed, forgotten it. On attaining the adult period, this lady had an acute fever, and, during her delirium, she ceased to speak in her native language, and chattered fluently in the bastard Welch.

A foreign gentleman, as we were told by Mr. Abernethy, after an accident on the head, spoke French only, and quite forgot the English, which he had before this spoken very fluently.

A Welch patient, in St. Thomas's Hospital, some years since, having received an injury, began to speak in Welch, and ever after continued to do so, although before his accident he constantly conversed in English.

On the contrary, we learn, from Dr. Pritchard, of a lady who, after a fit of apoplexy, forgot her *original* language (the English), and spoke only in French, so that her nurses and servants conversed with her only

by interpreters.

There may be a *partial* derangement of memory, *one set of impressions* only being erased.

A friend of Dr. Beattie, in consequence of a blow on the head, lost only his attainments in *Greek*; and Professor Scarpa (whose *corpus striatum* was disorganised) lost only the memory of proper names.

You may now comprehend how instantaneously material impressions derange and destroy memory, and its converse, the production of memory *by* material impressions, will be far less mysterious to you.

But creatures to which the gift of intellect is not granted, in which *innate ideas* cannot arise, still evince the faculty of memory. It is, therefore, possible that fish and insects, *possessing memory*, dream. Of course the doctrines of Pythagoras, and Simonides, and the story of the interpretation of the language of birds by the vizier of Sultan Mahmoud, are mere fables, and the cackling of the Roman geese was *accidental*; yet the bird does possess the memory of language, and the power of imparting ideas.

Nightingales' notes (as Bechstein has beautifully recorded them) seem to me like the Mexican language, and to express variety of sentiments of adoration and love. The parrot, magpie, jackdaw, jay, starling, and bullfinch, are prattlers; and the exquisite little canary, the pupil of my friend, Mrs. H ——, the pet, indeed, not only of its mistress, but of statesmen and learned physiologists, warbled its words in purest melody. From Sir William Temple we learn the faculty of the wonderful parrot of Prince Maurice, of Nassau, at the Hague, that responsed almost *rationally* to promiscuous questions. Granting, then, this faculty of memory, it is clear the bird may *dream*, and I may add one other quotation

from the "Domestic Habits of Birds," in proof of this.

"We have, however, heard some of these night-songs which were manifestly uttered while the bird was asleep, in the same way as we sometimes talk during sleep—a circumstance remarked by Dryden, who says,

" 'The little birds in dreams their songs repeat.'

"We have even observed this in a wild bird. On the night of the 6th April, 1811, about ten o'clock, a dunncock (*accentor modularis*) was heard in a garden to go through its usual song more than a dozen times very faintly, but distinctly enough for the species to be recognised." The night was cold and frosty, but might it not be that the little musician was dreaming of summer and sunshine? Aristotle, indeed, proposes the question whether animals hatched from eggs ever dream. Marcgrave, in reply, expressly says, that his "parrot, Laura, often rose in the night, and prattled while half asleep."

Among quadrupeds, it is probable that those which, by their half-reasoning instinct, approach nearest to the power of comparison, and those which, in contrast to the *callous-hoofed*, possess an acuteness of feeling, and therefore the nearest approximate intelligence, are the most prone to dream.

Although we know nothing of the dreams of that very learned dog, which Leibnitz assures us he saw, and which uttered an *articulate* language, and often enjoyed a chat with his master; yet, of the *slumbering visions* of the canines I have many illustrations. *Vic*, a fat terrier, was a somniloquist. She would bark, and *laugh*, and run round the room, or *against tables*; the surest proof of somnambulism. Indeed dogs are celebrated by many poets for their dreaming

propensities. Ennius writes —

"Et canis in somnis leporis vestigia latrat."

And Lucretius has left us a very comprehensive poetical account of the dreams of brutes.

Even Chaucer refers to these dreams; and in the Hall of Branksome,

"The stag-hound, weary with the chace,
Urged in dreams the forest race."

It is probable that the dreams of brutes are very *short*.

From simple, unassociated memory, too, springs the dream of the *infant*; pure and innocent as the thought of a cherub. For delight is the common feeling of a dreaming child; and when its lips are touched in sleep, the memory of its mother's bosom will excite its lips and tongue to the congenial action of suction, though a fright of the previous day will change its slumbers into moments of terror, and it will murmur and cry in its dream.

I believe it is Sir H. Wotton who lays much stress on the adoption of *plans of education* for a child, grounded on the discovery of its secret thoughts during its simple somniloquent dream.

CAST. It is wonderful how vividly are revived in our dream those scenes of our early life, which our waking efforts could not recollect.

This did not escape Chaucer, as I remember in Dryden's version of a fable:

"Sometimes forgotten things, long cast behind,
Rush forward in the brain, and come to mind.
The nurse's legends are for truths receiv'd,
And the man dreams but what the boy believ'd.
Sometimes we but rehearse a former play,

The night restores our actions done by day."

Ev. Yet do not associate this brilliancy of infantine reminiscence with *vigour* of the thought. The brain in children is, as it were, like wax, *easily impressible*. And remember, the *ideas* of children are more resembling the *imperfect* associations of our dreams; the tutorage of our advancing mind fills it with more serious and rational images characterized by judgment.

The first impressions of childhood are bright as fancy; so that we think in waking more of things present. But, in dreams of things long agone there is, in fact, no complete oblivion, in a healthy mind, for any one of our infantile impressions *may* chance to be brought to us in our dream.

But if impression be intense, it may assimilate that of childhood, and become as permanent. My friend, Dr. Uwins, told me of a patient who, in a joke, once amused himself by throwing stones at the gibbeted pirates on the bank of the Thames. An epileptic tendency succeeded; and ever after this, his dreams were of gibbets and chains, and to that degree, that his judgment and philosophy were powerless in controlling his fears.

And in the book of the Prussian, Greding, we read of J. C. V., a youth, who, in his eighth year, had been attacked by a dog. His future, and, indeed, nightly dreams, were of this creature, and these so intense, as to reduce his health to a very low degree.

Now it is easy to believe the period of slumber so limited, that the subject of reflection shall not have disappeared, that the thought had scarcely time to cool:

"Lateat scintillula forsan."

Thus Moses Mendelssohn had all the sounds, heard during the day, reverberating in his slumbering mind.

Or we may suppose, that the idea last imprinted on the mind, or by which it had been exclusively occupied, and the thoughts which are so much modified by our temperament, study, and contemplation, would be the *first to influence as the mind awakened*, ere the image of fresh objects had been again perceived.

Sir Walter, in his diary, thus writes: "When I had in former times to fill up a passage in a poem, it was always when I first opened my eyes that the desired ideas thronged upon me. I am in the habit of relying upon it, and saying to myself when I am at a loss, 'Never mind, we shall have it all at seven o'clock to-morrow morning.' "

Warton, the professor of poetry at Oxford, after partaking of a Sunday dinner with a friend, repaired to his service at his Church. On his way, he was powerfully saluted with a cry of "Live mackarel." He slumbered in his pulpit during the singing of the psalm, and, on the organ ceasing, he arose, half awake, and instead of his solemn prayer, cried with a loud voice, "All alive, all alive oh!"

I remember the storytellers in the coffee-houses at Aleppo, as if aware of this *last impression*, used to run out when they perceived they had *excited a deep interest*.

IDA. It is curious to hear, even by your own quotations, Evelyn, that poets have so revelled in the luxury of dreams, from Homer to Pope, chiefly employing them, however, as the *materiel* of their poesy. Have they condescended to glance at their causes?

EV. Lucretius, Claudian, George Stepney, Dryden,

and a few others. *Apropos* as to causes.

In the "Anatomy of Melancholy" we have the following quaint summary: "As Tully notes, for the most part our speeches in the daytime cause our phantasy to work upon the like in our sleep, so do men dream on such subjects they thought on last:

" 'Somnia quæ mentes ludunt volitantibus umbris,
Nec delubra deûm nec ab æthere numina mittunt,
Sed sibi quisque facit,' " &c.

For that cause, when Ptolemy, king of Egypt, had posed the seventy interpreters in order, and asked the nineteenth man what would make one sleep quietly in the night, he told him "the best way was to have divine and celestial meditations, and to use honest actions in the daytime." Lod. Vives wonders how schoolmen could sleep quietly and were not terrified in the night, they had such monstrous questions and thought of such terrible matters all day long. They had need amongst the rest to sacrifice to god Morpheus, whom Philostratus paints in a white and black coat, with a horn, and ivory box full of dreams of the same colours, to signify good and bad.

Cast. These are the manufacture, I presume, of two of those sons of sleep, born to him by a beautiful but erring grace, "Phantasus," or Fancy, and "Phobetor," or Terror. With the relations and illustrations of these good and bad dreams, the pages of both fiction and authentic history abound: another poetical batch of causes, Ida. Lucia exclaims:

"Sweet are the slumbers of the virtuous man,
Oh Marcia! I have seen thy godlike father—
A kind refreshing sleep is fallen upon him.
I saw him stretch'd at ease, his fancy lost
In pleasing dreams. As I drew near his couch,
He smil'd, and cried: 'Cæsar, thou cans't not hurt me.' "

Another poet writes thus:

"But most we mark the wonders of her reign,
When sleep has lock'd the senses in her chain:
When sober judgment has his throne resign'd,
She smiles away the chaos of the mind;
And, as warm fancy's bright elysium glows,
From her each image springs, each colour flows.
She is the sacred guest, th' immortal friend;
Oft seen o'er sleeping innocence to bend,
In that dead hour of night, to silence giv'n,
Whispering seraphic visions of her heav'n."

Then Richmond exclaims: "My heart is very jocund in the remembrance of so fair a dream." While the coward conscience of Richard thus speaks:

"By the apostle Paul, shadows to-night
Have struck more terror to the soul of Richard,
Than could the substance of ten thousand soldiers."

Aufidius thus recounts his slumbering memory of the prowess of Coriolanus:

"This happy Roman, this proud Marcius, haunts me.
Each troubled night, when slaves and captives sleep,
Forgetful of their chains, I in my dreams
Anew am vanquish'd; and beneath his sword
With horror sinking, feel a tenfold death—
The death of honour."

And yet another:

"Tho' thy slumber may be deep,
Yet thy spirit shall not sleep.
There are shades that will not vanish;
There are thoughts thou canst not banish."

And, lastly, Crabbe, in his "World of Dreams:"

"That female fiend, why is she there?
Alas! I know her. Oh, begone!
Why is that tainted bosom bare?
Why fixed on me that eye of stone?
Why have they left us thus alone?
I saw the deed——"

ASTR. You will drown us in a flood of Helicon, fair lady, if you thus dole out the thoughts of these maudlin poets. The records of national and domestic history, the dreams of the conqueror of thousands, and of the midnight assassin, are replete with incidents, if we will search for them, more impressive, ay, and more romantic, than all this rhyming; and from the legends of history alone I could select a legion of dreaming mysteries, which would dissolve all these fine-spun theories of Evelyn, regarding the *essence*, as he terms it, of the dream. He must adopt a clearer course, in showing us his *causes*, than by harping on this favourite theme of *memory*; and we must listen through another moonlight, ere we be made wiser, by the unfolding of this grand secret of visions.

INFLUENCE OF DARK BLOOD IN THE BRAIN.

"I talk of dreams,
Which are the children of an idle brain."
ROMEO AND JULIET.

EV. That I may explain to you the *predisposition* of a dream,—in other words, the state of *broken slumber*,—it is essential that I recur to the physiology of the brain; and I must humble our pride, by

combining some of the debasing conditions of our nature, as influential on the divine mind, through the medium of its *chambers of marrow*; for to the intimate condition and function of the brain and its nerves, and its *contained blood*, we must chiefly look for elucidation of the *physical causes* of a dream.

Yet I may even grant you, for an argument, Astrophel, the flight of an immortal spirit, and all the amiable vagaries of Sir Thomas Brown; reserving to myself to prove at what moment we become conscious of this flight.

In natural actions, there are ever *three requisites*, like the points of a syllogism:

1. A susceptibility of influence;
2. The influence itself;
3. The effect of this influence:

And these I call the *predisposing*, the *exciting*, and the *proximate* causes.

1. The brain is brought to this susceptibility by excited tem
   intense and undivided thought; in short, by *any* intens
2. The influence or excitement is applied; congestion of blc
   impression on extremities, or origin of a nerve, at the
   departing or returning consciousness. At these periods
   changes, and I believe, *as it changes*, the phenomena o
   waking state, obey these changes:—rational and light
   effect of circulation of *scarlet* blood; dull and reasonle
   "night-mare," that of crimson, or *black* blood.
3. The effect of this influence is recurrence of idea, *memory*
   erroneously associated, as the blood approximates to t
   state, or as the brain itself is constituted.

Now it is essential to the perfect function of the brain, not only that it shall have a due supply of

blood, but that this blood shall be of that quality we term *oxygenated*. If there be a simple *deficiency* of this scarlet blood, a state of sound undisturbed sleep will ensue (slightly analogous to the condition of *syncope*, or fainting). This may be the consequence of any *indirect* impression, or the natural indication of that *direct* debility, which we witness in early infancy, and in the "second childishness and mere oblivion" of old age. But this deficiency of arterial blood may be depending on a more positive cause, *venous congestion*, impeding its flow; for in sleep, the breathing being slower, the blood becomes essentially darker. Even arterial blood itself will become to a certain degree *carbonized*, by *lentor*, or stagnation. Venous congestion and diminution of arterial circulation are not incompatible; indeed, Dr. Abercrombie reasons very ably on their relative nature, implying the necessity of some *remora* of venous circulation to supply that want or vacuum which the brain would otherwise experience from the deficiency of the current in the arterial system. Thus will the languid arterial circulation of the brain, which causes sleep in the first instance, produce, secondarily, that congestion of blood in the veins and sinuses, which shall reduce it to disturbed slumber, and excite the dream. May we not account, on this principle, for the difficulty which many persons experience in falling into a *second* slumber, when they have been disturbed in the *first*?

IDA. Combe, I believe, observed, through a hole in a fractured skull, that the brain was elevated during an apparent dream.

EV. This is a matter of frequent observation with us. There was, in 1821, at Montpelier, a woman who had lost part of the skull, and the brain and its membranes lay bare. When she was in deep sleep,

the brain lay in the skull almost *motionless*; when she was dreaming, it became elevated; and when her dreams (proved by her relating them when awake) were on vivid or animating subjects, but especially when she was awake, the brain was *protruded through the cranial aperture*.

Blumenbach states that he, himself, witnessed in one person a sinking of the brain, whenever he was asleep, and a swelling with blood when he awoke. David Hartley, therefore, may be half right and half wrong when he imputes dreams to an impediment to the flow of blood, a collapse of the *ventricles*, and a diminished quantity of their contained *serum*.

We thus have not only a deficiency of *proper* stimulus, but a *deleterious* condition of the blood, which acts as a poison to the brain. In fatal cases of coma and delirium, we observe deep red points, chiefly in the *cineritious* part of the brain, from this congestion of its vessels. Sound sleep is thus prevented, but the congestion of carbonized blood acting as a sort of narcotic, depresses the energy of the brain so far as to prevent waking, inducing that middle state, drowsiness or slumber; so that sleep may thus depend on congestion *from exhaustion*; and "spectral illusion" from congestion in that state *short of slumber*; and insanity itself from congestion *still more copious and permanent*.

From this results a disturbed condition of the brain; it is *irritated*, not excited, by its healthy or proper stimulus; and it follows that such derangement of the manifestations of mind ensues as we term a dream. Waking, however, soon takes place, and the blood is more scarlet, and the faculties themselves gradually awake. As this is more perfect, we remember the dream, and are enabled to explain it, and know *that it was a dream*. The mind is now

restored, so that scarlet blood indicates *healthy thought*, and black blood its *reverse*. Your pardon for this prolixity and dulness. The healthy or unhealthy crisis of the blood is a most important subject in our argument, and too constantly slighted in the question of illusion.

Monsieur Denis records the story of a young man of Paris, in the 17th century, who was cured of a stubborn and protracted lethargy, by the transfusion of the *arterial blood of a lamb*; and another of a recovery from madness, by that of the arterial blood of a calf, and these in presence of men both of *science* and *high quality*.

I do not affirm my implicit faith in this statement, of the effect of *gentle* blood, but I am certain of the poisonous influence of that of *another quality*; and I will cite a passage from Hoffman, the German poet, whom Monsieur Poupon, in his "Illustrations of Phrenology," adduces as a specimen of marvellousness, ere I offer my cases.

"Why do my thoughts, whether I am awake or asleep, always tend, in spite of all my efforts, to the gloomy subject of insanity? It seems to me as if I felt my disordered ideas escaping from my mind, like *hot blood from a wounded vein*."

This was figurative, but it was true; for of itself this black blood may be suddenly the cause of furious and fatal mania. When Dionis, in his "Cours d'Opérations de Chirurgie," is referring to that operation that has lately, by its revival, occupied so much of the attention of the medical world (the process of *transfusion*) he says: "La fin funeste de ces malheureuses victimes de la nouveauté, detruisit, en un jour, les hautes idées qu'ils avoient conçues; ils devinrent foux, *furieux, et moururent ensuite*."

The relief of the brain, by the escape of this

blood, is of deeper interest to science than the mere romancer may imagine.

Sir Samuel Romilly was for a moment, I believe, in a state of sanity, when blood had flowed from the divided vessels of his throat; for he attempted, it appeared, to stop its flow by thrusting the towel with some force into the wound.

So diseases of the heart, by keeping the black blood in the brain, predispose to dreaming. During the age of terror in France, organic diseases of the heart and *cases of mania* were most prevalent.

I may for a moment indulge in analogies regarding this arrest of the blood. Cases of inflammation of the ear are often seen in confirmed maniacs (the *helix* being usually the part most inflamed), and *black* blood often oozes from the part.

M. Calmeil considers *chronic phlegmasia* of the brain as the cause of insanity, the derangement itself being, as it were, *the moral result* or disease, and the organic changes or proximate cause the *physical* disease; both being but the *sequelæ*, or consequence of inflammation.

A boy, the servant of a medical friend (Mr. A ——), was, some years ago, placed under my care for fever, with delirium. About the acme of his disorder the impetuosity of the blood in the vessels of the head was such as to project his ears prominently forwards, like those of a satyr, or, as the gossips thought, rather of a demon. Yet all this subsided *as the fever waned*.

Yet, believe me, I draw a decided distinction between mania and dreaming; though the phenomena may sometimes bear resemblance. In one essential point they differ; that the *transient* illusion is not manifested, except *during slumber*, or a state closely analogous to it, when the senses are languid,

or asleep. It is true, however, the maniac will, on his recovery, often *dream of the subject of his insanity*, yet insanity is more exemplified by *action*, the dream being usually *passive*.

The predisposition to insanity is often, too, *hereditary*, so that the slightest moral influence, imperceptible perhaps to the physician, may incite such a mind to madness; for where there is *no* predisposition, that is, a perfect integrity of brain, a right judgment is evinced even under the potent influence of the passions.

As the condition of insanity, so the illusive vision, does not always primarily depend on *medullary* disease; there are primary moral as well as physical causes. But even the exertion of thought, which the ultra spiritualist may term an immaterial faculty, is attended by increased action on the matter of the brain. The organ of mind will, if diseased, (though not always,) produce deranged actions. Yet it is equally true, if even a sound brain be *badly instructed*, and its passion uncontrolled, insanity may ensue; not however without quickly, I believe *immediately*, inducing structural change.

On one point, the dream and insanity are often *alike*; they are *mental fulfilments of a wish*: and the dreamer, during his slumber, and the madman throughout his derangement, are presented with the spectra of their desires, and their hopes and fears become, *for these periods, reality*.

It was with a reference to the wanderings of the understanding in dreams, that Sir James Mackintosh thus writes in a letter to Robert Hall:

“These will familiarise your mind to consider its other aberrations as only more rare than sleep and dreams, and, in process of time, they will cease to appear to you much more horrible.”

ASTR. And pray, Evelyn, how doth all this profound prosing affect the subject of dreams?

EV. By similitude. I may even remind you with devout veneration, of the dreams of a prophet, to prove the brain highly sensitive when these visions are before it. Listen to the words of Daniel, to whom "God gave knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom."

"I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit, in the midst of my body, and the visions of my head troubled me."

"And I, Daniel, fainted and was sick certain days."

Even here, may we not believe, that the Creator did not alter his law?

It was Dr. Cullen who first drew a parallel between insanity and dreams. As some proof of his insight, we read in Lode of a man who never dreamed until he fell into a fever in the twenty-fifth year;—in Beattie, of a young friend who never dreamt unless his health was deranged.

And Mr. Locke thus writes: "I once knew a man who was bred a scholar, and had no bad memory, who told me that he had never dreamed in his life until he had fever."

This immunity from dreams is also most marked in savages, unless during disorder or at the dying moment. Ulloa, Humboldt, and La Condamine, all agree as to the character of indolence and absence of thought and fancy in the native Americans, and it is as sure that they seldom dream.

Now whatever influence tends to arrest or derange the *upper circulation* of the blood in its return to the heart, or to detain it in the vessels of the brain, or which presses on an important nerve, so as to disturb the function of the brain or *spinal cord*, by

continuous sympathy, may be the *remote* cause of the phenomena of dreaming.

Such are the results of repletion, *dyspepsia*, the supine position, &c. &c.

And here, Astrophel, I meet your metaphysician.

Galen, and indeed the ancients generally, attributed dreams chiefly to indigestion; but referred their immediate excitement to fumes and vapours, instead of to nervous influence, or cerebral congestion from interrupted circulation.

CAST. And here, Evelyn, courtesy might have prompted you to meet my poets. Let me see, is it not Dryden who writes of—

"——rising fumes of undigested food,
And noxious humours that disturb the blood?"

And in a poem believed to have been written by Chaucer, there is this passage: can I remember his quaintness?

"I supposed yt to have been some noxiall fantasy,
As fallyth in dremes, in parties of the nyght,
Which cometh of joy or grievous malady;
Or of robuste metes which causeth grete myght;
Overmoche replet obscuryth the syght
Of natural reasonne, and causyth idyll thowght,
Makyth the body hevy where hyt was lyght."

And again, in the tale of the "Nonnes Preest:"

"Swevenes (dreams) engendren of repletions,
And oft of fume and of complexions,
When humours ben to habundant in a wight.
Of other humours cou'd I telle also,
That werken many a man in slepe moch wo," &c.

EV. I sit reproved, fair lady. Herodotus also says, the Atlantes never dream; which Montaigne refers to

their never eating anything which has died of itself. And Burton thus sums up his precepts of prevention:

"Against fearful and troublesome dreams, incubus, and inconveniences wherewith melancholy men are molested, the best remedy is to eat a light supper and of such meats as are easie of digestion, no hare, venison, beef, &c.; not to lie on his back," &c.

Dryden, to ensure his brilliant visions of poesy, ate raw flesh; and Mrs. Radcliffe, I am told, adopted the same plan. We know that green tea and coffee, if we *do* sleep, induce dreaming; and Baptista Porta, for procuring quiet rest and pleasing dreams, swallowed *horse-tongue* after supper.

Indigestion, and that condition which is termed a weak or irritable stomach, constitute a most fruitful source of visions. The immediate or direct influence of repletion, in totally altering the sensations and the disposition in waking moments, is a proof of its power to derange the circulation of the brain and the mental faculties in sleep.

"Somnus ut sit levis, sit tibi cœna brevis."

The influence of the great sympathetic nerve in this respect is very important. With many persons, a meal is usually followed by feelings of depression, impaired memory, unusual timidity, despondency, and other illusive characteristics of *hysteria* and *hypochondriasis*. And events will appear of the greatest moment, which, after the lapse of some hours, will be considered mere trifles. So that, after all, there is some truth in the idea of that *archæus*, or great spirit, asserted, by Van Helmont, to sit at the *cardia* of the stomach, and regulate almost all the other organs.

The posture of *supination* will unavoidably induce that increased flow of blood to the brain which,

under certain states of this fluid, is so essential to the production of brilliant waking thoughts; an end, indeed, attained so often by another mode—the swallowing of opium.

A gentleman of high attainment was constantly haunted by a spectre when he retired to rest, which seemed to attempt his life. When he raised himself in bed, *the phantom vanished, but reappeared as he resumed the recumbent posture*.

Some persons always retire to bed when they wish to think; and it is well known that Pope was often wont to ring for pens, ink, and paper, in the night, at Lord Bolingbroke's, that he might record, ere it was lost, that most sublime or fanciful poesy which flashed through his brain as he lay in bed. Such, also, was the propensity of Margaret, Duchess of Newcastle, who (according to Cibber, or rather Sheil, the *real* author of the "Lives of the Poets") "kept a great many young ladies about her person, who occasionally wrote what she dictated. Some of them slept in a room contiguous to that in which her grace lay, and were ready, at the call of her bell, to rise any hour of the night to write down her conceptions, lest they should escape her memory."

Henricus ab Heeres (in his "Obs. Med.") says, that when he was a professor, he used to rise in the night, open his desk, compose much, shut his desk, and again to bed. On his waking he was conscious of nothing but the happy result of his compositions.

The engineer, Brindley, even retired to bed for a *day or two*, when he was reflecting on a grand or scientific project.

I deny not that the darkness or stillness of night may have had some influence during this inspiration. I may also allow that some few individuals compose best while they are walking; but this *peripatetic*

exertion is calculated, itself, to produce what we term determination of blood to the head. I have heard of a most remarkable instance of the power of position in influencing mental energy, in a German student, who was accustomed to study and compose with his head on the ground and his feet elevated, and resting against the wall.

And this is the fragment of a passage from Tissot, on the subject of monomania:

——"Nous avons vu étudier dans cette académie il n'y a pas long-temps, un jeune homme de mérite, qui *s'étant mis dans la tête*, de découvrir la quadrature du circle, est mort, fou, à l'hôtel Dieu, à Paris."

You will smile when I tell you that the tints of the landscape are brighter to our eyes if we *reverse the position of the head*.

And now, with your leave, gentle ladies, I will bring phrenology to my aid.

If we assume that there may be distinct portions of the brain, organs of comparison, individuality, causality, &c., we naturally regard *them* as the source of that combined faculty which we denominate *judgment*. We might argue, that if these organs were *permanently* deficient, fatuity, or, at least, extreme folly, would be the result. By parity of reasoning we might infer, that if the function of such organs were *for a time suspended*, imagination, having lost its mentor, would, as it were, run wild, and an extravagant dream, granting an excitement, would be the result. If the organ of colour be excited, and form be asleep, we may have an *eccentric drawing*. If language and imagination are both awake, a poem or romance; so it *may* chance, that if *all* the proper organs are awake, there may be a rational dream.

I yield not to the too finely-spun hypotheses of Gall, and his first whimsical topography of the

cranium; the incipient idea of which, by the by, he owes to the Arabian phrenologists who, even in the olden time, had glimpses, although they decided on a different location. Imagination was in the *frontal* region, reason in the *medial*, and memory in the *occipital*.

In Dr. Spurzheim's beautiful demonstration of the brain, he exhibits it almost as one large convoluted web. While the ultra-phrenologist is unravelling these convolutions, it is strange that he sees not the inconsistency of his cranial divisions. Some of the boundary lines of his organs *must be drawn across* these convolutions. It will ever be impossible to decide the exact course of these, but the lines should be drawn in the direction of their fibres; for if the faculty be seated in one convolution, that faculty would proceed *in the course* of its fibres, and not across the fissure from one lobule to another. Now the most frequent coincidence of the possession of great mental power, with full development of the frontal region of the skull, will naturally lead us to believe that it may depend on *causation*. Indeed a skull, as well as expression, may be phrenologically *changed* by culture or thought. The skull of William Godwin, in early life, indicated an *intellectual* development; then it became *sensual*, the *occipital* organs being in excess; and again, as his mind was subject to more moral culture, the intellectual or *frontal* again prevailed. I am informed, also, by Miss A——, that there was observed a progressive development of the intellectual region in the head of her father, an acute and deep thinker.

We have analogies to this in physiognomy. Caspar Hauser lost some of the negro fulness about his mouth after he had been introduced to society. Perhaps the contrasted beauty and deformity in the

forehead and eye, and in the mouth of Sheridan, was a faithful indication of that paradox of mind which was never more perfectly displayed than in the intellectual dignity and moral deficiency of this man. As no function, then, either of brain or gland, can be carried on without a due supply of blood, it will follow that *position* may materially influence the integrity of these functions. The seat of the organs I have alluded to, if cranial development supports me, may be determined on the fore part of the head, behind the *os frontis*, portions of the cerebral mass which, in the *supine* position, are usually most elevated above the centre of circulation. "The more noble the faculties, the higher are the organs situated." These, consequently, may endure a deficiency of stimulus, in comparison with other organs more favourably situated. The phrenologist, then, will endeavour to prove, that the supine position generally produces *vascular pressure* on particular parts or organs of the *encephalon*; and he will argue that dreams arise from individual organs abstractedly or unconnectedly acting. There is one spot on the cranium, indeed, identified by Dr. Spurzheim as a most important item in the composition of a good dreamer. He tells us, that "persons who have the part above and a little behind the organ of *ideality* developed, are much prone to mysticism, to see visions and ghosts, and to dream."

It may not be difficult to believe in this *partial* function of the brain, when we recollect how often the loss of one faculty will be connected with *paralytic* disorders. The faculty of *perception* may be lost, unless the impression on the mind is made through a *particular* sense. Thus patients may be unable to comprehend that name or subject when it was *pronounced*, or related, which they will

immediately do, if *written* down and presented to the sight,—*the optic nerve may transmit while the auditory has lost its power*.

"Segnius irritant animos *demissa per aures*,
Quam quæ sunt *oculis subjecta* fidelibus."

Of this axiom there is an illustrative story, by Darwin, in his "Zoonomia."—A paralytic man could see and hear, but the *mind* was *conscious of vision only*. If the hour of breakfast were *named* to him, he repeated it and was passive; but if the hour were *pointed out* on the watch, he comprehended at once, and called for breakfast.

On the contrary, there may be the same imperfection of *outward transmission*; the *lingual nerves*, influencing the tongue to sound a name *inapplicable to the idea*, the person often reversing the names of articles which he is continually using.

These phenomena regarding nerves of sense, then, are strictly analogous to those which we recognize in those parts of the brain which are intimately connected with, or influenced by, these nerves of sense: thus in analogy to waking illusions, we have the *imperfect* associations of a dream when the organs are irregularly acted on.

INCUBUS, OR NIGHT-MARE.

"O'er ladies' lips, who straight on kisses dream."
ROMEO AND JULIET.

"Let us be lead within thy bosom, Richard,
And weigh thee down."
KING RICHARD III.

ASTR. I will no longer hesitate to grant that the dream occurs in the moment of departing or returning consciousness. Still, are you not *reversing* the order of these phenomena? may not the excitement of vague ideas in the mind be, itself, the cause of waking, and not the consequence of slumber, or half-sleep?

EV. I believe not, except the sensibility of the body be influenced by touch, or sound, or by oppressive congestions of blood in the brain, causing that state of disturbance which reduces sound sleep to slumber; as in the instance of "Night-mare," which is to the mind what sensation is to the body, restoring it to a state of *half-consciousness*, essential to that sort of dreaming, in which we make a painful effort to relieve, and at last awake.

CAST. Mara, by my fay! the night-spectre of Scandinavia; that evil spirit of the Runic theology, who weighed upon the bosom, and bereaved her victims of speech and motion: that oppressive dream, therefore, termed *Hag-ridden*, or, in the Anglo-Saxon, *Elf-siderme*. Is it not she, of whom it is written, —

"We seem to run, and destitute of force,
Our sinking limbs forsake us in the course.
In vain we heave for breath, in vain we cry;
The nerves unbraced, their usual strength deny,
And on the tongue the faltering accents die."

EV. A very faithful picture.

Sound sleep will often be broken by pain or uneasiness occurring in a particular part of the body; the dream will then often bear an instructive reference to the seat and nature of such pain. If cramp has attacked any of the limbs, or the head has been long confined back, the dream may be enlivened by some analogous tortures in the dungeon

of the Inquisition; and it is curious, that a waking wish for some relief from unpleasant sensations will be *re*-excited in the dream,—a *dreamy fulfilment*. Captain Back, during one of the Arctic expeditions, when nearly in a state of starvation, often dreamed of indulging in *a delicious repast*. And Professor Stewart thus writes,—"I have been told by a friend, that, having occasion to apply a bottle of hot water to his feet, he dreamed that he was making a journey to the top of Mount Ætna, and that he found the heat of the ground insupportable. Another, having a blister applied to the head, dreamed that he was *scalped* by a party of Indians."

If on these occasions we are warm in bed, our dreams will be often pleasing, and the scenes in the tropics; if *cold*, or chilly, the reverse, and we shall believe ourselves in Zembla.

Holcroft had been musing on the probabilities of life and death, and one night went in pain to bed. He dreamed his body was severed above his hips, and again joined in a surprising manner. He was astonished to think he was alive, and afraid of being struck, lest the parts should be dissevered.

Tempests heard in a slumber will be often associated with a dream of shipwreck; and some persons will dream of their having given pain to, or injured, others: they wake, and find some close analogy to *their own* sensations.

It is recorded that Cornelius Rufus dreamed that he was blind, and *so* indeed *he awoke*.

In other cases, we have the *double touch*, as it is termed; dreams of forcible detention occur, and the sleeper has found that he had with one hand tightly grasped the other. If this hand had been *moved in sleep* unconsciously, the dream, no doubt, would have been essentially changed. And thus we have all

the phenomena realised, which Shakspere has referred to in the visitations of his incorrigible Mab.

Elliston was always awaked by nightmare when sleeping in a strange bed.

As in some persons, by submitting the body to certain impressions during sleep, associated dreams may be produced at pleasure; so if the body or legs hang over the side of a bed, we may instantly dream of falling from a precipice: and it is curious that, under these illusions, we awake when we are past hope and our despair is at its height: in falling, at the moment we are about to be dashed to atoms; and, in drowning, when the last bubbles are gurgling in the throat.

When we read in the Bodleian, Astrophel, I will point you to other curious experiments of this sort, by M. de Buzareingries.

Sounds also may be partly associated with the dream at waking, and with reality, when awake. Under this illusive impression, even murder has been *innocently* committed, on one, who waked, and stabbed his brother at the moment he was *dreaming* of assassins.

CAST. And so may be explained, I suppose, this funny anecdote. A young lover was drooping into a day-dream, while sitting with his brothers and sisters, and his thought had turned on the cruelty of his mistress. He was for a moment dreaming of her, when pussy, stretching her paws, scratched his leg with a claw: there was an instant association, I presume, of the wound with the lady's cruelty, for he started and exclaimed, "Oh Arabella, don't!"

EV. Hippocrates quaintly alludes to the dreaming about seas and lakes as an indication of *hydrothorax*; and to others, as symptomatic of *effusion on the brain*: and it has been asserted, that gloomy dreams in

fevers indicate danger. But all this is hypothesis; indeed, the delirious dreams of fever are often bright and cheerful.

The "Opium-Eater" has a strange fancy regarding his dreams of "silvery expanses of water;" "these haunted me so much, that I feared that some dropsical state or tendency of the brain, might thus be making itself *objective*, and the sentient organ project itself as its own object." I hope you understand this, Astrophel—I do not.

In the morbid condition of *hypochondriasis*, which is a sort of permanent *daymare*, similar fancies are excited. Esquirol's patient at Notre Dame thought the pope held council in her belly;—her intestines were found *closely adherent* together. Another monomaniac thought the devil had stretched a cord across her stomach;—her heart was *adherent to its bag*. Another believed that her body was stolen by the devil;—she was in reality paralytic, and *insensible* to blows or pricking.

To explain some of these illusions, Jason Pratensis very gravely asserts, that "the devil being a slender incomprehensible spirit, can easily insinuate and wind himself into human bodies, and, cunningly couched in our bowels, terrify our souls with fearful dreams."

I may add that we see, in some, a delirious *transmigration of sensation*. Parkinson relates these cases. One referred his own sensation to others, telling his nurse that his visitors were hungry, while his own voracity plainly indicated that the *hunger was in himself*. Another, in a fit of intoxication, insisted on undressing all his family, as they were drunk, and could not do it themselves.

Now we certainly move ourselves unconsciously in our sleep as a relief from painful positions. If,

however, these uneasy sensations are increased from stagnant blood about the heart and lungs, the oppression is extreme, and *loads* the moving powers; producing a transient agony and an intense effort. If this were unsuccessful on the limbs and speech, the result would be often destructive.

The night-mare dreamers are usually lethargic, and their ideas are often wild and visionary.

Polidori, the author of the "Vampire," was a prey to night-mare; he died with a laudanum bottle in his bed. And Coleridge might have thus left a sad and pointed moral; blazoning his wretched suicide to that world, which unconsciously has pored with a thrill of admiration over those fruits of his delinquency, the romantic and unearthly stories of Christabel and the Ancient Mariner.

The grand feature of night-mare, then, is *impediment*: but how can I record all its varieties of miserable struggles; of attacks and manglings from wild monsters: of the rolling of mountains on the heart: or the unhallowed embraces of a witch?

The young lady who reads mythology, will fancy herself a syrinx, and struggle to escape from the amorous clutches of Pan. If we have been thinking of Chamouni and her giant peaks of snow, we may be overwhelmed in our sleep by the fall of an avalanche; or we may be dashed off a precipice, and feel ourselves falling into interminable space without a hope of resting.

A lady whom I know, and who is a frequent subject of night-mare, is very uniform in this dreamy occupation. She is shaken to and fro in her bed by fiends, and the process seems to her to occupy considerable time. And there are many who are tortured by the feeling that they are buried alive, and attempt to cry out, and beat against their coffin-lid in

vain. Aurelian writes, that the epidemics in Rome were premonished by *incubus*.

These, and thousands of a similar kind, might be cited; but a vivid imagination, with a hint or two, will readily create them at its pleasure.

"A battalion of French soldiers, during the toils and dangers of a campaign, were marching on a certain point on a most oppressive day, and at double the usual speed; their strength was eight hundred men, all hardy, seasoned, and courageous; careless of danger, despising the devil, and little occupied with the thoughts of ghosts and phantasmagoria. On the night of the occurrence in question, the battalion was forced to occupy a narrow and low building at Tropœa, barely calculated to accommodate three hundred persons. Nevertheless, they slept; but, at midnight, one and all were roused by frightful screams issuing from all quarters of the house; and to the eyes of the astonished and affrighted soldiers appeared the vision of a huge dog, which bounded in through the window, and rushed with extraordinary heaviness and speed over the breasts of the spectators. The soldiers quitted the building in terror. Next night, by the solicitations of the surgeon and *chef-de-bataillon*, who accompanied them, they again resumed their previous quarters. 'We saw,' says the narrator, 'that they *slept*. We watched the arrival of the hour of the preceding panic, and midnight had scarcely struck when the veteran soldiers, for the second time, started to their feet. Again they had heard the supernatural voices, again the visionary hound had bestrode them to suffocation. The *chef-de-bataillon* and myself heard or saw nothing of these events.' "

The superstitious thought this spectre to be the devil; but the heat and *carbonic acid gas* were, I

believe, enough for the excitement of the phantasm and the feeling.

There can scarcely be imagined a more terrific feeling than this sense of extreme danger, or difficulty, this intense impediment, without a power to avert it. The constant labour of Sisyphus, with his rolling-down stone, and the punishment of Tantalus, would yield in severity to the agony of night-mare, but for its *transient* existence.

It seems to me, that this want of balance between will and power influences human nature so much, that life itself may be termed one long and painful *incubus*. The actions we perform seldom reach the perfection which the will desires. Hence arises that constant dissatisfaction, which even the close approach to perfection of some of the most accomplished professors of art and science cannot avert.

We must confess, with Socrates, that the extent of our knowledge is indeed but a conviction of our ignorance. The metaphor of Sir Isaac Newton, on the insignificance of his own scientific attainments, is well known. Sir Joshua Reynolds so highly appreciated perfection in his art, that he was ever discontented with his own paintings; and frequently, as I have heard, by repeated touches, destroyed the effect of a picture, which had been in its early stages beautiful. And Dr. Johnson, after astonishing the world with his perfect specimen of lexicographical composition, confessed that he "had not satisfied his own expectations." May I add to these the frequent *discontent* of the unrivalled Paganini?

IDA. The desire of the mind is, indeed, unlimited; and when this is intense, it wishes to appropriate to itself all which it can *comprehend*. But disappointment *must* ensue; for all wish to be the

whole, when they form but a part. Thus will ever be proved the futility of *worldly* ambition,—it is never satisfied. But the desires of religion are not a phantom, or an incubus. True devotion, which aspires to heaven, as the hart panteth for the water-brooks, will never fail. Its fervent hopes and devout prayers, we believe, will be blessed by their accomplishment.

CAST. Then the visitations of the incomparable Mab are nought but the infliction of the night-mare? Gentle Master Evelyn, how should I be aweary of your philosophy, but that I am half won over to believe it true? In good faith,

"The Gordian knot of it you do unloose
Familiar as your garter."

EV. Then, I pray you, let me counsel you not to court such visits, dear Castaly. There is some peril in the touch both of Mab and Mara; for although rare and transient cases of night-mare excite no alarm, yet its repetition, in a severe form, is not to be slighted. It sometimes has been the forerunner of *epilepsy*; its immediate cause being obstruction to the course of the blood by which the brain especially is surcharged, and the action of the lungs and heart impeded, as we prove by the extreme labour of breathing at the time we awake.

I believe that there is usually a fulness of blood, also, in the vessels of the spinal marrow; as, although nightmare may occur in the *sitting*, it is far more frequent in the *recumbent* position. Thus the marrow is oppressed, and there is then no force transmitted by the nerves to put the muscles into action.

Distention of the stomach should be prevented, as the *diaphragm* is thus pushed up against the lungs, and the gas is accumulated in the cavity. All these

conditions often occur in our waking moods, but *then* our judgment tells us how to relieve them speedily; whereas, *in sleep*, the load accumulates. All indigestible substances, therefore, should be avoided, as nuts, cucumbers, shell-fish, &c.

Early and light suppers we advise to those whom Madame Mara so unmercifully overlies. A mattress should be our couch, and we should endeavour to compose ourselves *on one side*, having, previous to our rest, taken *gentle exercise*.

SOMNILOQUENCE.—SOMNAMBULISM.

"It is a sleepy language; and thou *speak'st*
Out of thy sleep."

TEMPEST.

"*Doct.* You see, her eyes are open.
Gent. Ay, but their *sense* is shut."

"*Doct.* A great perturbation in nature. To receive at once
the benefit of sleep, and do the effect of watching."

MACBETH.

EV. In the common dream, ideas float through the *mind*, but the body is passive. When the power of *expressing* these ideas by *speech* is added, it is *somniloquence*. When there is the *conscious*, yet *powerless*, will to move, it is *incubus*. When the *unconscious* power of *moving* in accordance with the ideas or wishes of the dream exists, it is *somnambulism*.

The common dreams of sleep are not unfolded to us until the waking recollections of the dreamer relate them; but the matter of a dream may be half developed during its existence, by the curious

propensity to unconscious talking and walking in the sleep.

Sleep-talking is the slightest of these phenomena, and, indeed, closely resembles the speaking *reveries* of some absent people, and the raving of a maniac. The sleep is, at this time, little deeper than a reverie.

The voice of the somniloquist is usually *natural*, but as again, in the cases of mania and of delirious excitement, a common voice may become sweetly melodious, and there will be an imparted fluency allied to the inspiration of the improvisatore.

Indeed, in some young ladies, subject to *hysteria*, I have known, at certain periods as it were, a new accomplishment—a style of singing which was far beyond their power in waking moments. Dr. Dewar relates a case of a girl who, when awake, discovered no knowledge of astronomy or the sciences in any way; but when she was *asleep* she would define the rotations of the seasons, using expressions the most apt to the subject, such as “the globe is now set agee.” It is probable that this was the memory in slumber of some geographical lesson which she had heard, but did not remember while her *senses* were active, that is, in her waking moments. And an American lady, during a fever, commenced a course of nocturnal prating, composing most eloquent sermons, chiefly made up, however, of *remembered* texts of Scripture.

I am informed, too, that a lady of Edinburgh, during her somnolent attacks, recited somewhat lengthy poems; and it was curious to notice that each line commenced with the final letter of the preceding.

These sleep-talkings are sometimes the mere lispings of an idiot; although Astrophel, perchance, may contend that the following, written down from

the lips of a servant-maid, is a proof of special inspiration, converting a rustic girl into an improvisatrice.

"You may go home and wash your hose,
And wipe the dew-drops from your nose,
And mock no maiden here.
For you tread down grass, and need not;
Wear your shoes, and speed not,
And clout leather's very dear;
But I need not care, for my sweetheart
Is a cobbler."

I have heard this trash cited as a proof of facility of composition in slumber. You do not believe it such; like other specimens, it was a ruse of a wanton girl to excite admiration. In the magnetic somnambulism of Elizabeth Okey, that cunning little wench, who was the *prima buffa* of the magnetic farces enacted at the North London Hospital, would often skip about and sing snatches of equal elegance:

"I went into a tailor's shop
To buy a suit of clothes;
But where the money came from,
G—— Almighty knows."

These are indeed the very burlesque of somniloquence. And yet Okey *was* an invalid, and presumed on the credulity of those who ministered to her.

True somniloquence is often preceded by a cataleptic state; and in girls like this, the senses are often so dull, that the firing of a pistol close to the ear does not rouse them, until the poetic fit is over.

CAST. Were sleep-talking more common, it would indeed be a very dangerous propensity. If the confessor were to prate in his sleep of the

peccadilloes of the fair penitents that kneel at his confessional; if the minister on his couch were to divulge his state secrets or his fine political schemes; where would be the tranquillity of domestic or national society? Yet the lips of the love-sick maiden have not seldom whispered in sleep her bosom's secret; and sometimes the unconscious tongue has awfully betrayed even the blood-stain on the hand.

Thus did the ill-mated Parisina of Byron:

"Fever'd in her sleep she seems,
And red her cheek with troubled dreams;
And mutters she, in her unrest,
A name she dare not breathe by day."

The fate of Eugene Aram, I believe, may be imputed to such an unfortunate propensity; and in Lady Macbeth's "Out, damned spot!" was confessed her participation in the murder of Duncan and the grooms.

Somewhat like this, too, was the half-sleeping exclamation of Jarvis Matcham, after he had committed the murder of the drummer boy. Starting from his bed, when roused by the waiter, his first words were: "My God! I did not kill him."

Ev. A dream will sometimes half wake even a child to a state of terror, although children are with difficulty completely roused. I have known instances in which children would sit up in bed, with their eyes open, sobbing, and talking, and staring, in a sort of trance; nay, they will sometimes start from bed, but still asleep, and, after a time becoming calm, they have again composed themselves to slumber.

I have known sleep-talkers, who have not remembered one iota of their wanderings when awake; and even the ecstatic somnambulist, who pretends to prophecy wisdom, recollects nothing

when the ecstacy is over. It is clear also, that the mind *varies* in sleep and waking, in regard to its memory; for it has been proved that persons who often talk in their sleep, have renewed the exact points of a subject which terminated their last sleep-talking, although, in the waking interval, it was to them oblivion.

Somnambulism is the most perfect paradox among the phenomena of sleep, as it exhibits actions without a consciousness of them; indeed, so complete a suspension of sensibility, that contact, nay, intense inflictions, do not produce that mental consciousness which is calculated to excite alarm, or even attention.

There is a somewhat remote analogy to this, in the want of balance between the judgment and volition of ambitious minds. In the campaign of Russia, Napoleon's march was a sort of somnambulism, for he must have been madly excited to action against his better judgment. In this he forms a curious contrast with his royal predecessor; for in Louis XVI. we observe a mind that might *conceive* great things, but which volition hesitated to accomplish.

The points of the *mystery* of somnambulism were never more forcibly illustrated, to my own mind, than in the following cases:

In 1833, a man was brought before Alderman Thorp, who had a parcel *cut from his arm*, although he had strapped it tightly on to prevent this, as he was often falling asleep, even during his walk. Yet, even then, he usually took the parcels to their proper directions.

The crew of a revenue boat on the coast of Ireland, about two o'clock in the morning, picked up a man swimming in the water. He had, it appeared,

left his house about twelve; and walked two miles over a most dangerous path, and had swum about one mile. After he was taken into the boat, he could not be persuaded that he was not still in his warm bed at home.

In 1834, Marie Pau was admitted into the hospital at Bordeaux, her left hand and arm covered with deep and bleeding gashes, its tendons projecting and the bones broken. She had, in her sleep, gone into a loft to cut wood with a hedging bill. Thinking she was cutting the wood, she had hacked her fore-arm and hand, until she fainted away, and fell bathed in her blood. *She had felt no pain*, but merely had a sensation as if the parts were pricked with pins.

Some time ago, (I believe in the year 1832,) a journal thus records a case analogous in its nature, although less unhappy in its effects:

"Some fishermen at Le Conquest, near Brest, were surprised at finding, at two o'clock in the morning, a boy about twelve years old, up to his waist in the sea, fishing for flounders, of which he drew up five or six. Their surprise however was increased to wonder, when, on approaching him, they found that he was *fast asleep*. He was taken home and put to bed, but was immediately afterwards attacked with a raging fever."

IDA. These walkers were of *low degree*; I presume philosophy is not altogether exempt from the fault.

EV. Oh no: Galen was a somnambulist; and Franklin assures us, that in a warm bath at Southampton, he floated on his back nearly an hour *in his sleep*.

Now that there is an apathy of the senses during somnambulism is clear, for the eyelids are unclosed, and if a candle be held to the eye of the

somnambulist, the *actions* of the *iris* are seen, but there is seldom aversion of the head to avoid the glare. Was Mrs. Siddons aware of this, when she *smelt* to her bloody hand, but *did not look upon it*? In sleep-walking, indeed, there is always *one* at least of the five senses asleep. The actions of somnambulists often appear almost automatic without a reason for them; somewhat resembling instinct, as the beaver will still build his dome for shelter, even under a roof; or as monomaniacs will do a work in *three or four different places*, forgetful of their previous labour. It is evident, too, that there is a dulness of reflection when the progress is impeded. The somnambulist will try to *move on in a straight line*, overturning things in his course: thus Mathews, in *Somno*, overturned the tables, but had not the judgment to *go round* them. Under very great obstruction to their progress, the somnambulists will sometimes burst into tears.

Gall relates the case of a miller, who every night got up and worked in his mill, *asleep*; and Martinet, of a saddler, who also worked nightly in his sleep; and Dr. Pritchard, of one who had been subject to epileptic fits, thus: “They ceased entirely until the nineteenth year of his age, when he became a somnambulist, working during the night at his trade as a saddler, getting out on the roof of the house, going out to walk, and occupying himself in a thousand various ways. Soon after this the fits of epilepsy reappeared, occurring every five or six days, increasing in duration, and commencing from that time only with a sensation of heat, which from the *epigastrium* rapidly extended to the head, and produced complete insensibility. He was, at various times, relieved by bleeding; and, in the twenty-fourth year of his age, being then a soldier, he escaped

three months without a return of his epilepsy. In the following year, he was astonished to find himself one night on the roof of the house, wet with rain; the impression which he thence conceived, produced, some time afterwards, an attack of epilepsy, followed by contraction of his fingers and toes."

In many cases, however, there is some predeterminate motive for the walk, which excites the memory in the sleep. The somnambulist has been *thinking deeply, ere he retires to rest*, and the walk occurs early in the night; so that we might believe a mood of musing had really *prevented sleep*, and itself been the cause of the phenomena.

Thus may be explained the miracle recorded by Fulgosius. Marcus, the freedman of Pliny, dreamed that a barber, sitting on his bed, had shaved him, and awoke well trimmed;—Marcus had *unconsciously shaved himself*.

And also other cases related by Dr. Pritchard, of which I will offer you a fragment.

"——He is just recovering from a singular state of reverie, in which he has passed twenty-four hours. It began in the evening, with a *rigor*, which continued more or less the whole night. From that time he remained constantly in motion, walking up and down the room or about the house. He kept his eyes open, but was unconscious of external impressions; sometimes he muttered to himself, and by his gestures and the motions of his hands it appeared that he fancied himself to be working in his usual occupation. In this state he remained all the ensuing night and a part of the following day. During that time, he never ate or drank any thing in a natural manner; he sometimes caught hold of a piece of bread, and, having bitten it hastily, threw it down, and drank in the same way, immediately continuing

his work. If he was spoken to, he was some time without taking any notice, and then would reply hastily, as a person does who is disturbed by a question when in a reverie."

Our study of these curiosities of mind teaches us how intimately combined in their essence are all the species of illusion.

Somnambulism is a very common feature in epileptic idiots. In confirmed insanity also, we observe in an intense degree that fearless daring and almost preternatural power which characterise somnambulism. A Highland woman, in a state of *puerperal mania*, which was increased by a terrific dream, escaped to the gorges of the mountain, and herded with the deer. She became so fleet of foot that it was impossible to overtake her. One day, an awful tempest drove her and her "velvet companions" to the valleys, when she was secured. Providence, which "tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," had covered her body with hair.

The dreamer walks and talks with imaginary people,—spectral illusion. The following is a perfect illustration of this night-fantasy. It is a story told to Sir Walter Scott by a Lisbon trader: —

"Somnambulism and other nocturnal deceptions lend their aid to the formation of such phantasmata as are formed in the middle state betwixt sleeping and waking. A most respectable person, whose active life had been spent as master and part-owner of a large merchant vessel in the Lisbon trade, gave an account of such an instance, which came under his observation. He was lying in the Tagus, when he was put to great anxiety and alarm by the following incident and its consequences:—One of his crew was murdered by a Portuguese assassin, and a report arose that the ghost of the slain man haunted the

vessel. Sailors are generally superstitious, and those of my friend's vessel became unwilling to remain on board the ship; and it was probable they might desert, rather than return to England with the ghost for a passenger. To prevent so great a calamity, the captain determined to examine the story to the bottom. He soon found that, though all pretended to have seen lights and heard noises, and so forth, the weight of the evidence lay upon the statement of one of his own mates, an Irishman and a catholic, which might increase his tendency to superstition; but in other respects a veracious, honest, and sensible person, whom Captain S. had no reason to suspect would wilfully deceive him. He affirmed to Captain S., with the deepest obtestations, that the spectre of the murdered man appeared to him almost nightly, took him from his place in the vessel, and, according to his own expression, worried his life out. He made these communications with a degree of horror, which intimated the reality of his distress and apprehensions. The captain, without any argument at the time, privately resolved to watch the motions of the ghost-seer in the night, whether alone, or with a witness, I have forgotten. As the ship-bell struck twelve, the sleeper started up with a ghastly and disturbed countenance, and lighting a candle proceeded to the galley, or cock-room, of the vessel. He sat down with his eyes open, staring before him, as on some terrible object which he beheld with horror, yet from which he could not withhold his eyes. After a short space he arose, took up a tin can or decanter, filled it with water, muttering to himself all the while, mixed salt in the water, and sprinkled it about the galley. Finally, he sighed deeply, like one relieved from a heavy burden, and, returning to his hammock, slept soundly. In the next morning, the

haunted man told the usual precise story of his apparition, with the additional circumstances that the ghost had led him to the galley; but that he had fortunately, he knew not how, obtained possession of some holy water, and succeeded in getting rid of his unwelcome visitor. The visionary was then informed of the real transactions of the night, with so many particulars as to satisfy him he had been the dupe of his imagination. He acquiesced in his commander's reasoning, and the dream, as often happens in these cases, returned no more after its imposture had been detected."

The case I am about to relate occurred within my own experience.

A butcher's boy, about sixteen years old, apparently in perfect health, after dosing a few minutes in his chair, suddenly started up, and began to employ himself about his usual avocations. He had saddled and mounted his horse, and it was with the greatest difficulty that those around him could remove him from the saddle and carry him within doors. While he was held in the chair by force, he continued violently the actions of kicking, whipping, and spurring. His observations regarding orders from his master's customers, the payment at the turnpike-gate, &c. were seemingly rational. The eyes when opened were perfectly sensible to light. It appears that flagellation even had no effect in restoring the patient to a proper sense of his condition. The pulse in this case was 130, full and hard; on the abstraction of thirty ounces of blood it sunk to 80, and *diaphoresis* ensued. After labouring under this phrenzy for the space of an hour, he became sensible; was astonished at what he was told had happened, and stated that he recollected nothing subsequent to his having fetched some water and

moved from one chair to another, which indeed he *had* done immediately before his delirium came on.

CAST. In the monastery of ——, this story was told to a party of Alpine travellers, to beguile our winter's evening.

A melancholic nobleman of Italy, Signor Augustin, walked usually at the waning of the moon. The walk was always preceded by his lying on his back, with eyes fixed and open. At this time the beatings of his heart were scarcely perceptible. During this state, he noticed none of his companions around him; but if any noise was made by them, his steps were hurried and agitated, and if the noise was increased, a sort of maniacal state was induced. In his sleep he would saddle and mount his horse, he would listen at a key-hole if he heard noises in another room, and, if he entered his billiard-room, he would seem to be playing with the cue. On returning to his bed, he usually slept for ten hours after his walk. Tickling would always rouse him.

In a Gazette of Augsburg, I have read this sad story: "Dresden was the theatre of a melancholy spectacle on the 20th ult. As early as seven in the morning a female was seen walking on the roof of one of the loftiest houses in the city, apparently occupied in preparing some ornaments as a Christmas present. The house stood as it were alone, being much higher than those adjoining it, and to draw her from her perilous situation was impossible. Thousands of spectators had assembled in the streets. It was discovered to be a handsome girl, nineteen years of age, the daughter of a master baker, possessing a small independence bequeathed to her by her mother. She continued her terrific promenade for hours, at times sitting on the parapet and dressing her hair. The police came to the spot, and

various means of preservation were resorted to. In a few minutes the street was thickly strewn with straw, and beds were called for from the house, but the heartless father, influenced by the girl's stepmother, refused them. Nets were suspended from the balcony of the first floor, and the neighbours fastened sheets to their windows. All this time the poor girl was walking in perfect unconsciousness, sometimes gazing toward the moon, and at others singing or talking to herself. Some persons succeeded in getting on the roof, but dared not approach her for fear of the consequences if they awoke her. Towards eleven o'clock she approached the very verge of the parapet, leaned forwards, and gazed upon the multitude beneath. Every one felt that the moment of the catastrophe had arrived. She rose up, however, and returned calmly to the window by which she had got out. When she saw there were lights in the room she uttered a piercing shriek, which was reechoed by thousands below, and fell dead into the street."

Such would have been the result, according to poetical justice, in the beautiful romance of "La Sonnambula." Had Amina been awakened while she was descending, she would probably have toppled down headlong!

Ev. Custom would render these wakings less formidable perhaps. There was a family alluded to by Dr. Willis, in which the father and many sons jostled each other nightly in their sleep-walk. This was probably but a cheerful recognition and to sleep again.

In Fraser's Magazine is recorded a very curious story of this sort. If I remember right, an individual had the mortification of discovering every morning when he awoke, that the shirt in which he had slept was gone. Some trick was supposed to have been

played upon him by an inmate of the house; and, thinking that the practical joke would soon be abandoned, he went on day after day, till his stock of linen was completely exhausted. The individuals of the family were now anxiously examined, but no tidings of the stray linen could be obtained. It was at last suspected that some depredator had entered the house and unswathed his sleeping victim, and a strict watch was made on the following night. At a suitable hour the somnambulist was seen to quit his bed, to pass through a skylight window to the roof of the house, to enter by another window a garret that was always locked, and to return *shirtless to his lair*. The garret was examined, and the thousand and one shirts were found carefully wrapped up and deposited in a pyramid.

Something like this is the story of the spectre of Tappington, in the Ingoldsby legends.

The actions, therefore, unlike the ideas of a dream, are often neither heterogeneous nor inconsistent, and it is astonishing to observe the exactness with which the work is executed.

Dr. Pritchard tells the case of a farmer who arose, saddled his horse, and rode to market in his sleep: the Archbishop of Bordeaux the case of a student, who composed both theological essays and music thus unconsciously.

Now if the dreamer be awakened, he will relate the circumstances of his dream clearly; but the somnambulist, if roused, will generally express himself unconscious of what he intended, or of what he had done. It is, by the bye, often dangerous, on another account, to wake the sleep-walker; indeed, we have recorded the case of a young lady who was walking in a garden in her sleep; she was awoke, and almost instantly died.

But in some future somnambulism the same actions will be again performed unheeded. And if there be memory of the sleep-walk, the somnambulist, I believe, always relates his actions as the mere *ideas of a dream*, and is long a sceptic of the *fact*, even if there are visible signs of his exertions.

CAST. *I* can illustrate this question from the recollection and knowledge of an ancestor of my own. Early on a morning, an immense number of foot-prints were observed by the men about a gate (on a farm in Sussex), which were not there *overnight*. On their return the servant girl was relating her *dream*; that she was told the cows had got into a wrong field, and that she had gone out, opened the gate, and driven them back. And I remember reading that a young gentleman of Brenstein was seen to rise, get out of his window on the roof, and take a brood of young magpies from their nest, and wrap them in his cloak. He then returned quietly to his bed, and in the morning *related his dream*, to his two brothers. They had slept with him, and had witnessed this feat, of which he would not be persuaded until they showed him the birds in his cloak.

I interrupt you, Evelyn.

EV. It is evident, as in dreams, and in rare cases of disease, that the mind of the somnambulist is often a contrast to its waking faculty. The memory will leap over intervals. Dr. Dyce records an illustration of this. A girl, *in a state of somnambulism*, was taken to church, and wept at the subject of the sermon. She never adverted to this impression when she awoke; nor could she be brought to recollect it until, in her *next sleeping paroxysm*, she spoke of it distinctly.

In delirium, also, we see these intervals of

thought. The patient will commence a subject in the delirious state; when this has subsided, the subject is dropped. In the *next attack* of delirium it will again be started, ay, and at the very point, even *the word itself*, at which it was broken off.

We read, in an American journal, that a man, previous to an attack of mania which lasted *several years*, had placed his work tools in the hollow of a tree. To them no allusion was made during the period of his disorder. When, however, this passed off, he directed his son to fetch them, believing that he left them *only yesterday*.

In the same book, too, we learn of that lady who became maniacal as she was engaged in needle-work. For seven years she thought not of this; but directly she recovered, she asked for her needle-work and canvass. The same may occur in intoxication also, which *is* but another form of delirium. In Mr. Combe's work we are told of a drunken man who left a parcel at a wrong house. When *sober*, he recollected nothing of the circumstance; but when *again intoxicated*, he soon remembered his error, and reclaimed the parcel.

ASTR. These cases form high contrasts with Hamlet's proof of insanity:

——"Bring me to the test,
And I the matter will reword, which madness
Wou'd gambol from."

EV. Yet if you analyze their nature you will find them even *proofs* of derangement; for you thus see that the faculty of memory is changed according to the state of mind. In the following case, by Dr. Abercrombie, we shall find the same variation in impression and taste. A girl, in her early youth, expressed her abhorrence of tunes played on the violin, which she termed a *discordant fiddle*. She was after this introduced into more refined society, and became a somnambulist. During her paroxysm she imitated the *beautiful airs* which she said she had formerly heard on this same violin.

Lieutenant C—— was once my patient, and died a maniac. The insanity arose from thwarted ambition, and was confirmed by his notion that he had seen his death-fetch. For some time he walked and talked in his sleep; subsequently he would walk for an hour round the table unconsciously. In him, too, was this change of feeling. He once talked little, and cared less for his child; but now he would caress it fondly, and expressed the deepest anxiety for it. It was difficult to decide, at times, whether this gentleman was awake or not; indeed, these states of mania, which have been termed "melancholia errabunda" by Bellini and Montalti, are closely allied to somnambulism, for the walker is absorbed in deep thought, and totally unconscious of his actions. And the analogy appears to have been recognised by the law. It is well known that the brother of Lord Colepeper, who was a great dreamer and somnambulist, shot a guardsman and his horse. He was found guilty; but he was pardoned on the

ground of his complete *unconsciousness* in his somnambulism.

We do not wonder more to see the perfection with which these unconscious labours of the somnambulist are performed, than at the ease and power which is evinced, and the very slight fatigue which ensues; although the occupation might have been most laborious.

As in *chorea* the most delicate girls will dance incessantly for twenty-four hours, resting merely for one sole hour; and yet they will sit down perfectly cool and free from fatigue.

IDA. Is it not wonderful that the somnambulist will incur great dangers with complete *sang-froid*? They will walk over

——"Torrents roaring loud,
On the unsteadfast footing of a spear;"

or scale the gigantic precipice, the mere contemplation of which would fright their mind from its propriety, when awake. I remember to have read of a French Jew, who walked by chance across a dangerous pass over a brook, *in the dark*, without the slightest fear or harm. The next day, perceiving what danger he had incurred, he fell down dead.

EV. It is equally curious that a concentration of nervous energy, which is here the result of unconsciousness, should also be produced *by* fear in some cases, which, in others, *paralyses*; but this is indeed a slight degree of heroism, or energy of despair. Thus we leap far higher, and run much faster, when danger threatens, than we could believe.

These are all very apt illustrations of somnambulism. I will check myself in quotations of more, as the phenomena may closely resemble each other.

But what is its philosophy, and how can I venture on its explanation, which involves the most intricate pathology of the nervous system? unless, with the self-complacency of quaint old Burton, I cut the Gordian knot by this affirmation,—"There is nothing offends but a concourse of bad humours, which trouble the phantasy. These vapours move the phantasy, the phantasy the appetite, which, moving the animal spirits, causeth the body to walk up and down, as if it were awake."

Thus much I may expound to you, if I am again allowed to run up our scientific scale. The philosophy of the dream and of incubus refers to the activity of the brain with a *passive* body; for somnambulism, we require an *active* body, with an *unconscious* brain.

Now there are *four* sources of nervous influence:—the brain and *cerebellum*, within the skull; the marrow in the spinal canal; and the nervous bundles in the large cavities, termed *ganglia*.

It is on the independent or unconscious function of the marrow, chiefly, that those mysterious actions, which do not seem to be willed by a conscious mind, depend.

In the day-dream, a thought or form shall present itself, even at a time when the mind is employed on subjects of a contrasted nature. These thoughts, or forms, are usually fraught with a high degree of pleasure or of pain, or refer to events of vital importance, to the dreamer;—such are the objects of the lover's idolatry, the anticipation of misfortune, or subjects of prospective felicity. Under this excitement, the influence of external objects is often for a time lost; the *retina* may be struck by a ray, or the *membrana tympani* by a vibration, but the mind shall fail in its perception,—no *internal* impression

being made. This cannot arise from a point of the *retina*, or the expansion of the auditory nerve being pre-occupied, as some have supposed. The idea of material impression must fail in explanation; for, on the instant that the mind is awakened, the external impression is again perceived. The external sense, in this case, is not in fault; nor is its direct influence on the *sensorium* suspended; for we find that a person will continue to read in this state, as it were *mechanically*; but the attention is *diverted* by deep thought, so that the reader, at the end of his task, may have no remembrance of what he has been reading.

Let me tell of a curious little episode of Dr. Darwin's, which will aid me in my illustration. A young lady was playing on the piano a very elaborate piece of music. It was correctly and scientifically performed, although she was agitated during her task; and when it was over, the lady burst into tears. She had been watching all the time a favourite canary in the fluttering of death; and with this catastrophe her *mind* was almost wholly occupied, but her *fingers* did not err in their complicated and delicate motions, which they undoubtedly would have done, if the will or mind alone had directed them.

In sanity of mind, and in mania, the most philosophical distinction is based on the *health* or *disease* of memory. The ecstacy of madness may not seem perhaps more irrational than an ecstatic vision, but the maniac will not re-word the matter; whereas the mere visionary will repeat the action of the trance as a dream.

ASTR. But there is a sort of somnambulism the reverse of this. In the retreat to Corunna, many of the soldiers, although exhausted by a long march,

and having actually fallen asleep, continued to move forwards, leaving their companions behind, who halted and laid down to repose.

EV. This is the *continued association* of that excitement which has produced muscular motion. The mind was exhausted and sleepy, the brain was inert; but we believe that the spinal marrow does, of itself, effect motion, while the will and consciousness sleep; and we may also *stand* and sleep. These soldiers did not walk in their sleep, but slept in their walk.

ASTR. I am informed, too, that Richard Turpin, in allusion to his famous flight to York, asserted that Black Bess appeared to gallop unconsciously.

EV. It is true; and when we reflect on this gigantic feat, we may suppose that the mare gallopped the farther, because her *consciousness of fatigue was not awake*, and her muscular energy was thus concentrated.

Paralyzed muscles will often quiver when the sound limb is quiet; the brain's influence being, in this case too, inert, sensation is diminished; but *involuntary* motion continues from a habit in the muscle, or the excitement of unexhausted irritability, as in *chorea*, spasm, &c. And in some cases of *post mortem* galvanism, Dr. Dunbar, of Virginia, passed the *galvanic aura* along the *ulnar* nerve of an executed negro, and the fingers instantly quivered, and assumed the attitude and action of one playing on a flute or the strings of a violin.

ASTR. It is possible, then, to move without our *willing* to do so, or being conscious of our act.

EV. There are believed to be, indeed it is almost a demonstration,—*four sets of nerves*, traced along the spinal marrow. Two to the brain, of *sensation* and *volition*, by which the mind feels what the body

touches, and transmits its will to the muscles; two others to the marrow, by which *it* also is stimulated by outward touch, and by which *it* excites the muscles to motion.

Now when the brain's influence is kept from muscle, that muscle will still possess *irritability*, derived from the spinal marrow; nay, that irritability will be greater, *because it has not been expended* by the acts of that volition, which resides solely in the brain, and which is now cut off. Thus the *excito-motory* function, and the influence of volition, are in these cases *antagonists*. And this principle of the *incident* and *reflex spinal* nerve is an explanation of the curious dilemma, regarding the suspension of the will in sleep and dream, to which Dr. Stewart alludes.—"Not a suspension of volition, but only of *its influence* over those organs, which it moves when we are awake." Decide for yourselves between the physical and metaphysical theories.

Yet, do you not see that all this does not essentially require the direction of mind? If you tickle the palm of a sleeping child, it will close its hand upon your finger; if you awake it, and *engage its attention, it will often leave its hold*. This is a fact proved by the *anencephalous* or brainless children. Even the puppy, deprived of its brain, and also the *mammary fœtuses* of the kangaroo and opossum, fix eagerly on the nipple when it touches their lips. There is a beautiful mechanism in the foot of the roosting birds, adapted to this physiological law. The tendon of the claws is tightened immediately they are touched, by which action they contrive to grasp the bough or perch even when asleep. In cases of *paralysis* even, the foot will sometimes be instantly drawn up, although it does not possess the least sensation; we may assert, then, that irritability is in

an *inverse ratio* to sensibility.

The *polype*, in which we trace no brain or nerve, exists and moves by its irritability, and without sensation or consciousness. We know also that the *vis insita*, or *vis nervosa* of a muscle, that is, its irritability, exists even after the animal life has ceased. The turtle will live and move long after its brain has been removed. The heart itself, an involuntary muscle, is stimulated also to action without sensation. The heart of the assassin, Bellingham, beat long after he was cut from the gallows.

If I have made these things clear, I am now prepared to explain, with some anticipation, those two curious contrasts, somnambulism and incubus. If the spinal or motive nerves be asleep, and the cerebral or intellectual, or volition nerves, awake, we shall have night-mare; if, on the contrary, the motive nerves are in excess, beyond the sensiferous or volition nerves, we have sleep-walking.

ASTR. I believe the philosophy of Leibnitz affirms *two* perceptions; one with, and another without, consciousness. I do not recollect if he distinguishes the *seat* of these *perceptions*; but, if the brain be that which perceives, I presume consciousness will follow that perception sometimes in so slight a degree as not to excite judgment or reflection. Am I correct?

EV. You have adopted the common error of metaphysicians. If, in the abstraction of waking moments, some persons talk to themselves, as it were unconsciously, so, from the *reflex* influence, may volition and motion occur, with as little self-feeling. That the *immediate* impression, however, and a necessity of action, may combine, is illustrated by Dr. Beattie's case of the officer who could be thus excited in his sleep. By a whisper in his ear, he was

induced to go through the whole ceremony of a duel, and did not completely wake until the report of his pistol roused him. This gentleman was also told that he had fallen overboard, and he began to imitate the motions of swimming; then that a shark was following him, when he would dive off his couch upon the floor; and when he was told that the battle was raging around him, he proved himself an arrant coward by running away.

Somnambulism may be induced by congestion or irritation of *that point* where the *incident* nerve blends with the *grey matter* of the spinal marrow, producing internal irritation, as the tickling of the foot does through the *cutaneous* nerves of a senseless limb.

CAST. We are thankless creatures, dear Evelyn, but all this reiteration bewilders me, does it not you, Ida? Yet, in my simplicity, I can but think it unphilosophical entirely to disregard the *will* as the spring of our actions.

EV. If I must EXPLAIN, fair lady, I cannot avoid prolixity. But to your question I will answer, no; for somnambulism *may be excited* by the *memory of an intention*. In the experiment made by the committee of the physical society of Lausanne, on the Sieur Devaud, of Vevay, it was proved that on the evening before the fit of somnambulism, his head was heavy, and he had a sense of oppression on his eye-lids. If, at this time, the mind was impressed by some legend, or story, or incident, the actions of the sleep-walk were perfectly *coincident with such a subject*. If a romantic tale of banditti were related, his alarm would be apparent in his subsequent sleep. In this somnambulist was beautifully illustrated the effect of permanent impression on the brain, rendering, for a time, the sense of vision useless; for having once perused his paper, it was so imprinted on his mind,

that the *exact* spot for each letter was *exactly* fixed on *by the finger*. And we have heard of one more interesting case, in which the somnambule, remembering that he had made errors in his writing, traced, on a blank paper substituted for that written on, the corrections, *in the very places corresponding to the erroneous writing*. And that here was memory was proved in this, that during the time his eyes were shut, the pen was dropped on the *very spot* where the inkstand stood; but this being removed, no ink was obtained, and the writing was blank.

Now we believe that there are certain vessels which contribute to nervous energy, perhaps by secreting a nervous fluid in the brain, or by concentrating electricity, which Dr. Faraday believes may constitute the *animal* portion of the nervous system. This influence may be profusely accumulated in a waking state; the resolution to act has been formed; or, there may be a rapid production in sleep of this energy. Then, when sleep occurs, *this impression becomes uncontrolled*. The third form of insanity of Spurzheim, irresistibility, exists, and the night-walk takes place. And indeed it may form an interesting analogy to that satiety of the voluptuary, "Childe Harold,"

> "Who e'en for change of scene wou'd seek the shades below,"

and to one unhallowed story related in "Salmonia."

From this excess there is the stimulus of *pain to move*; one of the most powerful motives of human action. Cardan, if we may believe in his "Opera et Vita," was at least a monomaniac; and he "was wont instinctively, as it were, to relieve this tendency of his mind by the excitement of bodily pain." I may assure you that I have, during my professional

studies, often witnessed (and indeed have sometimes suggested) a remedy on this knowledge: you may be aware, that a severe and painful disorder will mitigate, if not entirely dissipate, that apathetic misery which springs from a vacant or unoccupied mind.

In contrasting childhood and age, we witness these curiosities in the restless activity of youth and early manhood, for at these periods we are very constant somnambulists; not so in the passive state of old age, in which sleep-walking is very rare. Something of this we see also in the *growing pains* and *fidgets* of girls and those whose duties are sedentary. Exercise is the relief for all this.

Now when the sleep-walk has exhausted this excess of irritability or electricity (if it be so), the dreamer returns to bed and sleep. A hint is here thrown out to us, that if powerful exertion be employed previous to sleep, the night-walk might not ensue. Lethargy often terminates in somnambulism.

If I may for another moment still prose over the intricate, but deeply interesting question of the pathology of somnambulism, I will observe, that we often find it one symptom of madness or idiocy, and we know that somnambulism not seldom terminates in epilepsy.

In the brains of epileptic idiots, who are very determined somnambulists, we discover changes the most various; *effusion*, *congestion*, *ossification of membranes*, *ramollissement*, *indurcissement*, bony *spiculæ*, or points pressing the brain, *tubercles*, *cysts*. In some, the skull assumes the density of ivory. Yet in those persons who have been known to be sleep-walkers, the inspection is seldom satisfactory. *Plethora* of the head has often, however, preceded the sleep-walk. Signor Pozzi, physician to Benedict XIV.,

if he submitted not to depletion each second month, became a somnambulist; and we have known that in *chorea, previous to the dance*, and in some cases of somnambulism also, pain has been felt from the *occiput* along the course of the *spinal marrow*. This is from immediate excitement; but *dyspepsia* and other *abdominal derangements* may so influence the *ganglia* and *nerves of organic life*, and through them the brain and cord, as to excite sleep-walking by *remote* sympathy.

That injuries of the nervous matter about the nape of the neck are of the highest importance in our studies of these eccentric actions, is certain. The experiments of Flourens show that the *progressive* or *forward* motion of animals, is influenced by varied states of the *cerebellum*. When Majendie cut through the *corpora striata*, the animal darted forward; when the *pons Varolii* was cut, the animal rolled over sixty times in a minute.

When a soldier is struck by a ball about the *cervical vertebræ*, he often springs from the ground and drops dead.

It is our duty, then, not to slight the condition of the somnambulist. If *simple irritation* be its exciting cause, much benefit may be derived from *counter-action* on the surface, and other remedial means. Even if there be *diseased structure*, some palliation may be afforded. As preventives of the fit, we may inculcate an abstinence from late meals, exercise in the evening previous to retirement to rest, a high pillow, &c.

If the propensity continue in spite of our efforts, it will be right to have the windows fastened or locked, and the door of the chamber bolted *without*; or to confine the ankle or wrist to the bed-post by a long fillet, which may by its detention awake the

sleeper on starting from the bed.

IMITATIVE MONOMANIA.

"Men, wives, and children, stare, cry out, and run,
As it were doomsday."

JULIUS CÆSAR.

There are other very curious analogies of somnambulism, which are marked by a power of action that appears preternatural. And here again we witness the irresistibility of motion, which seems to subvert the laws of gravitation and the principles of mechanics. The involuntary twitchings and contortions of *St. Vitus's dance* present the slighter form of these eccentric actions, which, in the intense degree, become like the fury of a raving maniac.

In young girls there often is a proneness to be excited by slight causes,—to be startled by mere trifles.

Savarry tells us of a man who, at two o'clock each day, was irresistibly impelled to rap at doors and make very odd noises, and felt intense pleasure in doing this. If this had occurred in the night, it would have been termed somnambulism.

Gall also relates of a young man at Berlin, who, after rolling about in his bed for some time, and jumping out and in repeatedly in his sleep, at last started up awake, astonished at the crowd around his bed. And Dr. Darwin writes of a boy, nine years old, who went through a course of gymnastics, with an occasional song between the acts. At length he seemed bursting, and soon sank down in a stupor.

ASTR. I have read, (I think in Mezeray,) of an epidemic mania of this sort, in which the creatures

tore off their clothes, and ran naked through the streets and churches, until they fell breathless on the ground. Some of them swelled even to *bursting*, unless they were bound down by cords. The disease was referred to the agency of demons, and treated by exorcisms; they even tore their flesh to free themselves from their possessing devils. I have seen also a confident story of some nuns, who jumped so high during an hysteric ecstacy, that they were at length seen to fly; in imitation, perhaps, of the Corybantes, the priests of Cybele, who, in the celebration of their mysteries, leaped and raved, like madmen in the midst of their shrieks and howlings.

Ev. All these eccentricities amount to complete monomania for the time they last, and they are marked often by a very violent *imitative* propensity; like the delirium which came upon the Abderites, on witnessing the performance of the "Andromeda" of Euripides, by Archelaüs. Of such nature was the "*dancing mania*" of the middle ages; the *tarantula* of Apulia, in which melancholy was succeeded by madness; the feats of the *Jumpers* of Cornwall, and the *Convulsionnaires* of the Parisian miracles.

Yet with all this apparent violence, there might be a power of control by management. On some sudden and extreme mental influence, there was in the Maison de la Charité, at Haerlem, an infectious convulsion of this nature, so that the troop of little scholars, girls and boys, were a mere legion of dancing maniacs; and nothing appeared to relieve them, until a ruse of the physician Boërhave put to flight the illusion. With a solemn voice he pronounced, in the hearing of the little creatures, his decision that each of them should be burned to the bone of the arm with a red hot iron. From that moment the mania subsided.

Dr. Hecker, in his account of the *Dance* of the middle ages, notices two forms of this national monomania:—"*Tarantulism*," and the "*Danse de Saint Guy*."

The first was marked by all sorts of illusions, demonomania, obscene dancing, groaning, and falling down senseless.

The persons who believed themselves bitten by the tarantula became sad and stupid. The flute or guitar alone could give them succour. At the sound of its music they awoke, as if by enchantment; their eyes opened, their movements, which at first slowly followed the music, gradually became animated, until they merged into an impassioned dance. To interrupt the music was disastrous:—the patients relapsed into their stupidity, until they became exhausted by fatigue. During the attacks, several singular idiosyncracies were manifested, contrary to what occurred in Germany. Scarlet was a favourite colour, though some preferred green or yellow. A no less remarkable phenomenon was their ardent longing for the sea; they implored to be carried to its shores, or to be surrounded by marine pictures; some even threw themselves into the waves. But the dominant passion was for music, though they varied in their particular tastes. Some sought the braying sound of the trumpet, others the softer harmony of stringed instruments.

There was once a woman of Piedmont who was charmed by the "capriccio," played by the leader of an orchestra, into an ecstatic dance. In her, the sensations, as she expressed them, were so "strangely mingled," as powerfully to illustrate the fine line of distinction between pleasure and pain. She gradually became weaker, and the memory of the music was so intense, that, while she was irresistibly impelled to

this maniacal dance, her expressions were those of acute pain, and her cries were constantly of those "horrid sounds." In six months, this unhappy creature died exhausted.

The *Tigretier*, of Abyssinia, is believed in Africa to be the effect of demoniac influence. Indeed there is in this strange state a complete metamorphosis of features, and voice, and manner. In the hearts, even of the women, the affections of nature and of attachment seem to be annihilated, and they seem overwhelmed by some oppressive weight, which is dissipated only by almost preternatural exertion, excited by the charm of music; in which wild dance the female is dressed in ornaments of silver, like the chiefs of battle. This maniac movement is often, I believe, kept up from early morning until sunset, ere the accumulation of energy is exhausted; and even then the woman will start off suddenly and outrun the fleetest hunter, until she drops as if dead. But it seems the climax of the cure is not complete, until she drops all her ornaments, and a matchlock is fired over her, when she owns her name and family, both having been previously denied. She is taken to the church and sprinkled with holy water, and then the spell is broken.

There is another strange monomania, an incitement to suicide, evinced in that loathsome disease of the Lombard and Venetian plains, *Pellagra*. The prevailing fashion is *drowning*; so that Strambi has termed this monomania, *water-madness*.

Others are driven on by still more horrible fancies. Thus *Grenier* wrapped himself in a wolf-skin, and murdered young maids that he might devour them. And, among ourselves, the desire to *change the infant into a cherub*, has led the wild fanatic to the murder of the innocents!

ASTR. This, I suppose, is *Lycanthropy*, or wolf-madness, on which old Burton so funnily expatiates; and to which the author of the old play of "Lingua" also points, alluding to the

"Thousand vain imaginations,
Making some think their heads as big as horses,
Some that they're dead, some that they're turned to wolves."

In the woods of Limousin, in France, the belief in the power of changing from men to wolves is still prevalent. The *Loup-garoux*, or *Wehr-wolf*, was thought to have been in league with Satan.

In my wanderings through Poictou, these monsters seemed to me to confine their unholy powers to midnight prowling, and the wolf-howl. Yet Marie, in the "*Lai du Bisclavaret*," endows them with the cannibalism of the goul and the vampire:

"So Garwal roams in savage pride,
And hunts for blood, and feeds on men;
Spreads dire destruction, far and wide,
And makes the forests broad his den."

EV. The extraordinary effects of the instinct of imitation in spreading these epidemics, is but an example on the grand scale of what we see daily instances of in yawning, hiccoughing, coughing, and other similar acts, and in the propagation of *hysteria* and *epilepsy*. Some persons, again, possess an irresistible tendency to imitate others in mere trifling things. Tissot relates a case of a female, who never could avoid doing *every thing she saw any one else do*. She was obliged to walk blindfolded in the streets; and, if you tied her hands, she experienced intolerable anguish until they were loosened. There was another girl, that was seen by Dr. Horn, at

Salzburg, who sat *cross-legged*, like a hog. She had been brought up in a sty.

Even during the Commonwealth, the religious fanaticism of the Quakers carried the proselytes to such a pitch, that the preachers were thrown into excessive convulsions, and *seemed* possessed of demons. The churches were broken into, and the ministers insulted and attacked in the pulpits. Chains, and locks, and the pillory, which were inflicted on these mad people, failed, as it might be expected, in restoring their senses, although they bore them with the most astonishing fortitude. In their worshipping, the same eccentricities were seen: after a deep and long silence, a number of the devotees rose at once, and declaimed. The presumptuous imitation of the Saviour was a favourite illusion; and the forty-days' fast sometimes terminated in death. Naylor, convinced of his divine identity, rode in procession on a mule, while his deluded proselytes spread their garments, and sang Hosannas to him. Nay, the purity of the female mind was so grossly perverted, that a Quakeress walked naked into a church, before Cromwell, *as a sign to the people*!

There was a letter in an "Aberdeen Herald," dated Invergordon, Sept. 9, 1840, from which I quote this story:

"I had the curiosity to go to the church of Roskeen, last night, to observe the *workings of a revival*. I was prepared for something extraordinary, but certainly not for what I saw. The sobs, groans, loud weeping, fainting, shrieking, mingled in the most wild and unearthly discordance with the harsh cracked voice of the clergyman, who could only at intervals be heard above the general weeping and wailing. I was struck by the cries being all from

young voices; and on examining a little more closely, I found that the performers were almost wholly children—girls, varying from five to fourteen years of age; a few young women, perhaps a dozen, but not a single man or lad. I stood for nearly half an hour by three girls, the eldest about twelve years of age, who were in the most utter distress, each vying with the other in despairing cries. Their mother came to them, but made no exertion to check their bursts of —I don't know what to call it. In the church-yard there were lots of children in various stages of fainting. One poor girl seemed quite dead, and I insisted on one of the old crones, who was piously looking on, to go for some water, or to attempt something to give her relief, but was told, 'It was no' a case for water; it was the Lord, and he would do as he liked with her. She was seeing something we didna see, and hearing something we didna hear.' She was lying on the ground, supported by her father. Indeed the poor ignorant parents have been worked upon until they believe they are highly honoured by the Lord, by having such signs of the Spirit manifested in their families. The service, if it may be called so, was in Gaelic."

In the reign of the second George, Count Zinzendorf came from Germany and established the principles of the Hernhutters, or Moravians. These were debased by ceremonies, which they misnamed worship, of the most licentious character.

Like Mahomet, Zinzendorf proclaimed himself a prophet and a king, and in his presumption of an immediate appeal to, and answer from, the Saviour, in all matters of doubt, made a host of proselytes.

IDA. In our own day, another delirious profanation of the holy name of the Saviour has been exhibited, in the imitative monomania of *Sir William*

Courtenay (as he was called), in Kent. In May, 1838, this wild enthusiast (whose beauty of feature and expression closely resembled the paintings of Christ by Guido and Carlo Dolce, and who, to heighten this resemblance, wore his hair and beard in a peculiar form, and clothed himself in a robe) gained by his art numerous disciples in Kent, who implicitly believed his divine nature and mission. His career was, however, soon closed in a very awful and bloody tragedy—the death of himself, of many of his *followers*, and of the military who were called out to secure him. His *disciples*, to the last, not only believed in his divine nature, but even after his interment were watching *in implicit belief of his approaching resurrection*!

The mania of the "unknown tongues" has almost equalled this delusion. If we presume to analyse, on the principles of philosophy or reason, those religious eccentricities, which seem, even in the mind of the fanatic, to spring from sincerity or conviction, they must yet, I suppose, be termed *maniacal*, and this without the slightest profanation of the Divine will. Evil, doubtless, is permitted for a wise purpose, and while we deplore its *immediate* effects, we must not hope to reveal its origin or its end.

At Brighton, some time ago, while at one of the Millennium chapels, the wife of Caird, who was then preaching, uttered a dismal howling of this *unknown* language, which paralysed some, and threw into convulsions many others of the congregation. A young French lady among them instantly was struck with maniacal despondency, and, after some infliction of self-torture, became delirious and died in a hospital.

We learn from Plutarch, that in Milesium there

was once a prevalent fashion among the young girls to hang themselves; while the same mania once spread among the demoiselles of Lyons, to drown themselves in the Rhone. The Convulsionists of Paris, in 1724, not only inflicted self-torture, but in their wild delight solicited the bystanders to stone them.

The commission of a great or extraordinary crime to this day produces, not unfrequently, a kind of mania of imitation in the district in which it happened. I have known incidents, falsely called religious, to occasion similar events; and what is remarkable, the scene or place of the *first* event seemed to favour its repetition, by other persons approaching it. Thus a supposed miracle having been performed before the gate of the convent of St. Genevieve, such a number of similar occurrences happened on the same spot in a few days, that the police was compelled to post a peremptory notice on the gate, prohibiting any individual from working miracles on the place in question. When the locality was thus shut up, the *thaumaturgia* ceased. It is not long since we witnessed in Paris two events of a similar character. About four years ago, at the Hotel des Invalides, a veteran hung himself on the threshold of one of the doors of a corridor. No suicide had occurred in the establishment for two years previously, but in the succeeding fortnight five invalids hung themselves on the same cross-bar, and the governor was obliged to shut up the passage. During the last days of the empire, again, an individual ascended the column in the Place Vendome, and threw himself down and was dashed to pieces. The event excited a great sensation; and in the course of the ensuing week, *four persons* imitated the example, and the police were obliged to proscribe the entrance to the column. The same

mania was almost induced by the suicide of a foolish girl, who leaped from the balcony of our own city column on Fish-street Hill. Indeed Monseigneur Mare, of Paris, alludes to a society enrolled for the mere purpose of suicide; and there was an annual ballot to decide which of these miserable creatures should be immolated *as the suicide of the year*!!

Dr. Burrows, I remember also, relates cases analogous to these. They occurred in the ranks of some army on the continent, in which there was an epidemic propensity to suicide, until the general began to hang the soldiers on trees as scarecrows. The mania, as you may believe, very soon subsided.

Ev. Your curiosities eclipse mine, Ida. But the natural *leaning to the marvellous*, will, without mania or fanaticism, by the mere sympathy of intercommunicating minds, spread wide these illusions, even in the most simple instances. Some time since, a very large assemblage were watching with intense interest the stone lion of the Percies, at Northumberland House. They were unanimous in the conviction that he was swinging his tail to and fro; a false impression, of course, which had gradually accumulated from this solitary exclamation of a passenger: “By heaven, he wags his tail!” Of this sort of illusion I was myself a witness. Beneath the western portico of St. Paul’s, a crowd of gazers were bending their eyes on the image of the saint, who was nodding at them with a very gracious affability. Curiosity had risen to the pitch of wonder at a miracle, when suddenly a sparrow-hawk flew from the ringlets of the saint, and the illusion vanished.

These eccentricities, you will perceive, occurred *spontaneously*; and it is a most interesting study to note the analogies between *these* diseased actions, and *those* resulting from the influence of certain

gases and vegetable juices.

I have known the seeds of *stramonium*, when swallowed by children, produce a temporary delirium, and a state of *chorea*, singing, dancing, laughing, and other mad frolics, which could not be controlled. And in the "History of Virginia," by Beverly, it is recorded, that during the rebellion of Bacon, at James Town, some soldiers, after eating the young leaves of *stramonium* for spinach, enacted "a very pleasant comedy, for they turned natural fools upon it for several days. One would blow up a feather into the air, another would dart straws at it with much fury, another, stark naked, was seen sitting up in a corner, like a monkey, grinning and making mouths." In this frantic condition they were confined for safety. In eleven days they recovered, but had no memory of the delirium. Such also is the effect of large quantities of black henbane. Dr. Patouillet, of Toucy, in France, in 1737 witnessed a mania of this sort in nine persons, who had eaten of that root. It was marked by the strangest actions and expressions. In these also there was no recollection of the illusion.

But the closest analogy, in point of concentrated energy, to eccentric somnambulism, is the effect of the inhalation of the "gaseous oxide of azote," or "protoxide of nitrogen," the *laughing-gas*. So intense is its impression on the nerves and blood of the brain, that it effects a perfect *metempsychosis*. This gas contains a greater relative proportion of oxygen than common air, and it is inhaled through a tube from a bladder or silk bag. After a little giddiness and headache, the breather soon begins to feel a very delicious thrilling; the eyes are dazzled by even common objects, so much are the senses excited. Pride and *pugnacity* are quickly developed: we think

ourselves grand seignors, and elevated far beyond the common class of mortals. We expect from all a *salaam*, and, with all the proud dignity of papacy, wonder that the people do not fall down and kiss our toe. We turn a deaf ear to all which is addressed to us; in short, we are dissociated from all around us. Sir Humphrey Davy, as the effect was wearing off, seemed to have been charmed into the combined philosophy of Berkley and Hume. He writes, "with the most intense belief and prophetic manner, I exclaimed: 'Nothing exists but thoughts; the universe is composed of impressions, ideas, pleasures, and pains.' "

This brilliancy is probably the effect of scarlet or highly *oxygenized* blood, acting on the brain and nerves of the senses.

The duration of this gaseous influence is usually from five minutes to a quarter of an hour. It is not, however, always so transient.

From the record of Professor Silliman, it seems to have converted an "Il Penseroso" into a "L'Allegro." A man of melancholy became a man of mirth: and, although before his inhalation he had no sweet tooth in his head, he began to eat little except *sugar and sweet cakes*, and to swallow *molasses* with his meat and potatoes.

Although *sparring* is the grand amusement of the gas-breather, yet we can often decide on the shades of character, however studiously they may have been concealed from us in sane moments.

A gentleman among my fellow-students threw himself forcibly on his back, by his attempts to spout Shakspere with dignity and effect.

Another threw himself prostrate in the snow, and rolling himself over and back across the quadrangle at Guy's, turned himself into an immense cylindrical

snowball.

Another snapped his fingers in defiance, and walked with a most pompous strut, and without his hat, to the middle of London Bridge, ere he was brought to his senses.

Indeed these experiments seem so replete with the ludicrous, that I wonder Cruikshank and Hood have not often caught a fact, as a theme for their brilliant fancy.

REVERIE.

"That fools should be so deep-contemplative."

"In his brain
He hath strange places cramm'd
With observation, the which he vents
In mangled forms."

AS YOU LIKE IT.

ASTR. I was dreaming last night, Evelyn, of your eccentric puppets; and I cannot but wonder at the *contrasted* influences of nitrous oxide on the brain and marrow, as you say. In one, we see the wondrous phenomena of somnambulism; in the other, a state of apathy, like the almost senseless reverie of the idiot.

EV. You are shrewd, Astrophel, and have hit on these objective analogies with the acuteness of a pathologist. Contrasts they truly are; and yet there is a natural transition from one to the other.

Somnambulism is the most eccentric condition of sleep; and *Reverie* is that state which constitutes the nearest approximation to slumber. But the French verb, *rêver*, is a comprehensive word, signifying all the eccentricities of mind, from idiocy to divine

philosophy; so that its derivative, “Reverie,” may be construed into Dream, Delirium, Raving, Thought, Fancy, Meditation, Abstraction.

You may wonder at this combination, but, however you may smile, the existence of every one is marked by a certain degree of moral or instinctive mania, modified by the peculiarity of habit, taste, or sentiment; and, I may add, of intellectual *monomania* (“monomanie raisonnante”), in reference to some particular subject. There may indeed be an *incubation* of madness; and, if circumstances occur to *sit* and *hatch*, the germs will be developed. When these two, moral and intellectual error (which may *separately* pass current in the world for eccentricity), unite, then the man is mad, and becomes an irresponsible agent.

The term “Reverie,” then, will imply the varied conditions of that faculty, which phrenology terms *concentrativeness*; the extremes of which mark the idiot and the sage.

Idiocy is the most abject and imperfect condition of the waking mind, resembling closely the first disposition to slumber, the sensation of *doziness*. The creature will commit the most absurd acts, and utter the most ridiculous or profane expressions, without the redeeming apology of being engaged in abstract thought or abstruse calculation.

It is consolatory, however, to know that this weakness is usually *connate*, or manifested at the very dawn of intellect; so that we have not the painful study of contrasting, in one being, the light of mind with its shadowy darkness.

The idiot, indeed, often appears so little more than a laughing or a dancing vegetable, that pity yields to curiosity and mirth; and, instead of mourning, we work into the plot and incidents of a

novel or a stage farce, either that strange mixture of weakness and cunning which is delineated in Davie Gellatly, or the absolute imbecility of Audrey, Slender, and Sir Andrew Aguecheek.

But this melancholy being is not always a *solitary* curiosity. In many districts, especially in the stream-fed valleys of Europe and Asia, nature fails, by wholesale, in the development of that "paragon of animals," man.

Such are the *Capots*, or *Cretins*, of Chinese Tartary, as we learn from Sir George Staunton; those of the Rhone and Tyrolese valleys; the *Coliberts* of Rochelle; the *Cagneux* of Brittany; the *Gaffos* of Navarre; the *Gavachos* of Spain; and the *Gezitani* of the Pyrenees.

The condition of the lowest class of these wretched beings is indeed that of idiocy; their intellectual power being little more than the mental blank which would mark the *acephalous*, or brainless monsters, could such abortions attain the age of maturity. It is mere *animal life*, with the very faintest stamp of intelligence.

The *Cretin* is from four to five feet high, cadaverous, flabby, the head immensely out of proportion, the skin studded with livid eruptions, the eyes blear and squinting, the lips slavering, the limbs weak and crooked; and (like the *Stulbings* of Swift) the senses are imperfect, the hearing and speech often absolutely lost,—the expression being that of a fool or a satyr. And dissection demonstrates the frequent causes of all this; for, in the skull of these beings, we often find a *bluish jelly*, instead of healthy brain. This diseased *pulp* is thus the source of both animal and intellectual apathy. The idiot will often seem insensible to pain, while his flesh is burning; and objects or subjects do not cause sufficient

impression on this pulpy brain to produce their *image*, so that the being may almost live without a sense.

CAST. This is a dreary, but, I suppose, a faithful picture, and shows us one of those impressive contrasts which nature is fraught with. The Cretin dwarf amidst the gigantic sublimity of the Alps; the lava stream rolling over the chestnut groves of Valombrosa; the malaria that steams up from the Pontine even to Albano; the murky sulphur cloud that floats over Avernus, and the Solfaterra; and the poison-snake creeping among the honied flowers and purple festoons which gild the prairies and interlace the forests of Columbia, show us how intimately are blended the lights and shadows of creation. Yet Evelyn will let me ask him if there are not many beautiful stories, which we may have deemed the creation of poesy, proving that idiotism is not always *definite* and *permanent*. I ought to blush while I recite them. The romance of Cymon and Iphigenia is not a mere fable. I have heard a story of a youth who was an idiot to his 17th year. At this time he saw a beautiful girl, and instantly felt deep and devoted love for her; and became, from this almost divine influence, as acute in intellect as his playmates.

ASTR. And what writeth the quaint Anatomist of Melancholy?—"We read in the lives of the Fathers a story of a child that was brought up in the wilderness from his infancy by an old hermite. Now come to man's estate, he saw by chance two comely women wandering in the woods. He asked the old man what creatures they were. He told him fayries. After a while talking *obiter*, the hermite demanded of him which was the pleasantest sight that he ever saw in his life? He readily replied, the two fayries he espied in the wilderness. So that without doubt there is

some secret loadstone in a beautiful woman, a magnetique power."

IDA. We do not hold your gallantry lightly, Astrophel; there is some hope of your conversion.

EV. That mind is termed *weak*, where there is a want of the power of fixing the attention to one object, a *wandering of the imaginative faculty*. A train of ideas arises, between the links of which there is some remote relation; but its beginning and end may appear *so dissonant*, that the absent person will fail to recognize the connexion, until, by an effort to retrace the steps of thought, the mystery is developed.

IDA. The subjects of this form of reverie are, I presume, the *wool-gatherers* of society, being "every thing by turns, and nothing long;" and often, like the dog in the fable, losing the substance while they grasp at the shadow; others employ their time by sitting

"Musing all alone,
Building castles in the air,"

forming plans and projecting schemes which shall fill men's minds with wonder, and their own pockets with gold.

But these castle-builders are, alas! but the dupes of their own mad fancy. The card-house is nearly finished, and one imprudent touch of the child topples it down headlong. One of the most salutary lessons on this foible is the fable of the Persian visionary, the glassman Alnaschar, who, by rehearsing one kick of the foot, that was to indicate his despotic will, broke into ten thousand pieces the basket of merchandize, which, by its accumulating profits, was to raise him to the highest dignities. Such are the results of self-glamourie or castle-building.

EV. It is a moral lesson of great worth, dear Ida. But these wanderings are often assimilating the true delirium of fever, of which the dreams of Piranesi are examples. In his sketches of these illusions he figures himself as ascending by steps so high that he at length vanishes into the clouds.

Now there are many curious instances of forgetfulness, as there may be a confusion of ideas from this deficiency of concentration, memory being, as it were, deranged. From study, or intense thought, a jumble of strange ideas will sometimes force themselves involuntarily on the mind, displacing or confusing the subject of meditation.

Thus a German, of the name of Spalding, of high attainments, informs us, that after great mental labour, he was intending to write this receipt: "fifty dollars, being one half-year's rate," but quite unconsciously concluded it thus: "fifty dollars through the salvation of Bra." And the author of the "Spiritual Treasury," Mason, during his devotion to its composition, had, as he believed, taken the address of a visitor on whom he was to wait; but on referring to his note, he read, not the address, but —"Acts ii. verse 8."

Children have *naturally* a want of power of concentration. I have told you that if a new or more attractive object strikes their sight, they will drop that which they were holding; and Foote would often, while taking a pinch, let his snuff-box fall from his hand, if for a moment his attention was diverted.

ASTR. The reverse of wandering, then, you term *concentrativeness*. You would not stigmatize the passive or involuntary form of abstraction, as the reverie of a *monomaniac*.

EV. No. As attention is concentration of a sense, abstraction is the concentration or attention of the

mind; therefore the power of fixing the senses and forgetting the mind, is attention, that of fixing the mind and forgetting the senses, is abstraction—philosophy, if you will.

The active form, the power of fixing the attention on one subject, or of separating ideas and bringing them into association on one point, is the great characteristic of the philosopher and the mathematician. That inattention to *minutiæ* during this abstraction, has, I grant, caused the shafts of satire to be profusely flung at many a "learned pundit;" for the jokes of Rabelais are eclipsed by the eccentricities of our sages: Dominie Sampson is no caricature.

As I trace these forms of reverie from monomania to its curious contrast, the *folie raisonnante* of men of one idea, (in which there is an aberration of intellect, or want of consciousness on *all subjects but one*,) and so on to philosophical abstraction, we shall learn, not without some humility, how close an alliance does really exist between great wits and madness.

The records of history and fiction teem with the illusions of the monomaniacs from intense impression. The madness of Ophelia and of Lear, are true and faithful illustrations of the effects of *brooding over sorrow*. In the monarch, indeed, that one momentary glimpse of reason when the word "*king*" like an electric shock falls on his ear, and, for an instant, lights up his intellect, which as suddenly darkness again overshadows, beautifully shows forth by contrast this madness of one idea.

Dr. Gooch relates the case of a lady, who in consequence of an alarm of fire, believed that she was the Virgin Mary, and that her head was constantly encircled by a brilliant halo or glory.

A gentleman, on narrowly escaping from the

earthquake at Lisbon, fell into a state of delirium whenever the word “earthquake” was pronounced in his hearing.

In “Pechlin” we read of a lady, who gazed with painless interest on the comet of 1681 until she observed it *through a telescope* of high power; the terror was so intense, that she was frightened to death even in a few days.

Dr. Morrison relates the case of an insane gentleman who had consulted a gypsy, and was instantly in a state of high excitement, whenever a subject associated with her prophecies was alluded to.

My friend, Dr. Uwins, informed me of an intellectual young gentleman, who from some morbid association with the idea of an elephant, was struck by an horrific spasm whenever the word was named, *or even written* before him; and to such a pitch was this infatuation carried, that elephant *paper*, if he were sensible it were such, produced the same effect.

The Reverend John Mason, of Water Stratford, evinced in every thing sound judgment, except that he believed that he was Elias, and foretold the advent of Christ, who was to commence the millennium at Stratford.

Dr. Abercrombie writes of a young botanist who had gained a prize: he thought he was in a boat sailing to Greenwich on a botanical excursion, and conversed rationally on all points but that of the prize, which he asserted another student had gained.

Hear, too, another rhapsody of the “Opium-Eater.” After a close and intense study of the works of Livy, the words Consul Romanus seemed to haunt his mind. “At a clapping of hands would be heard the heart-rending sounds of ‘Consul Romanus;’ and

immediately came sweeping by in gorgeous paludaments, Paulus Marius girt round by a company of centurions, with the crimson tunic hoisted on a spear, and followed by the alalagmos of the Roman legions."

There is a story (written in the seventeenth century) of a youth, who in a playful frolic put a ring on the marriage finger of a marble Venus; and a strange illusion came upon him that she had thus become his wife, and, in obedience to the injunctions of the ceremony, came to his bed when the sable canopy of night was spread around them. So intense was this illusion, and so cold and loveless was his heart withal, that, as the story goes, an *exorcist was employed* to dissolve the spell which had so firmly bound him.

IDA. I believe it was Mrs. Barry, who (as we read in the "Last Essays of Elia,") averred that when playing the child of Isabella, she felt the burning tears of Mrs. Porter fall on her neck, as she was breathing o'er her some pathetic sentence. Even the study of Lady Macbeth, in midnight solitude, so intensely excited the imagination of Mrs. Siddons, that Campbell says, as she was disrobing herself in her chamber, she trembled with affright, even at the rustling of her own silk attire.

EV. I could add many stories to yours, Ida. This sensibility, if protracted or in excess, becomes the *Panophobia* of Esquirol. He attended once a lady whom the slightest noise alarmed, and who was wont to scream with affright at the simple moving of herself in bed.

From the journal of Esquirol I will quote other fragments, in which we see that every object was associated with *one* image.

"During our promenade he (a gallant general)

interrupted me several times, in the midst of a very connected conversation, saying, "Do you hear how they repeat the words '*coward*, *jealous*?' &c." This illusion was produced by the noise of the leaves and the whistling of the wind among the branches of the trees, which *appeared to him well-articulated sounds*; and, although I had each time combated it with success, the illusion returned whenever the wind agitated the trees anew.

"A young married man was in a state of fury whenever he saw a woman leaning on a man's arm, being convinced that it was *his own wife*. I took him to the theatre at the commencement of his convalescence, but as soon as a lady entered the saloon accompanied by a gentleman, he became agitated, and called out eagerly several times, 'That is she, that is she.' I could hardly help laughing, and we were obliged to retire.

"A lady, twenty-three years of age, afflicted with hysterical madness, used to remain constantly at the windows of her apartment during the summer. When she saw a beautiful cloud in the sky, she screamed out 'Garnerin, Garnerin, come and take me!' and repeated the same invitation until the cloud disappeared. She mistook the clouds for balloons sent up by Garnerin."

CAST. There is here as much romance, as when Ajax mistook a drove of oxen for the armed Greeks, or Don Quixote the windmills for a band of Spanish giants.

EV. Again, Dr. Beddoes relates the case of a scholar, who locked himself up to study the Revelation. The confinement brought on *dyspeptic* pains and spasms, and he was persuaded that "the monster blasphemy, with ten heads, was preying on his vitals."

The Reverend Simon Brown died with the conviction that his *rational soul* was annihilated by a special fiat of the Divine will; and a patient in the Friends' "Retreat," at York, thought he had no soul, heart, or lungs.

From "Tulpius" we learn, that the wife of Salomon Galmus sank into a state of extreme melancholy, from the deep conviction that she was a visitant from the tomb, but sent back to the world *without her heart*, for God had detained that in heaven.

Such illusions are sometimes excited by wounds of the brain. A soldier of the field of Austerlitz was struck with a delirious conviction that he was but an ill-made model of his former self. "You ask how Père Lambert is," (he would say;) "he is dead, killed at Austerlitz; *that* you now see is a mere machine, made in his likeness." He would then often lapse into a state of catalepsy insensible to every stimulus.

Dr. Mead tells us of an Oxford student, who ordered the *passing bell* to be rung for him, and *went himself* to the belfry to instruct the ringers. He returned to his bed only to die.

A Bourbon prince thought himself dead, and refused to eat until his friends invited him to dine with Turenne and other French heroes long since departed.

There was a tradesman who thought he was a seven-shilling piece, and advertised himself thus: "If my wife presents me for payment, don't change me." Accuse me not of transatlantic plagiarism.

Bishop Warburton tells us of a man who thought himself a *goose pie*; and Dr. Ferriday, of Manchester, had a patient who thought he had *swallowed the devil.*

So indeed thought Luther. As in Hudibras,

"Did not the devil appear to Martin
Luther in Germany for certain?"

In Paris there lived a man who thought he had with others been guillotined, and when Napoleon was emperor, their heads were all restored, but in *the scramble he got the wrong one*.

And there is the "Visitor of Phantaste" in the old play of "Lingua," who exclaims: "No marvel, for when I beheld my fingers, I saw they were as transparent as glass."

You perceive that the illusions of Pope's "Rape of the Lock" are not all fictions: the maids who fancied they were turned into bottles, were not more in error than these philosophers with their *maladie imaginaire*.

CAST. Is there not wisdom, Evelyn, in nursing *some* of these innocent illusions? I remember Kotzebue, in his "Journey to Paris," relates the following anecdote of a young girl, romantically in love. Her lover had often accompanied her on the harp: he died, and his harp had remained in her room. After the first excess of her despair, she sunk into the deepest melancholy, and much time elapsed ere she would sit down to her instrument. At last she did so, gave some touches, and, hark! the harp, *tuned alike*, resounded in echo. The good girl was at first seized with a secret shuddering, but soon felt a kind of soft melancholy: she was firmly persuaded that the spirit of her lover was softly sweeping the strings of the instrument. The harpsichord, from this moment, constituted her only pleasure, as it afforded her the certainty that her lover was still hovering near her. One of those unfeeling men, who want to know and clear up every thing, once entered her apartment. The girl instantly begged him to be quiet, for at that very moment the dear harp spoke most distinctly. Being *informed of the amiable illusion* which overcame

her reason, he laughed, and, with a great display of learning, proved to her by experimental physics, that all this was *very natural*. From that instant the maiden grew melancholy, drooped, and soon after died.

Ev. Truth is not always to be spoken, nor too much energy exerted, in our treatment; for many a *mad act*, as it will be called, is resorted to, *as a relief*.

Tirouane de Mericourt was wont to *saturate her bedclothes with cold water, then lie down on it*. Although an extreme *remedy*, it might yield her relief from *burning* pains. In the darker ages, she would have been chained and scourged.

But from Marcus Donatus we read the following case of still more melancholy interest; another illustration of your question, dear Castaly:

"Vicentinus believed himself too large to pass one of his doorways. To dispel this illusion, it was resolved by his physician that he should be *dragged through this aperture by force*. This erroneous dictate was obeyed; but, as he was forced along, Vicentinus screamed out in agony, that his limbs were fractured, and the flesh torn from his bones. In this dreadful delusion, with terrific imprecations against his murderers, he died."

ABSTRACTION OF INTELLECT.

"I love to cope him in these sullen fits,
For then he's full of matter."

As You Like It.

Astr. So that in these cases it is *one faculty only* which is interrupted, and not the *combined intellect*. But all the faculties *but* one may be deranged, may

they not?

Ev. Yes. When the patient is insane on all points but one, we term it, “Folie raisonnante.”

The very idiot, indeed, is often fond of most exact arrangement. The savage of Aveyron instantly put things in order when they were deranged.

White, in his “History of Selborne,” records the propensities of an idiot, who, he says, was a very *Merops-apiaster*, or Bee-bird. Honey-bees, humblebees, and wasps, were his prey: he would seize them, disarm them of their weapons, and suck their bodies for the sake of their honey-bags. Except in this adroitness, he had no understanding.

Pinel states the case of a mechanical genius, who became insane, believing *his head to be changed*. Yet he invented mechanism of the most intricate combinations. We are informed, too, of a clergyman, who was ever insane, but when delivering his discourses from the pulpit.

I believe some parts of a national establishment were constructed from the plans of one of its inmates, who was to all other intents and purposes a madman.

Dr. Uwins once told me, that some of the lines in his biographical work were written by a maniac in the Hoxton Asylum, who was ever aware of the approach of his mania. These lines were thought to be among the best in the work.

Nay, idiots will sometimes reason, and work out a syllogism. I think Dr. Conolly relates a story of two, who quarrelled, because each asserted that he was the Holy Ghost; at length, one decided that the other *was* the Holy Ghost, and that he *could not be, because* there were not two.

From this “folie raisonnante” there is an easy transition to that eccentricity which seems to be a

set-off against the *strength of mind* of the deep thinker. The *permanent* derangement, however, we term *insanity*; the *transient, eccentricity*.

Marullus informs us that Bernard rode all day long by the Lemnian Lake, and at last inquired *where he was*. Archimedes rushed into the street naked from the bath, in an ecstacy at having discovered the alloy in the crown of Syracuse. Pinel tells us of a priest, who, in an abstract mood, felt no pain, although part of his body was burning.

"Viote," says Zimmerman, "during his fits of mathematical abstraction, would often remain sleepless and foodless for three days and nights."

And Plato thus records an instance of the abstraction of Socrates:—"One morning he fell into one of these raptures of contemplation, and continued standing in the same posture till about noon. In the evening, some Ionian soldiers went out, and, wrapping themselves up warm, lay down by him in the open field, to observe if he would continue in that posture all night; which he did until the morning, and as soon as the sun rose he saluted it, and retired." This is mental abstraction with a vengeance!

ASTR. I will laugh with you at these oddities, Evelyn; yet not a whit less ludicrous are some of the vagaries of the learned Thebans of *modern* times. The abstractions of Newton were proverbial. It may not be true, that he once inserted the little finger of a lady, whose hand he was holding, into his pipe, instead of a tobacco-stopper; or that he made a small hole in his study-door for the exit of a kitten, by the side of a large one for the cat: it is certain, however, that he was once musing by his fire, with his knees close to the bars, when, finding his legs in danger of being grilled, he rang his bell, and, in a rage, desired

his servant to *take away the grate*.

Dr. Hamilton, author of the acute "Essay on the National Debt," visited his college class in the morning with his own black silk stocking on one leg, and his wife's white cotton on the other; and would sometimes occupy the whole class time by repeatedly removing the students' hats from his table, which they as often placed there. He would run against a cow, and beg madam's pardon, hoping he had not hurt her; and he would bow politely to his wife in the street, without recognition. Yet with all this he would, at any time, directly converse on a scientific subject beautifully and eloquently.

Bacon, the sculptor, in a rich full dress was finishing Howard's statue in St. Paul's, and, being cold, put on a ragged green and red shag waistcoat. In this trim he walked out to call on some ladies in Doctors' Commons. On his return he told his son that they were sadly disposed to laugh about nothing. On being convinced, however, of his condition, he remembered the people he passed *also* giggled, and cried out, "He does it for a wager."

Hogarth paid a visit, in his new carriage, to the Lord Mayor, and, after his audience, walked home in his state clothes, leaving his carriage at a private door of the Mansion-House.

Dr. Harvest, of Ditton, a very learned man, would unconsciously allow his horse to be loosened from his grasp, and walk home *with the bridle on his arm*. He would walk into his church on Sunday, *with his fowling-piece*. He would write a letter, address it, and send it to *three different persons*. He lost a lady, the daughter of a bishop, as his wife, by going out to *catch gudgeons*, forgetting that it was the morning of his marriage ceremony; and he once threw a glass of wine at backgammon, and swallowed the dice!

After this we can no longer call caricatures the abstract philosopher who boiled his watch, and held the egg in his hand as the time-keeper; or the American, who put his candle to bed, and blew himself out; or the lady, who believed herself to be a post-letter, but waited patiently until the letter-sorter had examined her, to ascertain if she was single or double.

EV. There is some hope of you now, dear Astrophel, for you are returning to matters of fact.

From the deep interest of *dramatic scenes* may spring the same apathy as that which *you* have illustrated. Dr. Fordyce writes of one who forgot he was sitting on a hard bench, when Garrick brought in his dead Cordelia in his arms. And even the impression of *fatigue* and *pain* will often, for a time, leave us, when we are gazing on architectural or picturesque beauty.

IDA. Are not those minds which are easily influenced by morbid sensibility, the minutiæ of existence, often thus depressed into a condition somewhat resembling the moroseness of these half-idiots?

EV. Ay, even the mighty minds of heroes and of monarchs. Queen Elizabeth was often wont to sit alone, *in the dark*, in sorrow and in tears. We know not if the fate of Essex or of Mary were the cause, but the marble mind of Elizabeth was dissolved before she died. In Sully's "Mémoires," also, we read that the solitude of Charles IX., of France, was saddened by remorse, for his memory was ever pealing in his ear the shrieks and groans of the massacre of St. Bartholomew. During this influence we may often find that the features or actions are so deeply expressive as to prove an involuntary, though correct, index of the thought. According to the

passions or subjects which occupy the mind, will be the play of feature or the movement of the body.

"We might almost suppose the body thought."

This "brown study" is the slightest form of that state which the French term *ennui*, in which the mind too often is left to prey upon itself, having, as it were, no sympathy with the world. Its more severe symptoms are those of *misanthropy*, *melancholy*, and *hypochondriasis*, inducing but too often that extreme *tedium vitæ*, the climax of which is suicide. Out of the first, which is but the mere ripple of derangement, we may be laughed or coaxed; nay, it may yield to the positive *suffering* of the *body*. The second is like the deep still water, the awful calmness antecedent to a tempest. In the words of Lord Erskine, "Reason is not driven from her seat, but distraction sits down on it along with her, holds her trembling on it, and frights her from her propriety. And then comes often o'er the mind a very coward sentiment, echoing the demoniac resolution of Spenser's "Cave of Despair":

"What if some little payne the passage have,
That makes frayle flesh to fear the better wave?
Is not short payne well borne, that brings long ease,
And layes the soule to sleep in quiet grave?"

IDA. Despair will often rouse even the most sensitive beings to the most patient fortitude. How is this?

EV. Not rouse, but depress—not fortitude, but apathy. I could excite your deepest sympathy and wonder, Ida, by the history of the young and beautiful Ann G——n, who was hung for child-murder; in whom the convulsive agony which followed her sentence at length ended in a

resignation which some would term heroism. During the nights in which I myself watched her slumbers, both from deep scientific interest, and the request of her judges, her actions were automatic; her existence was one perfect trance; and she met her fate as if life and its consciousness had long been parted.

Even an intense blow will sometimes, as it were, annihilate sensibility, creating an icy apathy to all subsequent inflictions; which was the effect on Mandrin, during the tortures of the wheel; for he smiled at the *third* blow, to find that it hurt him so little.

IDA. Then we are to contrast the state of the unhappy girl with the *voluntary* endurance of heroism depending on the power of *concentrating mind*? The almost superhuman endurance of pain is finely displayed among the North American Indians, who even chant their own death-song calmly amidst worse than the tortures of the Inquisition, or sustain with a smile those probationary trials for the dignities of a chief, or the admission to the class of warriors, that are modelled with all the refinement of cruelty. On the banks of the Orinoco, especially, (if Robertson be right, or Gumilla, his authority, to be believed,) the ordeal begins by a rigid fast, reductive of the body's energy; then commences a flaying of his body by lashes as dreadful as the knout, by the hands of the assembled chiefs, and then, if the slightest sensibility be evinced, he is disgraced for ever. His raw and reeking flesh is then exposed to the stings and venom of insects and reptiles, and again suspended over the scorching and suffocating flames of herbs of the most disgusting odour; and, to close this tale of torture, it is not seldom that the victim sinks in mortal agonies beneath the dreadful ordeal.

EV. The two great springs of voluntary endurance

of pain are *religion* and *honour*. Thus, among other heroic acts of England's martyrs, Cranmer held the apostate hand which signed his recantation in the midst of the flames until it was *wasted*. And the unyielding fortitude with which the victim bore the rack and other excruciating tortures of the popish Inquisition is almost beyond belief.

The fanaticism of the wild enthusiasts of the east it were profanation to call religion; but with the hope of rejoining her husband in the realms of bliss, the Hindoo widow clasps his corpse in her arms, and, without a sigh, sets the torch to his funeral pile. And, to inherit the paradise of Brahma, the Fakir or Yoghee keeps his fist clenched for years, until the nails grow through his hand; or forces the hooks between his ribs, and whirls himself aloft until he expires, or throws himself prostrate beneath the crushing wheels of Juggernaut.

It is written that Cardan rendered himself by great efforts insensible to external irritants.

And analogous to this, was the almost superhuman effort of that determined action of Muley Moloch quoted in the "Spectator," from Vertot's "Revolutions of Portugal:"—"In a condition of extreme prostration he was borne in a litter with his army. On the sounding of a retreat, although in a half-dying state, he leaped from the litter, and led his quailing troops to a charge, which ended in victory. Ere this was accomplished his life was fast ebbing, and, reclining on his litter, and enjoining the secrecy of his staff, with his finger on his lip, he died."

But my analysis will be incomplete, if I do not revert to a point that I had almost forgotten. These abstract moods have often been confounded with the visions of slumber, being adduced as proofs of the perfection of mind during sleep.

You reminded me, Astrophel, of the brilliant parody composed by Mackenzie, of the versification of Voltaire and La Fontaine, of the solution of the difficult problem by Condorcet, of the discussion of abstruse points of policy by Cabanis. You might have added Condillac, who asserts that when he was composing the "*Cours d'Etudes*," he often left a chapter unfinished, but had it all in his mind when he awoke. And Franklin assures us, that he often *dreamed* of the issue of important events in which he was engaged, believing the vision to be the influence of inspired prophecy. Dr. Haycock, of Oxford, too, is said to have composed and preached sermons in his sleep, in despite even of buffetings.

These are not dreams, but the reveries of philosophers and poets. The faculties of perception are suspended: one only object occupies the mind, and the impression on the memory is vivid and permanent. Of this reverie I do not recollect a more interesting illustration than the "*Dream* of Tartini," and its exquisite product, "La Sonata di Diavolo." This admirable violinist and once esteemed composer, relates the following anecdote as the origin of his *chef-d'œuvre*, the "Devil's Sonata." "One night, it was in the year 1713, I dreamed that I had made over my soul to his satanic majesty. Every thing was done to my wink; the faithful menial anticipated my fondest wishes. Among other freaks, it came into my head to put the violin into his hands, for I was anxious to see whether he was capable of producing anything worth hearing upon it. Conceive my astonishment at his playing a sonata, with such dexterity and grace, as to surpass whatever the imagination can conceive. I was so much delighted, enraptured, and entranced by his performance, that I was unable to fetch another breath, and, in this state,

I awoke. I jumped up and seized upon my instrument, in the hope of reproducing a portion, at least, of the unearthly harmonies I had heard in my dream. But all in vain: the music which I composed under the inspiration, I must admit the best I have ever written, and of right I have called it the 'Devil's Sonata;' but the falling off between that piece and the sonata which had laid such fast hold of my imagination is so immense, that I would rather have broken my violin into a thousand fragments, and renounced music for good and all, than, had it been possible, have been robbed of the enjoyment which the remembrance afforded me."

In the cases of precocious children, who are said to have "lisp'd in numbers," I do not doubt that the secret may be referred to this concentration of genius. Mozart composed a sonata at the age of four. The precocious little girl, Louisa Vinning, who was called the "*Infant Sappho*," has yet eclipsed Mozart in this; that at the age of two years and eight months she sang repeatedly a melody perfectly new, and so perfect, that it was written down from her lips, and entitled, "The Infant's Dream." During all this, the little creature was in such a state of apparent abstraction, that it was believed by all around her that she walked and talked in *her sleep*.

These mental concentrations can, by some enthusiasts, be produced at pleasure. The paroxysm of the improvisatore, for instance. But it is an effort which, like the dark hour of the Caledonian seer, is not endured with impunity: it points, indeed, emphatically to the limit beyond which mind should not be strained.

The Marquis de Moschati expressed himself to us, as experiencing excitement like intoxication when he *sat himself* to compose, and threw his whole soul into

his subject. It commenced with irregular and laborious breathing, excessive palpitations, *vertigo*, *tinnitus aurium*,—the perception of objects being lost. Then came romantic fancies, like the visions of opium, "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn." At the conclusion was felt excessive exhaustion, and a state of mild catalepsy ensued for five or six days together. This excited talent, therefore, is an evanescent madness.

CAST. Another fling at poesy. Were I an improvisatrice, you would not so libel my inspiration. "Listen, lords and lady gay." In the summer of 18—, after the *Eisteddfod* at Cardiff, we wandered over the hills to Caerphilly, the gigantic towers of Owain Glyndwr.

As I lay under the celebrated Hanging Tower, which is projecting eleven feet beyond its base, I reflected on the strange circumstance of the arrest of so gigantic a mass in its progress to prostration. "What," I exclaimed, "is the power by which it is suspended?" My imagination heightened my reverie, and placed before me the image of the Destroyer, with his emblematic scythe and glass, and he answered me thus:—

"Half-dreaming mortal, listen! It is *I*,
Time, the destroyer, whose gigantic arm
Lifted this pond'rous ruin from its base.
Why hangs it thus, arrested in its course,
In bold defiance of attraction's law?
Why, like its once proud lord, renown'd Glyndwr,
Sinks not its mouldering grandeur to the ground?
Behold an emblem of vitality!
A type of mortal man, of thee, of all!
Like this grey wall, thy tott'ring steps are staid,
And on a thread thy fragile life is hung;
Yet leaning, ever leaning, to the grave.
One moment more, an atom of an age,

This mould'ring ruin, trembling on its base,
May, like the marble shafts of lone Palmyra,
Be hurl'd to earth, and crumble into dust;
And, like the ruin, thou!"

And yet *I* was not mad.

EV. I talk not of a gentle heart like yours, fair Castaly; but of that extreme, when ideas are received by a mind nearly exhausted, and lie for a while dormant. As sleep and fatigue wear off, and consciousness returns, these images are suddenly and brilliantly lighted up. If intense impression shall have been made on the heart or mind, intense will be the abstraction of the enthusiast. Until *one* thought is touched, the patient is sane; but, when the chord vibrates, then, as in the pathetic episode of Sterne's Maria, the paroxysm is expended in a flood of tears, or in a mad fit, or in a gush of wildest music.

To the latter cause, we owe many beauties of composition. Demarini, the Italian tragedian, acted a prison-scene before Paganini, in which, with the pathos of deep distress, the victim prayed for death. The maestro retired to bed, but not to sleep; his excited brain relieved its painful sympathies by the composition of the "*Adagio apassionato*."

Carl Maria Von Weber witnessed the waltzing of his wife with a gallant cavalier. He retired in a mood of jealous frenzy, and expressed the ideas which rankled in his heart by the "*Invitation à la Walse*."

ASTR. Well, is there not something special in all this?

EV. Yes, truly,—a power imparted to some, withheld from others,—*genius*.

ASTR. Yet, in explanation of this abstract reverie, the phrenologist will, I dare say, satisfy himself by merely deciding that the organ of concentrativeness is strongly developed.

EV. It is clear, at least, that the deep interest of the subject of reflection overbalances the influence of the external senses. The impression of objects is either too slight, or rapid, to produce perception, or (in other words), however the impression may be imparted to the brain by the nerve, the brain is not *sensible* of it, and there is therefore no perception.

So intense indeed has been this influence, that Pliny contemplated the volcanic philosophy amidst the ashy cloud of Vesuvius by which he was destroyed. And Archimedes was so intent in solving a problem, during the siege of Syracuse, that no sense of danger impelled him to avoid the storm, or fly from the dagger of the assassin.

While Parmegiano was painting at Rome the "Vision of St. Jerome," which now adorns the National Gallery of England, the famous siege of that city was concluded by its spoliation. Yet Parmegiano (absorbed with his painting) was unconscious of the tumult, until his *studio* was burst open by some of the soldiers of the enemy. A similar story is told, also, of Protogenes, when Demetrius was laying siege to Rhodes.

CAST. The flappers of Laputa would soon have dispelled this reverie.

EV. But if they had thus flourished their official bladders, perhaps the "Principia Mathematica" had not been written; for Newton explained the extent of his discoveries by his "always thinking unto them."

Somewhat like the effect of intense study on the mind, the muscles of the limbs will be influenced *by one long-directed habit*. Paganini was observed, on board a steam-boat, constantly to repose on the sofa. During this state of reverie, his left arm assumed the peculiar attitude in which he held his violin, until he saw that he was noticed, when he altered its

position.

The right hand of Benjamin West, of which I saw a posthumous model at Lord de Tabley's, appeared to have taken that form in which he was wont to hold the pencil.

By this concentration, this full possession of the mind, the wildness of fancy in the dark is often the source of terror; but this is ever lessened or dispelled by any sound or sight which presents a subject to the *perceptive* faculty. Such is the sudden glimmer of a light, the barking of a dog, or the almost instinctive effort of the school-boy,

"Whistling aloud to keep his courage up."

All these cases, then, indicate concentration of mind. "Mental conception is uninfluenced by conscious perception."

I may add, that, in the heat of engagement, soldiers and sailors are often unconscious of being even seriously wounded. In the battle of Lake Thrasymene, the armies of Rome and Carthage were so absorbed in the tumult and din of war, that an earthquake, which spread desolation around them, was unheeded by these determined soldiers.

IDA. I have gleaned enough from your illustrations, Evelyn, to believe that we may explain by them that solemn and last reverie of the dying, when all other ideas have ceased to influence, but the *most impressive* —

"The ruling passion strong in death;"

when earthly life is on the wane, and the spirit, in this expiring thought, takes its last farewell of the flesh. I remember some beautiful evidences of this influence.

It was observed that Porson, after a paralytic fit, scarcely uttered a word of English; but to the last moment spoke *Greek* fluently.

Dr. Adam (a master of Sir Walter Scott), on the subsidence of delirium, exclaimed, "It grows dark—the boys may dismiss;" and instantly expired.

The last words of Dr. Abercrombie were addressed to an imaginary patient, regarding the care of his digestive functions.

Some time after the trial of the Bristol magistrates, Lord Tenterden lapsed into a stupor from exhaustion. A short period before death he rallied, and, after conversing with his friends for a few minutes, he raised himself on his couch, and said, "Gentlemen of the jury, you may retire;" and then fell back and expired.

SOMNOLENCE.—TRANCE.—CATALEPSY.

——"In this borrow'd likeness of shrunk death,
Thou shalt remain full two and forty hours,
And then awake, as from a pleasant sleep."

ROMEO AND JULIET.

CAST. Evelyn, you have again bewildered my thoughts. Sleep, that should be the *anodyne* of the mind, has awakened afresh my curiosity. I am in a mood for mystery. Any more wonders?

EV. The prototypes of sleep, dear Castaly, are *all* "mysteries," as *you* call them, and marked by ever-varying shades.

The most impressive conditions of the mind are these:

Unconscious and passive, as in *sound sleep*.

Conscious yet passive, as in *dreaming*.

Conscious and willing, yet powerless, as in *night-mare*.

Unconscious yet active, as in *somnambulism*.

If we go deeper in our analysis, we shall discover a state more wondrous still than all we have unravelled, in which mind is unconscious, sensationless, unwishing, motionless, powerless, as in *trance* or *catalepsy*; an absolute apathy of body and complete oblivion of mind. *And yet life is there!*

In the dream of night-mare, you remember, there is a will, but no power. In the absolute senselessness of trance, all sympathy between the brain or spinal marrow, or the influence of the nerves of motion, or of the will on muscle, *altogether cease*.

I will not fatigue you with *varieties*, such as *carus*, *catalepsy*, and the like, or with mere medical definitions, as *syncope* or fainting, epilepsy, apoplexy, and *their* analogies.

By the term trance I would define all those conditions in which there is protracted *derangement of volition* or the will; sensibility and voluntary action being suspended, while the *vital functions* are performed, yet with diminished energy; the “deep sleep” of Paracelsus, Hieronymus Fabricius, Celsus, and other writers of antiquity.

In some the rosy colour of the lips and cheeks will not fade; in others, they are pale and bloodless; the body becomes cold as marble, the pulse often imperceptible, and the vapour of breathing on a polished surface alone distinguishes the still living being from the perfect work of the sculptor. I have, however, had patients who were rosy when they fell asleep, but became pale about the end of the second day.

Girls often smile sweetly in full catalepsy, but the countenance will become anxious as waking

approaches; and this must ever excite suspicion. The body indeed is, to the external world, *dead*; for although the cataleptic will often swallow food, while all the other muscles are in spasm, this may, I believe *does*, depend on mere *irritability*, by which, as I before told you, the brain is first excited, and then directs a movement without the mind's feeling. Catalepsy is so peculiar to young females of extreme sensibility, that it may be considered an intense *hysteria*, depending on certain *sympathies*, or resulting from sudden or powerful influences on the passions. The form of catalepsy marked by *hysteria* is least dangerous; but it is very stubborn. Probably this is the form so common in Germany.

Previous to the *cataleptic acme* girls are often maniacally violent, and will then suddenly regain their temper and their reason. They will sit and play with their fingers in a sullen mood, and the power of motion and speech and other acts of volition may be alternately impaired or lost. In some, the sleep has been preceded by fits of lethargy, by lassitude, and inaptitude to exertion, and perhaps a propensity to sleep-walking. The decided state of catalepsy has begun in an epileptic convulsion. In all, I think, I have seen combined with this disorder, irregular determination of blood; in one case, where the taste and smell were gone for four or five months, the climax was suicide by arsenic.

The countenance is almost always placid in cataleptic sleep; the eyes being turned up, the pupils dilated, but the eyelids closed. If the fit be the result of *sudden* fright, the features will remain as they were at that moment—the eyelid fixed, but the pupil usually sensible. The joints and muscles are pliable, and may be moulded to any form, but they remain in that position as rigidly fixed as the limbs of a clay

figure, or the *anchylosed* joints of the self-torturing fakir; insensible to all stimuli, beating, tickling, or pricking.

I have seen patients lapse into a state of catalepsy, *in a moment*, without a struggle. I remember, during one of my visits to the asylum in Hoxton, a maniac, who often in the midst of his occupation became instantaneously *a statue*; leaning a little forward, one arm lifted up, and the *index* finger pointed as at some interesting object; the eye staring and ghastly, and the whole expression as of one rapt in an ecstacy of thought or vision.

The waking from a trance, like the recovery from the *asphyxia* of drowning, is painful. It is attended with a struggle, and the hand is almost invariably placed firmly *over the heart*, as if its actions were a painful effort to overcome *congestion*.

In some cases, indeed, a purple hue will suddenly suffuse the cataleptic body; the limbs are then extremely rigid, but become pliant when the healthy tint is restored.

The sensation in the brain of the cataleptic, as of those recovering from drowning, resembles the pricking of needles, the circulation soon becoming accelerated. Hunger is usually intense when the patient awakes. The usual duration of catalepsy is from twenty to forty hours. The return of volition is commonly marked by perspiration; this premonitory sign is often followed by a piercing shriek, as in the case of night-mare, and, indeed, in a *slight* degree, of an infant's cry as soon as it is born.

It has appeared to me that the cataleptic is marked by *extremes* of feeling and disposition. The sensibility either being too dull for the feeling of joy, or so intensely excited by pleasure, as to approach the confine of delirium. One of my patients, in

particular, who was an eighty-hour sleeper, endured a metamorphosis from religious enthusiasm to theatrical mania. Her Bible was discarded for romances and play-books, and even the most licentious volumes.

CAST. I have read, (I suppose in some moth-eaten tomes enshrined I know not where,) of a scholar of Lubeck, who slept seven years; in Diogenes Laertius, of Epimenides, who slept fifty-one years in a cave; in Ricaut, of the seven devoted sleepers of Ephesus (the same, I presume, as the seven illustrious sleepers of Mahomet's tale in the Koran); and of the *Leucomorians*, who fall asleep with the swallows early in November, and wake at the end of April.

One moment more among the legends of romance. In the "Hierarchie of the Blessed Angels" it is written, that in a dark cavern of the Baltic, there were discovered five men in Roman habits, so deeply sleeping, that all efforts to awaken them were unavailing.

Ogier the Dane is *now* sleeping in the dungeon of Cronenburg Castle—(so recordeth the "*Danske Folk Saga*.")

Prince Arthur, too, was lying, when a chronicle was writ, in a trance at Avelon; and the Britons, with implicit belief, were watching for his awaking.

Years have passed since these mysterious legends were penned, and I dare not say that the spells are broken yet.

EV. If they *then* slept, sweet Castaly, they are surely sleeping *now*. Tales lose nothing by telling, and nature is often thus magnified into a miracle. You may however *believe* this, that a *periodical* catalepsy with intervals may last even for years. The "Memoirs of the Academy of Berlin" record the case of a woman, who sunk into catalepsy twice a day for

many years; during which period she was married, and became the almost unconscious mother of children.

Nay, there is a story of Mynheer Vander Gucht, of Bremen, who, with very brief intermissions, slept and dreamt for thirty years; so that, on the return of travellers by sea or land, the primal question was, if *Mr. Vander Gucht was up*!

IDA. Catalepsy, I believe, has been often *feigned*; and, although it is astonishing with what apathy pain may be endured, the imposture, I presume, may be usually discovered by the proposition of some horrible remedy.

EV. Frequently; but many impostors have withstood the test, and triumphed in their deception. Yet it is true that the perfect state of catalepsy has been, in very rare instances, voluntarily produced; thus exhibiting the complete influence of will over an *involuntary muscle, the heart.*

The case of Colonel Townsend I adduce, as one of undoubted authority. This officer was able to suspend the action both of his heart and lungs, after which he became motionless, icy cold, and rigid,—a glassy film overspreading his eyes. As there was no breathing, there was no vapour *apparent* on the glass, when held to his mouth. During the many hours in which this voluntary trance existed, there was a total absence of consciousness, yet a *faculty of self-reanimation*!

Avicenna speaks of one that could "cast himself into a palsie when he list;" and Celsus, of a priest that could "separate himself from his senses when he list, and lie like a dead man, void of life and sense." Cardan, the Pavian astrologer, brags of himself that *he* could do as much, and that "when he list."

Dr. Cleghorn, of Glasgow, relates the case of a

man who could stop the pulse at his wrist, and reduce himself to the condition of syncope, *by his will*, of course.

Barton, the holy maid of Kent, was enabled thus to "absorb her faculties."

Restitutus, a presbyter, could also throw himself into a trance,—being insensible, except to the very loudest sounds. So says Augustin.

ASTR. So that there may not be much imposture in the case, recorded in the "Spectator," of Nicholas Hart, a professor of somnolency, who *lived by sleeping*. The following is his advertisement in the "Daily Courant," of that time: —

"Nicholas Hart, who slept last year in Saint Bartholomew's Hospital, intends to sleep this year at the 'Cock and Bottle,' in Little Britain."

I will freely confess to you, Evelyn, my scepticism as to these *ultra* romantic legends; but may my own memory fail me not, while I relate a few strange stories, and demand of yourself confirmation.

Euphemia Lindsay, of Forfarshire, slept eight weeks, having taken nothing but (possibly) a little cold water. In the eighth week she died.

Angelica Vlies, of Delft, had fasted in a state of insensibility from 1822 to 1828. She took nothing but water, tea, and whey, and these in the most minute quantities.

In a record, A.D. 1545, I read that "William Foxley, a pot-maker to the Mint in London, slept in the Tower of London (not being by any means to be waked) fourteen days and fifteen nights; and, when he waked, it seemed to him that the interval was but as one night."

Samuel Clinton, of Timbury, near Bath, often slept for a month; and once, from April to August. He would, during this period, suddenly wake, but ere

food could be administered to him, he lapsed again into a trance.

Margaret Lyall (of Edinburgh) slept from the morning of June 27th to the evening of the 30th, then from July 1st to August 8th. Her breathing was scarcely perceptible, and her pulse low; one arm was sensitive, the other senseless, to the pricking of pins. She had never any subsequent cognizance of this sleep.

A lady, at Nismes, had periodical attacks of trance; and it is curious that the intervals of waking were always of the same duration as the previous time of sleeping, however these might vary.

In the year 1738, Elizabeth Orvin slept for four days; and, for the period of ten years afterwards, passed seventeen hours of the twenty-four in sleep. No stimuli were powerful enough to rouse her: *acupuncturation*, flagellation, and even the stinging of bees were ineffectual. Like many other somnolents, she was morose and irritable, especially previous to the sleeping-fit.

"Elizabeth Parker, of Morley Saint Peter, in Norfolk, for a considerable time was very irregular in her times of waking, which was once in seven days; after which they became irregular and precarious, and though of shorter duration, they were equally profound; and every attempt at keeping her awake, or waking her, was vain. Various experiments were tried, and an itinerant empiric, elated with the hope of rousing her from what he called *counterfeit sleep*, blew into her nostrils the powder of white hellebore; but the poor creature remained insensible to the inhumanity of the deed, which, instead of producing the boasted effect, excoriated the skin of her nose, lips, and face."

The records of medicine, I doubt not, may add a

volume to these simple stories, and, perchance, may unfold to us something of the exciting causes which have induced these strange conditions; yet they seem to me so various, in some the effect being so sudden, in others so gradual, that it were vain for *me* to conjecture.

Ev. The influence of fear, and fright, and extreme joy, will often produce instantaneous *paralysis*; while that of intense study, or anxiety, will steal on by degrees; and then, while in some cases the senses will be entirely *apathetic*, in others, they will be acutely *excited*.

Mendelssohn almost every evening immediately fell into a trance whenever "philosophy" was even *named* in his presence; and so acutely deranged was then his conception of sound, that a voice of stentorian force seemed to ring in his ears, repeating to him any impressive conversation he had heard during the day.

Without presuming to satisfy Astrophel in explaining the full pathology of these curious cases, I may, by analogy, illustrate his question by alluding to the acute influence which impressions exert on the mind, and, through it, on the body.

Captain D——, on service in Ceylon, was ordered to march to the Kandian territory. This district had been the grave of many officers who had resided in it. From this circumstance, and the anticipation of a similar fatality to himself, he became speechless, and died in fifty hours.

During the plague of Egypt, lots were drawn for a decision as to what surgeon should remain with the sick on the departure of the troops. Mr. Dick, the army inspector, relates that on one occasion the surgeon on whom the lot fell dropped dead.

In the treaty with Meer Jaffier, Colonel Clive

omitted the name of the Gentoo merchant, Omichund. This man was induced to expect treasures to the amount of one million, for his aid in deposing the Bengal nabob. From this disappointment he became speechless, and subsequently insane.

George Grokatski, a Polish soldier, deserted. He was discovered a few days after, drinking and merry-making. On his court-martial he became speechless, unconscious, and fixed as a statue. For twenty days and nights he lay in this trance, without nourishment; he then sunk and died.

Some girls (as we read in Platerus) playing near a gibbet, one wantonly flung stones at the criminal suspended on it. Being violently struck the body *swung*, and the girl, believing that it was alive, and was descending from the gibbet, fell into violent convulsions and died.

The following case, although not fatal, very powerfully displays the paralyzing effects of imagination.

A lady in perfect health, twenty-three years of age, was asked by the parents of a friend to be present at a severe surgical operation. On consideration, it was thought wrong to expose her to such a scene, and the operation was postponed for a few hours. She went to bed, however, with the imagination highly excited, and awoke in alarm hearing, or thinking she heard, the shrieks of her friend under the agony of an operation. Convulsions and hysterics supervened, and, on their subsiding, she went into a profound sleep, which continued sixty-three hours. The most eminent of the faculty were then consulted, and she was cupped, which awoke her; but the convulsions returned, and she again went to sleep, and slept, with few intermissions, for a fortnight. The irregular periods

continued for ten or twelve years; the length of the sleeping fits from thirty to forty hours. Then came on irritability, and total want of sleep, for three months; her usual time for sleeping being then forty-eight hours.

But if the sudden transition be *excess of joy*, its effect may be equally melancholy.

Wescloff was detained as a hostage by the Kalmucs, and carried along with them in their memorable flight to China. His widowed mother had mourned him dead, and, on his sudden return, the excess of joy was instantaneously fatal.

In the year 1544 the Jewish pirate, Sinamus Taffurus, was lying in a port of the Red Sea, called Orsenoe, and was preparing for war, being then engaged in one with the Portuguese. While he was there he received the unexpected intelligence that his son (who in the siege of Tunis had been made prisoner by Barbarossa, and by him doomed to slavery) was suddenly ransomed, and coming to his aid with seven ships, well armed. He was immediately struck as if with apoplexy, and expired on the spot.

A Swiss student, writes Zimmerman, yielded himself to intense metaphysical study, which gradually produced a complete trance of the senses; the functions of the body being not inactive. After the lapse of a year of apparent idiocy, each sense was successively excited by its proper stimulus; the ear by loud sounds, &c. When these were restored, the mind was again perfect, although in this effort his strength was nearly exhausted.

I may add that lunar influence, though it is now somewhat out of fashion, was formerly believed even by so sage a physician as Dr. Mead and others, and Astrophel will thank me for blending with his own

examples the following case of catalepsy in a moon-struck maiden. At the full of the moon this damsel fell in a fit; the recurrence obeying the regular periods of the tide. During the flood she lay in a speechless trance, and revived from it on the ebb. Her father was engaged on the Thames, and so struck was he with the regularity of these attacks, that on his return from the river he correctly anticipated the condition of his daughter; and even in the night he has arisen to his work, as her cries on recovering from the fit were always a correct monitor to him of the turning of the tide.

PREMATURE INTERMENT.—RESUSCITATION.

"Oh sleep! thou ape of death, lie dull upon her;
And be her sense but as a monument,
Thus in a chapel lying."

CYMBELINE.

"Sleep may usurp on nature many hours."

PERICLES.

IDA. These stories are, indeed, painfully interesting; but tell us, Evelyn, is it so certain that the shaft of Azrael had irretrievably struck these unhappy creatures of whom you speak? Is it not to be feared that instances of premature sepulture have too often occurred from want of scientific discernment? On the exhumation of the Cimetière des Innocents at Paris, during the Napoleon dynasty, the skeletons were many of them discovered in attitudes indicating a struggling to get free: indeed some, we are assured, were partly out of their

coffins.

To avert this awful catastrophe it was the custom, in the provinces of Germany, to place a bell-rope in the hand of a corpse for twenty-four hours before burial. We may look on this, perhaps, as one natural source of *romance* and mystery; for the ringing of bells by the dead has been a favourite omen of the ghostly legends.

Ev. Alas! even my own professional study and duties have not been free from these melancholy scenes; and if I make not your gentle heart to tremble, fair Castaly, I will recount some of those unhappy instances of fatality, to which the errors and neglect of man may doom his fellow-mortal.

Miss C—— (of C—— Hall, in Warwickshire,) and her brother were the subjects of typhoid fever. She seemed to die, and her bier was placed in the family vault. In a week her brother died also, and when he was taken to the tomb, the lady was found *sitting in her grave-clothes* on the steps of the vault; having, after her waking from the trance, died of terror or exhaustion.

A girl, after repeated faintings, was apparently dead, and was taken, as a subject, into the anatomical theatre of the "Salpetrière," at Paris. During the night, faint groans were heard in the theatre, but no search was made. In the morning, it was evident that the girl had *attempted to disengage herself from the winding-sheet*, one leg being thrust from off the trestles, and an arm resting on an adjoining table.

A slave girl of Canton, named Leaning, apparently died. She was placed in a coffin, the lid of which remained unfastened, that her parents might come and see the corpse. Three days after the apparent death, while the remains were being conveyed to the

grave, a noise or voice was heard proceeding from the coffin, and on removing the covering, it was found the woman had come to life again.

In 1838, at Tonnieus, in the Lower Garonne, as the graveman threw earth on a coffin he also heard groans. Much terrified, he ran away, and a crowd assembled. On opening the coffin, the face of the buried man was distorted, and he had disengaged his arms from the folds of his winding sheet.

The Emperor Zeno was, as it is written, prematurely buried; and, when the body was soon after casually discovered, it was found that he had, to satisfy acute hunger, *eaten some flesh from his arm*.

ASTR. One might think that Master Ainsworth, from this record, sketched the episode of the sexton and the old coffin in his "Rookwood." The truth is equal to the fiction.

CAST. When I was at Breslau, in 1835, (and this is not one of Astrophel's fictions,) a nun of the Ursuline Convent was placed in her coffin in the church. At midnight, the sisters assembled to chaunt the vigils over the body of their sainted sister. While the holy hymn was echoing through the oratory, the nun arose, tottered to the altar, knelt before the cross, and prayed. The sisters with a cry of horror awoke the abbess; and on her arrival, the nun again arose, and lay down in her coffin. The physician of the convent was speedily summoned, but, on his arrival, *he found her dead*.

There can scarcely be drawn a scene, combining the sublime and beautiful of romance, in higher intensity than this. It was the spectral visitation of a seraph.

IDA. Like many sublimities of nature, these mysteries have been profaned by unholy imitation; as for instance, the reanimation of the nuns in the

opera of “Robert le Diable.” But there is an awful romance mingled with the history of those melancholy creatures, from whose inanimate clay the immortal spirit was thought to have parted, still more impressive. That instinctive, that inexpressible dread, with which we contemplate a corpse, is nothing in comparison with that thrill of astonishment which overwhelms us, when a body becomes (as in the miraculous recall of Lazarus) *reanimated*; when a spirit appears to visit us from the dead. Yet this is not *fear*, for we know it cannot injure us; it is a feeling that we are with something beyond ourselves spiritual, which had seemed to have endured a transfiguration, and been admitted into the order of angelic beings. There must be something of the supernatural which creates this fearful wonder; an impression on the heart that is an especial influence of the Deity. Else should we not behold with *dread*, instead of a sacred *pleasure*, the success of our efforts in cases of suspended animation?

This visitation from another world is one of the surest indications of our spirituality; and like the reanimation of soul and mind, and consciousness, from deep and undreaming sleep, lighting up the body into brilliancy and beauty, might drown a sceptic’s reasoning in a flood of holy faith, and overwhelm him with the belief of immortality.

CAST. It is this combination of vitality and death —so seemingly a paradox—that forms the basis of many of our deepest romances; as the “Spectre Life in Death,” in the Ancient Mariner, of the melancholy Coleridge,—himself a wild visionary of the first order. If I remember, he is writing of a spectre ship. —

——"Betwixt us and the sun.

And straight the sun was fleck'd with bars—
(Heaven's mother send us grace!)
As if through a dungeon-grate he peer'd
With broad and burning face.
Alas! (thought I, and my heart beat loud,)
How fast she neers and neers.
Are those *her* sails that glance in the sun,
Like restless gossameres?

Are those *her* ribs, through which the sun
Doth peer, as through a grate?
And is that woman all her crew?
Is that a Death—and are there two?
Is Death that woman's mate?

Her lips were red, her looks were free,
Her locks were yellow as gold,
Her skin was as white as leprosy,
The night-mare Life in Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold."

Ev. It is melancholy that a noble mind should be so perverted by poppy-juice. And yet the Mahometan beats him hollow at this sort of burlesque.

There is a fiction in Sale's notes to the "Koran." During the building of his magnificent temple, King Solomon sleeps in death. He remains supported by his staff, on which he had been leaning, until a worm eats away the prop, and the body falls prostrate to the ground.

But we need not go to the East for our specimens. Even in the year 1839, in our Emerald Isle of superstition, they would have us believe a miracle of this kind.

In a field near Lurgan, a man, called Farland, had

received money from a widow, wherewith to pay her rent;—this he failed to do. On her remonstrance and declaration, she was asked to name her witnesses. She answered,—"No one but God and herself." "Then," rejoined the man, "your God was asleep at the time." The attestation of three witnesses records, that he was instantly struck in a trance as he was resting on his spade, and in that attitude he had ever since continued!

CAST. And is it not a blot on the page of science, that so many ill-fated creatures are thus, through an error, doomed to dissolution? Say, gentle Evelyn, has not your philosophy discovered some mode of discernment between life and death, which would smile the philanthropist on to patient watching?

EV. To a degree. But it were vain to offer here precepts for such discrimination, which, sooth to say, are not yet absolute. The rosy tint of complexion may remain for some time, and even perspiration may break forth, *after death*; or the body may assume the *most deathlike* aspect, and yet vitality is only *in abeyance*. Among our recoveries, it is true, there are many *spontaneous* rousings, and this especially if deep impression has been the cause of trance.

Listen to the following, from a journal of 1834:—"The wife of Thomas Benson, livery-lace maker, of Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, being suddenly taken ill, to all appearance expired; and, when every symptom of life had fled, the body was duly laid out. On the following night, between nine and ten o'clock, whilst the undertaker was in the house receiving instructions for the funeral, to the astonishment and terror of the whole family, Mrs. Benson came down stairs, having been in a trance nearly thirty hours. Her situation has so terribly shocked her, that but faint hopes are entertained of

her recovery."

It is melancholy to know how often these cases are abandoned *to nature*; but science may do much, and *should do* more, to relieve them; although we possess not the wondrous phial of Renatus, nor have developed the creative mysteries of Prometheus or Frankenstein.

Yet the recovery of François de Civille, was almost as great a wonder. He was thrown, at the siege of Rouen, into insensibility. He was, in this state, carried home by his servant. During a week he became warm, but exhibited no other sign of life. He was, at this period, flung out of a window by the besiegers, and cast upon a dunghill, where he lay naked for three or four days. Yet, even after this, he was restored to life.

ASTR. You confess the *wonder*, Evelyn, that is some concession; you may, perchance, believe another of equal interest.

"My mother being sick to death of a fever three months after I was born, which was the occasion she nursed me no longer, her friends and servants thought, to all outward appearance, she was dead, and so almost two days and a night. But Dr. Winston coming to comfort my father, went into my mother's room, and looking earnestly in her face, said, 'She is so handsome, and looks so lovely, I cannot think she is dead;' and suddenly took a lancet out of his pocket, and with it cut the sole of her foot, which bled. Upon this he immediately caused her to be laid upon the bed again, and to be rubbed, and such means, as she came to life, and opening her eyes, saw two of her kinswomen stand by her, my Lady Knolleys and my Lady Russell, both with great wide sleeves, as the fashion then was, and said, 'Did not you promise me fifteen years, and are you come

again?' which they not understanding, persuaded her to keep her spirits quiet in that great weakness wherein she then was; but some hours after she desired my father and Dr. Howlsworth might be left alone with her, to whom she said, 'I will acquaint you, that during the time of my trance I was in great quiet, but in a place I could neither distinguish or describe; but the sense of leaving my girl, who is dearer to me than all my children, remained a trouble upon my spirits. Suddenly I saw two by me clothed in long white garments, and methought I fell down upon my face upon the dust, and they asked me why I was so troubled in so great happiness. I replied, O let me have the same grant given to Hezekiah, that I may live fifteen years, to see my daughter a woman; to which they answered, It is done, and then at that instant I awoke out of my trance.' And Dr. Howlsworth did then affirm that that day she died made just fifteen years from that time."

I remember a story of the effect of deep impression on a sensitive mind: the sleep of a love-sick Juliet, without the entrancing draught of the friar.

A young French lady in the Rue St. Honoré, at Paris, was condemned by her father to a hated marriage while her heart was devoted to another. She fell into a trance, and was buried. Under some strange influence her lover opened her grave, and she was revived, and married. Thus the romance of the "Beauty of Verona" was acted without its tragedy.

I have heard, but where I recollect not, a story of another French lady, who was actually the subject of an anatomist. On the evidence of some faint signs of vitality, he not only restored the lady to life, but

united himself to her in marriage.

There is no doubt, also, that Rachael, Lady Russell, would have been buried alive, had not the devoted affection of her husband, and his constant visits to her coffin, prevented it.

I read, too, that Shorigny, an hysterical girl in Paris, was watched daily by her physician, after he was assured by the friends that she was dead. On the sixth day, the cloth covering was seen to move, the eyes soon after opened, and she gradually recovered.

Ev. It is one of the anomalies of our science, that *similar* causes will often produce *opposite* effects. We may be thrown into trance by fright; and intense alarm may be the cause of recovery. I may relate an oriental anecdote as an analogy, which, however, I beg you to receive with some reservation.

A Persian, at the siege of Sardis, was about to kill Crœsus, whom he did not recognise. By his side was the king's dumb child, who, in a sudden paroxysm of agony, screamed out, "Kill not Crœsus." From this instant (as it were a miracle), Herodotus writes, his speech was fully restored!

We learn from Bourgeois, in 1838, that a medical man, from the sudden influence of grief, sunk into a cataleptic state, but his consciousness never left him. The lamentations of his wife, the sympathetic condolence of his medical friends, and the arrangements regarding his funeral, were to him distinctly audible. He knew that he was in his coffin, and that there was a solemn procession following him to the grave. As the solemn words of "Earth to earth" were uttered, and the dust fell on his coffin lid, the consciousness of this, and his horror at his impending fate, burst the fetters of his icy trance—he shrieked aloud, and was saved.

In the "Psychological Magazine" we read of a

lady who fell into a state of catalepsy, after a violent nervous disorder.

"It seemed to her, as if in a dream, that she was really dead. Yet she was perfectly conscious of all that happened around her in this dreadful state. She distinctly heard her friends speaking, and lamenting her death, at the side of her coffin; she felt them pull on her dead clothes, and lay her in it. This feeling produced a mental anxiety which was indescribable. She tried to cry, but her soul was without power, and could not act on her body. She had the contradictory feeling, as if she were in her own body, and yet not in it, at one and the same time. It was equally impossible for her to stretch out her arm, or to open her eyes, as to cry, although she continually endeavoured to do so. The internal anguish of her mind was, however, at its utmost height, when the funeral hymns were sung, and when the lid of the coffin was about to be nailed on. The thought that she was to be buried alive was the first one which gave activity to her soul, and caused it to operate on her corporeal frame."

I have been assured that the soldier who has been placed in his grave by such an error, has been awoke in his coffin by the volley fired over him.

Parallel with these are the instances in which vitality seemed to be instantly excited by acute pain.

I remember the case of a cataleptic girl, related by the Abbé Menon, who was doomed to dissection; the first stroke of the *scalpel* awoke her, and she lived.

Cardinal Sommaglia was not so fortunate. He fell into *syncope* from intense grief, and it was decided that he should be opened and embalmed. As the surgeon's knife punctured the lungs, the heart throbbed, and the cardinal attempted to avert the

knife with his hand; but the *die* was cast, and he shortly *died*.

The Abbé Prevost was also sacrificed in this way.

As Vesalius, the physician of Philip II., was opening the thorax of a Spanish gentleman, the heart palpitated. Death also occurred here. Vesalius was brought before the Inquisition, but was pardoned.

A gentleman was seized, apparently with apoplexy, while at cards. A vein was opened in both arms, but *no blood flowed*. He was placed in a room with two watchers, who slept, alas! too long; for in the morning the room was *deluged with blood* from the punctures, and his life was gone.

These are indeed unhappy instances of the errors of omission and commission entailed on the fallibility of science. I believe a French author, Bruhier, has collected fifty-two cases of persons buried alive, four which were dissected prematurely, fifty-three which recovered, and seventy-two which were falsely reported dead.

ASTR. There is a solemn problem associated with this, on which I have often reflected, the solution of which, I presume, your philosophy *cannot* offer to us. At what moment would the mind cease to influence the body, were there no recovery from the trance? I have sometimes felt a mysterious influence, apart, I am sure, from philosophy, that whispered me, the life, which I had watched in its ebb, was at length gone. Yet, of the transit of an immaterial spirit, although convinced of the sublime truth, it is certain we *know* nothing.

EV. Nothing *demonstrative*. It is not, however, when the body *seems* dead, for consciousness, or the *systemic* life, may for awhile be suspended by mere cold. But dissolution is *that point*, unknown to us, when the principle of life (whether that be the

influence of *arterial* blood, or electricity, magnetism, or galvanism,) is not excitable—when *molecular* death has ensued; not even irritability, that *vis insita* or *vis nervosa* of Haller, remaining. Of course mind must instantly depart on the commencement of *decomposition*, the brain being *then* totally incompatible with mind. The *stoics* believed the soul to occupy the body *until it was putrified*, and resolved into its *materia prima*.

ASTR. I once thought, Evelyn, that the difference in the tenacity of life in the man and the zoophyte might with some subtlety be explained on this principle—thus: That the life of a reasoning creature was in *its soul*; that of an inferior animal in its *spinal irritability*. Thus, when man is decapitated, his *soul* is gone from him—he is dead; but when vitality is in the *vis nervea*, as in the insect, life may exist without a head, that is, the organ of a soul. The butterfly will flutter, I am told, long after decapitation.

EV. The *excito-motary* principle illustrates this fact, without the requisition of such a notion; and life, we know, may be *artificially sustained* for a time after decapitation. The interesting physiology of the *reflex actions* of a nerve explains this, and all the terrific convulsions of galvanized bodies.

CAST. I think I have a glimpse of your meaning, Evelyn. May we not believe, then, that there is truth in the affirmation, that Charlotte Corday's cheeks *blushed* at her exposure after her decollation?

EV. There is far more romance than truth, fair Castaly, in this story; but I do believe the probability of a story almost as marvellous, that the lips of Mary Stuart *prayed visibly* after her head fell from her body. Sœmmering has written, that if the open eyes of a decollated head be turned full on the sun, the lids will immediately close, but this of course *without*

consciousness.

CAST. And yet some *learned* men believed the head of Charlotte Corday sensible of its state, from this asserted fact of its blushing.

EV. They should *not* have believed without complete evidence. Indeed, this question may now be deemed decided *in the negative*, by the experiments of a learned professor of Heidelburg, on the head of Sebastian Zink, decollated at Rastadt. On placing bitters on the tongue, and hallooing "pardon" in his ear *at the instant of decapitation*, it was proved that there was an utter insensibility to all.

IDA. Then sensation is instantly destroyed. In this, as in all his dispensations, how is the mercy of the Deity displayed!

EV. It is still a question with us, whether our physical sensations on the point of dissolution are often so acute as they appear.

Cabanis and the famous Guillotine declared their conviction that no pain was felt at the moment of or after decapitation. In the works of Lord Bacon, we read of one who was suspended till he was all but dead, and his declaration was that his suffering was a mere trifle. Cowper also left a manuscript, in which he states that in one of his three attempts at suicide, he hung himself over his door in the Temple, but that he did not suffer in the least.

IDA. And in drowning?

EV. While the medical committee of the Humane Society were framing those scientific rules which have rendered the process of resuscitation so successful, I remember especially one pale and melancholy girl, who glided in before us like a spectre. She had attempted suicide, but her intention was happily thwarted, after she had been for many minutes in the water, and was apparently lifeless.

True, the mental agony which prompts to such an act, will often overwhelm sensation; but this creature was *conscious of her act*, and assured us that the sensation of drowning was but *an intense feeling of faintness preceding a sinking into insensibility, with a short spasmodic struggle; an uneasiness rather than a pain*. When Clarence therefore, recounting his dream, exclaims, —

> "My God, methought what *pain* it was to drown!"

I believe, he should rather have referred his feelings to his *recovery*, if the words of the pale girl were true; for, when consciousness and sensation are returning, the feeling is intense. Throughout the body, as it is recovering from *apathetic* numbness, the sense of returning circulation of the blood is terrible: an acute sensation of *pins and needles* in the brain and the marrow of the spine. No wonder, then, that these resuscitated beings will request that *no efforts* may be made, should they again be in the state of suspended animation. The sensation on being born is probably as acute as that on dissolution.

IDA. Then there *is* consciousness?

EV. The evidence of Dr. Adam Clarke will illustrate this interesting question. Yet I differ somewhat with him, regarding so perfect a consciousness during submersion. In his life, you will see the following dialogue with Dr. Lettsom, in which Clarke describes his own case of immersion:

"Dr. Lettsom said,—'Of all that I have seen restored, or questioned afterwards, I never found one who had the smallest recollection of any thing that passed, from the moment they went under water, till the time in which they were restored to life and thought.' Dr. Clarke answered Dr. L.,—'I knew a case

to the contrary.' 'Did you, indeed?' 'Yes, Dr. L., and the case was my own. I was once drowned.' And then related the circumstances, and added,—'I saw my danger, but thought the mare would swim, and I knew I could ride when we were overwhelmed. It appeared to me, that I had gone to the bottom with my eyes open. At first, I thought I saw the bottom clearly, and then felt neither apprehension nor pain; on the contrary, I felt as if I had been in the most delightful situation; my mind was tranquil and uncommonly happy. I felt as if in Paradise, and yet I do not recollect that I saw any person; the impressions of happiness seemed not to be derived from any thing around me, but from the state of my mind. And yet I had a general apprehension of pleasing objects; and I cannot recollect that any thing appeared defined, nor did my eye take in any object, only I had a general impression of a green colour, as of fields or gardens. But my happiness did not arise from these, but appeared to consist merely in the tranquil, indescribably tranquil, state of my mind. By and by, I seemed to awake as out of a slumber, and felt unutterable pain and difficulty of breathing; and now I found I had been carried by a strong wave, and left in very shallow water upon the shore, and the pain I felt was occasioned by the air once more inflating my lungs and producing respiration. How long I had been under water I cannot tell; it may however be guessed at by this circumstance: when restored to the power of reflection, I looked for the mare, and saw her walking leisurely down shore towards home, then about half a mile distant from the place where we were submerged. Now, I aver,—1st. That in being drowned I felt no pain;—2nd. That I did not, for a simple moment, lose my consciousness;—3rd. I felt indescribably happy, and,

though dead as to the total suspension of all the functions of life, yet I felt no pain in dying; and I take for granted, from this circumstance, those who die by drowning feel no pain, and that probably it is the easiest of all deaths;—4th. That I felt no pain till once more exposed to the action of the atmospheric air, and then I felt great pain and anguish in returning to life, which anguish, had I continued under water, I should have never felt;—5th. That animation must have been totally suspended from the time I must have been under water, which time might be in some measure ascertained by the distance the mare was from the place of my submersion, which was at least half a mile, and she was not, when I first observed her, making any speed;—6th. Whether there were any thing preternatural in my escape, I cannot tell; or whether a ground swell had not, in a merely natural way, borne me to the shore, and the retrocession of the tide (for it was then ebbing), left me exposed to the open air, I cannot tell. My preservation must have been the effect of natural causes; and yet it appears to be more rational to attribute it to a superior agency. Here then, Dr. L., is a case widely different, it appears, from those you have witnessed, and which argues very little for the modish doctrine of the materiality of the soul.' Dr. Lettsom appeared puzzled with this relation, but did not attempt to make any remarks on it."

And well he might; for if animation were *totally suspended*, consciousness would have been suspended also.

TRANSMIGRATION.—ANALYSIS OF

TRANCE.

> "Thou shalt hold the opinion of Pythagoras, ere I will allow of thy wits; and fear to kill a woodcock, lest thou dispossess the soul of thy grandam."
>
> TWELFTH NIGHT.

> "Through all thy veins shall run
> A cold and drowsy humour, which shall seize
> Each vital spirit."
>
> ROMEO AND JULIET.

ASTR. You have granted me more than you desire, dear Evelyn. If life be *restored*, it had never *deserted* the body, and yet the mind *had* deserted it.

The mind and body, then, are both independent of each other. From this truth, a metaphysical question of deep and wondrous interest arises. *In what condition does the mind exist, during so long a period, uninfluencing and uninfluenced by the power of perception?* I remember searching for some elucidation of this mystery among those ghost-stories of the Hebrews, founded on the "purgatorie of souls" in Stehelin's "Traditions of the Jews," but I rose from my reading unenlightened.

IDA. And ever will, Astrophel. Profane curiosity must fail in such a study; adoration alone can sanctify this mystic question, on which theologians and philosophers, even those devoutly confident in the sublime truths of immortality, have so essentially differed.

Like Astrophel, Paley inquires where is the soul during suspended vitality? and Priestly, where when the body was created? Hume, with the subtlety of a sceptic, asks how can the soul long be the same, seeing that, like the body, its particles are constantly

changing? While Glanville thinks himself a wondrous wight, as he prates of its "*essential spissitude*, a something that is more subtle than body, contracting itself into a *less ubi*."

Were this sublime secret fathomable by the deepest intellect, then would be unfolded things above, which are ordained to be ever mysteries to creatures on earth; such as the future existence of the spirit, and the nature of Paradise.

Although revelation has given us glimpses, enough to satisfy humble devotion, what mind can *decide* on the exact nature and changes of its own future state? The negative answer is at once returned by the variety of these learned opinions:—That the soul is, immediately after death, submitted to its reward or punishment;—That its state after death is one of *half* happiness or misery, until it be again joined to its body on the resurrection; and then it shall enjoy or suffer the *extremes* of felicity or torment;—That the soul rests in quiet unconsciousness until the day of judgment;—And lastly, that souls are purified by purgatory and comparative suffering, and *then* are admitted into the realms of perpetual enjoyment.

ASTR. Is it not strange that in this notion of purgatory, with slight variations, pagans, and Romanists, and Egyptians, and Brahmins, so nearly accord? In the creed of the Brahmins, there is something of sublimity, whatever may be their error, and Ida will not chide, if I repeat the essence of their creed, which Robertson has gathered from the "Baghvat Geeta."

"Every intelligent nature, particularly the souls of men, they conceived to be portions separated from this great spirit; to which, after fulfilling their destiny on earth, and attaining a proper degree of

purity, they would be again reunited. In order to efface the stains with which a soul, during its residence on earth, has been defiled by the indulgence of sensual and corrupt appetites, they taught that it must pass, in a long succession of transmigrations, through the bodies of different animals, until, by what it suffers and what it leaves in the various forms of its existence, it shall be so thoroughly refined from all pollution, as to be rendered meet for being absorbed into the divine essence, and returns, like a drop, into that unbounded ocean from which it originally issued."

Aristotle, in taking up this notion of transmigration in his book "De Animâ," says that "the soul was always joined to a body, sometimes to one, sometimes to another." And from this idea were taken the stories of Fadlallah and the Dervis, in the "Spectator," of the "Transmigrations of Indus," and the beautiful fable of "Psyche," or the soul, which when a body died, could not live *alone* on earth, and so crept into another. Herodotus, in the second book of his history, has some allusions to the Egyptian creed; and, indeed, the fear of this transmigration was the origin of mummies among the Copts. Their belief that the soul (the immortality of which they very early, if not the first, decided,) could not leave the body when *entire*, induced them to preserve that body as long as possible; and the mummy unrollers and hieroglyphic readers must commit sad sacrilege, by exposing their sacred dust to the decomposition of air.

When the body was dissolved, however, the soul entered that of some animal that instant born; and profane commentators have, on this creed, presumed to explain the sacred story of the "banishment and savage life of Nebuchadnezzar." At the end of 30,000

years, it again entered that of a man; and it is likely that their object in embalming was, to have the soul *re-enter the same body* from choice and habit.

Simonides, four hundred years after the siege of Troy, ungallantly reversed this doctrine, deciding that "the souls of women were formed of the principles and elements of brutes." The Pythagorean system was, if not more courteous, at least more just.

"Thus all things are but altered, nothing dies;
And here and there th' embodied spirit flies.
By time, or force, or sickness, dispossess'd,
And lodges, where it lights, in bird or beast;
Or hunts without, till ready limbs it find,
And actuates those according to their kind.
From tenement to tenement is toss'd,
The soul is still the same, the figure only lost."

This is from Dryden's translation of Chaucer.

And Burton's record is as follows:

"The Pythagoreans defend *Metempsychosis* and *Palingenesia*, that souls go from one body to another, *epotâ prius Lethes nudâ*, as men into wolves, beares, dogs, hogs, as they were inclined in their lives, or participated in conditions:

'——*inque ferinas*
Possumus ire domus pecudumque in corpora condi.'

"Lucian's cock was first *Euphorbus*, a captaine:

'*Ille ego (nam memini) Trojani tempore belli*
Panthoides Euphorbus eram.' "

And Plato, in Timæus, and in Phædo—

Ev. Enough of Plato, dear Astrophel; or believe, with me, that *his* philosophy on this point was merely *figurative of the similarity of mind, or genius, or*

feature, between the dead and the living;—as it was said of old, that the soul of Raphael had transmigrated to the body of Francesco Mazzola (Parmegiano), *because* his style and personal beauty so closely resembled those of the all but divine master of his art.

And pray what was the gist of that special astronomer, who affirmed that he "saw something written in the moon?"—A wild romance only? No, forsooth. Pythagoras may classically vociferate—

"——errat, et illinc,
Huc venit, hinc illuc, et quoslibet occupat artus
Spiritus: eque feris humana in corpora transit,
Inque feras noster."

But read further, and you will find the high moral to be a severe injunction against flesh-eating:

"Then let not piety be put to flight,
To please the taste of glutton appetite;
But suffer innate souls secure to dwell,
Lest from their seats your parents you expel:
With rabid hunger feed upon your kind,
Or from a beast dislodge a brother's mind."

Think you this injunction will be obeyed, in the face of the "Almanac des Gourmands?"

IDA. Evelyn is severe. May I tell him that, among the records of the East, he will find incidents blended with this idea which may almost consecrate the creed of a Pagan. As the honey is hung close to the poisoned sting of the bee, there may be a bright spot to illuminate the gloomy annals of superstition. The very belief in *transmigration* may impart an atom of mercy, even to an infidel; and where superstition, shorn of the light of Christianity, *must* prevail, it were better sure to foster that notion which may, even in one little sentiment, half humanize the heart.

Listen to this contrast, between some orient sects, along the eastern shores of Hindostan. The daughters of Guzzerat fold their infants to their bosoms drugged with opium; and when the babe is thus poisoned, the Hindu girl will answer with a languid and seeming innocent smile, “It is not difficult to blast a flower-bud.”

Then the Kurrada Brahmins (as we read in the “Rudhiradhyaya”), believing themselves the agents of Vishara Boot, the spirit of poison, sacrifice the pundits to their vampire goddess, Maha-Lackshmi.

Equally blind, yet more happy in the *nature* of their superstition, are the Shravuch Banians, or the proselytes of Jena. The Yati, or officiating priest of *this* order, in purifying the temples, sweeps the floor with the Raju-hurrun, a broom of cotton-threads, lest hapless one little insect may be destroyed. And this we may believe, from the creed of transmigration being influential among these people. Sir Paul Rycaut also, in his oriental history, informs us of parallel incidents among the devout Mahomedans, who, believing that in the body of a brute may reside the soul of a departed relative, ransom, with their gold, many a bird that would otherwise flutter away its captivity in a cage.

CAST. I will not flout your praises, Ida; but, in our own island, this illusion has rather led *to* captivity. I remember the story of a lady, living in Worcestershire, who, under the innocent delusion that her daughters were changed into singing-birds, hung her pew in the cathedral with cages of goldfinches and linnets. And Lord Orford, in his “Reminiscences,” thus records the monomania of the Duchess of Kendal:

“In a tender mood, he (King George) promised the duchess that if she survived him, and it were

possible for the departed to return to this world, he would make her a visit. The duchess, on his death, so *much expected* the accomplishment of that engagement, that a large raven, or some black fowl, flying into one of the windows of her villa, at Isleworth, she was persuaded it was the soul of her departed monarch so accoutred, and received and treated it with all the respect and tenderness of duty, till the royal bird, or she, took the last flight."

ASTR. You spoke of the absolute *senselessness* of trance; and yet there were some hints of the awakening power of fear. Is this consistent?

EV. I expected your objection. In the cases of perfect catalepsy, the brain is not conscious of its mind, or if the mind be active, there is no *assurance of its activity*. But, as its faculties are awakened, it usually begins to work exactly where it left off;—one of the most imposing proofs, both of a separate existence during life, and of our bodies' *unconsciousness* of this transient disunion.

ASTR. I may own, Evelyn, that your illustrations of our questions, in despite of some *straining* at explanation, carry, on *many* points, conviction to my own mind, but not on *all*. There is another question equally interesting with the former. *How is vitality preserved during this protracted abstinence?*

EV. Remember, dear Astrophel, my confession, that there *are* inexplicable mysteries. But, to the point of your last question. We are aware of the long period during which the body may fast after shipwreck, or beneath a fallen cliff, or even on the incarceration of animals for the purpose of experiment. Thus Captain Bligh, and seventeen persons, sailed four thousand miles in an open boat, with a small bird occasionally for the food of all. The Juno's crew, wrecked off Aracan, existed twenty-

three days without food; and the wreck of the Medusa is fresh in our memories. Here the body *feeds on its own fat, shrinking* until that supply is lost, and then it dies.

I might relate to you the very impressive stories of Anne Moore, of Tutbury; of Janet M'Cleod, told by Dr. Mackenzie; and many strange facts related by Dr. Willan, Sir William Hamilton, and others.

I might refer you to legends, of which I can scarcely press for your belief. As the strange but authenticated story of Anna Garbero, of Racconiggi, forty miles from Turin, who existed without nutrition for two years, becoming like a shrivelled mummy. And that of Eve Hergen, who existed thirteen years upon the odour of flowers! But even with that incredulous frown of Astrophel's, and that faint smile of thine, fair Castaly, let me at once to my explanations.

In *natural* sleep the functions of the body are impeded. One of these is digestion. As there is little waste of the system there is little necessity for repletion, and life can be supported by a *very slight* action of the heart, a minute current of blood; like the slender vitality of infants, who, even in a state of health, seem frequently scarcely to breathe. The circulation is materially influenced in sleep, the pulse being slower and more feeble than during waking; the relaxation of the *cutaneous* vessels inducing frequent perspiration, especially in debilitated systems, and in the last stages of *adynamic* fevers.

The body of the cataleptic patient descends to the condition of less complex animal life, in which there appears a much greater simplicity of organization; and we well know, as we descend in the scale of creation, towards the cold-blooded single-hearted animals, and especially if we reach the *zoophyte*, in

how exact a proportion to this simplicity of structure is the tenacity of life increased. “Fish,” says Sir John Franklin, “were taken out of the nets frozen, and became a solid mass of ice, being by a blow of a hatchet easily split open; they, however, recovered their vitality on being thawed.”

A course of *systematic* abstinence will enable us, if we wished it, to endure extreme privations, which a high feeder would soon sink under; and this is probably the discipline adopted by the fakirs of India, who fast so long under the influence of superstitious devotion.

Vaillant’s spider lived without food nearly one year; John Hunter’s toad fourteen months; land tortoises eighteen months; a beetle three years; and two serpents, according to Shaw, five years; an antelope has survived twenty days without food; some dogs forty days; an eagle 23 days.

Now all animals fall asleep at certain temperatures, which they cannot resist, but the common effect of *extreme* cold is death. Dr. Solander was yielding to the influence of intense cold in *Terra del Fuego*, but was saved by the firmness of Sir Joseph Banks. Richmond, the black, lay down on the snow to sleep, and died.

There is a close analogy between this state and the *hybernation* of animals, although the causes are not similar. *Animalculæ* often become torpid for lack of moisture, and, even after the lapse of twenty-seven years, have been revivified by water. The small *furcularia anastobea* will repeatedly become animated and lively by a single drop of water, its previous condition being completely quiescent. The snail, the alligator, indeed most of the *ophidian* and *saurian* reptiles, assume the torpid state in a period of extreme drought; and Humboldt states this also of

the *centenes solosus*, a Madagascar hedgehog.

This hybernation of animals, as of the marmot and the dormouse, resembles the deep sleep arising from cold of a *certain* degree; for if this be *intense*, they will sometimes be momentarily roused from it. They may be constantly kept awake by heat and powerful light.

Thus hybernation and the *sleep of plants* take place from the withdrawal of *stimuli*; *heat* being the *animal—light* the *vegetable* stimulus.

CAST. The sleep of plants? a fiction surely!

EV. Nay, a truth. The *irritability* of plants is excited by their peculiar stimulus; when this is withdrawn, they fall to sleep. Most of the *discous* flowers turn to the sun in his course, as the sun-flower, the *helianthus*, and the *croton*. The acacia leaves at noon point towards the zenith. The tamarind, the *oxalis*, and the trefoil, fold their leaves on the exclusion of light. The evening primrose shuts its blossom at sunset, while that minion of the moon, the night-blowing *cactus, then only* begins to bloom; perhaps like the owl, and goat-sucker, and bat, who find *the sun too powerful an excitant*.

Vegetables may be put asleep by the withdrawal of proper stimulus,—the exclusion of this light. But this is a law of nature, and ordained for a special purpose. It is chiefly *during fructification*; the leaves at night folding round the flowers and seed-vessels, to protect them from the chilling blight of the night cold, which would congeal their juices. In this condition of the plant its irritability ceases, but the circulation of its sap-vessels is not suspended. Its vitality continues, but if the exercise of its *peculiar phenomena* be long discontinued, it will fade and die. Now the *vis insita* of the muscle resembles vegetable irritability; and, as this is lost and sensibility

suspended, the body is indeed in a condition of vegetable sleep; for vegetables have not of course sensation, although the Darwinian romance would endow the *dionœa*, the *hedysarum*, and the *mimosa* with sensibility, and all the blossom-beauties of Flora with the fervour of sexual passion. Trance then is caused by *the removal of a stimulus*. As somnambulism may result from a *redundancy* of nervous energy, trance and catalepsy, as well as *incubus*, seem to arise from an *inefficient* secretion or supply of this quality, in whatever it may consist, or an impediment to its transmission from the *sensorium* or brain to the expansion of a nerve. Thus the motive power of a muscle is in these diseases *suspended*, which in *paralysis* may be *permanently* impaired or destroyed.

To describe this state, I must abound in negatives. The brain is not conscious: there is no sensation. Even the marrow by its *reflex faculty* does not excite a muscle: there is no action: the mind has no cognizance: the body is for a time paralyzed. What is there then which may be termed life? merely involuntary circulation and gentle breathing. In this condition also there is a congestion of dark blood about the brain and in the right side of the heart; the circulation being reduced to an extreme *lentor* or sluggishness, while in real *asphyxia* there is a total stagnation.

I have done with minute pathology: as there are however two diseases, *epilepsy* and *insanity*, which may be the *result* of catalepsy, I may offer a precept on the point. The propensity to trance cannot suddenly be averted, but the state of the body and mind are important studies for our treatment. Melancholy and apathy are the features of the mind of the cataleptic, and languor and faulty secretions

the symptoms of the body. Cheerful society, sympathy with suffering, but firmness in resisting sloth and erroneous fancies, and the direction of the patient's mind to moral recreations, comprehend the sum of our *mental* treatment.

It is equally essential to ensure regulation of the secretions, especially those of the liver. We should employ *cupping* from the nape of the neck, if there be pain, or heat, or fulness of the head, and constant but gentle exercise. The head should not be low during sleep, nor should food be taken within two hours of retiring to rest. I believe obedience to these slight precepts will frequently mitigate, perhaps in the end avert the attacks, especially if they have arisen from diseased conditions of the body, or gloomy or depraved studies, and deep contemplation.

The most simple or unconnected form of catalepsy, is that most likely to end in madness. Perhaps, too, in deep and gloomy subjects, which begin by absorbing mind and sense, the end is thus; so that cataleptic abstraction is but the reverie or foretaste of mania.

As to suspected cases of still existing vitality: where there is *plethora*, I would employ bleeding, or cupping, *insufflation*, *Galvanism*; and I should not in extreme cases fear *acupuncture of the heart*, and galvanic shocks then transmitted through the needle. Beclard, in "La Pitié," in Paris, allows the needle to remain three or four minutes and then withdraws it, and I have learned from my oriental friends, that the Chinese practice this mode extensively.

MESMERISM.

"Thus smiling, as some fly had tickled slumber,

Not as Death's dart, being laugh'd at."

CYMBELINE.

"By some illusion see thou bring her here,
I'll charm his eyes against she doth appear."

"Such tricks hath strong imagination."

MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

IDA. You are very formidable creatures, Evelyn, if you can touch and wound the heart of a sensitive girl so easily; we must be wary, dear Castaly. It must be a desperate case that justifies so desperate a remedy; yet, with all this danger, the magi of our day will, as I have heard, induce by their art this very state of trance.

ASTR. Magnetic sleep. If the phenomena of this animal magnetism be not a *mystery*, it is at least a curiosity. And yet Evelyn will tell us that they, too, obey the *common* laws of our nature. I believe, however, there are stories of most strange and *novel* interest, beyond the scope even of *his* philosophy.

EV. The hand of a magnetiser *seems*, I confess, to effect a wonder; but your challenge will be fatal to you, Astrophel. In this same question of animal magnetism we may discover *the spring of all your mysteries*. The close analogies between the *natural* and *imparted* phenomena of trance and magnetic sleep and somnambulism, and somnambulic blindness, and magnetic ecstacy; even the frauds of lucid vision and clairvoyance, and the vaunted gift of prophetic divination, with the explanation of some, and the refutation of others, will dispel the most subtle arguments in proof of divine influence; seeing that the process is conducted by men of mortal mould, who claim no merit even for the possession of occult learning.

CAST. Mercy, dearest Evelyn, mercy. No more philosophy to-night. The smile of yon planet Venus, that was twinkling from out its cerulean blue, is veiled in a cloud; for our cold discourse is treason to its influence. Be ready with your stories, Astrophel.

EV. The history of Mesmerism is a romance in itself, dear Castaly. If I invade not the province of Astrophel, I will, as some apology for my dull prosing, sketch its progress by way of episode.

You must know, then, that it was Maximilian Holl who first, from the influence of his magnets on the body, imparted the practical idea of animal *magnetism* to Mesmer, who had already written his inaugural thesis, at Vienna, on "Planetary Influence," and had laid down this unblushing aphorism: "There is one health, one disease, one remedy, and one physician, and that physician am I." His immediate proselytes were Deslon at Paris, and Gmelin at Heilbronne, and Reicke at Stutgard, and Klugé at Berlin. Encouraged by the Swedenborgian tenets, this magic brought immense revenue into the purses of Mainanduc in England, and the rest of its revivers; so that one hundred guineas were given for a course of lectures and experiments, and fifteen guineas for a consultation and the imparting of its influence.

In after times Miss Prescott, among others, gained great fame in the art: but De Lauterbourg was one of its most popular professors. Three thousand patients, it is said, were often waiting for the magnetic influence about his house at Hammersmith.

In 1784 an ordonnance of the French king confirmed Mesmer in his working of these apparent miracles. By tractions on the body, either with the hand or by substances magnetized with his "imponderable fluid," by *champooing*, and the accompaniment of sweet music, a state of

enchantment of the senses was induced. Convulsions and mania were often excited in the "Hall of Crisis," which was lined by soft cushions to protect the convulsionaries. These paroxysms and tempests of the brain Mesmer seemed to control, like a second Prospero, with his wand of enchantment, gliding, in robes of silk, among the multitude of devotees, whom novelty and voluptuousness had attracted to his shrine.

To study and report on these mysteries, commissioners were appointed by the "Faculty of Medicine," by the "Academy of Sciences," and by the "Royal Society of Medicine." These *savans* referred all to the influence of imagination, or of emotion in sensitive systems; and that there must be this sensitive predisposition is often proved, for idiots, and those who have been blindfold, and unconscious children, *remain uninfluenced*, although it is declared by one that he magnetized an *idiot baby*!

I must observe, that before the commissions in Paris, especially that of which Franklin was a member, not the slightest influence was observed; and the experiments of Monsieur Berner, who was the chief manipulator, were a perfect failure, especially in regard to the *clairvoyance*.

Astrophel reminds me by his frown ——

ASTR. That magnetic power is not granted to all; that all possess not the essential qualities of mind and body. It was affirmed that the operator must have his mind abstracted, and teeming with affection and benevolence towards his patients; must believe himself a very *magnet*, and feel a desire of benefiting mankind. Thus a sympathy, or incorporation of atmospheres, was induced, by which disease was influenced; and even in persons distant from each other, by an intensity of thought the patient tasted,

smelt, or heard, the flavours, odours, or sounds which at that moment affected the senses of the *operator*. The magnetizer must thus be confident that, by his will, he can pass his whole nervous energy into his patient. It is essential, also, that the *mind of the patient* should have a corresponding willingness *to be* magnetized.

EV. And this congenial platonism is sometimes so intense, that offers of *magnetic marriage* are made by the ecstatic ladies to their magnetizers, even though it may not be *leap-year*, on the plea that the loneliness of magnetic widowhood distressed them, and that the possession of a *sleeping* partner was better than *sleeping* alone.

Under this interesting disposition for magnetic union, the eyes of the maiden being fixed on the magnetizer intensely, *his* hands were passed before her body, his fingers thus forming natural conductors, by which the magnetic fluid was conveyed from the positive to the negative magnetic body. Then came the wonders of this influence. The patient was warmed by the benevolence of the magnetizer, who felt an *aura* or tingling in the part corresponding to any painful part of the patient's body which was relieved or cured. Indeed, Bertrand assures us that many told him they saw a *blue fluid streaming from his fingers* when he magnetized them.

The secret of this is closely analogous to the effect of brooding over sorrow: the mind of the patient is *concentrated* on the spot to which the passes are directed; and, as we know that *disease* can be excited thus by imagination (especially in the hypochondriac), so it is a truth that this concentration may *remove* disease and pain, especially by the superaddition of faith.

ASTR. But the magnetizer, as they said, was not

always *in a state* to operate, and required a certain *training*. So it was observed that Casper Hauser's *cat* did not follow him after he had eaten meat; his magnetic and somnambulant qualities were destroyed by animal food, although they were so abundant in his *wilder* state,—as his history will thus illustrate to those who believe it:

"As I came into the room, and the door of the deceased person was opened, which I did not know, I felt a sudden dragging on both sides of my breast, as if any one wished to pull me into the room. As I went on and proceeded towards the sick person, a very strong breath blew on me from behind, and the pulling which I felt before in my breast I now felt in my shoulders. I went towards the window; the sick person followed me. At the time that I wished to ask a question of Mr. Von Gutter, I felt a trembling in my left foot, and it became unwell. She went back again, and that trembling left me. She seated herself under the canopy and said, 'Will not the gentleman sit down?' Hereupon Mr. Professor Hensler said to her, she should see me. So as she drew nigh to me, within two or three steps, I was still more unwell than before, and I felt pains in all my limbs. Mr. Professor Hensler told her that I was the man who had been wounded (that is, by the attempt which had been made to assassinate him); at the same time she noticed my scar, and pointed towards it; then came the air strong upon my forehead, and I felt pain in it, also my left foot began to tremble greatly. The sick person seated herself under the canopy, and said that she was ill; and I also said that I was so unwell that I must sit down. I sat down in the other room: now the other foot began to twitter. Although Mr. Von Gutter held my knees, I could not keep them still. Now a violent beating of my heart came on me, and there

was a heat in all my body: that beating of the heart left me afterwards; and I had a twittering in my left arm, which ceased after some minutes, and I was again something better. This condition lasted until the next morning, then I had a headache again and a twittering in all my limbs, still not so violent. In the afternoon, about three o'clock, it came again something less, and left me earlier: then I was quite well again."

"The Somnambulist was greatly affected by the *presence* of Hauser. I heard that, afterwards, when she was asleep, she had said these words,—'That was a hard struggle for me.' She felt indisposition from this process even on the next day."

EV. The first sensation from magnetism is usually that of slight *vertigo*,—a state of musing or reverie succeeding, the mind being lulled into abstraction, as it is by the rippling of water, the busy hum of bees, or the murmuring of the Æolian-harp. I would explain this feeling by the term, *confusion of the senses*; for a certain period must elapse ere an external object make an impression on the mind. When, therefore, objects or sounds become *extremely rapid*, the perception is confused, and the mind, left as it were to itself, cannot follow the impressions *so as to associate them*, and thus the magnetic ecstacy ensues.

ASTR. But Monsieur de Paysegur, who first excited *magnetic somnambulism*, magnetized trees and ropes, by which he converted those who clung to them into sleep-walkers. Dr. Elliotson, also, mesmerized a *sovereign*, by *merely looking on it*; and a girl, who intuitively *selected* it from a heap of others, was instantly struck with *coma*.

EV. The last is a very frail experiment. Paysegur often failed in his illustrations, and then the cunning

juggler explained this, by affirming that the trees counter-magnetized each other. Now, whatever may be the influence imparted by this *traction*, the phenomena of *excited* somnambulism are similar precisely to those *spontaneously* occurring. Magnetic sleep, or ecstasis, is its precursor; and there is a total unconsciousness of it when awake. Here is one of those close analogies that are the most potent arguments on which the question of magnetism rests. For, in all the states alluded to, the interval of *ecstacy* is *a blank*. And, as in the cases of intense alarm, as you remember, the mesmeric ecstacy will cause a sensitive girl to *forget the present*, while the scenes of youth and infancy pass vividly before her memory.

Now the effects of the passes of magnetism are referred to *six* degrees,—the chief conditions being those of sleep, somnambulism, and clairvoyance. The essence of the last, it seems, is combined with a blending of one's own feeling and nature with those of others;—a reuniting, in fact, of body and soul once separated from that individual whole, which some philosophers, as Hecker, believed the whole human race to be. You observe my fidelity, Astrophel.

It must be confessed, that some of the experiments at which I have myself assisted exhibit very strange results. In some, there is the propensity to chatter nonsense,—a system of one form of *hysteria*, of which the analogy is perfect. One little jade created much amusement, by inserting supernumerary syllables, thus—oppor*way*tuni*whats*ty.

The insensibility of the nostril to the most powerful *ammonia* is a very imposing fact; one which must strike us more than that of insensibility of the eye to light, or the ear to sounds. For the faculty of perception may be often suspended in either of those

organs of sense, if attention be powerfully diverted to another point, or, as it is by the abstraction of magnetic ecstacy, not directed *to any*.

So that I do not wonder when thoughtless proselytes believe these effects to be *miraculous*, or credit the assertions of Pereaud, in his "*Antidæmon of Mascon*," that,—"The devil causeth witches to fall into ecstacies, so that a man would say their souls were out of their body." Or those of Bodin, in his "*Theatre of Universal Nature*," that "those that are rapt of the devil feel neither stripes nor cuttings."

So that the honour of the magnetic monomania must at last be conceded to the fallen angel.

IDA. And are all these wonders worked only to excite curiosity?

ASTR. I believe there is some good in it. Is it not certain, that during this state of magnetic sleep, operations have been performed without creating pain? The lady on whom Mons. Chopelain operated, talked coolly and unconsciously during its performance. And Jules Cloquet, in Paris, amputated the breast of a lady who had been put into an ecstacy or state of apathetic trance by a mesmerizer.

EV. It is, I believe, quite true that she was perfectly unconscious of the operation. But even this is not *safe*. Pain is given us as a warning against extreme injury; that by our complaint or suffering, the surgeon's mind may be *on its guard*. For the body is so far in disorder when it is chilled by this apathetic spell, that it may sink under fatal injuries, although they may be endured by the mind unconscious of its peril or its state. As a very curious antitype to these cases, it is stated in a medical gazette, that a young lady fell down in an hysterical fit and was insensible for two days. As a puffy swelling arose, she was *trephined*, but there was no

disease of the brain. In two days after this, she awoke and expressed all the steps of the operation, of which she had been *painlessly sensible*.

ASTR. And in this state of *ecstasis*, is there not strange havoc played with the senses, by their seeming displacement or transference?

The philosophers will tell us that the *ganglia* in the abdomen become as it were *little brains*, and the plexusses and the nerves of the skin become, like those of the senses, capable of imparting the idea of visible objects to those ganglia and of rendering a slight whisper distinctly audible. This is all very fine, and very *material*; but this straining at explanation is itself a proof of mystery. Van Ghest records the case of Mademoiselle B——, a young lady who was magnetized: she assured him that while she was intently looked upon, she felt her eyes and brain leave her head, and become fixed in her stomach, in which situation she saw acutely; but if she was in the slightest degree disturbed, the eyes and their sense seemed to return to her head.

The stories recorded in the book of the Rev. Chauncey Townsend are not less curious than this.

EV. Although I take the *metaphysics of a divine* with reservation, his *facts* may not be doubted. For there are *other* powerful impressions that will produce phenomena as curious. The arm of a young man in the "Ospidale della Vitta," at Bologna, in 1832, was grasped by a convulsive patient. Violent spasms succeeded, and he lost the senses of taste, smell, and sensibility of the skin, but he could hear *if the voice was applied on the stomach*; and could, at that spot, discriminate between different substances.

Another patient in the same hospital was subject every third day to violent convulsions, during the continuance of which, he lost entirely the use of all

his senses, and could neither hear, see, nor smell. His hands also became so firmly clenched, that it would be impossible to open them without breaking the fingers. Nevertheless, Dr. Ciri, the physician under whose charge he was placed, discovered that the *epigastric region*, at about two fingers breadth above the navel, received all the impressions of the senses, so as to replace them completely. If the patient was spoken to whilst the finger was placed on this spot, he gave answers, and even, when desired, opened his hands of his own accord. If any substance or matter was placed there, he could describe its form and quality, its colour and smell. As long as the finger was kept on the stomach, the convulsion gradually diminished until it entirely disappeared; but if the finger were placed on the heart, the convulsion returned with increased violence, and continued as long as the finger was kept in that position. If a flute was played while the finger was kept on the stomach, the patient heard the music; but if the finger was taken away, and placed on the heart, and then taken back again to its former position, the man asked *why they played by intervals*; yet the flute had never ceased. These experiments were all made in the presence of the professors and students of the hospital.

I will not counsel you, Astrophel, as to the *extent* of your belief in these strange tales, but extreme exaggeration often lessens the interest which scientific minds would take in these curiosities.

These pictures are correct in their *outline*, but the artists *have not spared their colours*. They will remind *us*, who are learned in legends, of that illusive monomania among the monks of Mount Athos, who believed that they could at pleasure attain a celestial vision by communing devoutly with the Deity, *while*

their attention or their sight were directed to the umbilicus! And they were therefore called "Omphalopsychians." We discover also very close analogies to this mental concentration, in the acuteness with which *one* sense is endowed on the failure of *another*. The delicacy of touch in the blind is often *extreme*; I knew a blind lady who played an excellent rubber, passing her finger lightly over the card spots; and more curious still are the cases of Miss M'Avoy, of Stanley the organist, and of Professor Saunderson. De Luc tells us of a lady, who read distinctly by passing her fingers over the page, even of a strange book. In Laura Bridgman, an American girl, an inmate of the Institution of Boston since 1837, the *whole faculty of perception* was concentrated in the one sense of touch. At the age of two, sight, and hearing, and smelling, and almost taste, deserted her. To this interesting creature, through the acuteness of her sense of touch in tracing letters, has been imparted so much knowledge, that the *moral sentiments* and the congenial affections of the heart are now beautifully displayed in her character. If by the dumb alphabet, or finger-talking, conversation is commenced with her, she follows the fingers with her arm with extreme rapidity, so that scarce a letter escapes her. Such are the wonders of this child's intelligence, that her mind has been cited as illustrative of *innate sentiment*; but the very *facility* is enough to explain her actions.

Le Cat writes of a blind sculptor at Voltera, who modelled features most faithfully by the touch.

A French gentleman lost the integrity of *every sense*, but *sensation* remained in half of his face, on which he received the correspondence of his friends by their tracing on it letters or forms.

In Mr. Eschke's establishment at Berlin, conversation was carried on by tracing letters on the *clothes of the back*.

A Bolognese, on witnessing a woman in acute *hysteria*, became occasionally convulsed, and impenetrably deaf; if, however, the slightest whisper was breathed to the *pit of the stomach*, he heard distinctly.

From Andral's Lectures, to please you, Astrophel, I will select this fragment:

"I saw yesterday a young lady who has been frequently magnetized, and who, on my visit, presented some very remarkable circumstances. After a fit of indigestion she fell into the ecstatic state, in which she continued when I saw her. Her skin was perfectly insensible, and her eyes were open like animals' in whom the *fifth pair* of nerves has been divided. She could perceive light, knew the difference between day and night for instance, but she could see and distinguish nothing else. She could not speak, but by signs expressed that her intellect was unusually active. But the most remarkable of the phenomena she presented was a singular *exaltation of the sense of hearing*. So extraordinarily delicate had this become, that she distinctly perceived sounds inaudible to myself and several other persons."

Carus, unmindful of the existence of a state of abstract reverie resembling sleep, records the case of a young ecclesiastic, who composed sermons in a state of slumber, correcting and adding to them with *peculiar care*. And this is the deduction: that the sense of vision seemed to be *transferred to the fingers*, as the eyes were perfectly blinded to the writing paper. His eyes, when he sat for his portrait, should have been painted at the tips of his fingers.

James Mitchell, congenitally deaf and blind,

discriminated his friends from strangers, and even formed a fair estimate of character, by the smell of the parties. And there was a deaf woman (writes Le Cat) who could read, and even tell the difference of languages, from the *silent* motion of the *lip*.

From these very curious illustrations we may confess that these lines in Hudibras are no fiction:

——"Communities of senses
To chop and change intelligences,
As Rosicrucian virtuosis
Can see with ears and hear with noses."

For so strange are the synonymes of the senses, that the blind will express their notion of *colour* by *sound*; the tint of scarlet is like the sound of a trumpet. From this hint, probably, St. Amand, in the "Pilgrims of the Rhine," speaks of a *visible music*.

IDA. Do we not perceive, also, something of this acuteness in the sense of touch under certain other conditions? In the story of Caspar Hauser, whether it be romance or reality, we read the following illustration of the effect of *mineral* traction:

"Once, when the physician, Dr. Osterhausen, and the royal crown fiscal, Brunner, from Munich, happened to be present, Daumer led Caspar, in order to try him, to a table covered with an oil cloth, upon which lay a sheet of paper, and desired him to say whether any metal was under it. He moved his finger over it, and then said, 'There it draws.' 'But this time,' replied Daumer, 'you are nevertheless mistaken, for,' withdrawing the paper, 'nothing lies under it.' Caspar seemed at first to be somewhat embarrassed, but he put his finger again to the place where he thought he had felt the drawing, and assured them repeatedly that he *there* felt a drawing. The oil cloth was then removed, a stricter search was

made, and a needle was actually found there."

Caspar Hauser might have felt this, or a cunning youth might have palmed on us his *idea* for a truth. Yet I confess Parkinson also relates the case of a woman who fainted on the touch of a *stethoscope*, exclaiming that it was "*drawing* her too strongly."

CAST. And of clairvoyance. Have you no incidents, Astrophel?

ASTR. Many. Listen to the following fragments. One from Andral's Lectures:

"M. Feruss was present at the experiment. A watch was held behind the individual's head. 'I see,' said he, 'something that shines.' 'What is it?' 'A watch.' He was asked the hour, and *replied exactly*. Two different watches were tried. He was equally precise. The watches were taken out of the room, and the hands altered. He still told the hours and minutes expressed on the dials."

Another from an English newspaper, in 1833:

"Mr. Barnaby ('twas at Bow-street) took his watch from his pocket, and said, 'What have I got in my hand?' 'A watch,' was the reply.—'What is it made of?' 'Gold.'—'What chain is attached to it?' 'None at all,' said the boy: 'there is a riband to it.'—'Can you tell at what hour the hand stands?' 'Yes, at twelve.' Mr. B. showed his watch, and the hands were at twelve precisely. Mr. B. then produced his purse from his pocket, and asked the boy the colour of it, and what it contained, and his answers were, without having the least opportunity of turning round towards the bench, that one end of the purse was brown, and the other yellow, and that the brown end contained sovereigns, and the yellow end silver. Mr. B. admitted the correctness of the description, and, taking some silver from his pocket, asked the boy to describe the different pieces. 'What is this?'

'Sixpence,' said the boy, 'and of the date 1819.'—'What is the next?' 'A shilling, and dated 1816,' was the reply. And when the clerk brought forth another coin, and asked similar questions, the boy said, 'That is a sixpence of the date of 1817;' and all these guesses proved to be correct."

Townsend and Wood, at Antwerp and Paris, produced this second sight in several instances. E. A., with eyes bandaged, read two hundred pages of print, and even written music.

Ev. A little more sifting of these cases, Astrophel, and they would resemble that of the cataleptic female of Amiens, related by Petelin; who also professed to tell the spots of a card, *unseen* by her. But it was discovered that the physician *glided it beneath the bedclothes*. Or that told by Bertrand, of another *ecstatic female*:—"While lying entranced in a chamber illuminated by a candle, her ring was removed from her finger by Monsieur Bertrand, and given to a person standing near him. She was asked who had her ring,—'Mr. Eyre has it in his trowsers pocket.' Mr. Bertrand exclaimed that she was wrong, for it was *not* to Mr. Eyre the ring was given. The lady persisted in her statement, and, on immediate inquiry, it was found that the person who first was given the ring had secretly conveyed it to Mr. Eyre."

The pages of history are not deficient in these pretensions to miracle. From Ulrick Zwingle we learn that Thomas Aquinas, the evangelical doctor, professed, by intense thought, to throw himself into ecstacy; in which, strange visions and mysteries of another existence passed before him.

Matthew Paris writes of a monk of Evesham, and of a certain *Sir Owen*, that, in one of these ecstacies, was favoured with an introduction into Saint Patrick's purgatory. So the mad visionary, Jacob

Bœhm, fell into many strange trances, and at last were revealed to him,—"The origin of nature; the formation of all things; and even divine principles and intelligent natures!"

But the case of Santa Theresa, if we can but believe the testimony of so accomplished an hypocrite, presents phenomena far more remarkable than all these. "Her frame was naturally delicate, her imagination lively, and her mind, incapable of being fixed by trivial objects, turned with avidity to those which religion offered, the moment they were presented to her view. But, unfortunately, meeting with the writings of Saint Jerome, she became enamoured of the monastic life, and, quitting the line for which nature designed her, she renounced the most endearing ties, and bound herself by the irrevocable vow. Deep melancholy then seized on her, and increased to such a degree, that for many days she lay both motionless and senseless, like one who is in a trance. Her tender frame, thus shaken, prepared her for ecstacies and visions, such as it might appear invidious to repeat, were they not related by herself and by her greatest admirers. She tells us that, in the fervour of her devotion, she not only became insensible to every thing around her, but that her body was often *lifted up from the earth*, although she endeavoured to resist the motion. And Bishop Yessen relates in particular, that, when she was going to receive the *Eucharist* at Avila, she was raised in a rapture higher than the grate, through which, as is usual in nunneries, it was presented to her. She often heard the voice of God, when she was recovered from a trance; but sometimes the devil, by imitation, endeavoured to deceive her, yet she was always able to detect the fraud."

So that Theresa's life was an elysium on earth,

and she might well have cried out in her ecstacy, —

"——sic sine vitâ,
Vivere quam suave est, sic sine morte mori."

Yet the modern proselytes to Mesmerism would scarcely believe this a fiction, but an illustration of that lucid vision which may, it is believed, be so highly excited, as to associate the being with universal nature: a creed grounded on the expansion or illimitable nature of thought or mind, by which it seems to leave the body, carrying with it its consciousness.

So the disciples of Mesmer asserted, that, when they thought or spoke warmly of absent persons, they would both appear in their *eidōlon*; and also that they were, at that exact time, speaking or thinking of *them*. This was Shelley's conviction, that minds *sympathetically* imparted ideas and thoughts,— particles, indeed, of the "mens divinior." So that they might well see in the dark.

Brown would be in a flood of joy to hear the affirmations of these ecstatics, whose spirits, as they believe and avow, are for the time released from the chains of mortality. "Why," exclaimed one of these half-spiritualized creatures,—"Why do you bring me again to life? Would you depart from me, my body would grow cold, my soul would not return to it, and I should be happy."

ASTR. You are fond of caricature, Evelyn. I speak of sober truths only. I am told that the powers of acquirement may be so increased by magnetism, as to resemble *new* faculties. A lady, during a sort of ecstacy, sung most scientifically church music; although, when awake, she entirely failed, and had forgotten all. And others will speak languages and sentiments, of which they are perfectly unconscious

when awake.

There was a girl in the vicinity of Bedford Row, of whose case there are related similar wonders of this magnetically-imparted accomplishment; and her beauty was so enchanting, as to transcend the brightest visions of Michael Angelo or Correggio.

EV. Like that of the inspired somnambule, of whom Wolfart thus writes in his "Annals:" "An evil spirit ushered in her somnambulic sleep, and then a good spirit spread its wings around her; and when they had conversed, he flew with her to the Eternal City, through the sun and the moon; and while there, tranced scenes were around her, and her spirit was enjoying her beatitude: her face was like the face of a seraph, and no mortal painter might essay to trace its beauty." So say those who *saw* this mystery.

ASTR. Yet, as to the prophetic power imparted by magnetism,—cases are recorded by our enthusiastic proselytes, which throw the spells of the conjuror into an eclipse —

EV. And therefore forbid belief. —

ASTR.—Even those displayed before our learned bodies. Madame Celini Sauvage, you remember, in the presence of the committee, in Paris, was placed in somnambulism. Even while insensible to stimuli she formed, it is recorded, a correct judgment of the diseases of persons around her, especially in the person of M. Marc, one of the committee; and in that of a young lady, on whom M. Dupuytren had operated for dropsy, and had tried the effects of the milk of a goat which had been anointed with mercury. Madame, unconscious of this, *prescribed the very same remedy*. You remember the report, Evelyn.

EV. I remember, but believe it not.

CAST. And is it thus with *all* our legends? have you no more faith in your own order? There is the

learned physician, Justin Kerner. *You* have not forgotten, Astrophel, his beautiful story of that most accomplished somnambule, the Prophetess of Prevorst, who seemed, as she said, to draw from the air a living principle, and whose *very vitality*, it was believed, was preserved by the magnetic influence. The body of this ethereal creature enfolded her spirit like a veil of film,—she was a very flower of light living on sun-beams. Her senses were lighted up by the minutest atom. A web of gossamer stung her waxen skin like a nettle. At the pale green light of a glow-worm, she fell into ecstatic sleep; and then, (as to my own Tasso,) came to her spectral visitants, with whom she conversed, and whose colourless forms were visible even to her earthly companions. This fair creature had, as the story goes, been some time dead, when her mother made passes over her cold face and lips; and lo! her eyes opened, and a tremor was on her lip. Were I Astrophel, methinks I would make a pilgrimage to Lowenstein, where her body lies. And now, Evelyn, if you will, reprove me for my wildness, but confess there must be a sort of truth in legends so circumstantial as these.

Ev. A fair question, dearest Castaly. Yes, it is the crude or false interpretation of that *sort of truth*, a transient glimpse it may be, of some embryo principle, that leads to popular error. A baseless theory is raised on an *isolated* fact; and infantile science, bursting from its leading-strings ere it can crawl, topples headlong down the precipice, and splits on the rock of hypothetical presumption.

And then the confusion into which the mind is thrown by the definitions and conclusions of magnetizers, would make a very Babel of the fair field of philosophy. The least perplexing, perhaps, is that of the French *savans* who referred magnetism to

the efforts of a fluid matter consisting of fire, air, and spirit, to preserve its equilibrium in certain bodies which were, as to their capacity for this fluid, in a state of plus and minus. There is nothing very unphilosophical in this; for the essence of magnetism is somewhat analogous to eccentric derangement of mind, a disturbance of that order or symmetry among the faculties and actions, by which one is highly excited and another is comparatively passive. In a word, Mesmerism is true in part: it *may* induce catalepsy, somnambulism, exalted sensation, apathetic insensibility, suspended circulation, even death. Clairvoyance and prophecy alone are the impositions as regards its *effects*, as the "blue flame" at the finger tips is of its *nature*.

One folly more. Mesmer himself vaunted to Dr. Von Ellikon, "twenty years ago I magnetized the sun;" &c. so that the miracle of Joshua was but a stroke of magnetism. Indeed, Richter, rector of the School of Dessau, affirms that all the miracles of the Testament were but the sequences of magnetic passes. And Kieser refers all to a "telluric spirit," a sort of magic, of which the sun and moon are the grand reservoirs; nay, this influence is the real cause of sleep and waking.

IDA. So that we are mesmerized by the moon at night-fall, and unmesmerized by the sun at the opening of the dawn.

EV. Then there were some aphorisms of Wolfart about *fiddling* to the viscera with his magnetic medicine, and working them up, as it were, to a jig or a bolero. These are the visions of a madman. But surely the illusion regarding this mysterious fluid is confessed in Dupotet's own notion of *his own* wondrous faculty, when he asserts his belief that animal magnetism is analogous to the royal touch,

and the mysteries of Apollo, and Æsculapius, and Isis, the miracles of Vespasian, and the Sibylline prophecies.

ASTR. You sneer at this as you did at the blue flame; but Dupotet assures us that while he is magnetizing his patients, he feels a sensation at the points of his fingers resembling the *aura* from diffused electricity. Now is it not fair to ask if electro-magnetism may not reside in the *animal* as well as in the *mineral*, in *man* as well as in the *torpedo* and *gymnotus*. And why may there not be a condition of intercommunication or *en rapport*, a magnetic *aura* creeping through the nerves of each body?

We should not, therefore, make any hasty decision against the presence of an *aura* streaming from the fingers and directed by the will. Monsieur Deleuze said, in Paris, "I do not know if this be material or spiritual, nor to what distance it is impelled; but it is impelled and directed by my will, for if I cease to will, the influence instantly ceases."

I remember Priestly opined that *phlogiston* in our bodies *produced* electricity, which was destined for our own purposes merely. But as the *silurus* and the *torpedo* possess the power of *imparting theirs*, although at the expense of their animal power, I presume to think that concentrated mind *may* impart our own nervous influence to others.

EV. I admire the acuteness of your question, Astrophel; but you are now come down from your clouds; you are descending unawares to *physiology*. There are, doubtless, many peculiar states of the nervous system at present inexplicable. I grant it is *possible* that the influence of the nervous energy may become so eccentric as to illustrate the phenomena of magnetism, if, as some believe, this influence

depends on a subtle fluid analogous to light, heat, and electricity; the nerve conveying this fluid as the wire conducts the electric.

Thus an influence, which is apparently *physical*, may be, in reality, *mental*, for there is usually *consciousness* of the contact. M. Bertrand believed that the mind alone of the patient was acted on, and this is strengthened by the experiments of the Abbé Faria, who produced many of these phenomena by merely exclaiming to his sensitive visitors, "*Dormez*."

ASTR. Well, you are drawing the influences of mind and body very closely together, Evelyn. If animal magnetism be not the universal influence of sensitive beings, what is *personal sympathy*?

EV. It is not that mysterious freemasonry of the senses which may impart a superhuman knowledge, or confer a power of personal recognition. Yet we are required to believe such stories.

ASTR. And are there not many well attested? There was a Monsieur de la Tour Landrie, a nobleman of France, who so powerfully influenced a young shoemaker by whom he was measured, that the youth fell into a senseless syncope, and profuse hæmorrhage succeeded it. This influence was repeated, and excited so deep an interest in the mind of the noble, that he instituted an inquiry regarding his birth and fortunes. And the result was, that Monsieur de la Tour discovered in the humble mechanic the son of his sister, the Baronne de Vesines.

The thrill of feeling with which the lover touches the lip of his mistress, the intense delight with which the mother presses her infant to her bosom, are illustrations of that power to which I allude. It is the magnetic touch of beauty which sends the fires of passion not only through the bounding heart of

youth, but even through the icy veins of the stoic. "He that would preserve the liberty of his soul," said Socrates, "must abstain from kissing *handsome* people." "What, then," said Charmides, "must I be afraid of coming near a handsome woman? Nevertheless, I remember very well, and I believe you do so too, Socrates, that being one day in company with Critobulus's beautiful sister, who resembles him so much, as we were searching together for a passage in some author, you held your head close to that beautiful virgin, and I thought you seemed to take pleasure in touching her naked shoulder with yours." "Good God!" replied Socrates, "I will tell you truly how I was punished for it for five days after. I thought I felt in my shoulder a certain tickling pain as if I had been bit by gnats, or pricked with nettles; and I must confess, too, that during all that time I felt a certain hitherto unknown pain at my heart."

EV. So that "the crime," like that of Sir Peter Teazle, "carried its punishment along with it." But you must see that the mind of Socrates first *appreciated* beauty, ere this influence was imparted to him. *Imagination* is not certainly idle here, yet I grant, that if the charm of *substantial* beauty or endearment be wanting, poesy will ever be but a cold and joyless sentiment.

ASTR. Then there is another mysterious sympathy, the fascination of the evil eye, or *fascino*. There were, both in Africa and in Illyria, writes Aulius Gellius, certain families believed to possess the power of destroying trees, flowers, and children, and this by merely praising them; and Plutarch and Pindar refer to the credence of the Greeks on this point, who were wont to invoke the Fate Nemesis against this fascination of an evil eye.

I think, too, traces of this credence may be found in Ovid, and Horace, and Pliny.

Ev. Yes, and in modern Italy the professors of the art are yet termed *jettatori*, or *eye-throwers*. But Valletta, an Italian author, conscious of the truth, boldly disclaims for his countrymen the notion of *demoniac influence*, referring it to *physical impression*, somewhat resembling the fascination of the eye of the rattlesnake, that drops, as we are told, the bird from the branch into its mouth. In that exquisite sympathy between mind and body (the sequence of an influence on sensibility, or on the senses) consists the secret of all this.

You remember the effects of intense impression on the mind in the excitement of catalepsy, and indeed in causing instantaneous death: this is intense influence on the *sensibility*. The effects of deep impression on the sight or touch, by the passes of magnetism, are magnetic ecstacies: this is intense influence on the *senses*. So that all your mysteries are the result of this influence passing through the brain to the body; and the vaunted miracles of Mesmer, and Bertrand, and Dupotet, are, as I have said, impositions, chiefly as regards the *nature* of their *influence*. And, like these, the doctrines of Fludd *the Seeker*, of the Abbé Nollet, of Lavater, of Nicetas the Jesuit, and the quaint ideas of many other visionaries, which you may read in their writings, are really explicable by the laws of physiology.

When the magnetiser asserts that a patient should possess *a disposition to be acted on*, he unwarily divulges his own secret; for this is nothing more than blind faith in a promise. And this credulity is most characteristic of that disordered condition of a nerve, acute sensibility, in which the slightest causes may effect a seeming wonder. Nay, even disease and *death*

were so induced during the manipulations of Hensler and Emmelin.

This also is the secret of that influence imparted by the touch of a seventh son; or of the hand of a criminal hanging on the gallows; or the revolting precept of Pliny, that an epileptic should drink the blood of a dying gladiator, as it gushes from his wound; or the *stroking* of Valentine Greatrex; the *sympathetic powder* of Sir Kenelm Digby; the *tractors* of Perkins; of chiromancy, rhabdomancy, and of other curiosities recorded in tracts and journals.

In my professional life, I have seen the same influence, though infinitely less in degree, imparted by an implicit confidence in the blessings of our science. Even Bertrand honestly confesses its power.

A lady was thrown into deep sleep by the touch of a magnet, sent by him in an handkerchief from the distance of three hundred miles. But the *same effect* was produced by the contact of *unmagnetized* cambric; and Bertrand allows, that where an ignorance of his intention existed, *even the magnetized talisman was powerless* over his patient.

I could tell you tales of bits of wood effecting all the wonders of the metallic tractors of Perkins; and cubes of lead, and those of nickel, fraught, as a learned doctor had declared, with magnetic virtues; but I spare you.

From this superstitious faith spring also the miracles of that pious saint, who had assumed the staff of Saint Francis Xavier, the Prince Hohenlohe. One of these was the cure of Miss O'Connor, attested by Dr. Baddeley, of Chelmsford, who had tried in vain to relieve the lady of *acute neuralgia*. She was directed to prostrate herself at the altar in Chelmsford at the moment when the sainted prince would kneel at his shrine in the cathedral of

Bamberg. At the appointed time, during the solemn celebration of high mass, as she exclaimed, “Thy will be done, O Lord,” the agonizing limb was painless.

I do not doubt the possibility of such an incident. And here is the unfolding of another secret of these German magnetizers, who were believed to *shoot at* their patients with the unerring aim of a rifle, even though many miles might intervene. Nadler, as we are told in the “Asclepeion,” was so good a shot, that he brought a woman to the ground at the moment he fixed his magnetic aura at her, aiming between the eyes and the bosom, even at the distance of eighteen miles.

I am aware that this, my philosophy, would not pass current at the Vatican, for “the congregation of the holy office, having once applied to the pope, to know if animal magnetism were lawful, and if penitents might be permitted to be operated on; his holiness replied, that the application of principles and means purely physical to things and effects which are supernatural, for the purpose of explaining them *physically*, is nothing but an unlawful and heretical deception.”

But I may tell you that his holiness himself was once a great monopolist of saints’ cures, if we may believe a book, printed by Roberts, in London, in 1605, entitled, “A Declaration of egregious Popish Impostures, to withdraw the hearts of religious men, under pretence of casting out devils; practised by Father Edmunds, alias Weston, a Jesuite, and divers Romish priests his wicked associates.”

And, moreover, the interference of priests has often led to the interdiction of protestants, in their scientific ministering to disease the most severe, as typhus fever, or surgical operations, because they were heretics; while the profane Paracelsus says, “It

matters not, by God or devil, so he *be* cured;" even without an indulgence, I presume, from Della Genga, or the leave of the sacred college.

Believe me, the influence of faith will illustrate all this mystery, and reduce even these impostures to a simple truth. Without it, only the grossest superstition would believe that sympathy would thus "take the wings of the morning," and impart to a mind that was thinking at our antipodes a consciousness of our own sentiments; for this would be a revival of that blind credulity, which in the darker ages was reposed in the superhuman agency of magic and of witchcraft.

SIBYLLINE INFLUENCE.

"She was a charmer, and cou'd almost read
The thoughts of people."

OTHELLO.

IDA. As you unfold the wonders of the mind, Evelyn, the secrets of many splendid mysteries shine forth in the light of your truth; and the wisdom of "charmed rings," "blessed brambles," and amulets and talismans, fades before the precepts of a purer faith. Yet is there no witchcraft in your philosophy? You have, methinks, absolved Astrophel from spells and dark hours, for, in the softened lustre of his eye I see a light more holy than its wonted flash of divination.

CAST. You have more faith in his conversion than I have, Ida; for, lo ye now! On a mossy stone in Tintern lay this sable velvet pouch, which, from its mystic 'broidery, might be the lost treasure of a Rosicrucian cabalist.

"There's magic in the web of it;
A sibyl that had number'd in the world
The sun to make two hundred compasses,
In her prophetic fury sew'd the work."

And here is a scroll of vellum folded within it. Listen, and you shall hear the pencillings of some unhappy student, benighted in the mazes of the Cabala.

"The eye of modern philosophy may wink at the wisdom of occult sciences, and sorcerers and magicians, necromancers and Rosicrucians, cabalists and conjurers, astrologers and soothsayers, Philomaths, Drows, and Oreades, wizards and witches, and warlocks, and sibyls and gipsies, may be, in *its* estimation, a mere legion of cyphers. Yet faith hath been long and firmly lavished on the art of divination by the learned and mighty men of all ages. The Chaldean, who read the stars, was the coryphæus and the type of superhuman knowledge; the magi of Persia and Egypt, and other orient lands, followed in his wake. The venerable Hermes Trismegistus was surrounded by his proselytes in the year of the world 2076; and Apollonius and Zoroaster, and Pythagoras, and, in later ages, John of Leyden, Roger Bacon, and other learned mystagogues, have imbibed a more than mortal wisdom from the aspect of those starry lights which gem the vaulted firmament; while the luminous schools of Padua, and Seville, and Salamanca, were rich in the records of occult and mystic learning. Emperors and kings, and ministers, who ruled the destiny of mighty nations, have believed. Wallenstein was all confiding; Richelieu and Mazarin (as Morin writes) retained soothsayers as a part of their household; Napoleon studied with implicit faith his book of fate; and Canute, obedient to his confidence in the virtue of relics, directed his Roman agent to

buy St. Augustine's arms for one hundred silver talents, and one of gold.

"Nay, what saith divinity itself? Glanvil, the chaplain of King Charles II., affirms in his 'Saducismus Triumphatus,' that 'the disbeliever in a witch must believe the devil gratis;' and Wesley said, that 'giving up witchcraft was, in fact, giving up the Bible.' Now, as the Chaldean sophs were divided into three classes—1. the 'Ascaphim,' or charmer; 2. the 'Mecascaphim,' or magician; 3. the 'Chasdim,' or astrologer; so the legion of modern witches was composed of a mystic tryad, distinguished by colours that were a symbol of their influence on our mortal frame. The black witch could hurt, but not help; the white could help, but not hurt; the grey could both help and hurt."

IDA. My own Castaly, have pity on us. Evelyn may unrol the coils of this unholy manuscript if he will.

I do believe this lettered clerk has, in some unhappy hour, wandered by the ruins of the Seven Churches in the valley of Glendalough; and there, creeping up to St. Keven's bed, that hangs over the gloomy waters of its lake, has won the fatal gift of Catholic magic. Or perchance he has sworn allegiance with Faust and Friar Bacon.

ASTR. If an Oxford student *must* kneel at the shrine of a fair lady, he will whisper this confession. In exploring the treasures of black-letter romance, he revelled among the occult mysteries, slighting that pure analysis of nature which is the essence of all philosophy. The legends of Reginald Scott, De Foe, Glanvil, and Wanley, were the companions of his pillow; and thus in poring over the legends of enchantment, he was himself enchanted, and contemplated a wondrous history of witchcraft,

where Sir Walter himself had failed. Let me have light penance, and I promise in the simple and beautiful light of nature alone to read her wonders; and if I dare, to study astrology in those planet eyes which look so mildly on their proselyte.

IDA. Or rather, as the magi of old, you will burn your books of divination; and, like Friar Bacon, who broke the rare glass which showed him things fifty miles off, you will study divinity, and become a pious anchorite.

CAST. I am happy that you abandon the dark and dooming spells of the magus and the witch, Astrophel, for witchcraft is the unholy opposition of a demon to the Deity. Yet in your fate I read my own. But censure not the poetry of that innocent romance that lights up the legends of the berry-brown sibyl, whether she be a *tirauna* prowling in the streets of Madrid, or a gipsy perched upon the heath-brow of Norwood; for theirs are *happy* prophecies. Yet if, like Astrophel, I am to be the slave of philosophy, let me at least make "a dying and a swan-like end."

It was among the heath-valleys, where nature lay in wild repose around the place of my birth, that I first met the glance of a gipsy's eye. On the northern side of that beautiful sandhill in Surrey, that rears its purple and turret-crowned crest between the chalk hills and the weald, there is a green and bosky glen, the "Valley Lonesome," Along the waste of *Broadmoor*, that spreads between the brow of *Leith-Hill* and the Roman camp of *Anstie-bury*, comes rippling down the crystal streamlet of the *Till*, which, blending with a torrent that leaps from a lofty sand-rock, steals away amid mosses and cardamines, and cuckoo-flowers; now gliding between its emerald banks, now swelling into a broader sheet, beneath

the beech woods of *Wotton*, the ancient seat of the Evelyns. There the willows dip their silver blossoms, and the violet, almost hidden beneath them, fills the air with sweetness. There the wild briar wreaths in light festoons its tiny roses, and the passion-flower, entwining its luxuriant tendrils around the aspen and the sycamore, hangs its beautiful blue stars in rich profusion. And there, among the boughs of lofty elms whose shadows in the early morning darken the casements of *Tillingbourne*, a colony of rooks hang their woody nests; and the murmurs of the ringdove, nestling within the woods of Wotton and the Rookery, are heard in the golden noon and sunset of June, floating around this leafy paradise.

It was on such an eve that my thoughts had faded into slumber; and when my eyelids oped, there was a form of embrowned beauty before me so wild, yet so majestic, that Cleopatra, in the garb of an Egyptian slave-girl, might have stolen upon my sleep: so scant of clothing, so lovely of form and feature, she was like an almond-flower upon a leafless branch. Her expression was full of beautiful contrasts, for, while her eaglet eye went into my being, there was a languid smile on her ruddy lip, as she were about to syllable my own destiny; and, indeed, she *did* unfold to me many things which have been most strangely worked out and verified in my life. I wept at some of these foretellings, and she said, “Tears were the pearls that gem the rose-leaves of life.” I smiled at others, and she said, “Smiles were the sunlight that warmed their swelling leaflets into beauty.”

Throughout that summer night, when all were sleeping, save two romantic girls, she unfolded to me the secrets of her tribe, and a mine of mysteries learned from a Bohemian *Maugrabee*. She told me how, and why, the Druids, when the moon was six

days old, cut the *misseltoe* with a golden knife; how the *vervain* was gathered with the left hand, at the rising of the dog-star; and the *lunaria* was valueless, if not picked by moonlight; how the *roan-wood*, and the *Banyan seedling*, and the four-leaved *shamrock*, bore a charm in their tender leaves against every ill of life. In nature, she said, there is no bane without its antidote, were the intellect of man ripe for its discovery. There are corals and green jaspers, carved into the forms of dragons and lizards, hung round an infant's neck, for the cure of an ague; the crimson-spotted *heliotropium*, to staunch a flow of blood; a wrapper of scarlet-cloth, to mitigate the virulence of small-pox; the blue-flannel, *nine times dyed*, to allay the pains of rheumatism; and the magic word *Abracadabra*, to sooth the disorders of a nerve. And, above all, that wondrous *weapon-salve of sympathy*, which once healed on the instant the wound of Ulysses, and that which the dainty Ariel gave to Miranda, to charm Hippolito to life and health; and that with which the lady of Branxholme *salved* the broken lance, when William of Deloraine was healed.

It will be long ere from my memory fade this vision of Charlotte Stanley. In pity, Evelyn, leave me this one romance of my young life,—the sheet and taper, nay, the ducking-stool for the witch, if you will, but deign to bestow one smile upon the gipsies.

Remember the story of the Sibylline Tables. If Sextus Tarquin had not frowned on the *Roman* gipsy, she had not burned six of those precious volumes, which, from the massive cabinets of stone made to enclose the three that were preserved, prove that the Roman thought them priceless. One smile, Evelyn, for my sibyl.

Ev. Not in memory of the Sibylline Tables, but for your own sake, dear Castaly. Although the innocence

of your nut-brown sibyl is not so clear, and I am somewhat jealous, too, of that *white magic* of hers, which hath won the belief of so many minds the reverse of illiterate, who, from the Chaldean even to Bacon and William Lilly, have spurned philosophy, and even divinity, and pinned their faith upon a gipsy's sleeve, and doted on the inspiration of an astrologer.

IDA. Forgetful, it would seem, that the wicked king of Babylon found the devout Daniel, and Hananiah, and Michael, and Azariah, *ten times better* than all his magi and astrologers.

These are the antiquaries who possess the last relic of the true cross; or the last morsel of Shakspere's mulberry, of which last bit there may be about ten thousand; such are they who would pen learned theses on the disputed place of sepulture of St. Denys, and *determine* the question, too, although one of his heads is in the cathedral of Bamberg, another in the church of Saint Vitus in the castle of Prague; one of his hands in a chapel at Munich; one of his *bodies*, minus one hand, in the keeping of the monks of Saint Emmeram at Regensberg; while the monks of Saint Denys possess another, his head being preserved in the third shrine of the treasury in their cathedral. These may be innocent follies, but superstition, alas! will not always stop here; fanaticism soon descends to self-infliction, or to cruelty, and in that moment it becomes a black stain on the heart of man. Yet, even for the tortures of the Inquisition (so exquisite, that we might believe them the suggestions of a devil), the jesuit, Macedo, has put forth this profane justification: that the bloody tribunal was first instituted by the Deity, in the condemnation of Cain and the bricklayers of Babel.

EV. Such was the trial of *ordeal* instituted for the

test of innocence. Among the Anglo-Saxons, as all the chronicles of their history will show, this mode of trial prevailed; as in the ordeals of the *Cross*, of *boiling water* and of the *hot iron*; of *cold water*, or *drowning*; and of the *corsned*, or consecrated cake. Equally savage was the trial for murder, so prevalent in Scotland, especially the institution of their *Bahr-recht*, or "Right of the bier." Among the "decisions" of Lord Fountainhall, you may read of legends almost incredible. Philip, the son of Sir James Standfield, was executed because, in lifting the corpse of his murdered father from its bier, blood welled forth from his wound; and the Laird of Auchindrane was tortured, because a corpse chanced to bleed on the approach of a little girl, who, I believe, was merely one of his domestics.

But waving these profanations, the reliques of a darker age, let me have a word with Astrophel on parting. The seeming *fulfilment of many a sibylline prophecy* is perfectly clear *as to its source*. There may be *coincidence*, as in the dream; or *faith* and *inducement* may impart an energy of action, which may itself work a wonder, or accomplish that end which is referred to a special power.

At the siege of Breda, in 1625, when fatigue and abstinence had well nigh reduced the garrison to prostration and despair, the Prince of Orange practised this pious fraud on his soldiers:—He pretended to have obtained a charmed liquor, so concentrated, that (on the principles of homœopathy) four drops would saturate a gallon of water with restorative virtues; and with so much skill was this administered by the physicians, that a *general restoration was speedily effected*.

You remember, Astrophel, the temptation of Diocletian. From Flavius Vopiscus we learn, that he

was paying the Druidess of Brabant, with whom he lodged. "When I am emperor," he said, "I will be more generous." "Nay," said the Druidess, "*you shall be emperor, when you have killed the* BOAR." He hunted and killed boars incessantly, but the purple was not offered to him. At length, the Emperor Numerianus was murdered by Arrius *Aper*. This was the eventful moment, and, transfixing the heart of Aper with his sword, he said, "I have slain the boar!" and the imperial crown was his.

Is not this, too, the counterpart of that seeming prophecy of the Weird Sisters, which made Macbeth a murderer and a king?

There was an enchanted stone at Scone, in Scotland, the palladium of Scottish liberty, for it was believed that the lord of that spot on which the stone lay, should bear sovereign sway. King Edward bore this talisman away in triumph; and Scotland, *depressed by its loss*, became a vassal of the English crown.

And this faith may invest the merest trifle with a spell. Sir Matthew Hale was presiding in his court on the trial of a witch. She had cured many diseases by a charm in her possession; and the evidence seemed conclusive of her guilt. But when the judge himself looked on this charm, behold! it was a scrap of paper, inscribed with a Latin sentence, which, in default of money, *he himself*, while on the circuit, had given many years before, in a merry mood, to mine host, by way of reckoning.

Among the many analogies to this story in ancient times, there was the potent poison-charm or antidote of Mithridates, King of Pontus. Its *effect* was supreme. And what its composition? twenty leaves of rue, one grain of salt, two nuts, and two dried figs!

Now you will remember that the wizard and the

ministers of these charms, even among savages, were also their physicians, and, among pagans and papists, their priests. It is clear that the sensitiveness of mind and body *under disease*, when the first were consulted, and under the influence of superstitious fear, instilled by the priesthood, rendered them impressible to the most trifling causes.

Even in minds of superior natural energy, from the instilment of superstitious ideas *in infancy*, a blind faith will often become paramount. Such a mind, and so influenced, was Byron's; and on such a faith he once stole an agate bead from a lady, who had told him it was an antidote to love. It failed: had it not, Byron might have been a happier man; but the world would have been 'reft of poesy, the brightest, yet the darkest, that ever flashed on the heart and mind of man.

Sir Humphrey Davy, you may recollect, "knew a man of very high dignity, who never went out shooting without a bittern's claw fastened to his button-hole by a riband, which he thought ensured him good luck."

To illustrate the *innocence* of your gipsy, Castaly, hear this story.

"About forty years ago, a young lady, afterwards Mrs. W——, rallied her companions aloud for listening to the predictions of an itinerant gipsy, when the latter malignantly threatened her to beware of her first confinement. She was shortly afterwards married; and, as the period of her peril approached, it became evident to her friends that the remembrance of the wizard malediction began to fasten upon her spirits. She survived her time only a few days: and the medical attendants, who were men of eminence, stated it as their opinion, that mental prepossession alone could be admitted as the cause

of her death; not one unfavourable circumstance having occurred to explain it.

"And some melancholy illusion of this nature induced fatality in the case of another lady, (Mrs. S.) who, according to the statement of the venerable Mr. Cline, reluctantly submitted to the removal of a small tumour in her breast. Unexpectedly, and without any apparent cause, she died, on the morning following the operation. It was then for the first time ascertained that she had prognosticated her death, and the impression that she should not survive had taken so strong a possession of her mind, that her minutest household arrangements were preconcerted, as appeared by the papers found in her cabinet."

I believe that many modern instances of gradual and almost imperceptible decay, may be referred to the influence both of melancholy prophecies and visions on the mind, although their agency may be unsuspected, and as obscure as that of the poisonous herbs of the Thessalian Erichtho, or the sorceress of Neapolis, or the *aqua tofana* of the *Italians*.

And superstitious fear may induce a *sudden* death. Alfred, a nobleman, was one of the conspirators against the Saxon Athelstan. To justify himself from the accusation, he went to Rome, that he might make oath of his innocence before John, the pope. On the instant he took the oath he was *convulsed*, and, in three days, *died*.

Then as to the language of the stars:—as the phrenologist is much indebted to the principles of Lavater in forming his estimate of character, so I believe of the astrologer. The aspect of the *face* is not always disregarded in his prophecy, while he seems to observe only the aspect of the stars. And although there is often a very strange precision in his guesses,

yet there was once a curious incident in my own presence, from which we may learn something of this secret. On a visit to a learned astrologer, (who might rest his fame on another art in which he is so eminent,) our fortunes, past and future, were told with extreme minuteness, and, I confess, with many coincidences of former times. One was reminded by the seer of a state of deprivation which he endured in the year 18—, in the Mediterranean. The officer remembered in that year being becalmed in a voyage to Malta, and, under a sultry sky with parching thirst, enduring the want of water for many days. This was conclusive of the fidelity of the planets, until we discovered that the horoscope was imperfect, for the officer had given to the astrologer the *wrong date of his birth*.

CAST. And this, sir, is your Philosophy of Mystery? Oh for the forethought of my sibyl, that I might learn my own fate for listening to this treason against the throne of fancy, on the steps of which I have so long offered up my homage—this ruthless spoliation of her dreamy kingdom!

EV. Let me for once play the sibyl, fair Castaly, and whisper the penalty in your ear ——

IDA. A lesson in natural philosophy; and the apt scholar, as I read it on her cheek, has in a moment learned it all by heart; o'ershadowing all her bright visions of earth and its romances.

EV. What marvel that a daughter of earth should be so apt in its philosophy? —

"For half her thoughts were of its sun,
And half were of its show'rs."

But it is not so easy to shake the throne of fancy, or to lay the genius of romance. He will ever wave his wand of enchantment over the human mind. The

poet will still build his air-castles, and the ghost-seer indulge in his wild visions of nonentity.

The wonders of creation will still affect us, according to the quality of intellect or genius, or the constitution or cultivation of the mind. The poor Indian will still "see God in clouds, and hear him in the wind," and the untutored rustic be startled by the shadow of a shade. To him the slightest change in the regular course of nature will still be a special miracle: thunder, the awful voice of Divine reproof; lightning, the flashes of Divine displeasure; the scintillations of the aurora, the spectral forms of contending armies; and the comet foretel the wreck of mighty empires. Against this untutored devotion I would not breathe a thought,—it is the voice of the Deity speaking to the savage.

But it is the privilege, the duty of intellect, to think more deeply of the physiology of nature; and to learn from the physical sciences, its real utility in the grand scheme of the creation.

Philosophy, rising from the sublime study of these beautiful phenomena, regards them as the pure effect of those elemental laws, by which the integrity of the universe is preserved. And what ought this philosophy to teach us? Not the superstition of the bigot—for the age of special miracles is, for the present, past; not the pride of the fatalist, who refers all to chance and necessity; not the mania of the astrologer, who plumes himself on his prophetic wisdom, and presumes to interpret to the letter the mysterious voice of his Creator; but that true wisdom, which threw over Boyle, and Locke, and Newton, the mantle of humility and devotion.

The autumn floods had descended from the

mountains of Gwent; the banks of the meandering Wye were desolate, and her woods leafless; yet the Abbey of Tintern was still majestic and unchanged.

It had been decided, that when the summer sun shone again on Wyndcliff, the wanderers should revisit the beautiful valleys that lay beneath it, in memory of happy hours; but ere this was fulfilled, changes manifold had come over their destiny, from which might be fashioned a true love-story.

For Astrophel, Ida had unconsciously worked a spell of natural witchcraft, and his wild thoughts were ever chastened by the pure light of her devotion. And Evelyn almost confessed to Castaly, that there might be a sort of animal magnetism. He has neglected the study of the atomic theory, for the contemplation of the animated atoms that play around his domestic hearth; and the heart and life of Castaly, a poetry in themselves, have since interwoven many a blushing flower on the classic pages of his philosophy.

THE END.

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Page of other books by this same author was moved from the front of the book to the end of the book. Archaic spellings have been retained as in the original. Punctuation and obvious typesetting errors have been corrected without note. Other errors have been corrected as noted below.

page 5, St. Hilary at Poictiers ==> St. Hilary at Poitiers
page 30, The Welch guide was ==> The Welsh guide was
page 33, to be a meanless ==> to be a meaningless
page 48, Praise God Barebones ==> Praise God Barebone
page 53, of Halloween and Hogmany ==> of Halloween and Hogmanay
page 54, Stonehenge and Abury, ==> Stonehenge and Avebury,
page 54, when we have past ==> when we have passed
page 67, the niflheiner, or hell ==> the niflheimr, or hell
page 95, shall be crowned King ==> shall I be crowned King
page 95, Westermister Abbey, likely refers to Westminster Abbey
page 95, in the of Hyde the Park ==> in the Hyde Park
page 159, Hogmany, or New-year's Eve, and ==> Hogmanay, or New-year's Eve, and

page 160, around the Feroe Islands. = = > around the Faroe Islands.

[End of *The Philosophy of Mystery* by Walter Cooper Dendy]

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE PHILOSOPHY OF MYSTERY ***

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