



ASTROLOGER AND WEEKLY ORACLE OF DESTINY.

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THE SPIRITS AMONG THE CLOUDS.

THAT Nature abhors a vacuum, is a saying among natural philosophers ostensibly founded upon truth. A reflective mind arrives, by necessity, at the conclusion that creation is as illimitable in minuteness as it is in magnitude; and that we cannot imagine the existence of nothingness (to use a paradox) in any portion of the Universe. If, by the aid of optical instruments, we descend to the consideration of the very minims which form our own earth, we discover that every particle is fraught with life to an extent that defies calculation. A single drop of water, as we observed in our last number, is peopled with creatures of all imaginable shapes, in the enjoyment of their various attributes, actuated by their innate passions, and pursuing their prey with as much eagerness as the huge beasts that roam about the forests. And thus, on investigation, the pathologist is amazed to find that the very air which we inhale, and the very blood which circulates in our veins, teem with living things so infinitely small in their proportions as to baffle our unassisted senses. The merest blade of grass is a kingdom in itself, and every crevice in creation is populous with existence, admirable and fantastic in its formation.

Bearing these facts in mind, is it not contrary to right reason

to conceive that the worlds which are scattered about space at such a vast distance from each other, are *alone the regions of life*?—that Omnipotence restricts itself simply to these atoms of eternity, and fills them only with living creatures?—that these globes are moreover rendered the sole arenas for the prodigal display of the creative power?—and that the vast intervals which separate the various heavenly bodies form one prodigious and desolate void? The mere assumption of such a notion appears to us little short of actual blasphemy. While we perceive the vegetable kingdom stored so carefully in its minutest parts with such myriads of lives, we cannot, without an insult to Omnipotence, deny the creed of many of the Rosicrucians, that all space is thronged with sentient beings, without number and without boundary, whether in immensity or littleness. This belief has been casually hinted at in "Zanoni," but the idea has not hitherto been considered with the seriousness due to its importance. Though it is impossible, of course, to reduce the problem to positive certainty, there is a real splendour and majesty in the supposition that immaterial creatures are afloat in the blue glory of the sky, and that happiness, and love, and all those ethereal joys of which our limited intellects can entertain but a faint conception, revel in those realms of air. To those to whom this fancy is a novelty, the

question startles them into delight with its magnificence, and they feel, to employ the exquisite imagery of Keats, "like some mute watcher of the skies when a new planet swims into his ken." Who shall answer our inquiry in the negative—Are there spirits among the clouds?

Doubtless many have remarked, in their springtime rambles, upon a tree, otherwise of delicious green, a single leaf red prematurely with something like the autumnal russet; and they have wondered that upon that insignificant fragment of vegetation a horde of insects in countless numbers have found repose and nourishment, and that their presence imparted to the foliage its dun crimson hue. Is the conjecture too quaint to imagine that the gorgeous colours which are so frequently visible at the dawning and the dying of the day, are suffused among the clouds by legions of bright beings thronging together in the ethereal dome? Are those fairy battlements and cities which are repeatedly formed by the upper clouds, or the *cirrus*, tenantless and lonesome? Those mimic fanes and temples which are raised in an instant by the fickle vapours above, and which mock us with their evanescence—are they solitary and desolate? Or rather, may not creatures of impalpable loveliness reign among those cloudlets, hover above the pleasant regions of the world, bodiless but seeing? Who shall answer, "Nay?" These reflections may appear extravagant to some, but we are influenced in their utterance by the calm dictates of judgment; we look upon the ineffable glory of those realms amid the cloud, and amid the sunshine, we paraphrase the before-mentioned saying of the philosophers, and exclaim, *God loves not the void!* But even conceding that such thoughts are visionary (which, nevertheless, we boldly deny), our most unimaginative cavillers must confess, at least, that they are not the less beautiful—and a "thing of beauty is a joy for ever!" We would, however, simply question these uncompromising materialists if it be probable that the twenty millions of miles and upwards which intervene between this world and Sirius, the nearest of the stars, may be regarded as a sheer vacuity? The supposition, as we have already remarked, is preposterous. This prodigious territory, therefore, must be inhabited: our organs of vision inform us that the beings which people that space can scarcely be substantial; the deduction is self-evident. Of the monsters which glide in the secret depths of the gigantic ocean, man has, without doubt, but a dreamy and superficial cognizance; and it is more than possible that marine reptiles, of a loathsome and enormous character, crawl among the weeds and coral rocks in the profundity of the great seas, such as human eyes have never beheld. In a similar manner we are ignorant of the population of the immeasurable ether, which it is obvious cannot, according to the acknowledged laws of nature, be a silent and dismal wilderness.

There is a tradition prevalent among the Chinese, and which a few years ago was narrated in the shape of a tale by a popular author—a tradition of an ancient seer who, through some mysterious and occult studies, was enabled to increase the scope of his vision with regard to material objects—in other words, to endue his eyes with the power of microscopes of marvellous

efficacy; insomuch that the fairest landscape became to this sage repellent and terrible, since in it he could discern the smallest animalcule; so that the crystal draught from the fountain, which had previously alleviated his thirst, became a subject of abhorrence, being to his sight instinct with astounding life; the fragrant moss, which used to afford him agreeable repose, appeared swarming with creeping things; the breeze, which once revived him by its freshness, made him shudder with the multitude of its insect populac; until the overmuch wisdom of the philosopher became a bane and a torment to himself, conveying hideous visions to his mind through the malific influence of his senses.

What matchless spectacles, on the contrary, would be unfolded to our imaginations, were those veils torn aside which conceal from the gaze and scrutiny of man the dwellers in the fields of space! Then might our souls be ravished with the effulgence of an unsubstantial universe; the dim vistas of the atmosphere might appear animate with glorious phantoms, and the still twilight might be visibly haunted by beings of celestial aspect! It is no phantasy of an overwrought brain to meditate upon the creatures that populate the intermediate portions of creation. Common sense declares that the boundless expanse of space is not merely fraught with existences on the different spheres which intersect it with their orbits, and that the stupendous regions of the heavens between the planets constitute one "cold, grey, dark, illimitable void." How, then, can common sense deny that there are SPIRITS AMONG THE CLOUDS?

GOLD.—The undecomposed indivisibility of this worshipped mineral could never have entered into the creed of the old alchemists, else its production, except from its own invisible atoms, would have shown the impossibility. And is not this invisibility palpably shown (giving a splendid proof, by analogy, of the reality of "unseen things") when we contemplate the £50,000 worth of this indestructible metal annually used in one town, Birmingham, in gilding, which vanishes away, and will be for ever lost to human ken, save Nature, in her wondrous processes, re-collects the atoms in her secret mines, or some seer, with his magic wand, attracts the golden vapours, and again forces their glittering form on human vision?

A "**FOREST THOUGHT**" BY A POET.—Wandering again into this uncultivated grove, crackling between its entangled twigs, treading down the matted brambles—how exquisite to recline on a verdant slope!—silver-barked sycamores and rugged elm trunks, many-branched alders, and straggling privet clumps surrounding us with their apparently endless variegated vista; to watch the vermillion berries on the sturdy thorn bush; to hear the timid lapwing flutter from a fir tree, rattling its wooden fruitage to the ground; to lie back and gaze on that little scrap of ether peeping down among the wavy boughs, to fathom its fathomless blue depth, and stray, thought-lost, into eternal space, intoxicated with never terminating immensity; these, these are precious moments of unbroken enjoyment, when the world and its withering anxieties, life and its toilsome woes are forgotten and cast aside for blissful mid-day visions. Globes may roll on their giant axis then, suns may glow in their glorious pride above, cities be wide enveloped in lurid, heaven-licking conflagrations, earthquakes heave level plains to mighty mountain heights, and sink huge hills to valleys deep and gorges black—one little, gossamer-winged seedling from a prickly thistle top would heap oblivion on all sublunary things, and bear our mind far on its boundless course up to the Good Supreme.—*The Occoticon.*

THE ROSICRUCIAN.

CHAPTER I.



HO is that singular looking man?" said Carl Merler to one who stood near him in a coffee-house at Manheim.

"Who?—the tall man in brown?"

"The same; do you know him?"

"I can hardly tell; every one who comes here knows him, and yet he is known to nobody. He is said to be an immortal—an invisible."

"Immortal?—how?—invisible? The man is six feet, or more; you jest."

"More plainly, he is a worshipper of the Rosy Cross—a visionary—half chemist, half mystic, whose character you may hear from everybody in the room, all of whom speak confidently of him, and all differently. From one you will hear that he is a man of genius and a philosopher, from another a fool, from a third a madman."

"An illuminato, perhaps?"

"No, not exactly so. There is nothing, as it seems, political in his reveries; nothing relative to the ordinary concerns of humanity. He mixes with no one. It is not known that he keeps up any correspondence by letters. His manners are mild and urbane, and his demeanour, as you may observe, serious and contemplative. You now know all that any one appears to know of his habits or character."

"What is his name?"

"I know not, nor have I ever heard him addressed by name."

"Does he inhabit this city?"

"An old chateau, two miles hence, close by the Rhine, is his residence. He has no visitors, and of his domestic life, of course, nothing is known. What is the hour?"

"Half after eight."

"So late?—I must be gone. Farewell."

The individual who had given rise to the young man's inquiries was a man whose appearance was at once striking and prepossessing—the latter phrase is, perhaps, too weak. His large frame, it is true, gave him, at the first glance, a somewhat ungainly appearance, which, however, vanished when his countenance was observed. It was pale and clear. The features of the face were deeply traced, the forehead broad and capacious, the temples full and bare. Merler gazed and gazed, and became more and more anxious for a more intimate knowledge of this visionary, if such he was.

The room began to assume the mellow deep tinge of an autumn evening. The stranger laid down the paper he had been reading, and left the house.

Day after day Carl Merler resorted to the same place, and it generally happened that he saw the individual of whom he was, in fact, though almost unconsciously to himself, in quest. Still he was not better acquainted with him than before. If he made inquiries, he learnt nothing from the answers which added to his previous stock of information. It happened, too—remarkably, as he thought—that no opportunity ever occurred for the interchange between them of those little civilities that continually take place between persons whom habit or accident brings together. His curiosity increased.

One evening, it chanced that all the company had left the room except Carl Merler and the object in whom he felt so unaccountable an interest. The latter was reading a pamphlet; the former, as usual, alternately studying the appearance of his companion, and creating theories of his real character and station.

It was while involved in one of these reveries that his attention was awakened by some one's drawing a chair to the table where he sat. He looked up and saw, opposite to him, the subject of his thoughts. He was confused—rose up—resumed his seat, and looked hesitatingly at his companion, who calmly returned his glance.

The stranger smiled. "Do you want anything with me?"

he said, turning his full, bright eye, not unpleasantly, on Carl Merler.

"Sir?"

The stranger repeated his question.

"No; I am not aware that—that is—"

"Pardon me; you *are* aware. You have sought me here—not once, nor twice, nor thrice, but day after day, and for weeks. I know that you sought *me*; and yet you say that you have no business with *me*."

"At least, I know of none."

"Well, then, I will tell you. You would know who and what is this solitary individual of whom you have heard that he is an alchemist, dreamer, Rosicrucian—what not. Is it not so?"

"I confess that my curiosity has been strongly—I fear impertinently—at work since my first visit to this place."

"Impertinently?—why so? Every man is and ought to be subject to the inquisition of his fellows. He, only, who has cause to fear, will object to the jurisdiction; I have none. Once again, you wish to know what I am and what are my pursuits?"

"Since you ask me, I do."

"Very well, come and see."

The stranger arose, took his hat, and departed, accompanied by Merler. They passed through several streets, and, proceeding beyond the confines of the town, found themselves on the pleasant borders of the abundant river. They wound their course among the vineyards that clothed the banks.

"See what an evening," said the stranger, as they lingered for a moment under the shade of a lime tree. And it was an evening fit to be spent and enjoyed on the banks of the Rhine.

The sun just sinking over the green levels of the vine plantations, the rapid waters rejoicing in his purple glow, the little neat cottages of the peasants, and the gay song and happy step of the peasants themselves, as they rejoiced in the work of the harvest, fell at once on the eye and ear with such a lively accordancy, that the spirit was charmed, and forgot that the days of poetry and bliss—the reign of Paradise—were no longer of the earth.

They walked on still admiring the scene that changed every instant, looking now at some lazy vessel that came floating down the stream, with its great sails flapping idly about in quest of the breeze; and now at some half ruined tower, or dismantled dwelling, that stood gloomy and discontented, where everything around was jocund, fresh, and delightful. It was at one of those habitations, in somewhat better repair than the others which they had seen, that the stranger stopped, and announced to his companions that their journey was at an end.

Taking its external aspect, it was a sombre and comfortless building, half French and half Gothic, surrounded by a garden, dark, cheerless, and neglected. The gate in the garden-wall creaked dolefully as it opened, and again, as the owner of the pile closed and locked it as they entered.

The path along which they proceeded was overgrown with thick weeds, and here and there a fallen garden statue interrupted their progress. They arrived at the door of the mansion, a wicket in which was opened by an old and feeble woman.

"Let me now introduce you to my mansion," said Merler's host; "no very splendid one, perhaps, for one whose fame has passed through the converse of all the good people of Manheim. It suffices, however, for my wants, and more is not needed. This is my library."

It was a spacious room, three sides of which were covered with shelves well stocked with books. The third was occupied partly by the window, which admitted light to the apartment, partly by a cabinet, the doors of which were open, and partly by one or two full-length portraits, suspended in huge, heavy, painted frames. A large table occupied the centre of the floor, upon which, as well as around the room, were arranged numerous mathematical and philosophical instruments, books, maps, and papers. The shelves of the cabinet were loaded with phials.

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The stranger took a place in the window-seat, and motioned to Merler to follow his example.

"Are you not convinced," said he, "that you have to do with a wizard?—does this apparatus capture your imagination?"

"I see nothing here," replied Merler, "unsuited to the library of any man of scientific habits."

"What! yet incredulous?" returned the other, with a smile, "follow me, then."

Merler complied, as his host, taking a key from the cabinet, unlocked a small door near the window, and descended a flight of stone stairs. Arrived at their termination, Merler found himself in a low, vaulted chamber. It was full of the instruments with which the alchemists were said to torture the elements of things in their endeavours to attain boundless wealth and unceasing health. Several furnaces were burning with a light green flame.

"Now," said his conductor to Merler, "you see what are my occupations."

"You are an alchemist, then—a seeker for that which so many have failed to find?"

"Hardly so. I have wealth to satisfy my wants, without resorting to the transmutation of metals; and he who has passed half a century on the earth will scarce wish for the *elixir vita*."

"Perhaps you disbelieve in their existence?"

"No; the powers of the human mind, when free from the clogs of sensual desires, are nearly illimitable. I could discover those secrets—I have accomplished more; but I wish not for them."

"What, then, has been the object of your inquiries?"

"Neither, as I have told you, to acquire golden dross (which many have prostituted the paths of philosophy to obtain, as a means of gaining luxuries and indulgences, and which the motive of their search has alone withheld them from discovering) nor to increase the number of my days here. My object has been, during the time allotted to me, to partake of a double existence—a spiritual one, peculiar to those who have had firmness and courage to attain it—as well as the fleshly one, which I enjoy in common with the rest of my species."

"I do not perfectly comprehend."

"I know it. When we have left this place I will explain myself."

There was a short pause, during which Merler examined more minutely the appearance and furniture of the apartment. The walls, ceiling, and floors were of stone; the various utensils, which were placed on all sides, were partly of glass and partly of metal.

"How is it," said Merler, "that though your furnaces are apparently at work, I perceive none of the deleterious vapours with which their operations are usually accompanied?"

"Because," replied his companion, "everything here has reached that state in which matter is sublimed, and loses its grosser particles. My labours now are not to find or to invent, but to continue and perfect that of which I have long been possessed. Look at this."

"I see nothing more than an empty phial—of crystal, I think—and very transparent," said Merler, as he held the vessel between his eye and the lamp.

"So it seems to you," said his companion. "Yet it is full, full to the stopper."

"What, then, is this invisible substance?"

"Dew, the purest, most refined dew of heaven—the most powerful dissolvent of matter."

"I remember to have heard of it as one of the agents employed by the alchemical philosophers. Light is, I think, another."

"It is. Look once again."

He unstopped one of the retorts, and poured in the contents of the phial. A light, brilliant beyond imagination, but withal so soft that it dazzled not Merler's eyes, issued from the aperture. At the same moment the lamp became extinguished.

"See," said Merler's conductor, "how the grosser light is unable to sustain the pressure of the pure element. If you please, we will withdraw."

They ascended the stairs, and again entered the library.

"I have displayed to you," said the philosopher, "the agents with which I work; and this, because I can read the characters of men at a glance, and your's pleased me. I know that I can confide in you; nay, no protestation—I know it. The end to which I have applied these agents you shall know before we part. Meanwhile, partake of my humble meal; the body has its wants as well as the mind."

The host ate only of a salad, though, in regard to his visitor, more substantial food had been prepared. When the meal was ended the former rose.

"I will now," said he, "perform my promise; but first examine this picture." He pointed to one of the portraits that hung from the wall.

It was of a man, apparently about thirty, clothed in the dress of a monk, and whose square cowl betokened him of the order of Capuchins. Merler examined the features again and again, and as often turned from the contemplation of the picture to look upon his host.

"Enough," said the latter; "you discern the resemblance?"

"Perfectly," said Merler.

It was the picture of a female to which Merler's attention was now directed. The countenance was sad, but full of intelligence, and beautiful as the depth of a summer's evening. Under each of the pictures the letters F. R. C., and the symbol of the cross, denoted that the originals were followers of the Rosicrucian philosophy.

"Be seated, and you shall know what I have to relate."

(To be concluded in our next.)

A NIGHT IN JUNE.

Down from above a spirit of love,
All garbed in sunny woof, doth fall,
And meadow-wold and ancient grove
Hold high fantastic carnival.

Soft flutterings
Of leaves and wings
Bedown the hymn of sunlit notes
Which through the ardent welkin floats.

And the souls of all flowers are unwound the while,
By the rich, warm haste of eloquence;
And each sends up its breath and smile,
All wreathed and tangled to the sense;

The maiden rose
Doth her heart unclose,
Aye, blushing deep for the south wind's kiss,
Which maketh him aye repeat the bliss.

June smileth at even, as if she knew
That beautiful dreams light Beauty's sleeping;
But she weareth at dawn her pensive dew,
Like one o'er ta'en in secret weeping,

Whose sad surprise
Forgot disguise—
Ah, me! even bliss itself hath here
A need sometimes to hide a tear!

Yet sorrow sways not the night of June,
But somewhat of a blissful sadness;
Earth drinketh in the holy moon,
To ease with love day's aching gladness;

And each flower doth seem
To wear its dream,
There visibly effused upon its breast,
In liquid light, all trembling with unrest!

O God! to thee this proud array
Is but the mien of humble duty!
Earth's reverent love would fain display
Thy smile reflected back in beauty!

And the human heart
Hath its still part,
A sacrifice of deep emotion,
To swell a throbbing world's devotion!

THE GIPSY'S PROPHECY.

Twas in the year 1822 that I visited the prisons at Rome. Among the unfortunate creatures brought hither by distress or guilt, I observed in the corner of a dungeon a young female seated on a handful of straw, suckling her infant. Her complexion was swarthy, and in her large black eyes glowed the fire of the sun of Italy. The relics of her apparel indicated that previously to her imprisonment she had worn the garb of a Roman peasant. Her expressive physiognomy and her bold look seemed calculated to excite curiosity. I approached, and begged her to relate to me through what misfortune she found herself in this place of horror. "St. Francis!" exclaimed she; "what interest can the narrative of my extraordinary misfortune have for free and happy people? My name is Maria Grazia. My mother lost her life in giving birth to me. My father, devoted to his own pleasures, and caring but little about my education, placed me, while yet very young, in a convent. The older I grew, the more irksome this kind of life became to me; for my inclinations, my disposition, and the vivacity of my character, all seemed to urge me on to a futurity full of trouble. A circumstance which I never could account for, had a powerful influence upon my fate. On some particular occasion, a gipsy-woman was admitted into the convent for our amusement. All the sisters were allowed to hold their ears to the tin-speaking trumpet of the old sibyl, who moreover gave to each of us a slip of paper, on which was written what the hag termed the decree of Heaven. Thrice did I go up to her for the purpose of enjoying the like favour, and thrice the oracle became mute. This refusal of the old woman excited partly my anger and partly my curiosity. I begged, I entreated, I wept; at length the gipsy was moved by my tears. 'You insist upon it, unhappy girl,' said she; 'well then, know that you will be the wife of a robber, who will murder your father, and that your hair will turn grey in a dungeon.' At the age of fifteen such predictions make no very deep impression. I laughed heartily on the subject with my companions, and loaded the old prophetess with ridicule. At night, however, when I was alone, my mind became, against my will, a prey to apprehensions. I passed the hours in anxiety and anxious reverie; the prediction of the fortuneteller incessantly haunted my waking dreams. My father took me out of the convent; but only to shut me up again with an old housekeeper at his country-seat about five miles from Rome. One night the weather was very tempestuous. I could not sleep. I fancied that I heard a confused sound of voices under my window, which looked into the garden. I awoke my *Ajì*, who never went to bed without her weapon, which was a large carving knife. Presently we heard the outer window-shutter broken open. We concealed ourselves behind the curtain; I had armed myself with a knife. A pane of the window was cut, and a hand was protruded through the aperture to unfasten the catch which secured it. I seized the opportunity and struck so effective a blow that the hand dropped at my feet. A fit of agony and the sound of footsteps succeeded, and then all was quiet again. At daybreak I repaired to Rome, where I related my adventure to my father; he admired my courage, and permitted me to leave the lonely villa. He was by this time thinking of marrying me, and even hoped that my adventure, which was soon rumoured abroad, would forward his design. Among my suitors there was a young cavalier, the beauty of whose handsome features was heightened by a delicate paleness. He gave himself out for a Florentine, and carried his arm in a sling, in consequence, as it was said, of a slight wound which he had received in an affair of honour. His kind attentions and amiable manners soon made a deep impression upon me. He solicited my hand. My father, with his usual levity, gave his consent, and we were united. The day after our marriage my husband was no longer the tender lover; his looks were wild, his voice was harsh, and his smile sarcastic. Distressed at this melancholy change, I asked with tears after the cause of it. 'Would you known who I am?' cried he. 'Do you recollect that night when you

cut off the hand of an unknown person who would have penetrated into your chamber? Well, that hand was mine. Look here.' His mutilated arm but too strongly confirmed his story. 'I had seen you,' he continued, 'and was captivated by your beauty. I determined to carry you off. With two of my comrades I ventured to climb up to your chamber-window. From the reception which you gave me, we inferred that you had men to protect you. I retired, but learned the next day that to you alone I owed the loss of my hand. Shame and rage at being thus baffled by a girl of sixteen awakened within me thoughts of revenge. I came under an assumed name to Rome; my friends, my artifices, my gold, accomplished the rest. You are now in my power, the wife of a robber.' At this word a feeling of horror seized my soul; nevertheless, whether it was owing to the flexibility of my disposition, to the prediction of the gipsy, to that secret fondness for romantic adventures to which the female heart often but too willingly resigns itself, or finally to the hope of bringing back by the power of love, a stray soul, dwelling in a yet youthful body, to the tract of virtue; in short, I threw myself at the feet of my husband, and implored him with tears not to cast me from him, for I would never cease to love him. Moved by my tears and my resignation, he clasped me to his bosom, and for three years I was, or imagined that I was, happy. One evening, however, he returned home pale and perturbed, his garments torn and spotted with blood. In broken sentences he told me that he had been obliged to defend his life against assassins, and charged me to observe the profoundest silence respecting this mysterious occurrence. I could not help trembling, but not for him; my soul was shaken by melancholy forebodings of a different kind. A horrid dream terrified me—I awoke. At the same moment my husband also was startled out of his sleep—his convulsed lips several times pronounced the name of my father—the recollection of that gloomy prophecy enveloped my senses in darkness. O my unhappy father! O my still more wretched husband! The former had actually attacked the latter, having probably been apprised of the real state of the case, and desirous of withdrawing me from so disgraceful a connexion. The agents of justice were soon in search of us; we escaped with great difficulty from Rome, and fled to the mountains. There my husband bethought himself of his former comrades. He sought them out, discovered them, and a cavern of banditti was now my dwelling. His companions welcomed him with joy; but he had violated one of their laws, which forbids any of the members of the band to marry, and enacts, that if a woman should fall into their hands, she shall belong exclusively to the captain. No sooner had the latter set eyes on me than he rudely insisted on his right. His daring hand had already grasped me, when a ball from my husband's pistol extended the wretch on the ground. Disliked as he was by the band, his fall was a signal for a shout of joy from his comrades, who unanimously elected my husband their leader. So completely was I possessed by that wild spirit which must have betrayed itself in my looks to the gipsy at the grate of the nunnery, that I was quite proud of my husband's elevation. I now wrapped myself in the coarse habiliments of a peasant, of which these rags still cover me, and with equal courage and pleasure accompanied my husband in his expeditions. Towns and villages rang with his exploits; fate at length overtook him. He fell in a conflict with the horsemen who were sent against us and had discovered our retreat. At the moment when I saw my husband drop, I sought shelter in a cavern for my infant; there I was seized and dragged to this dungeon, where I anticipate with horror the fulfilment of the latter part of that fearful prediction." Such was the narrative of Maria Grazia, the widow of the bandit chief. In pity for her situation I offered her some pieces of gold; but she refused them, at the same time caressing her child, which had fallen asleep at her bosom.

A QUESTION FOR THE MATERIALISTS.—There be powers in the human body independent of the will, by which the heart beats and the lungs play. What are these powers, ye unbelievers in the immaterial, without which even peristaltic motion would be voluntary and unconscious process?

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Being Predictions of the Chief Events from Week to Week.

THIS week, if, indeed, it has not already occurred, will take place a change in the councils of the Queen of Britain. A new train of events little expected will arise, so as to overthrow long-cherished resolutions. A church dignitary bows to the inflexible decrees of fate, and many changes take place in our beloved national institutions. Bristol or its environs is the scene of a melancholy catastrophe by water, and in the north of England rains and disturbances prevail. The whole week is one of great excitement, and individuals throughout this time will be involved in strange and unexpected adventures.

THE ASTROLOGER'S CALENDAR.

A Diary of Apparitions and Unusual Events During the Weekly Influence of the Planets, calculated from Planetary Influences.

TUESDAY, July 9th.—Warms showers. Dangerous for most matters. Avoid edged tools.

WEDNESDAY, July 10th.—Fair, but cloudy at nightfall. An excellent day for soliciting favours.

THURSDAY, July 10th.—Fair and warm. This day, if thou art need, money will be made.

FRIDAY, July 11th.—Fair. Ladies and their lovers will disagree, but still woo boldly.

SATURDAY, July 12th.—Fair and very warm. Unfavourable for all new speculations.

SUNDAY, July 13th.—Thunder-clouds in many places. Sultry. Surprises and strange visitors may be expected.

MONDAY, July 14th.—Fair at intervals, with electrical showers. Unpropitious for most matters.

THE UNIVERSAL SOUL.—The soul of the Universe must not be confounded with the Creator; it is not even an intelligent agent: it is the universal solvent or sea, in which Motion plays, and through which Thought (the principle beyond nature) acts.

A CHAPTER ON COMETS.

Concluded from our last.



N the autumn of 1811, within the memory of many of the present generation, by far the finest comet suddenly appeared to adorn our heavens, that has been seen since the age of Newton. It was first beheld in this country in the beginning of September, and was visible for more than three months in succession to the naked eye, shining with great splendour, the observed of all observers. This was a comet of the first class in point of magnitude and luminosity. Its brilliant tail, at its greatest elongation, had an extent of 123 millions of miles, by a breadth of fifteen millions; and thus, supposing the nucleus of the comet to have been placed on the Sun, and the tail in the plane of the orbits of the planets, it would have reached over those of Mercury, Venus, the Earth, and have bordered on that of Mars. At its closest approach to us, the comet was yet distant 141 million of miles, so that even had the tail pointed to the earth, its extremity would have been eighteen millions of miles away from its surface. The following are the calculations respecting its period of revolutions:—

Years	Authority.
3556	Callelli
3383	B. A.
377	Carter
4237	Lemaire

The comet is accounted at a journey requiring the least of these cycles for its accomplishment—a period equal to that extending from the habitation of Grecian story to the present; nor is the straight line westerly of the chain of solar influence renowned for travel through the whole of its course, and presenting its epoch into the regions of immensity. The laws of the system, indeed, impose upon the long-period comets vast differences of velocity. The same body that dashes round the sun at the nearest point of contact with prodigious speed, will move but sluggishly through the remoter parts of its orbit. In computing the periodic time of the comet of 1811, Lemaire assigned 775 years to the half of the ellipse nearest the sun, and 3462 to the more distant half. But the space must be immense that has to be traversed by an object whose return is not expected, taking the lowest estimate given, till the year 4867. The appearance of this comet was strikingly ornamental to the evening sky. Many a reaper late in the harvest field stayed his hand, and many a peasant homeward-bound stopped on the way, to gaze upon the celestial novelty as it grew into distinctness with the declining day. The Ettrick shepherd has left a memorial of his impressions in the well-known lines:—

“Stranger of Heaven, I bid thee hail!
Shred from the pall of glory riven,
That flashest in celestial gale—
Broad pennon of the King of Heaven!
“Whate'er portends thy front of fire,
And streaming locks so lovely pale;
Or peace to man, or judgments dire,
Stranger of Heaven, I bid thee hail!”

Those who were alive in 1811 will recollect the high temperature of that year—its bountiful harvest—its abundant vintage. Popular opinion assigned these blessings to the resplendent comet; and the wine of the comet was sold afterwards at high prices.

The leading features of the chief cometary appearances of modern times have now been sketched. There are various inquiries which naturally suggest themselves with reference to these bodies. What is their physical constitution? What are their origin and office in the system? Are they inherently luminous, or dependent upon the solar glory, shining, like the planets, by virtue of his light? Have they any terrestrial

influence? Is there a chance of our globe coming into actual collision with them; and supposing collision, what would be its probable effects? Upon most of these points we have no certain knowledge. Herschel and Schroeter thought the comet of 1811 a self-luminous body, but in opposition to this opinion Cassini is quoted as having described the comet of 1744 showing a phase. On the very day, says Arago, that any comet shall appear with a distinct phase, all doubts will have ceased. At present, however, no satisfactory evidence is possessed of such an appearance being observed. Upon the question of physical constitution, it is pretty certain that the great majority of these bodies, and most probably all of them, are entirely gaseous—simple aggregations of vapour. The evidence to this effect is various. The comet of 1770 passed twice through the system of Jupiter; and calculation shows, that had it been 1-50th of one of the satellites in mass, it would have sensibly affected that system. Yet there was not the slightest derangement of the planes of motion, or of the periods of revolution, by its intrusion among the satellites. The same body also passed at that time at no very great distance from the earth. In fact, it approached us nearer than any other that has visited our terrestrial sky. Had it possessed a quantity of solid matter equal to that of the earth, it would then have shortened the length of our year by the ninth of a day; or had it been 1-5000th of the earth in mass, it would have appreciably altered its length to a degree that must long ago have been observed. But not the least perturbation was caused by its close proximity. These are sufficient proofs of the smallness of its mass, even allowing it to have had any solid matter at all, which may be reasonably suspected. Through the very centre of Biela's comet in 1832 a group of stars of the sixteenth magnitude was very distinctly seen by Sir John Herschel. While admitting that many comets are mere agglomerations of vapour, some hold to the opinion that where there is a nucleus remarkable for its vivacity of light, there is a solid and opaque body. But several facts declare against this supposition. Instances have occurred of stars being visible through a strongly defined nucleus. In 1618, the nucleus of the comet of that year is described as having dissolved into several detached parts; that of 1661 observed by Hevelius, changed also from a globular figure, and entirely disappeared; and an appearance of a similar description was presented by the comet of Halley, when visible in the year 1607. It is most probable that a comet is altogether a gaseous body, and has no solid matter whatever. Sir John Herschel remarks that, "whenever powerful telescopes have been turned on them, they have not failed to dispel the illusion which attributes solidity to the more condensed part of the head, which appears to the naked eye as a nucleus; though it is true that in some a very minute stellar point has been seen, indicating the existence of a solid body." Mr. Airy also states, that "on the physical constitution of comets we have learnt nothing, except that they appear to be wholly gaseous."

SUN AND MOON.—The splendour of solar light is more than three hundred thousand times that of the full moon. In other words, if the firmament were paved with three hundred thousand full moons, their united splendour would be inferior to that of the sun.

WOMAN'S LOVE.—Women generally love less for youth, beauty, or fortune, than for fame, especially the higher minded portion of the sex, and this proves the purity of their affections; for what, after all, can be the object of true love, but mind—the high and noble mind—which attests itself by the loud voice of fame, and the reluctant evidence of envious mankind? A noble spirited woman, in the prime of youth and the morning of beauty—whom will she choose? on whom bestow her affections? Not on the gay youth of her own age, priding himself, like another lady, on his smooth face and flexible form. She will turn away from the fair brow without a laurel, and the delicate hands that reaped no harvest from the field of honour, and place her heart in the custody of him whose vigour and energy of thought have given him a place amongst the great of the world.

THE WORLD AND ITS CREATION.

"Are there not aspirations in each heart,
After a better, brighter world than this,
Longings for beings nobler in each part,
Things more exalted—steeped in deeper bliss?
Who gave us these? Whence are they? Soul, in thee
The bud is budding now for Immortality!"

ROBERT NICOLL.



ERHAPS there has never been a greater sensation produced in the circles of literature and science than that arising from the recent publication of a work called "VESTIGES OF CREATION." It has excited the ire of deans and bishops, and roused the attention of all interested in the eternal truth of a life hereafter. The columns of the *Times*, daily crowded with intelligence, have been thrown open to those who have felt it incumbent on them to enter the lists of controversy, and amongst the most prominent are the epistles of a writer who has, in antagonistic spirit to Buckland the geologist, christened himself *Anti-Megatherium*." Although evidently this gentleman is actuated by a right spirit, he is lamentably mistaken if he supposes the arguments he has brought forward will overthrow the immense mass of facts triumphantly established by geologists and astronomers. The stupid bigotry of a past age can never again return, and this spirit of intolerance with which the writer is so deeply imbued is the worst weapon in the world for a contest such as this must eventually be. It looks as if we were afraid of the discussion—as if the precipice on which we stood was so horrible that the eyes must involuntarily be closed. This is absurd; nay, more, it is highly dangerous. Those who will not take the trouble to consider for themselves will be disgusted with the fruitless attempt made to stifle inquiry, and at once go over to the popular side of the question with a fluttering feeling of infidelity in their hearts, which science never intended—and if fairly treated never will be able—to produce. With the latter portion of the volume of the "VESTIGES" we dissent; but in a popular form the author has worked up so many truths and focussed so many hitherto scattered facts—that his work deserves the overwhelming success which has attended it, and demands the most calm and dispassionate investigation.

From the extracts we have at various times given, our readers will know that the theory of developing our solar system from a nucleus, is the basis of this work. Of this we shall consider hereafter; but merely here beg to observe, for the edification of such blundering well-meaning gentry as *Anti-Megatherium*, that, in the whole work, the question of the soul's immortality is untouched—this stands unshaken by all the arguments—a pyramid of solid truth, existing amongst the desert of crude imaginings by which it is surrounded. This view of the question seems to have been most unaccountably overlooked, but it is the grand plain on which the battle must, at last, be fought. The solar system may have sprung from a nucleus, but the question must still be asked—who created the nucleus? Our very powers of

intellect loudly proclaim a source beyond this world of matter, and though the theory of a progressive development may be correct to the minutest details, the arguments for an original purpose and design are still incontrovertible, still the votaries of chance escape not confusion, and still the mind turns itself with confidence to an Intelligent Great First Cause. But an examination of the principles thus advanced by the author—

Ambitious man—placed, as Richter says, “in the centre of immensities, in the conflux of eternities”—has lately displayed his anxiety to mark the progress of his knowledge by measuring them in all directions. Girt with the vast oceans of time and space, he has cast forth his sounding lines, he has erected his watch-towers, to span and fathom the abysses that surround him; and, weighing his spherule of a world against the universe, and his span of life against eternity, has exhausted the powers of his arithmetic in endeavours to discover how much less, and how many times shorter, were the sensible than the real, the contents and the containing.

His success has been consistent with the audacity of the attempt. Hitherto, “all that we know is, that nothing can be known.” The answer which the universe has returned to our painful questionings has been given only in *negatives*. We calculate series of years, whose sum transcends the powers of imagination, to conceive the period of their lapse—but time is longer than they; and myriads of millions of miles—but space is wider than them all! The units of extent and duration which nature places within our reach, aided as our calculations are by the wondrous powers of mathematical analysis, are far too minute to enable us, with any approach to certainty, to complete the measurement even of the phenomena least removed from our ken.

If we reflect upon the astonishing extent to which our instruments *can* penetrate and measure, the sense of the profundity of those abysses to reach which their powers are vain, will be wonderfully increased. For example,—in our calculations of *space*, the condition of our earth as a planet enables us to view the stars from the opposite side of an orbit whose diameter is 186 millions of miles. Yet in calculating our triangles, even with this enormous base, we find only that the angle thereby formed at the fixed stars, while absolutely inappreciable in regard to most of them, is about one second of a degree in the instance of a double star distinguished as *a* *d* in the constellation of the Centaur. Now, as the second of a degree in a circle of 575 yards radius will have a chord of only the tenth of an inch, the distance of the star thus measured will be more than 80,000,000,000 miles. Of the stars whose angle (or parallax) is not appreciable, we can say only that they are more distant still. And if we assume, as probability entitles us to do, that the diminished light of the stars arises not from their size, but their remoteness, we must multiply the figures given above some thousands of times before we have reached the *lowest limit* of the distance at which many myriads of telescopic stars are placed in space. And this refers only to the visible firmament; beyond the range of our telescopes, are we to conceive that the universe is blank and unpeopled?

With regard to *time*, our powers of mensuration are even more limited: having no certain quantity given us to form the basis of our computations of duration, [such as the diameter of the earth's orbit constitutes in space]; we are, therefore, compelled to grope our way through the darkness of dead ages, by the uncertain guidance of an estimate of probabilities. Thus, when we ascertain the comparatively minute changes that have passed over the surface of our planet since the commencement of recorded history, we are able to estimate, approximatively, the period that must have elapsed in the accomplishment of the vast and repeated catastrophes which have visited the earth since the deposition of the earliest strata.

Or when we calculate the time that has lapsed without producing any new or strange developments of animal life (with certain exceptions, very minute in themselves, and occurring among the *lowest* in the scale of animated nature), we are furnished with an index to the extent of the period wherein could have been born and extinguished the various tribes of animals, so different in form, habit, and constitution, which have successively inherited their portion of the all-nourishing earth.

Here, too, we find only the *lowest limit*, the period than which we know the actual lapse cannot have been less; but how much

greater, we have no means of learning. It may not be beyond our hope to succeed in calculating, with some approach to accuracy, the duration of the periods during which each successive creation was permitted to exist. But the time involved in the convulsions by which they were overwhelmed, or the birth-throes that built up the materials of the new earth, when again allowed to repose and vivify, or the eras of lifeless chaos that may have intercalated between the destruction and the formation, must remain for ever undiscovered.

Not many years have passed since the inquiries into subjects such as these would have been denounced as irreverent, not to say impious, in their audacity of speculation, and this not, at the time, without reason. In almost every department of research, a period is, at one time or other, passed through, during which the progress is associated with scepticism, and the establishment of science appears to involve the shaking of the foundations of faith. But this is only a transient phenomenon. It is not more certain that the philosophy of Socrates, the astronomy of Galileo, or the geology of Hutton, contradicted and weakened the principles of the religion professed at their respective eras, than that philosophy, when its vision becomes clear, and science, when its discoveries are developed, have lent and will lend to religion the most efficacious support.

Nor are the effects of such studies upon the minds of their disciples, in the end, less excellent. The consequences of venturing upon speculations of this vast and mysterious character may at first be sometimes to bewilder, sometimes to dazzle the intellectual vision; a blinded vanity of its own capacity and achievements may by times invade the mind, which may even dare, in the insanity of its pride, to arraign the councils of the Supreme! But these are mists that will ere long become cleared away, and no pride can linger with us after we are once able to lift our thoughts from the difficulties of the search to the awful sublimities of the discovery. While struggling amid the steep intricacies of the upward path, natural enough is it for us to feel elated at the perseverance or skill we exert in forcing our passage, and to triumph without reserve at every conquest over difficulty—at each chasm that we have overleaped—at every precipice that we have scaled—till we reach and pause upon the summit; and then, standing face to face with Infinity, we find all other emotion extinguished in the overwhelming awe which attends the manifestation of Omnipotence.

“In the beginning,” is the favourite period for our theory-makers to lay the scene of their ingenious world-dramas. Having then free scope to select the materials of their future earth, and to arrange them in the order proper for obeying the supposed influences that are to organise them into a shapely and habitable sphere, with unlimited time at their command, and a *tabula rasa* for their successive developments of secular phenomena and animal life, it would be wonderful if they did not succeed in constructing systems almost without number, each of which should be at least coherent and plausible, till the next one arose to overturn it? When the framers descended to particulars, and endeavoured to reconcile the multiform and often contradictory appearances of nature with the theoretical necessities of their respective systems, the task became one of much greater difficulty. The startling hypotheses to which they had recourse in their anxious attempts at “accounting for” what the evidence of their senses would not let them contradict—the violent convulsions summoned without stint to explain the existence of every inconvenient anomaly—will not soon be forgotten. Between Descartes’ vortices and Whiston’s comets—between Neptunians and Vulcanians—between the “Catastrophists” and the “Uniformitarians”—a din of strife arose, in which the voice of real Science was not seldom drowned, while the combatants who had ranged themselves under her banners fought for victory instead of truth.

The author of the “Vestiges of Creation” is not inclined to waive his privilege to begin with the beginning of things. The universe, in his first chapter, is described as a section of space filled with the attenuated particles of nebulous matter, on which the law of mutual attraction has just begun to act. We close the book with man established in his supremacy—having replenished the earth and subdued it—and waiting for some to-be-expected change in the material organisation of the globe he inhabits, for the development of new faculties of sense or intel-

lect, which the author looks forward to as about hereafter to convert the existing race of mankind into a very superior sort of animal. The general result of his inquiries we give, as summed up in his own words.

"Thus the whole is complete on one principle. The masses of space are formed by law; law makes them, in due time, theatres of existence for plants and animals; sensation, disposition, intellect, are all in like manner developed and sustained in action by law. It is most interesting to observe into how small a field the whole of the mysteries of nature thus ultimately resolve themselves. The inorganic has one final comprehensible law, GRAVITATION. The organic, the other great department of mundane things, rests in like manner upon one law, and that is, DEVELOPMENT. Nor may even these be, after all, twain, but only branches of one still more comprehensive law, the expression of that unity which man's wit can scarcely separate from Deity itself."

Taking the divisions of the subject as the author has here marked them out, we will speak first of the inorganic bodies, and their governing law, gravitation.

We do not find much in the work that can claim to be entitled intrinsically *new*. The author has joined Laplace's theory of the solar "rings," with the Herschells' hypotheses relative to the nebula, and from the union compiles a theory of the planetary system in which the single law of gravitation is assumed to have been the agent in converting a dispersed and unformed congeries of nebulous particles into the spheres of the sun and planets, regular in form, and adapted for the habitation of living beings.

Proceeding into the domain of *geology*, the author has made free use of the labours of Lyell, Murchison, and Agassiz; and in the region of natural history, of Cuvier, Lamarck, and Macleay; displaying throughout that his reading has been large and diversified; while his speculations bear, to our mind, the impress of having been derived more from the study of books than the observation of nature, and are frequently characterised much more by ingenuity than depth. He has, however, concentrated a considerable amount of information in his pages, and has marshalled his facts with much skill; so that his sketch of the system of creation is both lucid and interesting, and fully merits the popularity with which the volume has been favoured.

As this happens to be the first work of a strictly popular character, wherein we have seen the phenomena of the nebular theory of the system arranged in consecutive order, followed out into their results, and separated from the detail of mathematical calculations which serve to conceal their meaning from the eyes of any save those initiated in the mysteries of analysis, it may not be uninteresting to explain this subject a little more fully. We will, therefore, endeavour to give our readers a *perspective* view of the phenomena attending the consolidation of our system under the propounded hypothesis, and try how far we can realize, as brother Jonathan would say, the various stages of the progress.

We must begin by imagining a district of space, filled with the constituent materials of the system, extending to a vast distance beyond the existing orbit of Uranus; and in the condition of attenuated or dissipated particles, without mutual action or internal organisation,—a mere aggregate of stagnant and lifeless atoms. In this state *attraction* is ordained to commence its action; at first exhibiting itself under its merely mechanical form, as gravitation; but afterwards assuming the more complex aspects of chemical and electrical affinity.

The first effect of the newly-created principle would be to impress upon the various particles a motion directed towards the *centre* of the space they occupied—a motion that would prove most rapid in those atoms situated at the exterior of the mass, decreasing in velocity in the interior, and becoming absolutely *null* at the centre itself. As the atoms drew into closer aggregation, the attractive powers would be increased, and, as the focus would be constantly acting, the centripetal motion of the atoms would increase in a ratio of double acceleration, not only from the impulses being constantly renewed, but from their being as constantly made more powerful.

Presently, a new set of motions becomes developed. The moving particles act on one another laterally, as well as centrally; their motions are consequently deflected from the straight

line leading towards the centre, and their paths become *spirals*. For although there is no *a priori* reason for the motions to become deflected towards one side more than another, that is, for the spirals to turn from west to east, rather than from east to west, or for the position in space of the equator of their resulting orbit to be in any given plane, yet the chances are hardly less than infinity to one of *some* deflection occurring; and of a certain plane in space being selected for the position of the equator. To suppose the contrary, or, in other words, to render possible the continuance of motion in a direct path towards the centre, we must assume that the atomic mass was at the beginning perfectly spherical in form, and homogeneous in constitution: that its particles were absolutely equal in condition and weight, and adjusted with mathematical precision at symmetrical distances from one another. Such an assumption would, to use a simile that has been already employed, require a combination of chances comparable to those that should occasion a million of needles to remain balanced upon their points when thrown loosely upon the ground.

In process of time, the nebula has reached a state wherein it has acquired rotation, with a fixed axis, equator, and poles. It can now no longer retain the spherical form, if it ever possessed such; for though every particle is still drawn towards the centre, yet the polar segments are impelled with greater velocity, since the centrifugal forces arising from rotation counteract in some measure the influence of attraction. In fact, the equatorial particles are compelled to move towards the centre in inclined planes, while those situated in the axis move in direct lines, and the shape assumed in consequence by the nebula becomes a spheroid growing constantly more *oblate*.

The respective motions continue to accelerate, the *rotative* among the rest, the perpetual rush of the polar atoms towards the centre, adding fresh impulse to these latter, so that the spirals gradually approach the circular form; and the centrifugal force continually increases, till at length the spheroid has reached a condition which we may term that of "separation." Mr. Ivory has calculated that in any spheroid in revolution, when the rotation has become sufficiently rapid to expand the longer (or equatorial) diameter into a proportion *two and three quarters times greater* than the shorter (or polar) diameter, or more accurately when the former is to the latter as 27,197 to 10,000, then the particles girdling the equator will be in a state of equilibrium between the centripetal and centrifugal forces, and without exhibiting any tendency to approach the centre will continue to circle around it in an orbit of independent revolution. Of course, should the rotation be increased, however slightly, beyond this point, the atoms would cease to move in circular paths; they would be thrown into orbits of long eclipses, like the majority of the comets, or even in an extreme case, be endowed with an *hyperbolic* motion which would disperse them into space.

This latter accident could never occur to our supposed nebula. For its rotation, as we have seen, is produced through the action of its centripetal tendencies, and could not increase after those tendencies had become null. But it might reach, if it could not pass, the required degree of oblateness, and then the equatorial surface-particles would remain poised under the counter-balancing forces impressed upon them; while the interior portions and polar segments continuing to approach the centre, a broad elliptical belt would be severed from the mass, and left behind to continue in its separate and equilibrated orbit.

Meantime the nebula continues to obey the same impulses, the polar axis perpetually diminishing in proportion to the diameter of the equator, till another point is reached where the spheroid has acquired the requisite oblateness, when a new belt is separated. And this process continues till, possibly, the approximation of the particles has brought into action a new form of the great law of attraction—that, namely, of *cohesion*; when the remaining particles will be retained in connexion with each other, and finally agglomerated into a central mass of enormous size and density.

The rings, when separated, would ere long become themselves divided. The same confliction of chances that caused the moving particles to be deflected originally from their straight paths, would now sever the belts into distinct masses, and afterwards assemble their constituent atoms into a spherical form around some centre

of greater density than the rest. Thus *planets* would be formed, retaining the orbicular revolution of the original belt, and acquiring in addition an individual rotation in the same direction, owing to the greater velocity of the particles in the exterior of the separated belt.

While the planetary atoms are thus conglobating, an action of forces, similar to that which formed their primary belts, may throw off one or more subsidiary rings, which in their turn condense into satellites, in the majority of instances; one single or rather *double* specimen remaining in existence when the belt has preserved its coherence, we mean the remarkable appendages to the planet Saturn.

The satellites would also possess a rotation, and in the very same direction with the orbits and rotations of their primaries. It is, indeed, from the observed and universal coincidence of these rotations and orbits, that the theory we are describing derives its chief support. By the calculation of probabilities, it is proved that for six planets and their secondaries, whose revolutions are known to possess a motion uniform in its direction, the chances are four millions of millions to one that the cause of their rotation must have been identical for them all.

[Our limits compel us to defer the conclusion of this article until our next.]

FRAGMENTS FOR THE FANCIFUL.

PROGRESSION IN KNOWLEDGE.—The mind cannot know. All knowledge attained, makes more necessary.—There is a knowledge which creates doubt, that nothing but a more extensive knowledge can satisfy; and he who stops in the difficulty will be perplexed and uncomfortable for life.

A HARP AT MIDNIGHT.

Is it a sound from far-off fairy land
That comes in gentle murmurings on mine ear,
Like tones from harp that, swept by fay's light hand,
Sends forth its tinkling music, sweet and clear?
Methinks I see, beneath the moon-beams bright,
A shadowy troop of wild and tiny things
Holding their revels 'mid the reign of night,
And tripping lightly, in their mystic rings,
To the rich melody which floats around—
But all hath fled—all, save the music's sound,
Which o'er my spirit still its magic flings,
And wraps my senses in a bliss profound:
Piercing and shrill the silvery notes arise,
Then fades each tone, and in soft cadence dies.

MESMERISM.—“The universal solvent,” sought by the old alchemists, may have originated from the faint glimmerings of the far-off tradition of the *universal soul* that pervades all nature, the *spiritual thought* receding as the dust of earth accumulated on the human heart, and transmuting the spiritual essence to a material fluid. In clairvoyance, I hold that the partially liberated soul of the patient is in communication with the soul of the universe, like a drop of water mingling with the mighty sea, equal to a portion of it, and participant of all that passes, as well beyond the orbit of Saturn as within the narrow circle of its mortal dwelling. Among all the learned theories on Mesmerism, give me old Jacob Behmen's, who, in other words, gives that true development that stands in stern contrast to the explanations of the *philosophers* of our nineteenth century. “Attraction,” I think he somewhere says, “is the first principle of nature;” but its origin is beyond nature—it dwelleth with the “incomprehensible.” Repulsion, the consequence of reaction, is the second, and circulation the third; and from this threefold principle he deduces all motion, diversified by the endless qualifications of matter. By this “soul” the planets move in their orbits, and with it all nature, solid, fluid, or gaseous, is imbued, however infinite the variety, however small the particle. Liberate but one atom from the human form, it mingles with the universe, and, through the dim obscure of mortal stain, tells, in dreams and visions, things to which we can give no name—feelings which strike with astonishment, and vanish like the lightning before we can grasp the glittering gem.—*Fide et Fortitudine.*

IMMORTALITY.—That we belong to a class of beings whose existence will not cease with their present earthly life, but will continue elsewhere, although the body we now animate will decay, and separate into its elementary particles, we believe from reason, from our intellectual feelings, from the consent of the best philosophers of all ages, from the traditions of all nations, and from the deciding communications of the Christian Revelation. We do not perish when our material frame dissolves: our thinking and feeling principle survives its fleshly limbs and organs, which are but the instruments of its use and pleasure here; and will, after the visible death of our corporeal frame, and in reunion with another, possess its consciousness, its sensitiveness, and its active powers, under such other circumstances as its Creator shall appoint.

EVENING.

'Tis evening, and the radiant moon
Smiles o'er the humid earth, gemming the flowers
With diamond coronals, as if the light
Of their own graceful beauty were too faint to tell
Their great Creator's power. A calm repose
Steals o'er the face of nature; tree and shrub
Are lull'd, as 't were, in sleep, and scarce a sound
Comes on the summer air, save the sweet chime
Of some soft harp afar, mingling its tones
With the low wailing of the waterfall; anon,
A song burst forth in rich and gushing melody,
Pouring a flood of melting music through the grove,
Awakening echo from its mystic home,
And throwing o'er the heart a spell of soft enchantment.
Oh ! 'tis an hour when every wilder feeling of the heart
Is hushed to silence, and pleasant memories alone
Steal o'er the soul.

EARTH, THE NATURAL FRIEND OF MAN.—The great Roman naturalist Pliny, in one of the most beautiful passages of his elaborate history of nature, observes, “It is the earth that, like a kind mother, receives us at our birth, and sustains us when born. It is this alone, of all the elements around us, that is never found an enemy to man. The body of waters deluge him with rains, oppress him with hail, and drown him with inundations; the air rushes on in storms, prepares the tempest, or lights up the volcano; but the earth, gentle and indulgent, ever subservient to the wants of man, spreads his walks with flowers, and his table with plenty; returns with interest every good committed to her care, and though she produces the poison, she still supplies the antidote, though constantly teased to furnish the luxuries of man rather than his necessities; yet, even to the last, she continues her kind indulgence, and when life is over, she piously hides his remains in her bosom.”



In which all Questions from Correspondents are answered gratuitously, in accordance with the true and unerring principles of Astrological Science.

To our QUESTERS.—This department of our work involves the solution of “horary questions,” so called from a figure of the heavens being erected for the hour in which the question is asked, and from the indications manifest in which the corresponding answers are derived. It

will, therefore, be absolutely necessary for all correspondents to specify the exact hour and day on which they commit the question to paper for our judgment, and the replies will then be given accordingly. As this important feature of the starry science will necessarily occupy considerable time which he is willing to devote, without reward, to benefit the public, THE ASTROLOGER hopes that the liberality of his offer will protect him from the correspondence of those who desire adjudication upon frivolous subjects, or who are merely actuated thereto by motives of idle and foolish curiosity. All subjects on which they may be really anxious, can be solved with absolute certainty; and the election of favourable periods for marriage, speculation, or commencing any new undertaking with advantage, will be cheerfully and readily pointed out from week to week. All communications addressed to "THE ASTROLOGER" will be considered as strictly confidential, and the initials only given in the oracle.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ZOROASTER.—We are greatly pleased with the second letter of our correspondent. It breathes a genial and kindly spirit throughout. Since the first publication of our work we have the gratification of knowing that the attention of many has been drawn to these themes, who have otherwise scarcely bestowed upon the subject a passing thought. The spirit of inquiry now walks abroad—it is with us night and noonday, and notwithstanding the hourly demands made by business on the mental capacities of individuals, cannot be stifled. It must elicit the fiery emanation of the immortal spirit from the commonest clay—as the spark flashes from the flint when brought into collision with the steel.

THE WANDERING JEW.—Thou art right in thy surmises of his existence, but be not afraid. The hour is rapidly approaching when man will turn from the vile and vulgar of the earth's commonplaces with sickening disgust, and bask alone in the pure light of astral knowledge. All things are progressing—nothing is stationary.

ROME.—Love is an essence of the soul. Few ever take the trouble to inquire into it metaphysically, though this is the personification of that lever with which Archimedes boastingly exclaimed he could move the world. We have already said it once, but it cannot be too strongly urged upon the reader—that not one man—or perhaps woman either—not one in a hundred ever marries the person they love the fondest. What is it, then? A mere dream of youth and beauty! Perchance, so. But nothing more? Ask our philosophers. They will tell you it is the party's own fault. We most emphatically tell them it is not. The events of a minute—circumstances of unexpected occurrence, or a thousand other things, equally as disappointing, and as efficacious—will step in to sever the two fond hearts, and ever after they are as strangers to each other. The mind, which is continually storing up in its golden treasury images of true poetry, will not, however, abandon its thoughts of those happy hours of the by-gone, when "the world was all before us where to choose," and one smiling angelic face inspired us to rush into the thickest of the contest. Those days are over with many now, and—well! respecting these letters? Ah! bless us, we forgot!

GEORGE H. JACKSON.—We have duly considered the horoscopes forwarded, and judge therefrom that the union contemplated will not take place, although the indications of a close intimacy are very strong and remarkable. The female native has, unquestionably, a very warm and ardent temperament, but though her passion be intense it is not enduring. A development of this character will be speedily seen.

O. N. E.—The marriage will unfold a new train of thoughts and will, we have no doubt, be with the person formerly mentioned. The indications are more strongly suggestive of it taking place here; but there is no question of your being destined to a fortunate union. Perhaps before this reaches you, or soon after, circumstances will arise to alter your determination.

LA BOUCH.—A reconciliation can be ultimately effected, and will be the best immediate step to your renewed prosperity. A change in your pursuits will then follow, and the remainder of your life—through friendly interference—will be passed in comparative comfort.

ASTOLFO.—It is more than either you or the Astrologer can say. Who is mad? Those who are supposed lunatics, or those who are presumed sane? Define madness? Do the folks, vulgarly called "mad," see more or less than those vulgarly called rational. This is a question you had better get answered first.

Q. Q.—Go not abroad on the 25th of July, or an accident will befall thee. There are two females who have evil designs on your character—beware of their influence.

S. W. P. (Russell-square).—We do not judge the promise held out will be fulfilled at that time, but, one month after, that, or another equally good, will be obtained. The marriage will be solemnised in November, and we anticipate the bumper and a boy. To the last question we can but hold out some faint hopes, at all events, a considerable time must elapse first.

C. W.—The deductions you have drawn are correct, and we have no doubt of their ultimate fulfilment, but the era is not yet arrived for their promulgation. A mightier power has yet to supersede steam. Even the rapidity of railway travelling will be excelled by the individual speed of man, and before the present century has become entombed in the past, the art of flying will be attained and perfected. Electricity will be the motive power, it is the antagonistic spirit to gravity—the other great law. Intercourse with the species of remote districts will destroy war and remove long existing prejudices, and then we shall have an epoch of concord—peace will flourish and the goal will be attained.

H.—In the Rosicrucian's recital, which is contained in the present number, will be seen the basis of the communion. Self-denial, frugality, abstemiousness, and a continual habit of wrenching the soul from its corporeal trammels, will establish the groundwork and prepare the way for the ethereal intercourse that succeeds. More anon.

W. WITH ♀—Follow the instructions given by the eminent astrologer Zadkiel. We do not judge marriage will take place, the native's horoscope showing no indication.

E. S. (Matfen Cottages).—You can only become proficient by incessant study and practice. It is the labour of a life. We applaud the motives by which you have been actuated, and will consider the proposition.

W. T. G.—If we remember aright, the information wanted will be found in one of the earlier numbers of "Raphael's Prophetic Almanac." There is nothing of any importance introduced into the second edition, if we except a few additional precepts concerning nativities. The "Manual" is worthy attention, and, from our own experience, may in a great measure be relied upon.

T. H. (Agnes-street).—The business of a country bookseller, combined with the usual extra sources of emolument, will unquestionably tend to your advantage, as you are not likely to succeed in anything of a more purely speculative nature.

LEO.—The two first questions do not come within the scope of Horary. The year 1847 will be the period, when a connection with one of dark handsome features and accomplished manners will be formed.

C. J. Y.—You will find it necessary to seek other aid before the undertaking will be found successful. The engagement we do not consider likely to result as you seem to anticipate.

J. R.—Your friend had better go, should a favourable opportunity occur this year; if not, let him postpone it to the August of next.

J. S. A.—We have received your communication on "Dreams," and wish to see the sequel. Your talent and misfortunes are both known to us and recognised.

T. S. H.—The former answer was intended for you, a typographical error having changed the first initial. The situation will be fortunate. The precise period we cannot ascertain of the other, having no basis on which to form our calculations.

M. P. J.—We will endeavour to comply with your request as speedily as possible; but at present we are, with all our anxiety to oblige, compelled to solicit the indulgence and patience of some of our correspondents. A private letter at the earliest opportunity will communicate more.

Virgo.—Let your son beware, in his eighteenth and twenty-first year, of the influence a dark, swarthy woman, of moderate stature and middle age, will exert over him. Honour' and wealth, together with a high reputation, will be his lot, if these cautions are observed and heeded. Impetuosity of manner must be subdued, but a look or a word will have more effect upon him than any severer punishment. The pathway that will lead his feet towards the rugged ascent of life's mountain is bordered by briars and beset with pitfalls; but an earnest reliance on Providence and himself will surmount all difficulties, and enable him at last to bask in the sunshine that we now see lighting up the summit.

John (Dublin).—Our publication is still weekly, so you must have laboured under an error. For the question we have just received, learn this. Success is very strongly indicated, but the obstacles encountered require the greatest strength of mind and perseverance to overcome. The visit to London which will produce the beneficial effects that have elicited your inquiry, will doubtless be caused by an unexpected change in your domestic circumstances, and the earnest persuasion of a friend.

Delta.—A detail of the circumstances will be necessary. Such things can be—have been; but in your individual case we must have further warrant for testing its practicability. No objection from reason or analogy can be offered. Why does the violet ray of the prism magnetise iron? What connection is there apparently between the two, and yet this is daily-demonstrated by experience. On receipt of the particulars we will decide, and shall have much pleasure in so doing.

H. L. S.—A continuance is not indicated; another will estrange his affections.

Edith Dalton.—We do not anticipate the realisation of your present wishes. "Yes," to the last question.

S. T. C.—A similar delay is frequently occasioned. Very few letters received after Monday morning are answered in the current number.

Fide et Fortitudine.—How can we resist an invocation from an esteemed correspondent, which comes in such a flattering shape as the following:—"Seer! of beautiful imaginings! philosophic thought! poetic mystery! whose soul hath power to leave the clay and mingle with the rays of the furthest star, teach me how to interpret the wonders I behold in the 'dream-sphere,' to translate the fitful music of another existence, that sweeps at intervals o'er the higher aspirations of my heart—like angel's sighs, suffusing its throbs with primeval joy; a joy almost unknown in these metallic times—a feeling whose very existence would be denied amid the feverish pursuits of the anxious race that now ballast our revolving world. Teach me to hold communion with your spirit, that I may learn how to condense the dark shadows of occult thought, and gaze on the spark of celestial fire." We must indeed be more than mortal to receive such a tribute with stolid indifference. What can we say in reply? Simply this, that to the fulfilment of the desires we will dedicate our heart and hand.

Fitzgerald.—We have here a poser; such a perplexing question that Ptolemy himself would have thrown it up in utter despair. It is a problem for a physiologist. A young lady who entered this mundane territory a month ago, already "promises to be tall." Very kind of her to promise already, but will she keep it when she grows up. That is the question. Our reverence will, however, see. On that day the Sun was in conjunction with Mercury. Zadkiel says "ο δ ς will bring much active business and inclination to literary things and persons. It brings an inclination to travel and benefits to youth. The native will be changeable in fancy and unsettled in studies." There, Fitzgerald! only imagine that. We can see, besides, that in her craniological formation will be found the organs of "taste," "order," "form," "colour," and we are afraid "gustativeness," strongly developed. Her 18th, 22nd, and 24th years are her eventful ones, but the 2nd year is not less so.

Received.—HOPE AND SINCERITY (You will, certainly, have a bequest from that quarter, and very shortly receive several

benefits beside).—**Eliza Clara (No).**—**Eliza H.** (You will change).—**John R. E.** (You have no reason to think otherwise).—**J. B. M.** (You have not mentioned year of birth).—**A. B. C.** (We cannot spare the time).—**T. M. W.** (It is not attainable).—**Henry James** (You have been answered—choose a trade).—**Syntax** (You must inform us of the hour and minute).—**Albert** (Our motive for asking arose from seeing the calculations were erroneous. A new one must be erected).—**H. B.** (You need not doubt it).—**Z. A.** (The next year will decide for you).—**X. Y.** (You need not anticipate the event for three years; but your acquaintance with him will commence in June, 1846).—**ELLA** (About eight months).—**M. E. V.** (Unanswerable).—**E. O.** (You will not have the same person).—**Queen of Cyprus** (You will find next month bring a profitable change).—**W. Curtis (No).**—**Poet Ardwick** (You will recover and prosper within the present year).—**Born under Jupiter** (Yes, and it would prove beneficial).—**Ernest** (Three years, at least, will elapse before the pecuniary advantage takes place).—**R. L. S.** (Next year; but not to him).—**E. Cross** (You must have patience).—**Penny Post** (Who did you dream of last?).—**HELEN** (Read the third act of Hamlet).—**Oberon** (You will soon receive a benefit from some partnership or joint business).—**George Greenough** (You must send time of birth).—**Miss Brian** (We will see what can be done).—**L. L. L.** (November).—**Emure** (The nativity is left at the office to be called for).—**S. U. M.** (It does not fall within our province).—**Perro** (You will soon have a pleasant change).—**Angerance** (You will not remove for some time; but when you do it will be northward).—**Eliza Hardy** (You have been answered in the negative).—**E. K. E** (Your 22nd year).—**M. B. R.** (No).—**Anne** (You will not marry again).—**Mary Green** (It involves a laborious calculation).—All correspondents unanswered in this number will find their replies in our next.

GENERAL NOTICE.

All the back numbers of this unique and original publication have been reprinted, and can now, without extra charge, be obtained through any bookseller in town or country. For a small sum like eighteen-pence, the purchaser would be thus in possession of a complete volume on the OCCULT SCIENCES, and the general tendency of its pages to elevate and refine will be admitted by all who have had the opportunity of perusal. For those gratifying and encouraging letters which he has received from men of high intellect and lofty station, the Astrologer here begs to offer his sincere, though comprehensive, acknowledgments, and urges his friends and subscribers generally to recommend a work which aims at disseminating a creed of TRUTH and BEAUTY, inculcating the highest doctrine which the human mind is capable of receiving, and endeavouring to sow the seeds of hope and concord, that may ripen into a future harvest of peace and good will to all men." ESTO PERPETUA !

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