ECSTATICS OF GENIUS.

BY

J. W. JACKSON.

LONDON:

ARTHUR HALL, VIRTUE, & CO., 25 PATERNOSTER ROW;

H. BAILLIERE, 219 REGENT STREET.

EDINBURGH

MACLACHLAN & STEWART, 64 SOUTH BRIDGE.

1859.

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EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY A. AND W. R. WILSON, HIGH STREET.

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INTRODUCTION.

In no department of literature is the incompetency of authors for the task which they have undertaken more manifest than in history and biography. What a lamentable incapacity for appreciating the presence and working of great first principles do we not find in the ordinary narrators of events! What a dwelling on the merely surface phenomena of effects! and what an obvious inability to penetrate into the profounder realm of causes is revealed in the pages of those cumbrous tomes of inanity that with the majority serve for an authentic revelation of the past! And when a really great man is introduced to our notice, and we expect a life-like portraiture. have often, in place of the veritable great-souled mover of the world, the true authentic creator of an age or an epoch, on whose majestic framework of ideas the after generations have been but too content to fashion their every thought; how often, we say, in place of this living reality, with his lofty aspirations, his ennobling emotions, his exalted faith, and his vast and plastic conceptions, have we some second-hand description of a dead piece of state-machinery that went by clockwork, or some miserably defective sketch of an impossible combination of wild enthusiasm with cold-hearted hypocrisy! The sham is ever present, the man is ever absent; and, in place of the generous, warm-hearted, and in every way vitalized enthusiast, whose electrical sympathies rendered him irresistible with all generous spirits, we are presented with a monster from whom all higher natures would have shrunk with abhorrence. Slowly, however, yet surely, is justice being done in this matter. We are beginning, though with much reluctance and recalcitration, to

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apprehend at something like their true value the heroic master-spirits of other times. Men are arising among us, gifted with a sufficiency of insight to prevent the feeble reiteration of groundless and libellous insinuations in reference to souls of whom the earth was not worthy, and the prophet spirits of the past are being, one after another, reinthroned in the heartfelt reverence of their race. Of all the indications of our age, we hold none to be more hcpeful than that which is afforded by this true catholicity of appreciation. We are leaving the beclouding mists of sectarianism behind, and rising into the clear empyrean of universal thought. Of all the evidences of true manhood, none are more hopeful than that which is afforded by this power of heartily appreciating its presence in others. He who can fully and unreservedly recognize the heroic in another is not himself at an altogether infinite remove from that of which he has so acute a perception, and to which he can accord such entire sympathy. A true intuition of the noble is never accorded to the mean, nor can the base ever give right recognition to the really exalted. The worshipful of any age is the best index of its essential character, for the dead saint is ever but the *beau ideal* of the living man.

Of the seriousness, earnestness, and truthfulness of earth's great master-spirits, most right-minded enquirers have now little doubt. Of this the evidence is indeed too clear for any but the blindly prejudiced to fail in obtaining an intuitive perception. But there is nevertheless one very important circumstance connected with their condition, to which scarcely an intelligible allusion is to be found in any work treating either on the details of their biography, or on the success and character of their mission; we allude to the fact, that many of them were obviously ecstatics, that is, they were clairvoyants or seers. Now so important an element in their mental constitution ought not to be overlooked, if we would arrive at a correct estimate of their mental resources, or of the nature of the influence which they were capable of exercising over others. It is the key to much that would

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otherwise seem utterly unaccountable in their career, and inscrutable in their character. This interior light, this visional illumination is a force, our ignorance of which can scarcely fail to lead us occasionally into a false estimate of the motives under which the whole life of such men proceeded in its higher phases of development. Through it they would have a different outlook upon the universe, and in a sense conceive of themselves as holding a higher relationship to the entire scheme of existence. Of the effects of such an endowment, however, we shall be better enabled to speak when we come to treat of its existence and varied modes of manifestation in the successive subjects whom we have selected as appropriate examples of its presence and influence. Confined to no age, country, or faith, limited to neither the learned nor ignorant, the young nor the old, and appearing alike in either sex, the instances of lucid vision that history presents are both numerous and varied; so much so, that we are more likely to be encumbered by their multiplicity than limited by their scarcity. The difficulty indeed consists less in the discovery than the selection of cases: and our guiding principle in the choice of individuals as illustrations has been, in general, their historical celebrity, in virtue of which their lives are better known, and their action on society more readily appreciable.

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ECSTATICS OF GENIUS.

No. 1. — PYTHAGORAS.

COMPARED with Asia, that birth-place of man and cradle of civilization, that mother of knowledge and nurse of art, Europe, with all the splendour of her classic traditions and the magnitude and importance of her subsequent history, seems but a young and morally dependent colony. Our antiquity may be venerable to the Occident, but it is a thing of yesterday to the Orient. When we talk of our "ancients," the Brahmin smiles in pity, and the Persian sneers with ill-disguised contempt. They were old when we were young; they are the originals of which we are the copies. Ethnology and philology have shewn us the quarry whence we were hewn. From the teeming plains of India and Iran came those bands of primeval emigrants, to whom the West owes alike its culture and its power, its intellectual activity and its political supremacy. We, too, though afar off and at many removes, are "children of the sun," albeit we have followed our radiant sire, as worshippers of his vesper glory rather than his matin splendour. We are the descendents of Asia's noblest nations, and the inheritors alike of their grandest ideas and their purest blood. Let us not, then, despise our venerable mother in the hour of her decrepitude. To the East we owe our lineage and language, our religion and philosophy. The Druid in his grove and the Papal priest at his altar equally exhibit the pliant acquiescence of European faith, in its uninquiring submission to Asiatic apostleship; while a more extensive study of Sanscrit literature has shewn us that the Grecian schools, from the earliest Eleatics to the latest Alexandrians, were little other than the reflected light of Asian intellect. In none, however, is his so strongly marked as in that of Pythagoras, whose

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principles were so obviously an Eastern transcript, that their relationship is unmistakable. He taught transmigration as a doctrine, and enforced vegetarianism as a practice. Returning from long years of studious travel, which is said to have extended from India to Britain, he brought to his great work a mind suffused with all the higher elements of Oriental theosophy, and looms out upon us, through the mists of tradition, rather in the semblance of a Brahminical or Budhistic meditationist, the subject of interior illumination, with its visional inspirations, than a Grecian sage, with ideas limited by the range of his logical faculties, and conceptions regulated by the exercise of his judgment. Regarded, indeed, by his followers as of divine descent, he seems to have not wholly disclaimed the position and attributes of an incarnation. Mystical in his teachings and miraculous in his operations, he spoke from and to the supersensuous sphere, and hence required a prepared audience, "fit though few," as the capable recipients of his transcendental tuition.

Strictly speaking, Greek philosophy was theosophy in transition. Its various schools exhibit Asian intuition in the process of adaptation to European deduction. They were an endeavour to endue the insight of inspiration with the vesture of reason, and so accommodate its sublime verities to the rationalistic apprehension of European intellect. It was a stage in that long descent, whereby, during humanity's lengthened march westward through space and downward through time, we have been landed by the inductive philosophy on the firm though low foundation of fact. Still *a priori* in form, the tuition of the Grecian sages was gradually becoming *a posteriori* in spirit. It was a preparation for the desertion of first principles, and the abnegation of faith, in favour of experimental investigation and deductive logic. The process was progressive; and hence the earlier schools exhibit less of the practical, and abound more in the theoretical, than the later. Now, a distinctive feature of the Pythagorean system was an endeavour to stay this downward course, and bring men back to the grandeur and sublimity of the primal philo-

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sophy of earlier ages. Its founder, in the estimation of his disciples, was more than a sage; he was regarded as a saint or demi-god. Deeply imbued with the higher spiritualism of his eastern masters, he was a religious missionary rather than a philosophic teacher, the hierophant of a faith rather than the founder of a school.

Our data for a life of Pythagoras are rather traditional than historical. His memory is shrouded in legend and surrounded with miracle. Must we, then, conclude that his moral stature was so overawing, that his contemporaries could not see its limits, and, like a mountain whose lofty peak is crowned with clouds, his head appeared lost in the wonderland of heaven. He was said to be the son of Hermes, and even of Apollo. He could tame wild beasts by a word, and restrained an ox, who was devouring the sacred beans, by a whisper. He was heard to lecture in different places at the same day and hour. His head occasionally appeared surrounded with a halo, and his whole aspect was less human than divine. He was pre-eminently susceptible to all the finer influences of nature: he looked on the harmonious proportions of beauty with an artist's eye, and he listened, even to the music of the spheres, with a poet's ear. He taught the metempsychosis, and professed to remember the experiences of his former transmigrations. His knowledge was obviously supersensuous: he could divine men's secret thoughts, and his utterances were oracular and prophetic. Nature herself is said to have acknowledged his greatness by modifications of her phenomena, and the spirits of water, wood, and wild audibly recognised his presence.

Through the somewhat transparent disguise of this mythical narrative, the following facts become abundantly evident. A Grecian youth of consummate ability, of commanding talents, and of extraordinary, we might almost say universal, genius, and endowed, moreover, with a pure and elevated moral nature, and a refined spirituality of thought and feeling, rare even among the most gifted of his countrymen, having exhausted the higher tuitions of his native land, determined

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to travel for the noble purpose of extending his knowledge by experience, and expanding his ideas by personal intercourse with the wise and good of other nations. To this end he visited Egypt, India, and the extreme West, so that, when he had completed this vast circuit of study, he could, in his mature scholarship, compare the teachings of the Budhistic Lamas with those of the British Druids, and admeasure Brahminical truth by the creed of Misraim. In this learned pilgrimage he expended twenty-two years of the prime and vigour of his manhood, and at its conclusion might be considered as immeasurably the most accomplished scholar and philosopher of his age. Now, let it be remembered this vast lore was not embodied in a walking lexicon. It was all digestible and nourishing pabulum to one of the most highly vitalized souls that ever illumined earth by the reflected radiance of his supernal glory. Here was saint and sage, priest and poet, in one august personage. In him genius culminated into seerdom, and the mission of the prophet crowned the labours of the man of science and letters. Historical Greece had never before seen his equal, and except in Apollonius Tyanaeus, never afterwards beheld his rival.

His mind suffused with the ideas, and thoroughly interpenetrated by the doctrines of his Indian teachers, his endeavour was to restore the reverential spirituality of the olden time. Intellect had dominated over the moral nature in the Hellenic race long prior to his day, this distinctive characteristic of European culture, as compared with that of Asia, being thus early exhibited. As a result, reason with its disintegrative analysis triumphed over faith with its recreative synthesis. Since the age of the still more mythical Orpheus, in the faintly reverberated echoes of whose traditional existence we have the indistinct indications of a prior but somewhat similar theosophic missionary advent, no man had taught with the authority of direct insight. Masters and disciples were alike on the low level of deductive reasoning, and, as a necessary consequence, were drifting into an interminable embroilment of difficulty and doubt, the mutually

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destructive force of contradictory hypotheses, tending to no positive result, and leading only to that refined Pyrrhonism, in which all merely rationalistic schools of philosophy have so miserably terminated. Pythagoras stood on the higher plane of intuition, his doctrines being direct revelations of inspired truth, rather than the doubtful results of laboured excogitation. He taught the unity, spirituality, self-consciousness, omniscience and omnipotence of God, the immortality of the soul, and its progressive advance from the outer or lower, to the inner and higher spheres of being. He symbolised the order and beauty of the moral and physical creation, by the mathematical proportion of numbers, and the musical notes of the harmonic scale. He believed in a hierarchy of spirits, and, as a consequence, in the adaptation of some and inadaptation of other human beings to the reception of great and God-given truths. Hence his pupils were a carefully-selected band, and could only be admitted to a knowledge of his deeper esoteric doctrines after a prolonged initiation intended to try their courage, worth, probity, and purity. He imposed restrictions on diet, and was careful of the moral as well as physical health of his disciples.

Now, what have we here? A Budhistic Grand Lama, a Brahminical Saint, an Egyptian Hierophant, and British Arch-Druid, robed in the mantle of a Greek philosopher. The form alone is Hellenic, the spirit is pre-eminently Oriental, or, shall we say, primeval. Pythagoras was grandly conservative, his object being to restore a once sublime and heroic though now forgotten past to its pristine vigour. This, among others, was one reason why he selected his pupils from among the aristocracy; they were of high caste, and such as he had been accustomed to see the honoured depositories of truth among his Eastern teachers. The essentially democratic character of Greek institutions, and the profoundly analytical character of Greek intellect proved too strong for him. In its grander and ulterior objects, his mission was a failure. He could not reinstitute on a lasting foundation, either the hierarchial constitution or social divi-

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sions of primitive Iranian civilization. He could not permanently change either the faith or practice of his countrymen; they were not, as a body, amenable to his tuitions, either in matters spiritual or temporal, and hence, in place of founding a religion and organizing a state, he simply originated a school. As legislator and prophet the man was there, but the time and place were wanting. It was a missionary "enterprise of great pith and moment," but it was in opposition to the tidal movements of destiny, and hence, despite the ability, sanctity, and inspiration of its originator, terminated in confusion and defeat.

The gifted Samian was a lucide, not an occasional crisiac, but a permanent seer. Hence his oracular utterances, the halo around his brow, and his magnetic power over all brought duly within the sphere of his personal influence. Of structure the noblest, and temperament the finest, he had doubtless been subjected, under his foreign initiations, to all those time-honoured processes of fasting, solitude, and meditation, which have been found, by long experience, so effectually conducive to the development of ecstacy. By these, combined, doubtless, with a constitution originally prone to lucidity, he appears to have attained, eventually, to a condition in which vision, intuition, and thought-reading, were habitual, rather than rare experiences. His belief in transmigration was, as we have observed, a return to the exalted doctrines of the primal Iranian faith, and the assertion that he could remember the personalities and details of his previous incarnations, was in strict accordance with the tuitions and example of those Budhistic Lamas, who still profess to recollect the events, and recognize the attachments of place, furniture, &c., with which they were familiar in their former terrestrial life. That, in achieving the intellectual efforts, necessary to demonstrate this to their adoring, yet keenly observant disciples, they manifest a high form of clairvoyance, there is no doubt; and Pythagoras appears to have exhibited the same when he pointed out the shield which he had used as Euphorbus at the siege of Troy. His asserted ability to

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appear and lecture simultaneously in two places, is what has been narrated of several ancient magicians. It seems to be an instance of that phenomenon whose occurrence has been occasionally noticed in modern times, and often as attaching to persons by no means remarkably gifted or illustrious. The Germans speak of these double presentments of the same person, as *dopple gangers;* and in England they are termed wraiths or fetches. Unless we are prepared to deny human testimony, we must admit that occasionally, though rarely, the image of an individual, perfect in every lineament, so that the nearest relative or most attached friend could recognize nothing distinctive from the original, has been observed in one place, while the physical organism has been in another. It would appear that a state of intense abstraction on the one hand, or of proportionately high excitement on the other, are alike favourable to this unusual liberation of nervo-vital power, by which the *eidolon* is projected forth on "the magic mirror" of nature. Hence crisiacs are probably more liable to it than others, and the subject of our present notice would doubtless be more than ordinarily susceptible to such a duplex presentment of his corporeal envelope. It need scarcely be said that such a fact occurring only once or twice in the life of so illustrious a teacher, would be magnified, by the admiration of his pupils and the accumulative force of tradition, into a customary and voluntary multiplication of personality, amounting to something like an attribute of approximative omnipresence.

Altogether, the enterprise of the Samian sage had a religious and missionary, in short, a theosophic rather than a philosophic character. He taught with authority, as one having primal rather than derivative light. His followers were disciples, not pupils, and he impressed them with dogmas which were the tenets of a sect, rather than principles which were the convictions of a school. For so distinguished a position and such important duties, he was, in many points, pre-eminently qualified, both by his mental and corporeal attributes, by his original powers and their subsequent culture.

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His failure was the result of circumstances, which would have rendered even greater qualities than his unavailing for such a purpose at such a time. His success would have involved the retrogression of Greece, Italy, and eventually, perhaps, of all Europe, for humanity had not completed the cycle of intellectual change, which would permit of the commencement of the epicycle; and hence its march to the higher Iranian theosophy, must have been backwards to the letter of the past, rather than forwards to the spirit of the future. As an eminent instance of ecstatic exaltation with its lucidity and its moral magnetism, Pythagoras has few rivals in any age or country; and the gigantic proportions in which he looms out upon us through the mists of tradition, may be taken as unmistakeable evidence of the inherent grandeur and dignity of his character, of the vastitude and power of his mind. It must have been a substance of more than ordinary greatness, which could cast so Titanic a shadow on posterity, a sound of more than usual volume, whose echoes have reverberated with undiminished force, adown so many centuries.

No. 2.—Socrates.

It has been generally supposed that the persevering study of philosophy is antagonistic to the effective development of imagination. Whether this be a popular fallacy or not, quite certain it is that there are many notable exceptions to the rule. He who would undertake to assert that Shakespeare was not one of the profoundest thinkers in the sphere of moral philosophy that humanity has yet produced, would exhibit but slender powers for appreciating the real depth and earnestness of those passages in which this wondrous master-spirit reveals his intuitive acquaintance with the subjective sphere of being. He does not syllogistically demonstrate or scientifically deduce a conclusion; he is neither dry, nor precise, nor formal in his enunciations of

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abstract truth. It must be confessed he abounds not with laboured excogitations, nor does he provide us with the slowly elaborated results of severely and cautiously applied principles. His glance is that of an eagle, who from the sublime altitude of the empyrean contemplates those wide-spread provinces which the most accomplished of engineers can only survey in succession with much ado and vast toil, and to whose successful achievement of the task a great diversity of instruments and a vast multiplicity of aids and assistances are an essential prerequisite. He whose more lucid intuitions indeed transcend not both the heights and depths of mere scholastic philosophy has but imperfect claims to the gift of insight. That vision to which the interior life remains unrevealed is scarcely worthy of the name. The bard who has failed to discover that most momentous of all secrets to him, his own soul, yet needs to have his spiritual eye opened. The poesy, in truth, which is not the result of seerdom, more or less, must be considered but as a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. And conversely may we not say of the sage, that he who is devoid of the ideal is but the fraction of a man. As well might a wing-clipped barn-door parade itself for the perfection of birdhood, as a merely incarnate deduction, or digesting demonstration, presume to consider itself as a befitting embodyment of humanity's completed wholeness. The sage, like the bard, is ever something of the seer —is in verity a prose prophet.

Who so blind as not to perceive all the elements of a true poet and vates in our own illustrious Francis of Verulam! What page of prophecy was ever more truthful in the matter, or more sublimely eloquent in the manner of its enunciation, than many which we may find in the *Novum Organum!* Was there in very truth no celestial inspiration to prompt such far-stretching thoughts, which in effect embraced so much of the glorious futurity of man? Was there no creative power in that mighty intellect, whose "meditations" furnished the plan of that magnificent temple of knowledge, on whose enduring foundations and never-failing pillars the great and

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gifted of all subsequent generations have laboured in willing obedience to the design of their architectural chief? Was there no insight here, no spiritual eye to discern the forecast shadows of coming events? No gift of tongues wherewith to clothe thoughts so weighty and aspirations so sublime in a befitting vestment of language, whose eloquence still stirs us as with the sound of a trumpet? What is this great work indeed rightly considered but a terrestrial echo of that interspheral harmony, by whose guiding notes suns and systems keep step and time in their magic dance through the infinite, where now all is order and beauty, while without some such directing influence all would be confusion and chaos? And must he not have had a poet's eye and prophet's soul who could so rightly discern and truthfully declare the relationships and sequences of things in that *terra incognita* of science, on whose outermost boundary man had then scarcely set foot? What is prophecy if it be not a precognition of coming events, and who then shall deny to Francis Bacon the gift of seerdom? Poet and philosopher, sage and seer, has not all human culture ever commenced with such grand humantarian spirits, who could embrace *both* these characters, whose vast circuit of being comprehended at least thus much of perfected manhood? Did not the first lawgivers propound their authoritative edicts in rythmical cadences, and what were the primal creeds of men but deductions of after generations from those revelations of the celestial in which the anthems and other productions of early bards abounded? The weak and unauthorized separation of sage and seer is a poor after-thought, to which the colossal minds of the first ages, of whose cyclopean remains in the moral world our existing beliefs are but fragmentary remnants, would never have condescended. They valued the man in his *integrity*, and esteemed *oneness* in the work and *entirety* in the author as a needful accompaniment of all true greatness, without which to predicate perpetuity of any human production were the vainest of fancies.

We have been more especially led into this train of reflec-

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tion while contemplating the ecstatic life of those primeval master-spirits whose sublime contemplations constitute the true foundation of theosophy in the East and philosophy in the West. Humanity's first teachers, we repeat it, were ecstatics. To their grander revelations, as to the fountain heads of thought, all later systems of faith and practice owe their origin. He alone who is gifted with the intuition of a seer can speak with the authority of a prophet. The deductions of logic are never enthroned in the conscience, nor will men in the mass, or through the sequence of generations, ever yield loyal obedience, except to the true Godsent, whose edicts are issued not from the superficial sphere of conscious excogitation, but the far profounder depths of lucid intuition. Reflection is one thing, inspiration is another; the former affords, as its name implies, but a secondary and derivative species of illumination; it is essentially planetary, while the latter is primal, solar, and therefore vital. The first may characterise the philosopher, but it is the second alone which constitutes the prophet. We have said that originally sage and seer were one, and that their separation was itself a declension from the massive greatness of that epoch whose mightier minds have cast their shadow on tradition as Gods and Titans. But when the sacred vates became a mere poet, utterly unconscious of his spiritual gifts and holy vocation, and when those mystic elements of the ideal in his higher being, which should have constituted the subject matter of anthems and the figures of prophecy, became but the playthings of fancy or the fuel of passion, how fearful was the degradation, how terrible rather shall we say this desecration, of so chosen a vessel of the sanctuary to the paltry uses of man's vile body feasts. And yet, perhaps, if we think of it aright, even this misapplication of power in the wayward and erring bard is not so wide a departure from the higher path of inspiration as that which we see manifested in the self-sufficient sage, when he descends to the rank of a sophist, and bandies propositions from side to side, not with the exalted aim of arriving at an assured and guiding truth for

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the right direction of less gifted souls, but for the petty purpose of exhibiting his intellectual agility in the childish game of battledore, with ideas for shuttlecocks. A passion-blinded bard, swooping down into the fiery depths of a moral Tophet, on those glorious pinions which should have borne him heavenwards into the regions of prophecy, is in some sense an object of admiration as well as of pity. This very power is a redeeming quality, and we feel that the impulse which has carried him on daring wing to such depths of sensuous perversity, might yet, in regenerated and rightly directed strength, bear him again upwards to the celestial altitude of prophetic vision and heaven-vouchsafed inspiration. We still look, if even with abhorrence, yet at least with solemn awe and heartfelt dread, on the wreck and ruin of such noble powers. We may listen with horror to his blasphemous adoration of the terrene in place of the divine. We may lament over, but we cannot thoroughly despise, this outcast Godson, wandering afar from his brethren and his sire, for, amidst the gusts of his passion and the wailings of his despair, we still at intervals distinguish the echoes of those tones which proclaim that a seraph.harper is present, though clad, alas, in the sad and degrading habiliments of a ministrant at the altar of sense, instead of the pure and radiant robes of a heavenly hierophant. But of the calm, clear wisdom of the true sage, of his profound revealings from the stilly depths of wrapt meditation, what remnant do we find in the silly and superficial sophist, whose intellectual armoury is the mere show-shop of mind, where the deceptive glitter of cleverness passes for the golden ore of true wisdom, and the sterling worth of reality is sacrificed to the passing semblance of appearances.

Of such seers and sages, however, as those to whom we have been alluding, but little truth biographical, above all *auto*-biographical remains. We read their careers in their effects, their actions are in their bequests, their lives are in their testaments. 'Tis true we have a code of Menu, a creed of Gautama Budha, and a very insignificant echo of the first

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Zerdusht in the second; but, except in THE BOOK, with its lawgiver upon Sinai, and its zeal-consumed prophet, mounting heavenwards in his fiery chariot, we nowhere, as yet, find a clear and authentic revelation of the revealer. We hear the thunders of command gradually reverberating adown the centuries, and in the wrecks of antecedent faiths we may trace the path of that bolt which occasioned their destruction, but the hand which launched it is generally hidden from view behind those mists of tradition where we know there must be light, as we are sure there is a sun beyond those clouds of the evening west, whose varied hues are but the glory-woven veil of a passing brightness, the jewelled throne of a retiring majesty, withdrawn not for ever, but only till the cycle of another morning shall re-bless the earth with the ruddy radiance of a second day. It is, therefore, of no small value to the effective illustration of these greater spirits, that we are permitted to know something of a minor visitant of the same order, and, if we cannot stand face to face with a primeval Titan or veritable Olympian, we may at least observe and converse with a restorer of truth of no mean order.

The master of Plato and the founder of a school of Greek philosophy, or rather philosophers, whose meditations have been the glory of the western world for more than two milleniums, is not to be despised, even in a comparison with the intellectual giants of remoter ages. SOCRATES WAS AN ECSTATIC, and as such in the truest sense of the term, *a master*. His wisdom, self-derived, looked to no other teacher for its origin. To him it was a primal revelation, a God-sent illumination from the interior sphere of trance-life and daimon converse. Behold him standing wrapt in absorbing thought from morning through the burning day, and outwatching the evening star till the matin light of another dawn, "when as the sun rose he saluted it with a prayer and departed." Whoso beholds not here an indication of seer-life, has simply not brought with him the power, that is, the requisite knowledge to see. In this one fact, connected as it is with so

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much beside of corroborative evidence, whole volumes are revealed to all competent to the study of such manifestations. And then that Dæmon, who *always forwarned him of impending evil either to himself or friends*, what student of the phenomena of ecstatic exaltation does not here recognise the guiding influence of the interior Ego—the unconscious self-intuition of the uncompleted mystic, the inter-communion between the temporal and fleshly-tabernacled mind and the eternal "dweller in the temple?" Is there not, also, even in his careless endurance of heat and cold, of hunger, thirst, and fatigue, an indication of some approach to that insensibility of the physical system, which has produced in those still more advanced in the ecstatic condition their forty days' fasts and their long journeys over desolate regions on angels' meats? Truly, it is no wonder, that the sculptor's son could emerge from his father's shop to be the tutor of Plato and the guide of Xenophon, that he who had no master should become the devoutly worshipped leader of those great and gifted men who have proved themselves the world's masters. How could sophism do aught but wither in the presence of his spirit, even when this base system prevailed to destroy the life of his body? He was the truth, and lies perished before those veracious utterances in which his every thought was clothed. The prison at Athens was a Golgotha, where the martyrdom of futurity's prophet sealed the doom of antiquity's effete bequest of outworn forms. Well do those who write a history of the Grecian schools consider his life and teachings as the beginning of an epoch. Such a man at such a time marked the commencement of an era, which was only intellectual and not religious, because the sent one came not to a people having the theological, but the philosophic mission upon them. He was the prophet of thought, because the race of which he came, and the time at which he flourished did not permit him to be anything else. But we doubt not that he who was so faithful to the lesser message would have been equally so to the greater, had Athens been Jerusalem, and Greece Palestine.

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Socrates derived from nature a powerful and peculiarly constituted cerebral organization. ***His head was large and finely developed, both in the moral and intellectual regions.*** The latter is pre-eminently indicative of abstract thought, the reflective faculties being far above the average and altogether preponderating over the perceptives. His face, anything but what might be called Grecian or classical, departs from the line of facial beauty and proportion, not like the Roman, by *convexity*, but rather like that of a Mongol, by *concavity* of outline. Contemplated ethnologically, the impression which he gives is that of a half-caste, who has derived his highly Caucasianized upper head from one parent, and his common place vulgar physiognomy and basilar region from another. With this was united a very mixed temperament, in which, however, the nervo-lymphatic decidedly preponderated. Such a being, although he might be profoundly receptive and deeply thoughtful from early youth, would scarcely attain to radiating energy till the middle of life. While from the imperfection of his development, in fact from the *incompleteness* of his organization, he would ever remain disinclined to the sustained mental effort required for that formal and systematic embodiment of his conclusions which is implied in the production of a professed philosophic treatise or dissertation on a special subject. Discursive and desultory, yet intuitive and original, ironical, eloquent, sarcastic, and profound, as the case required, his almost inspired conversation was, in his higher moments, the spontaneous outpourings of a richly-gifted, self-cultured, and many-sided mind, whose fine native endowments had been exalted by ecstacy to an almost preternatural beauty, grandeur, and power of manifestation. On such occasions, and they seem to have become frequent, and almost habitual, he spoke with that peculiar force which attaches to and characterizes the crisiac, when his communications come directly from the interior and subjective sphere. Then it was that he shone with that self-derived light which ever exerts so magical an influence over duly susceptible minds, and thus converts the otherwise careless hearer or thoughtless pupil

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into the life-long and devoted disciple. Nevertheless, creative rather than constructive, he needed more prominently developed and more scholastically trained, though perhaps less profoundly meditative, minds among his followers, to act as his interpreters to the many, whether of his cotemporaries or of posterity. An earnest and gigantic, yet after all, imperfectly constituted intellect, he suggestively furnished the germs of thought to others, to whom of necessity he left their farther development and subsequent diffusion. Without befitting and competent pupils as needful and appropriate media, his sublime tuitions, embodying as they do so much of philosophic truth and moral wisdom, would have been utterly lost. But for the scholarly authors of the Phædon and Anabasis, those sublime and eloquent utterances, which affected Alcibiades even to tears, and "made his heart leap up like those of persons who celebrate Corybantic mysteries," even these glorious revelations would have died away like the matin song of the laverock, or the evening anthem of the nightingale, leaving but a sweet remembrance, ever growing fainter and yet fainter among his listeners, and at last dying out in a vague tradition amidst the widening void of space and the ever-deepening gulf of time.

The nearest approach which we have had in modern times to a mind so constituted was in the case of Coleridge, where we find an anterior and coronal development almost equally expanded and exalted, together with a somewhat similar temperament, and a style of physiognomy which, although certainly less inharmonious, was nevertheless very imperfectly developed. And where, despite a much more systematic culture in early life, and a much greater *organizing* faculty, we may yet detect the same tendency to avoid the labour and minutiæ of composition, and to substitute for it an easy and unstudied yet eloquent and almost inspired oral intercommunication with a few favoured friends, who in this case also seem to have listened rather as disciples, waiting for the oracular and authoritative responses of a master, than as independent critics prepared to question the statements or analyze

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the opinions of their interlocutor. In so far there was a marked and easily observable, nay we might say a *generic* resemblance between the two "old men eloquent," although by a profound analysis of their respective individualities it would of course be comparatively easy to find many points even of radical diversity. The manner in which *Kublai Khan* was written (from the imperfectly remembered fragment of a dream), together with the character of many of his other productions, such as *The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*, are however amply sufficient to shew the essentially ecstatic nature of Coleridge's higher intellectual manifestations. The exhaustless flow of his conversational power in early manhood, and the seer-like depth of his wisdom in age, his "talk" ever radiant and glorious with at least the reflected light of intuition, welling up from the mystic recesses of his marvellously-gifted being, a mighty compound of the sage and poet, these and many other indications of a grand interior life, ever bursting through the coarse envelopment of external thought and attainment, are amply sufficient to shew that in the spokesman of Highgate we had the elements of a master-mind that probably wanted but the evocative influences of a nobler and more spiritualized, of a more deeply enthusiastic and profoundly emotional age, to have become fully developed into seerdom, with all its grand prerogatives of prophetic annunciation and authoritative theosophic tuition.

To return, however, to the subject of our present prelection: we see in Socrates the tendencies and endowments that under other circumstances might have readily ripened into the Indian Gymnosophist or Sanyasi, the Persian Sooffee, or the mediæval mystic. But born in the practical and energizing sphere of a Greek republic, trained from youth to a daily calling for his livelihood, and having as a man to discharge the varied duties of soldier in war, and citizen in peace, he became more practical, perhaps, even as a teacher, more availably useful, than under other and less positively evocative influences would have been probable or even possible. Still despite all these modifying circumstances the ecstatic

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tendency is unmistakably evident, and the sage of Athens may be studied with advantage as a fine example of that exalting influence which a development of the interior and subjective sphere of being exercises over the exterior and objective life, when, as in the case before us, good sense, sound judgment, high principle, and habitual self-command, combine to restrain the inspiration of lucidity from degenerating into visional fanaticism or insane enthusiasm.

The *Daimon* of Socrates, on which so much learned discussion has been expended, was, as we have already hinted, simply the form which his interior illumination assumed, being doubtless so conditioned, partly by the stage of ecstatic development to which he had attained, and partly by the profounder faith of his age and country as to the usual character and manner of preternatural communications. In another time and under another creed, that is, under other circumstances and with different impressions, this internal monitor might have assumed the traditional form of a Gabriel, a Creeshna or a Budha, and in that case might perhaps have imposed a mission somewhat less philosophic and sedate than that which actually fell to the lot of "the wisest man in Hellas." This wisdom, welled up from the stilly depths of his earnestly meditative soul, where by prolonged and frequent contemplation he communed with his higher self, till at length the interior Ego assumed this daimon phase of manifestation, wherewith he seems ever afterwards to have held high and holy intercourse.

Verily, as we have said, but a little lower than the plane of a true and God-commissioned prophet, stood he of whom we have been writing. And we wonder not that after two-and-twenty centuries he should still be regarded as the greatest and wisest of those mighty ancients to whom we are indebted for all the models of our purer literature, and all the examples of our higher art, and without whose philosophy we had still been in very truth barbarians in intellect, even though Christians in morals.

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No. 3.—Josephus.

Races have their especial mission, and nations their peculiar vocation, like individuals; nor are the gifts and graces requisite for the effective discharge of their respective duties withheld from the one more than the other. Egyptian wisdom, Babylonian learning, Grecian genius, and Roman policy, were all necessary elements in the great scheme of human progress, and without any one of which the world of to-day, and we may add of the far to-morrow, would have lacked somewhat of its greatness and much of its glory. To deny the Jew a distinguished place in the great family of man; to speak slightingly of his influence, or disparagingly of his achievements, is simply to display our ignorance, or demonstrate our prejudices. A servant on the Nile, a captive on the Euphrates, an exile on the Tiber, and an alien throughout Europe, he has been swept resistlessly on the tidal flow of imperial power, as it surged from east to west, bearing on its troubled waters, or submerging in its fearful depths, the wrecks of mightier nationalities than his own. Beholding the decline of ancient, and the rise of modern civilization, he has trampled on the ruins of cities, where his forefathers dwelt as slaves, and seen the advance of peoples to imperial power, whose ancestors were painted savages, when Solomon's wisdom was the admiration of the world, and Jerusalem sat as a queen amidst the nations. Memphis is a sand-drift, and Nineveh a sheep-walk, while Paris has become the centre of European refinement, and London the world's exchange; Osiris is defunct, Baal is subdued, and Jupiter is dethroned, while the cross and the crescent reign supreme where these once mighty deities were of old so fondly worshipped; yet the unchanging son of faithful Abraham still remains the silent, the solemn, and we might say the sublime witness of this earthquake-march of time, in his devastating yet recreative course.

Ignorant of art, which his monotheistic religion taught him

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to despise, and but imperfectly versed in science which his simple habits rendered almost needless, the Hebrew was nevertheless master of an idea, which dominated alike the lore of Egypt and the culture of Greece. The pure and exalted faith of the shepherd patriarch of Ur was a living power, before which the might of heathen tradition gradually waxed faint. The Jew has a mission: it is to maintain the unity of the Deity against all the polytheisms in the world, and he has accomplished this arduous task with a persistency and endurance beyond all praise. A victor through faith, he stands a moral conqueror on the ruins of empires, whose passing shadow covered his fathers like an eclipse. A spiritual warrior, the field of his conflict covers defunct nationalities, that once regarded Palestine as the smallest of their dependencies, and her people but as the meanest of their tributaries. Still an exile, he yet asserts the royal prerogative of his indefeasable, theological supremacy, and sees the kingdoms amidst whose subjects he dwells but by sufferance, the willing believers in his prophets, and the zealous followers of his Messiah. Thus demonstrating that spiritual force wants not social status or political power, to insure for its proclamation of God-sent truth a universal acceptancy. The "eternal veracities," being independent of circumstances, and superior to casualties, and sufficing with the meanest instrumentalities for the grandest and most enduring results.

The death even of an individual is a solemn and awe-inspiring spectacle; but the extinction of a nation is at once terrible and yet sublime. In the former, we behold the end of a career; but in the latter, we may be said to witness the termination of an epoch. And such a nation as that of Israel, with its antecedents and its expectations, its history and its prophesies. No wonder that its devoted and enthusiastic children—familiar with the lofty utterances of their sacred oracles, now lowering with the tempest-clouds of anger, and threatening in the fearful thunder tones of impending wrath; and then radiant with the light, and beaming with the promises of miraculous deliverance—no wonder, we say, that

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such a people should have arisen from the wreck of hope into the loftier sphere of faith, and while involved in the common ruin of their unhappy country, have poured forth their lamentations over the past, and their predictions for the future, in a strain of sustained eloquence, that whether for grandeur of imagery, sublimity of conception, earnestness of manner, or greatness of intent, finds no parallel among the orators or poets of either ancient or modern times. The Shemetic race seem to have been endowed with an especial aptitude for the prophetic office. They have inherited the theological mission. To them Europe is indebted for Christianity, and Western Asia for the faith of Islam. A devotional proclivity is the most powerful tendency of their being. Worship affords the supremest happiness of which their existence is susceptible. The solemn awe of wrapt contemplation, dwelling with ecstatic intensity on the unspeakable perfections of the divine nature, is an attitude of mind, a condition of thought and feeling, to which the high-caste Asian is prone, as from elemental constitution. He is born a devotee, and finds in the fervour of religious aspiration the only occupation thoroughly congenial to his devout and yet exalted spirit. Meditation, emotion, affection, and passion, are all laid as sacrificial offerings on the flaming altar, from whence the sweet savour of this costly oblation ascends in fiery volumes to the Highest. Whether we contemplate an Elijah purifying his lower nature of its terrestrial dross, till earth seems no longer a befitting residence for her supernal son, who accordingly mounts fire-winged to his celestial home; or behold a royal David, now the slave of unbridled impulse, and then a God-inspired bard, endowed with every attribute of the most exalted genius, we in either case see a son of Israel, in whose fervent soul the light of the Shechinah never dies, and on whose lips the accents of devotion never lapse into silence.

Now of this specially characterized, and we might almost say, sacred race, and of its sacerdotal tribe, came Flavius Josephus, the distinguished subject of our present remarks. Living after the commencement of the Christian era, it was

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his sad destiny to behold, and his melancholy privilege to survive the final overthrow of his people, crushed beneath the resistless weight of Roman power. Living thus in a season of great and heart-rending calamity, his position, and the influences resulting from it, were very similar to those of the older prophets, cotemporary with the captivity. He, too, had seen the ploughshare pass over the ruins of the holy city, and, as captive and exile, had wept over the destruction of the temple, the cessation of sacrifice, and the abomination of desolation even in the most holy places.

Of all life-writing, autobiography should be the most interesting and instructive; when a veracious self-revelation, it is so. The Ego has a centrality of position, for his outlook to which none else can by possibility attain. Others may see him best from without; but he alone beholds himself from within. Of his social relationships, they may be the most accurate judges; but of his spiritual affinities he alone can be thoroughly cognisant. A true autobiography should furnish us with the profounder sources of thought and more secret springs of action in a career, which, contemplated from without, would present only a series of effects. Every man knows much of himself whereof others are necessarily ignorant. Even of his external life, he has been the only ever present eye-witness, while of that internal sphere, where passion, affection, emotion, and thought, play their several parts, he alone can afford an adequate, and therefore truthful revelation.

Fortunately for our present purpose, Josephus has left us an autobiography especially rich in materials illustrative of the character and tendency of his interior existence. The whole narrative is a fearless exposition of his peculiar self-consciousness. Happily he lived in an age and came of a people more favourable than our own to such faithfulness of delineation. Hence he does not palter with the truth "for fear of the folk." He is not ashamed of the whole matter. Had he a dream subsequently fulfilled, a presentiment afterwards verified, a vision which the course of events ultimately

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demonstrated to have been prophetic, he narrates it with simplicity and directness, as one conscious of standing on the everlasting foundation of fact. He is not meanly afraid of the wonderful, and therefore introduces it without exculpatory apologies or prefatory remarks. He and his contemporaries had not attained to that stage of advanced intelligence which regards a living prophet as a doubtful character. To him miracles were divine phenomena, whose occasional recurrence involved no grave improbability. He did not think that the mystic veil which divides this temple of earth, with its million-fold worshippers, from the holy of holies in heaven, was finally closed, never to be withdrawn. To him God was a Person, not a mechanism; a Being, not a principle; an omnipotent Spirit, not an impotent abstraction. He believed in the Scriptures, not simply as a record of the past, but as an earnest of the future, and saw no reason why the experience of the older seers should not be renewed in his own, and repeated in succeeding generations.

It is a somewhat notable fact, that, as prophets, few men see the ground on which they stand: this, morally as well as physically, is covered by their own feet. Thus it is no uncommon thing for a seer to foretell the impending fate both of nations and individuals, while yet utterly ignorant of his own to-morrow. Casting supernal light on the future of others, his own destiny remains involved in impenetrable darkness. As a rule, vaticinatory gifts have but imperfectly conduced to the temporal welfare of their possessor. Prophecy, indeed, seldom proves a marketable commodity; its sale is usually the sign, and, in some instances, perhaps the cause, of its worthlessness. It is a loadstar in the sky, not a lamp for the earth; a heavenly beacon for the guidance of bewildered souls across the stormy seas of time, to their celestial haven, not a horn-lantern wherewith to grope for an evening through the common footpaths around our terrestrial dwelling. The seer is usually poor, and not seldom unfortunate. Misery is perhaps to the most a needful element. They are conditioned by adversity as ships by ballast, and would utterly

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lose their equilibrium without the weight of suffering to keep them steady.

Now, to most of these specialities the career of Josephus furnishes a remarkable and fortunate exception. His dreams and visions were usually respecting his private affairs, or those with which he was more immediately connected. They were the aids, guides, and solaces of his earthly pilgrimage. They directed him in difficulties, and sustained him under affiiction. Gifted, in no ordinary measure, with native talent and energy, of an honourable family, and enjoying, moreover, the advantages of a first-class education, he might by these alone have achieved a distinguished position amidst the tumults and civil wars of his native country; but it was to his vaticinatory powers, both vigilant and somnolent, and to his intuitive and almost supersensuous insight, that he was again and again indebted for escape from the most imminent danger, and for victorious emergence from apparently the most hopeless complication of irretrievable difficulties. Investigated scientifically, he possessed every claim to the epithet of seer; yet, perhaps, contemplated morally, he could not well be termed a prophet. Subtle, refined, and penetrating, his unrivalled readiness and acumen but too often degenerated into Machiavellian craft in the management of public affairs. Prompt and self-possessed in danger, his courage, that never failed, was aided by an astuteness never deficient. Thus, equal to all demands and competent to every crisis, he seems to have been endowed with all the more important qualities of chieftianship, and, perhaps, only wanted a more favourable time, a more opportune combination of circumstances, to have proved the deliverer of his country and the saviour of his race. Even of his faults, many were doubtless due to the fact that, as a military leader, his forces were too small for a display of the grander elements of strategic genius, and permitted only of those irregular movements and desultory attacks which are peculiar to guerilla warfare; while, as a statesman, his possession of power was too short, and the area which he ruled too contracted, for aught but the con-

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trivance of temporising expediencies to meet pressing emergencies, and the manifestation of vulpine cunning in dexterously outwitting less acute and penetrating adversaries.

The following are the principal facts in the life of Josephus which have a reference to our present purpose. He was a Hebrew of good descent, being not only of the sacerdotal race, but his ancestors having, in more than one generation, filled the exalted office of high priest, a dignity which, in their day, implied not only ecclesiastical rank, but carried with it also something of regal power. In addition to languages and the other accomplishments of a gentlemanly education, it would appear that he was also reared in a most careful study of the law and the prophets, in which he seems to have made such creditable proficiency, that at sixteen he was often consulted by his seniors on difficult cases, and excelled every rival in the legal acumen and logical precision of his answers. About this time, however, his mind appears to have been much exercised by the religious disputations then prevalent among his countrymen, and he accordingly determined to investigate the tenets and observe the practices of their various sectarian divisions for himself. In the pursuit of this object he expended nearly three years, living principally, it would seem, among the Essenes, a distinguished body of ascetics, devoted more especially to a mortification of the body and an exaltation of the spirit, by solitude, fasting, prayer, and habitual meditation on the attributes and perfections of the Deity. Prone, perhaps, from hereditary predisposition, to constitutional ecstacy, the impressions which he received and the discipline to which he was subjected among these enthusiastic devotees must have powerfully tended to develope into manifestation whatever latent elements of lucidity existed in their susceptible and talented neophyte. However this may have been, the moral and intellectual effects of this training never wholly disappeared, its influence being perceptible in the tone of thought and feeling prevalent at every subsequent period of his life. To such an extent, indeed, is the Essenic spirit observable in his writings, that

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some annotators have conjectured he must have been under the tutelage of a disciple of John the Baptist. No such speciality, however, need be predicated of his tuition, as John himself was but an eminent example of the Essenic life of devotion and self-denial; and the profoundly respectful terms in which he is spoken of by Josephus, and the resemblance which we find in the writings of the one to the teachings of the other is to be accounted for by the fact of their belonging to the same great school. That holy academy which, in the predominance of hypocrisy and decline of faith, sought refuge from the profanity of men in the purity of the desert, and there, despite the profligate degeneracy of an untoward generation, endeavoured to maintain somewhat of the fiery zeal and fervent piety of the elder prophets.

On his return to Jerusalem at nineteen, he joined the Pharisees, as the most strict and devout of the religious bodies then in the Jewish capital. Still animated by the spirit, and adhering so far to the practices of the Essenes as to ensure a moral life, he appears to have been gradually initiated into the management of public affairs, and, at a comparatively early period, to have taken a prominent part in the national councils. Here his superior native abilities, combined with many other advantages, soon insured for him a commanding position; and as, from a combination of unfortunate circumstances, his countrymen were being irresistibly precipitated into their last fatal revolt against Roman power, he was compelled to take a leading part in their unhappy rebellion, notwithstanding his having been prophetically forewarned of the failure of their attempt, and the ultimate triumph of their oppressors. Thus, when shut up in the cave at Jotapata, "he called to mind the dreams which he had dreamed in the night-time, whereby God had signified to him beforehand both the future calamities of the Jews, and the events that concerned the Roman Emperors." He afterwards observes, speaking of himself in the third person, "Now Josephus was able to give shrewd conjectures about the interpretation of such dreams as have been ambiguously

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delivered by God." When in the cave at Jotapata, it also appears that he fell into a lucid crisis, his words being, "and just then he was in an ecstacy," as if this exalted condition of thought and feeling, under which he was favoured with vaticinatory revelations, were by no means uncommon with him. While thus entranced, he commenced a fervent prayer, during which the mode whereby his life might be saved appears to have been communicated to him. Shut up with forty of the bravest of the Jews, who determined to die rather than surrender, he proposed that they should cast lots whereby the order of their death should be decided as by divine appointment. In this way thirty-eight of these resolute patriots perished by mutual slaughter; and when only Josephus and another were left, the former persuaded the latter to surrender with him to the Romans. It would seem either that he had a clear prevision how the lots would fall, or his clairvoyance enabled him to select the one which conduced to his safety. It is certain that from the commencement of the siege he knew he should not die, for he informs us, "I did foretell to the people of Jotapata that they should be taken on the forty-seventh day, and that I should be caught alive by the Romans." Neither was his lucidity confined wholly to Jewish affairs; for after his captivity, when Vespasian was about to send him to Nero, he remonstrated with him on the needlessness of such a procedure, informing him of the short period which the tyrant had to reign, and of his (Vespasian's) early exaltation to the purple, an annunciation, the fulfilment of which seems to have secured him the protection and patronage of the imperial family to the end of his life. It would also seem that he must have been to some extent endowed with that power of resistance to physical injury which we occasionally find as an accompaniment of the higher forms of ecstacy. For when his angry followers surrounded, with the intention of killing him, in the cave at Jotapata, he tells us, "their swords dropped out of their hands, and not a few of them there were who, when they aimed to smite him with their swords, they were not thoroughly either able or willing to do it."

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Such, then, are some of the principal facts illustrative of the ecstatic condition of the Jewish historian. Now, what is the explanation which we are prepared to give of these marvels? What is the solution which mesmerism can afford of these seeming wonders? Josephus was a Jew—one of a race whose whole history indicates a strong proclivity to seerdom. He was, moreover, of the sacerdotal tribe, and hence, possibly, inherited a special tendency to exalted theosophic meditation. While individually, if we may judge from his portraits, he was of superior organization and refined temperament, the features being high and regular, and both the head and face of the purest Caucasian type. Highly educated as a Jew, the tendency of his culture would be to direct his attention to the sacred writings, and evoke in him a peculiar reverence for the prophetic office and character; while his ascetic discipline under the Essenes could not fail to develope whatever seeds of vaticination might be latent in his nature. By the events of his subsequent life as the military leader of a hopeless rebellion, exalted by success, depressed by defeat, continually exposed to mortal peril, both from war and assassination, a general to-day and a captive to-morrow, every faculty must have been evoked, and every susceptibility aroused to the uttermost. Even an ordinary man would, under such exciting circumstances, have been favoured with occasional and subsequently verified presentiments; and it is no wonder, therefore, that, in a character constituted like that of Josephus, with such hereditary predispositions and such personal antecedents, the presentient tendency should eventually have ripened into previsional ecstasy. It was the career of a prophet operating on an intellect too subtle and tortuous, and perhaps too artificially cultured for a free transmission of supernal effluence. Or, if disposed to be more lenient to the man, then must we be proportionately severe on his age, and say that here were the constitutional elements and individual experiences, that, in the olden times of unwavering faith and heroic devotion, might have ripened into perfect seerdom, with its exalted mission and grave responsibili-

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ties; but which in the decay of national spirit, and decline of ancestral zeal, simply eventuated in a few remarkably fulfilled dreams and predictions. The whole tenor of the life of Josephus, although known to us through the favourable medium of a self-revelation, demonstrates that he stood morally beneath the plane of olden prophetic vision. The childlike simplicity, the trusting faith, the fervent devotion, and the utter self-oblivion of better and purer times is nowhere to be found. For which, indeed, a miserable combination of Jewish cunning with Greek astuteness, constitute but too obviously the wretched succedaneum. The age of Hebrew prophecy was passed. The spiritual wholeness and religious integrity of the people had departed. The life of their once-exalted faith had ceased, the formalities of Phariseeism had eaten its bloom like a canker; the infidelity of Sadduceeism was feeding like a worm on its putrid corpse. Josephus was born too late for the high and holy office of sacred prophecy, and so he fulfilled the inferior demands of profane vaticination. The heavenly voice of seerdom uttering its divine annunciations, or pleading in tones of celestial eloquence with an erring people, had sunk into silence for centuries, with all who, like himself, acknowledged the rightful supremacy of the Sanhedrim, and of its reappearance, under a new dispensation, in renovated strength, amidst the mountains of Galilee; and, in more than pristine splendour, on the lonely isle of Patmos, he seems to have received but the faintest echo of intimation.

No. 4. Apollonius Tyanaeus.

The great and good are a sacred harvest yielded by the ages to the Divine Husbandman. The arch-heresy is denial and condemnation of another's faith. Whoso proclaims the God of his brother a devil, the same is a blasphemer. All heavenward desires are holy aspirations. Prayer and praise need no specific forms for their acceptance. There is a charity

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without which zeal, the most ardent, is but a blind fanaticism; and devotion, the most fervent, but a gross superstition. Why should branches of the same tree envy each other the breath and the light of heaven. Stars may differ from each other in brightness, and yet be loving brothers in glory. Unity may be predicated of the Deity; but diversity is the characteristic of his creation. Every zone has its flowers, and every clime its products. Of all follies the bloody necromancy of a coercive inquisition is the most insane. Bind men's souls in chains of adamant, girdle them ever so closely with stringent forms of thought and action, and yet the simple principle of *growth* shall in due time burst these restrictive bonds, as the lightning rives the oak, or the earthquake rends the temple.

We have been led into these remarks by the long injustice which has been done the subject of our present observations. Of all the great masterspirits produced under classic culture, none loom out upon us with more of mystic grandeur than the mighty Tyanaean. In their respective departments many sages and philosophers were doubtless his equals, and some, perhaps, his superiors; but in variety and extent of attainment, in exaltation of sentiment, in purity of life, and in thaumaturgic potentiality united, no one, save Pythagoras, even remotely approaches to him. In no other do we find so beautiful a union of the saint and the sage in one person. In none else are the two grand attributes of humanity, moral excellence, and intellectual power so harmoniously blended. A devoted student and an extensive traveller, combining the wisdom of the closet with a practical knowledge of mankind, Apollonius was both a profound scholar and an accomplished gentleman. Living at a period when Roman dominancy had broken down the independent and opposing nationalities of a former period, and yet when the olden currents of thought and knowledge flowed on unbroken, he was enabled to visit every shrine and school of note and study in every library of importance throughout the civilized world. If any one mind can be said to have gathered up into itself the literary and

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scientific, the occult and philosophic lore of the entire past, Apollonius is the being who seems most nearly to have accomplished this superhuman feat. He was the ripened result of classic antiquity's long-continued culture. An exalted specimen of humanity, raised up as by Providence, to show what that mighty phase of civilisation, then about to perish, could accomplish under favourable circumstances and on a peculiarly gifted subject.

The jealousy once entertained towards Apollonius as the rival of Christ, seems now to have ceased. It never could have existed save among those who regard his miracles as the chief evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus. It is an idea, moreover, which does great injustice to the Tyanaean, who, notwithstanding the purity of his life and the number of his thaumaturgic achievements, laid no claim to religious leadership, and made no attempt to refound or reconstitute the faith of mankind. More receptive than radiative — profoundly impressionable yet not vigorously creative — endowed with every faculty for the acquisition of varied learning, yet devoid of that plastic power which shapes the ages to its will, he left no footprints on the everlasting rocks, and built no living temple of ideas as his *monumentum perennius aere*. He was, as we have said, simply the summation of heathenism, the culminating point of idolatry's noblest culture,—a man to whose edification all antiquity had contributed—in whose all-comprehensive grasp of intellect every known system of theosophy and philosophy had found its appropriate place, yet on whom the Logos had never brooded, the dove of promise had never descended. If prophet and hierophant, he most assuredly came to a world that afforded no befitting response to his invocation, and yielded no harvest proportionate to his labours. But, in truth, he came not so commissioned, the far mighter work of recreation having been already performed by Him who was laid a helpless babe in the manger at Bethlehem; and all that remained for the world-renowned Tyanaean was, like some brightly illumined and gorgeously tinted cloud of the west, to o'ercanopy the

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setting sun of polytheism, and shine with the grandly reflected splendour of his departing radiance,—a vision of surpassing yet waning glory,—the wonder and admiration of all who could revere the venerable greatness of a faded royalty, —the majesty of a king, mightily descending like all the time-born to his ancestral resting-place.

Heathenism, indeed, is rather a vague accusation. Applicable to the faith of Socrates the wisest and Plato the sublimest of ancient teachers, it is also used by modern missionaries to designate the grovelling fetishism of the negro, and the degraded hero-worship of the low caste Hindoo. Like Gentilism with the Jews, it is our generic appellation for all creeds fundamentally different from our own. Assuming that, in all ages and at every stage of development, it was wrong, we have been accustomed to regard it as one vast system of error in doctrine and evil in practice. Contemplating it from our own especial platform in time, we have beheld only its aspect in decay, and, while gazing on its ruins, have wondered how the great, and good, and pure of other times could gather round its altars and assemble within its temples. We forget that this, too, like all other majestic decrepitudes, had once its youth of beauty and maturity of vigour; that it once shone radiant with the light of morning, and was gloriously apparelled in meridian splendour, with an admiring and believing world reverentially attendant upon its triumphant march. Like ungrateful heirs, while luxuriating in the almost boundless wealth of our inheritance, we have ridiculed the infirmities, and affected to despise the senile weakness, of our noble and departed ancestor. Classic antiquity was a magnificently designed picture, finished in all its parts with unapproachable excellence, where the faultless figures of Olympian gods were outlined by master hands, and every accessory was thrown in with matchless skill and taste. Let us not be too harsh in our judgment of that constitution of things which produced an Iliad and a Phaedo, a Parthenon and a Jove, and under whose tuition were formed those heroic and masculine generations of whose more choice

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exemplars Plutarch and Cornelius Nepos have left us such admirable and awe-inspiring portraits. The men of antiquity are a sufficient response to every slander uttered upon its institutions and its creed. "By their fruits shall ye know them." Miltiades and Cimon, Cato and Brutus, are not the possible offspring of hopeless and irremediable corruption. These morally robust and exalted natures indicate that the influences which formed them could not be wholly unfavourable and deteriorating. Let the literature and art which have been our unchallenged models for two thousand years plead powerfully with us for a favourable verdict. Such a harvest most assuredly demonstrates that the seed whence it was grown and the conditions under which it was raised were not altogether unsuitable.

The following are the principal facts connected with the career of Apollonius which have a reference to the subject of our present work. And it should be remembered that, however extraordinary some of them may appear, they were generally accredited by his contemporaries and their immediate posterity. He was born of wealthy parents at Tyana,—his father, said to have been also named Apollonius, being of an ancient and honourable family. From childhood he was remarkable for beauty and intelligence, for the gentleness and docility of his manners, and for the aptness and pertinence of his responses. At an early period he was provided with learned and accomplished tutors, to whose instructions and leadership he passively submitted till he was sixteen years of age, when he decided on following the Pythagorean doctrine and mode of life. He studied first at Tarsus and afterwards at Ægas, becoming at the latter place acquainted with all the various schools of philosophy,—at the same time frequenting the temple of Æsculapius, with whose priests he seems to have been an especial favourite, and in connexion with whose fane his first clairvoyant capabilities were manifested. These seem to have been developed soon after his adoption of that peculiar diet and dress by which he conformed to the strictest rules of Oriental ascetism. His deliberate choice of

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such a system was, in all probability, due to the promptings of an exalted nature, urged by its higher instincts to a course of purity and virtue, in direct opposition to the degrading sensuality and indulgence then almost everywhere prevalent. Such systematic self-denial, consisting in an habitual mortification of the lower or animal nature, with all its grosser tendencies and desires, must have proved especially favourable to the manifestation of ecstatic lucidity, more particularly in one who, from aboriginal constitution—that is, by structure and temperament—was, even previously to any such discipline, so refined, so spiritual, and so gifted.

If we are to trust tradition, Æsculapius himself so approved of Apollonius, that patients coming to the temple were directed, by dreams and otherwise, to consult him; and, after doing so, were, if they followed his directions, cured of their ailments. This was especially the case with an Assyrian youth who was thus relieved of dropsy. In other instances he, by clairvoyant intuition, discovered the circumstances which had conduced to the disease or produced the defect under which the patient laboured, and which, from some sinister motive, was kept secret even from the priests. In this way he informed a wealthy Cilician of the manner in which he had lost an eye. It is no wonder that, after such achievements, he should have become extensively famous—not only the multitude, but persons of distinction coming to him in great numbers, while even crowned heads did not disdain to hold epistolary correspondence with the rare and distinguished youth who was so deservedly a favourite both with gods and men. Young, beautiful, and rich, he was addicted to no vice and prone to no indulgence. Neither was he contented to be virtuous alone, but exerted himself successfully for the reclamation of an abandoned brother, and for the reformation of many profligate relatives and friends. Nor, in achieving these commendable results, was he sparing of his patrimony, sharing it liberally with those of his kinsmen who had impoverished themselves by luxury and intemperance.

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After rigidly observing the five years' silence, dictated by the old Pythagorean rules of initiation, he determined on visiting India and conversing with the Brahmins,—passing through Babylon, and acquiring whatever knowledge was obtainable from the magi of that ancient and renowned seat of learning and science. It was while on this journey that he met with Damis, who subsequently became his disciple and biographer,—being apparently one of those worshipful spirits who are peculiarly susceptible to the magnetic influence of such master-minds as the lofty Tyanean, and who seem to be especially appointed and set apart as their faithful followers and historians. From one of his early conversations with this devout recipient of his doctrines, it would seem that Apollonius was a thought-reader, if not, to some extent, also endowed with the gift of tongues. For when the former stated that he might perhaps be of some use to his master as he understood Armenian, Median, and Persian, the latter replied, "My friend, I am well skilled in all these, notwithstanding I never learned any one of them; do not wonder that I profess to understand all the languages of men, for I can tell even those things which they conceive in their very thought." Here we have the powers of a high ecstatic, whose lucidity extends to the interior sphere of other beings, who are thus perfectly diaphanous to him—revealing their experiences and cognitions to his spiritual insight as clearly as their features and costume to his sensuous observation. This condition appears to have been habitual with Apollonius; so that he seems to have seen and read, to their profoundest depths, all the variously constituted and diversely disciplined individuals with whom his extensive travels and lengthened life brought him successively in contact. Such a perusal of the living volumes of humanity, far transcending that of the most experienced confessor, could not fail to add alike to the knowledge and wisdom of such a mind, so peculiarly adapted to receive the good and reject the evil likely to accrue from the exercise of so tremendous a prerogative. If ever fallible man was endowed with the angelic purity that resists all

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contamination, and to whom, consequently familiarity with vice may prove innocuous, here was an instance. From his lofty watch-tower of impregnable virtue Apollonius appears to have regarded the weaknesses and follies of mankind with the feelings and sentiments of a superior being inaccessible to the temptations besetting inferior and more weakly constituted natures. Not that he was devoid of either the antipathies or sympathies of his species, and while beholding wickedness and lies with detestation, he contemplated goodness and truth with fully proportionate admiration and warmth of approval.

Of his farther journey to India many surprising stories are narrated, chiefly on the authority of his devoted companion Damis, who must, in virtue of his Oriental descent, be allowed a certain latitude for Eastern hyperbole and exaggeration. Still after every deduction enough remains to show that Apollonius was a most extraordinary man, not only to those who regarded him reverentially at a distance and through the magnifying light of his world-wide fame, but also to those who lived in habits of daily and familiar intercourse with him, and who, consequently, had every opportunity of observing his errors and detecting his pretences had the smallest element of the sham and charlatan existed in his nature. He who could come forth from such an ordeal, the most worshipful to those who knew him best, must assuredly have had veracity at the basis of his being; nor could his inner or outer life have been other than an earnest endeavour to climb the excelsior path of virtue and integrity.

Like most highly spiritualized natures, Apollonius was prone to analogical modes of reasoning and tuition. In him this was the result of that penetrating insight, whereby he knew not only the apparent but real nature of men, animals, plants, and things, and through which he read at a glance "the open secret" of universal being. This seems to have given him an especial aptitude for that occult branch of ancient lore—the interpretation of dreams—in which he is said to have manifested peculiar skill. Neither was he with-

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out some rather remarkable nocturnal presentiments of this kind in his own individual experience, which it seems he occasionally narrated to his companions, not simply for their amusement, but rather as a means of testing their capacity for the solution of such refined enigmas,—as, after hearing their misinterpretations, he would correct their errors, and reveal to them the true signification of such somnolent communications. Of these Damis left many interesting notices on record, some of which have been preserved for us by Philostratus, whose biography of the illustrious Tyanaean reads in many passages, more like the life of an eastern prophet than a classic philosopher. Nor was he less an adept in augury,—the various incidents of travel furnishing him with hints as to coming events, of which he was not slow to avail himself, rather, it would appear, for the instruction and encouragement of his followers, than for his own requirements. He in all probability, indeed, saw the import independently of the sign, needing indeed no such imperfect foreshadowments of coming events for a due cognition of their outline and general character.

While in India he appears to have carefully studied the Brahminical theosophy, for which his previous acquaintance with the Pythagorean system must have especially prepared him. On his return he still continued his pursuit of knowledge, visiting the various shrines and cities where learned men either of the sacerdotal or philosophic order might be found. At times he became himself a teacher, assembling round him a circle of ingenious youth, like those who, centuries before, had listened to the revelations of Pythagoras and the wisdom of Plato. He also practised the art of healing, and is said to have wrought many surprising cures with a facility quite incredible to all but those acquainted with the Hygienic marvels that follow the labours of a naturally gifted mesmerist wielding his innate power with skill and experience. So great was his fame in this respect, that being sent for to Ephesus, where a pestilence was raging, it is said to have ceased at his presence. Combining clairvoyance with this healing faculty,

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he on one occasion perceived that a young woman, whose funeral procession was passing by, was not dead but only in a trance; he stopped the cavalcade of mourners, restored her to consciousness, and she returned home to her astonished and overjoyed parents. His lucidity gave him at times immediate cognition of events taking place at a distance. Thus, while at Ephesus, he saw the assassination of Domitian, with all the detailed circumstances attending the death of the tyrant. The phenomenon of a double presence is also reported to have been occasionally manifested by him; so that he has been seen in different places at the same time. This apparition of his *eidolon* was in all probability only perceptible by a few favourite disciples or other persons more or less *en rapport* with him, and would indicate both their susceptibility and his intense abstraction.

In all this the experienced mesmerist will find nothing transcending the laws of nature,—the facts, when duly explained, falling within the category of known and admitted phenomena. Apollonius was obviously a man far more than ordinarily endowed with nervous power. All accounts agree that his organization was of the highest type of refined temperament and powerful cerebral structure. His energies were never wasted in profligacy, his ideas never dissipated in folly. His whole life was one long edification. His culture extended to the passional and moral as well as the intellectual portion of his nature. His every act was one of beneficence, and his every thought a portion of that exalted train of meditation by which his entire being was gradually sanctified and spiritualized. That such a person, if prone to lucidity, would possess it in a very high degree, is what might be expected—his extraordinary faculties of insight and vaticination being such as an acquaintance with mesmerism would lead us to anticipate. Nor is it at all surprising that his influence should have been peculiarly soothing and beneficial to the sick. His emanations could not fail to partake of the angelic purity of his character, the delicacy of his structure, and the intensity of his inner life. They were the aura of a being

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who, both in quality and power, far transcended the ordinary range of humanity, and who could not fail, therefore, to produce results impossible to an inferior operator. In addition to these, his inherent endowments, it should be remembered that Apollonius also possessed the traditional lore of the Œsclepiadae, that ancient school of mystic and mesmeric healers, of whom from his early youth he was an initiated and favourite disciple. The mere fact, however, that he united clairvoyant and operator in one person will go far to explain both the rapidity and certainty of his cures. He thus knew both the seat and nature of the disease, and could not fail in the right application of the remedy; while he was at the same time saved the mortification of failure by his intuition of impossibility in hopeless cases. His staying the pestilence was probably due to his knowledge of the laws of health as a physician, rather than his power as a mesmerist; or, as it occurred only once in his life, it may have been one of those fortunate coincidences to which scepticism is so prone to resort as a ready solution of the wonderful. His vision at a distance was simply second sight—a manifestation of spontaneous clairvoyance with which men have been in all ages more or less familiar. His gift of tongues was probably a phenomenon of thought-reading, of which we have many instances among mesmerised lucides, who understand what is said to them in a language of which they are ignorant in their waking state, accomplishing this probably not by cognition of the sign but perception of the meaning. There appears, however, on rare occasions, to be a degree of lucidity so clear, or of interspheration so profound, that the seer or somnambule is enabled to use a language of which, in his normal condition, he is ignorant. His double presence, like that of Pythagoras, was doubtless similar to the dopple gangers of the Germans, and to those wraiths and fetches which constitute so important a feature in the legends of English superstition.

Thus pure in his life and exalted in his aspirations, his existence was spent in the pursuit of truth and the practice

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of virtue, in the communication of knowledge and the performance of charity. It may be truly said of him that he went about doing good, dissipating ignorance and removing suffering, his object being, by precept and example, to raise men above the dominion of their passions, and give their higher and human a predominance over their lower and animal nature. In this great and heroic endeavour he was so far successful, as to be rightly accounted the noblest of the later heathens. A man so grandly exceptional was, of necessity, an object of admiration to his contemporaries, and of reverence to posterity. During his life princes sought his converse, that they might obtain wisdom from his responses; and after his death temples were erected and emperors paid divine honours to his memory. He became a tradition, of which declining heathenism was justly proud, and so, perhaps, looms out upon us through the magnifying medium of that *nimbus* wherewith fame loves to encircle the more eminent of her favourite children. But after every allowance for this which the severest criticism can justly demand, a glorious reality remains,—the fact of a great, good, wise, self-denying, and spiritually-minded man, whose excelsior march to his hundredth year was ever upwards and onwards, in whom the wisdom of the sage and the virtue of the saint were combined with the insight of the seer, at whose touch disease disappeared, and to whose prayerful intercession for the sick health was vouchsafed as a response.

The mean jealousy that would unjustly derogate from his merits, and the misplaced fear that would tremble at his rivalry, need now have no place in our estimate of his character. He left no doctrine which can displace the truths bequeathed to us by the still greater who sealed His testimony on the cross at Calvary. The early Christians, surrounded by a dominant though waning paganism, may be excused for a tender anxiety lest the glory of their rising faith should be temporarily obscured by the dazzling splendour of this heathen luminary; but from our vantage-ground we can contemplate the career of the Tyanaean without pre-

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judice or anxiety, and, in passing a calm and unperverted judgment on Apollonius, we must confess he was one of the best and most gifted of the sons of men. He lacked, indeed, but one element of the highest greatness and most exalted spirituality attainable by our race—he was not the sorrow-crowned. The thorns of care had never penetrated his lofty brow, and agony of the deepest had never pierced his bleeding heart. He was, in personal experience, comparatively a stranger to suffering. His path through life was on the sunny slopes,—the terrible sublimities of the valley of the shadow being unknown to him, apparently, even by report. Hence there were depths in our nature which he had never sounded, requirements of which he had never heard, susceptibilities of which he was ignorant, and possibilities to which, with all his insight and acquirements, he was an utter stranger. Thus it is obvious his lucidity had its limits, and his cognitions their boundaries. He was great, but not the greatest; wise, but not the wisest—one whom we may safely regard, not with fear but respect, and whose powers and achievements we should contemplate, not with jealousy but admiration.

No. 5. MAHOMET,

Or, Mohammed Ibn Abdallah, the Arabian prophet, a noble son of the Koreish, and founder of the faith of Islam, promulgating a creed and code which have been for twelve hundred years the temporal guide and eternal pole-star of one hundred and twenty millions of our race,—this gifted and extraordinary man has been, till lately, regarded as little else than a cunning quack and successful impostor. Simple in his habits, warm in his affections, generous in his impulses, and enthusiastic in his feelings, he united with these great and ennobling moral qualities those rare gifts of a creative intellect that ever stamp their possessor with the highest attributes of genius. Dwelling apart from the undistinguished multitude in an interior sphere of lofty aspiration and beatific vision, he could with facility descend from this towering alti-

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tude to the commonest duties and most kindly relationships of life,—affording that best of homilies on the dignity of labour, its cheerful and voluntary performance by himself, and giving that highest of all sanctions to the obligations of friendship, and the heartfelt affections of the household, by his assiduous discharge of the duties of the former, and his indubitable manifestation of all the sympathies of the latter. As he was constitutionally devout, religion was a primal necessity of his higher nature. Idealistic in the cast of his genius, his entire life was an acted epic. Earnest and truthful, he abhorred lies as death. At once kindly in his disposition and honourable in his sentiments, he could be both just and charitable. Generous and forgiving to his merely personal foes, he was, like most high-wrought natures, stern to a fault in the prosecution of that great enterprise to which he had committed himself with all the zeal of an enthusiast and the commanding energy of a prophet.

Such was Mahomet--a man, under every point of view, one of nature's proudest nobles, who might have been a fanatic, but could never have been a trickster,—a being as incomprehensible to the sceptical historian of the eighteenth as to the superstitious monk of the eighth century. Of such men, happily, the world is never altogether devoid, but it is not in every age that they become commissioned.

And this man, we repeat it, was an ecstatic, a visionary, a seer, a lucid, a clairvoyant—in short, a prophet. The cave at Mecca was his shrine, solitary meditation the energizing process by which the crisis was induced, and the visits of the archangel Gabriel the subjective form under which he communed with his higher self. Epileptic in his earlier years, he appears to have been ever morbidly susceptible to nervous exaltations and depressions. Profoundly imaginative, his thoughts were ever embodied in scenic presentations, and the conclusion of a syllogism became to him the symbolic vision of wrapt ecstasy. Profoundly devotional in his feelings, and spiritually exalted in his meditations, neither the grosser idolatry nor sublime Sabeism of his less enlightened countrymen

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could satisfy the irrepressible yearnings of his soul after a purer faith and higher life than then existed among the Arabian Sheiks and their followers, who had preserved, amidst the profligate licentiousness and decadent glories of many successive empires, all the simplicity and much of the fervour of the Hebrew patriarchy. Disgusted with the formalities of the Jew, and the ill-veiled idolatry of the Greek Christian, this great soul, pitiably dark in all that related to merely human learning, but illumined within by that brightness which is never vouchsafed but to prophet-born messengers of the truth, felt himself at last vocationed to the mighty task of originating and promulgating a new faith. The internal processes of his mind in the evolution of this great idea, his subjective experiences, however mysterious or abnormal they may at first seem, are easily explicable by the practised mesmerist, who cannot fail to recognise in every peculiarity of this extraordinary man the distinctive features of a natural seer of the very highest order. Mahomet, in brief, was an ecstatic of genius, and as such the interpretation of his character and career becomes comparatively easy. He was a phenomenon, rare we grant, but neither unique nor exceptional He was one of a class; and his appearance, so far from violating any law of nature, did but afford a magnificent illustration of that great truth which the world will yet have to receive,—that the vast ideas whose promulgation constitutes an epoch have ever been committed to men, not merely of great ability, of sound judgment, of far-seeing prudence, of consummate tact, and of profound thought, but, above all, of a vivid and creative imagination, rendered in their case subservient to the aspirations of an ardently devotional moral nature, and so acting with an energy to which merely poetic inspiration can never attain. The philosopher may speculate and the bard may idealize, and the system of the former and the epic of the latter may be admired and studied when the tide of thirty centuries shall have swept over the tomb of their author, but it is the prophet alone who can create, who can evolve those forms of

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thought which, penetrating into the innermost depths of being, become enthroned in the conscience and constitute a medium through which the subsequent generations have to contemplate their relationship both to time and eternity. Such a man, we repeat, was Mahomet, the fiery, earnest, energetic and enthusiastic visionary of the desert, whose spiritualized veneration made him the first of Iconoclasts, but whose ardent passions left him the victim of polygamy. And who, in his strength and his weakness, in his exalted adoration, his stern justice, his kindly charity, his burning zeal, and his licentious profligacy, stamped his personal impress so indelibly on his multitudinous converts that to this day every true Mussulman is a son of the Koreish *in petto*, a Mahomet in miniature, who, with the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other, would be but too happy to go forth conquering and to conquer, either returning for solace to the houris of this world, or ascending as a martyred warrior to the blooming bowers and fadeless beauties of his sensually symbolical paradise above.

Lest the reader should think we have been too general in the foregoing remarks, we will subjoin, in a condensed form, the principal facts connected with the life of Mahomet that may serve to illustrate and confirm them. He was an Arab of noble lineage and pure blood; a high caste member of that Semetic family to whom the theological mission has been so especially given. Racially allied to the Hebrew prophets, he manifested all their fervour, and much of their spirituality. More than ordinarily gifted with the exalted moral and intellectual qualities of his great brotherhood, he rose superior to the traditional faith of his age and country, and aspired, as by the native instinct of a grander nature, to the development of some higher form of adoration than that which prevailed around him. Handsome in person, of high nervo-fibrous and slightly sanguineous temperament, his lofty and expanded forehead, projecting at the temples,* affords to the

* "*Extremum frontis latus supra tempora prominens exporrectum*,"

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phrenologist the sure indication of a poetic structure, of a dreamy and idealistic mental constitution. In his earlier years, ere the Koran was revealed to him, "he was occasionally seized," says Dr Gustav Weil, "with a violent trembling, followed by a kind of swoon, or rather convulsion, during which perspiration would stream from his forehead in the coldest weather; he would lie with his eyes closed, foaming at the mouth, and bellowing like a young camel." Now it is a well-known fact that many epileptic persons have spontaneously exhibited symptoms of clairvoyance, and many others have developed lucidity when under mesmeric treatment. The account of his visit to heaven reveals in the clearest manner possible the fact that it was an ecstatic vision, —an interior revelation, and not an external experience—a mental and not a corporeal journey. It began when a water pitcher was upset, and it ended ere the contents were altogether spilled. This lightning rapidity of thought is occasionally manifested even under artificially induced lucidity. There is also an anecdote which seems to indicate that his face was occasionally radiant with even more than the intelligence of genius, and that it shone with the odic luminosity of ecstatic seerdom. It seems that the poet Abu Kaber had written a piece on this glorious phenomenon, which, however, in some moment of depression, had disappeared from the countenance of the prophet as he sat in moody silence with his young wife Ayesha, who thereupon rallied and recalled the agonized and temporarily desponding visionary to himself.

Have we not here, then, some additional light, from the lamp of science, thus thrown on the mental and physical constitution of this extraordinary man? Are we not thus enabled to more clearly apprehend the basis of original character and proclivity, on which in after years was erected the magnificent superstructure of a prophetic mission. A being less earnest and concentrated would have sunk into idiotcy

says Abulfeda, the Arabian historian, who flourished from 1273—1331 A.D., and whose works were published at Oxford, in Arabic and Latin, in 1723.

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under his epileptic attacks, or would have raved into insanity under his subsequent visions. But to this man, as to some other chosen ones, it was given "to mount the whirlwind and ride the storm" of constitutional excitement, and come forth more than conqueror from so fearful an initiation. Long-continued solitary self-communings have been the resource of overwrought natures in all periods of the world's history; and the hermit of the Hadges, in his frequent retirements at Mecca, did but fulfil a desire and obey a tendency experienced in equal or greater strength by thousands similarly affected but not equally endowed. In so far as genuine, the grander passages in the Koran must be considered as the product of ecstatic illumination, being in this respect, like all other authoritative religious works which lie at the foundation of subsequent creeds, a revelation of genius, wrought up to so high a degree of nervous tension and excitement that imagination becomes exalted into lucid vision, and thought assumes the form of heaven-sent inspiration. Its imagery was derived from the ideas prevalent in the time and country, and taught in the early faith of the author, mingled with the impressions derived from his subsequent studies and the ideas evolved in his hours of meditation and wrapt contemplation. European prejudice may yet long refuse to recognise in the Arabian seer aught but an ignorant fanatic or impostor. But the true mundane charity of a dawning universalist philosophy will know how to embrace not only the Arabian and the Hebrew, but also the Indian and the Persian, in the same great and all-embracing category of worthies: and, while according all due reverence to the magnificently endowed and profoundly devotional heroes of Judaism, will not fail, at the same time, to give befitting honour and acceptance to the Menus and Zoroasters of those other faiths, whose geographical expansion and long continued endurance, among the things of time, may suffice to show to all, but the hopelessly blind, that they came not altogether uncommissioned from Him, in whose hands are the issues, not only of life and death to individuals

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of growth and decline to empires, but also of emergence and decay to faiths.

No. 6.—Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans.

In few things more than the sacred does distance lend enchantment to the view. Whether from modesty or ignobility of nature, from exalting reverence or debasing superstition, the masses of any present fail to see in it the true elements of the holy and divine. Is it that the littleness of our nature dwarfs the objects which we more immediately contemplate, so that for a time we seem to reduce everything to the admeasurement of our own puny statures; or is it in the nature of the celestial to cast its shadows close at hand but its lights afar off? Perhaps to the true poet alone is it given to discern clearly the ideal amidst the real, the prophet soul only according hearty and immediate recognition to the Divinity inherently pervading all presences. Truly great is the power required to see into the open secret; weird the enchantment which reveals a fathomless mystery in the commonplace. Of all magic, that which resists the deadening influence of habit must be pronounced the most potent. In truth, the divine is never primarily revealed but to the inspired, of whom others are well content to receive the report at second-hand. This, if we could see it aright, is the true history of those cremations and crucifixions by which so many of whom the earth was not worthy have departed from it, not sorrowfully, but rejoicing as at a mighty deliverance. To stone prophets and then build their sepulchres, to maltreat heroes and then erect their statues, is not in any respect a modern invention; on the contrary, it dates as a venerable custom from the very remotest antiquity. The God-sent travel not on their mystic mission by flowery paths; not chaplets of roses, but crowns of thorns, await the brows of those troubled with the burthen of a celestial message.

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Saintship and seerdom have been claimed by some as the appanage solely of religion: but this is a mistake, for any great and holy cause may have its martyrs and prophets, nay, if it be in very truth sacred, *will* have them. Let us not uncharitably restrict the circle of merit within too narrow confines. Wherever is the spirit of self-sacrifice, there is martyrdom; and whoso hath unshaken loyalty, the same has devotion. Mere creedology is simply sectarian, and not grandly catholic in its sympathies, and, while loudly vaunting the peculiar merit of its own especial heroes, denies that of the believers in another faith, the supporters of another cause. It is time, however, that the world were raised above its olden prejudices in this matter, and made to approximate somewhat nearer to universality of appreciation. Let us remember that every faith has had its prophets, and every condition of life its "excellent of the earth." Birth has no prescriptive right to virtue, nor are the humble necessarily the pure; although, where there are the fewest temptations, we may perhaps rationally expect the greatest innocence. Village maidens are admirable subjects for the painter's easel and the poet's verse: nevertheless it is scarcely from such that we should expect the deliverance of a nation in that dread hour when the councils of the wise and the swords of the brave have alike proved abortive. So however it has sometimes proved, as if to show that the weak things of the earth are indeed sometimes chosen to confound the mighty. And of such no nobler or more remarkable example is found in all time than that furnished by Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans. This simple-minded yet truly exalted peasant, reared to womanhood amidst the misfortunes which befell her beloved France, in consequence of the English invasion, was a natural ecstatic, who, if she had not been evoked into manifestation as a political prophetess and military leader by the peculiar circumstances and especial necessities of her age and country, would in all probability have become a dreamy visionary in some cloistered convent, and of whom we might then have heard, as of a St Therèse or Hildegardis, not

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from the pages of authentic history, but the rather apocryphal chronicles of monkish devotion and legendary sanctity. Joan was from her earliest childhood a seeress. "Since my thirteenth year," said she, in some autobiographical notices furnished to us by Delaverdy, from MSS. in the Royal Library at Paris, "I heard a voice in my father's garden at Domremy. I heard it from the right side near the church, and it was accompanied with *great brightness* (odic light). At first I was afraid of it; but I soon became aware that it was the voice of an angel, who has ever since watched well over me, and taught me to conduct myself with propriety and to attend church. Five years afterwards, while I was tending my father's flocks, this voice said to me, 'God has great compassion for the French nation, and that I ought to get ready and go to its rescue.' When I began to weep at this, the voice said to me, 'Go to Vaucouleurs, and you will find a captain there, who will conduct you without hindrance to the king.' Since that time I have acted according to the revelations I have received, and the apparitions I have seen; and even on my trial I speak only according to that which is revealed to me." These apparitions, it appears, were those of St Catherine, St Margaret, and the Archangel Michael—the forms which had been most forcibly impressed upon her imagination in childhood

The following appear to be the principal facts in the life of Joan that are of importance in connexion with the subject of the present work. She was the child of Jacques d'Arc, and of Isabeau Romde, his wife, poor villagers of Domremy, on the borders of Lorraine. She was born in 1410 or 1411. At thirteen years of age her visions commenced; at nineteen they culminated in the imposition of her mission. Finding that her claims to inspiration were but a source of grief to her parents, she repaired to the house of her uncle Durand Laxarl, who lived between Domremy and Vaucouleurs, and who was so far influenced by her representations, as to proceed, on her behalf, to Robert de Baudricourt, governor of the latter town. The reception of the honest villager, by

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the stern old warrior, was anything but flattering; and eventually Joan herself proceeded to Vaucouleurs, where, although she failed in producing much effect on the veteran governor, she succeeded in convincing two gentlemen, Jean de Metz and Bertrand de Poulengy, of the reality of her mission. These with an attendant each, and two sub-officials, making in all an escort of six, set forth on their perilous journey to Chinon. Arriving in safety, she was, after much delay, ushered into the stately hall of its royal castle, where she recognised the king, though plainly dressed, and purposely mingled with a crowd of courtiers. Led apart by him, she spoke of secrets known only to himself and God. While being equipped with a suit of knight's armour, she described an old sword marked with five crosses, lying amidst other arms, in the church-vault of St Catherine at Fierbois. It was found, an old neglected weapon, in the very place she had described. Promising to lead a convoy into Orleans, she succeeded, despite, apparently, insurmountable obstacles. Having declared she would raise the seige of this important town, she accomplished it in seven days, although three of them had, by her direction, been devoted to public prayer. Prophesying that she would be wounded near the breast on the morrow, she received an arrow in the part indicated, during an assault on the English works. Returning to the court at Tours, she again read the royal thoughts, together with those of some of the principal commanders by whom the king was then surrounded. Promising to conduct her sovereign to Rheims for his coronation, she achieved this seeming impossibility without even a battle. It would seem, however, that after this her prophetic faculty was greatly diminished, both in the frequency of its manifestations and the clearness of its previsions. She had indeed accomplished her mission, and it was only at the urgent request of the French generals that she consented to forego her avowed intention of retiring to a monastery. Her sad fate, therefore, may be considered as the result of her not obeying the dictates of that internal monitor under whose support and guidance

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she had achieved such almost incredible marvels. But, even were it otherwise, her cruel death at the hands of her enemies, although no doubt affording an opportunity for the utterance of a few smart jests on the part of shallow sceptics, is no argument against the truthfulness of her claims or the genuineness of her inspiration; for such has been the kind of departure usually vouchsafed to the archecstatics of all times.

Now of this vast array of well-established facts, what is the explanation? Simply, we reply, an admission that Joan was a natural clairvoyant, a spontaneous ecstatic. With that as a master-key, the solution of the otherwise difficult problem becomes perfectly easy; while, without it, the most skilful ingenuity does but involve its unfortunate possessor in fresh complications of absurdity at every attempt which he makes to read this deepest yet simplest of riddles. "She had seen a portrait of the king or heard a description of his person, and by a strange coincidence happened in her subsequent conversation with him to light on the very topic which had been the subject of his secret prayer," &c., &c. Such are the foolish and inadequate explanations which learned historians endeavour to foist on their unhappy readers. Alas! for the miserable inefficiency of such wretched endeavours to fathom the ocean depths of a profound mystery with the foolish toys of a shallow, because ignorantly sceptical, philosophy! So Joan, poor, pure, devout, and simple-minded girl, was but a successful trickster, a lucky guesser, or, at best, a morbid enthusiast after all! Such is modern history's summation of the whole matter; its greatest ability eventuating in the presumption of an impossible combination of elements in one character, for the purpose of affording a very insufficient and unsatisfactory hypothesis in reference to phenomena whose manifestations and laws are utterly beyond its ken!

Joan, as we have said, was a natural clairvoyant, her susceptibility to visional presentments being doubtless inherent: but the specialities of her time and the peculiarities of her faith and position, by their form and pressure, gave that dis-

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tinctive character to her endowment under which it is presented to us in history. A quiet and thoughtful, a devout and moral, yet ardently patriotic and enthusiastic girl, she had from childhood dwelt with deep and pardonable earnestness on the political misfortunes of her country, that *belle France*, the love and loyalty of whose gay and sprightly citizens have ever partaken of the character of devotion; and which, in the instance before us, were contentrated into all the intensity and fervour of the purest religion. The English invasion wounded her pride as a citizen, by the humiliation which it inflicted on her country; while it pained her feelings as a woman, by the military atrocities and social evils to which it was continually giving birth. In the quietude of her rustic life, she dwelt with painful interest on each new tale of private suffering and public calamity; till at length her mind, possessed with a powerful desire for the deliverance of her native land from the oppressive yoke of the hated foreigner, fashioned to itself that mystic message which imposed the mission of championship on her own soul. From the innermost depths of her pure and maidenly being, far below the level of all consciousness, welled up that mighty call of duty, in which "the dweller of the temple" spoke to the perishing child of clay, filling her as with the breath of divinity, and bearing her upwards and onwards, above all fear and through every obstacle, to the previsioned achievement of what, to every other, had been impossible. Yes! the virgin inspiration, which, under the voice and form of an angel, had, from her thirteenth to her nineteenth year, watched so well and effectually over her conduct and feelings, now attained to a higher stage of development, and projected her from the retirement of rural life, keeping sheep on the mountain side, into all the excitement of a camp and the publicity of a court.

Brave heart, how nobly didst thou bear thyself amidst those trying and unaccustomed circumstances. The rustic maiden remained self-possessed even in the awe-inspiring presence of royalty, and the timid woman quailed not amidst

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the shock and rush of battle. What Doborah or Judith of holy records shall, at time's judgment-seat, be held thy superior either in heroism or sanctity? Already has the historian learnedly narrated, and the poet ably sung, thy wondrous deeds. Truly, like most of thine exalted order, it was a fiery chariot and not a bed of down that bore thee within the veil. But fear not; though burnt with indignity by thine enemies as an agent of Satan, grateful France shall remember thy achievements and embalm thy memory when centuries shall have rolled away and dynasties been changed like the phantasmagoria of a troubled dream. The daughters of royalty shall model thy statue, and the good citizens of Orleans, with a pomp and ceremonial utterly unexampled in their quiet locality, shall inagurate thy monument; and floating down upon the tide of time, outriding the storms of revolution and the mutations of a progressive civilization, the honoured descendants of that humble household, of which thou wert so distinguished a daughter, shall be present, "the observed of all observers." The age when thy memory could be blasphemed by perverted genius and the stage could basely re-echo the unfounded calumny to an applauding audience has passed. So that even we, whose stern and relentless English forefathers provided for thee the terrible honours of a martyr's death, have received thee into our list of time's most noble heroines.

Contemplated scientifically, Joan of Arc is an instructive example of spontaneous ecstasy, developed in an individual of more than usual mental energy. To the duly enlightened student of mesmerism she presents not only the phenomena of ordinary clairvoyance, which are comparatively common, but also that still higher range of manifestations arising from the mystic and commanding moral magnetism, with which it would seem that only the true master-spirits of seerdom are ever effectually endowed. Constitutionally prone to a development of the interior life, her lucidity eventuated not simply in vision, but also in action. It was ecstasy induced upon, or rather evolved from, a naturally noble and elevated character;

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from a brain capable of great thoughts, and susceptible to the influence of exalted emotions; and so conducing to that resistless potentiality in virtue of which the prophet calls and his disciples come. Resist the truth as we may, there are born kings and queens of men, and of these the dreamily devout child in the garden at Domremy was undoubtedly one. Her age did not need a new creed: its demand was not for articles of faith, and therefore she came not forth as the inspired founder of a religion. That which her time and place required, she provided; namely, the oracular response of hope to a monarch and people overwhelmed by defeat and sinking under the burthen of accumulated national misfortunes. She was the moral antithesis of Cassandra, and, as the prophetic saviour of her nation, cast the golden radiance of ecstatic illumination on the clouds of the future, till their dusky and sombre masses became effulgent as with the reflected light of some celestial glory. Princes and nobles, learned priests and rude soldiers, once in her presence, were involved in that circle of fascination, with which beings of her order seem ever engirdled. To the effective exercise of this mystic sway, neither the rusticity of her manners, nor her utterly unlettered ignorance ("I understand neither A nor B," said she to the king's plenipotentiaries) seem to have presented any barrier. The resistless force of a great, noble, and enthusiastic nature, fully aroused by an all-absorbing and unselfish zeal for the public good, and thoroughly pervaded in all its thoughts and actions by an interior light far transcending that of genius, seems to have overborne all the limitations usually imposed, even on great minds, by diversity of rank and the manifold artificialities of society. Regal in soul, a queen in thought, she triumphantly vindicated her claim to the exercise of a royal prerogative of command.

It has been attempted to be shewn by some of her biographers, that she really exhibited no ability for military leadership, and that she failed to impress those with whom she came personally in contact with an idea of her superiority, or even with the truthfulness of her claims to veritable inspi-

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ration. But the entire tenor of her story demonstrates the very reverse of this. That her enterprizes were often conducted on principles the very reverse of those maintained by the pedantic strategy of her time, is no proof whatever of her being in error. She succeeded where the greatest captains had failed; she retrieved their defeats, repaired their losses, and achieved a series of brilliant victories, by apparently very inadequate means, over the bravest and best disciplined troops in Europe. No plan, even approximately executed according to her design, ever proved abortive. And, although, from the deception and perversity of her subordinates, some of her finest and most daring combinations were but imperfectly accomplished, her presence in the hour of difficulty, induced by their incompetency, at once sufficed to restore the tide of fortune to the cause of Charles. The opinions of men grown grey in the routine of ordinary warfare can never prove an accurate admeasurement of the abilities of genius, whose originality is looked upon by these respectable formalists as an error. Napoleon in Italy was at first deemed a daring ignoramus by the very Austrians whom he defeated with such masterly skill in every engagement. Joan's ability was derived not from knowledge, but intuition. These remarks must be understood as applying to her before the king's coronation at Rheims. After that, she was still the daring heroine, but was no longer the inspired leader. As to her inability to impress those immediately around her, how, we would ask, but for such a faculty, manifested in most extraordinary force, could the peasant-girl of Domremy, friendless and moneyless, have made her way to court; or, when there, have produced such an effect on the mind of Charles and his counsellors as to induce them to entrust her with the relief of Orleans? The rapidity of her promotion without antecedents, is, in truth, not the least marvellous part of her wonderful career. Without birth in an age of caste, a woman in a period of social disorganization and military violence, she yet bounded at a single leap into a position of honour, trust, and authority, that excited the envy of some of the

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first men in France. To argue that such a person was devoid of the commanding moral magnetism of a truly great spirit is, with such facts in our hands, simply to reject truth upon system. In the history of neither seer nor hero do we find anything transcending the matchless facility of conversion exhibited by the whole population, from the monarch to the man-at-arms, under the personal impressions produced by this simple shepherdess. In a moral as well as a military sense, she might without arrogance have used the haughty Roman's sublimely laconic triloquy, *veni*, *vidi*, *vici*.

That such beings are common it would be too much to say; but that they are far less rare than is usually supposed we are fully justified in asserting. Unsuited, however, to ages of routine, these marvellously-endowed beings generally remain in a state of latent passivity; their peculiar powers, in most cases, continuing, from want of duly evocative influences, in a merely germal state. Of old, such were usually devoted to the service of the altar, and, as Pythia at Delphi, Druidic priestesses and Scandinavian alrunes, held a recognized position of trust and honour, in which their peculiar gifts were duly cultivated and then provided with fitting opportunity for manifestation. At a period still more remote, the prophetic faculty of these ecstatic females gave them both authority and renown as sibyls. While, in more recent times, they have in the Roman communion frequently attained to the distinction of canonization, and often shone forth among the most eminent saints. In all periods except the present, by which we mean the era of inductive science, these wondrously-gifted individuals were permitted, and even encouraged, to follow the proclivities of their nature; and, in virtue of this, their free development not only attained to a more vigorous expansion, but often became motor forces of considerable importance in the general working of society. We, however, in the full enlightenment of a utilitarian age, consider them as of value principally for the purpose of supplying recruits to our lunatic asylums. Occasionally escaping this, they become important adjuncts to a

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revivalist camp-meeting; or still more rarely attain to the doubtful pre-eminence of quasi-religious founders, followed only by a few rampant fanatics, while thoroughly despised by the many, and at best pitied as devout but misled maniacs by the benevolent and enlightened few. From this degradation, however, true science is now beginning to rescue them with as yet but an imperfect appreciation, we fear, of their true position in the scale of moral being. A mesmeric clairvoyant is but an indifferent succedaneum for an ancient sibyl, to whom indeed even a veritable Seeress of Prevorst, though portrayed in the affectionate pages of Kerner, seems rather like a scientific curiosity than a legitimate successor. Fear not, however, O ye mysteriously-gifted daughters of this sacred sisterhood! Ages of hard unbelief, of unfeeling scepticism, of ignorant doubt, and of shallow philosophy, are but the necessary reaction after periods in which dogmatic credulity has run riot and reverent devotion has sunk into grovelling superstition. The sunshine and the cloud, the calm and the tempest, are alike of nature's production. "The eclipse of faith" has passed its maximum, and, though still involved in its penumbra, the rapidly retreating and diminishing shadows proclaim that the returning light of cloudless day is at hand. Ecstacy will yet be recognized as a condition of being to which genius is an approximation, and the seer and the seeress will then, like the poet and the artist, have their rightful place assigned them in the great hierarchy of human intelligences. Among such the fair dreamer of Domremy, the heroic Joan of Arc, will hold no undistinguished position. Her high-toned patriotism, her lofty devotion, her unwavering faith, her fearless courage, and her indomitable energy, placed as they are in the foreground of a picture so historically important, cannot fail to secure her the favourable notice of an enlightened posterity to the remotest ages of civilization. She is a heroine, without the notice of whose glorious deeds the annals of France can never be written. As the champion of her country, she is an instance of lucidity, too important to be overlooked,

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too authentic to be doubted. As a divining nun, or a village prophetess, she might and would have been treated with contempt by the pretentious conceit of a philosophy which, while lauding the *Novum Organum*, yet decides every important question by an *a priori* doctrine of probability. But as a seeress, verifying her own predictions by leading armies to victory; as a sibyl, whose magic words converted defeat into triumph; as a pythoness, bounding from the tripos to give confidence to kings and courage to generals; as a prophetess, in short, whose words of mighty import were converted as by a celestial thaumaturgy into unhoped-for facts which have influenced events through all succeeding centuries, the Maid of Orleans must descend to coming time as a magnificent and indubitable example of spontaneous clairvoyance, grandly demonstrating its presence on the great theatre of the world, and affording a verification of its reality by the lasting modifications which it has induced on the destiny of Europe and, through it, of mankind.

As might be supposed, a life so remarkable and romantic has not failed to furnish a text for many literary productions. The antiquary, the historian, the poet, and the novelist, have each and all found appropriate materials wherewith to prosecute their several avocations in connexion with an individual so exceptional and distinguished. Among the more illustrious continental scholars who have devoted their leisure and erudition to an investigation of the documents which throw light on the biography of this extraordinary woman, we may mention Buchon, Petitot, de Laverdy, and Lebrun de Charmettes, together with de Bramante and Sismondi; while in this country an excellent memoir has been published by Lord Mahon, now Earl Stanhope. Introduced by our immortal Shakspeare into one of his historical plays, her real character, like those of Sir John Falstaff and Richard III., has been treated with that dramatic liberty, or rather license, which, in the absence of all detailed historical knowledge on the part of the people, was then perhaps admissible, but which would not now be tolerated for a moment,

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even from a writer of the most commanding genius. Treated with equal injustice by Voltaire, her memory has in our more recent literature been restored to respect, if not reverence. By Southey she was selected as the heroine of a poem, and by Schiller she was chosen as the subject of a drama; while the vivid imagination and fertile pen of Alexandre Dumas have not failed to illustrate the tale of his country's greatest heroine.

It would seem that there is no authentic bust or portrait of Joan in existence, the oldest dating nearly two hundred years after her death. All descriptions agree, however, in representing her as a tall, graceful, and beautiful woman, with flowing golden locks. Obviously one of those fair-haired, blue-eyed daughters of the Gothic stock, who are to be found scattered throughout the north of France, and whose ancestors must have crossed the Rhine in one of the many invasions of Celtic Gaul by its more vigorously-constituted Teutonic neighbours. Phrenologically speaking, we have reason to believe that she presented a sanguineo-nervous temperament, with a moral and intellectual development much above the average. Her statue by the daughter of Louis Philippe, afterwards Mary of Wurtemberg, is well known for its chaste and exquisite beauty—it is the dream of one fair woman by another. At the inauguration of her equestrian statue at Orleans, it would seem that the direct or collateral descendants of all the principal heroes associated with her were present, so that Dunois, d'Aulon, la Hire, &c., reappeared in their representatives. It is well to find her memory thus honoured by her countrymen, who with the true instinct of universal humanity fail not to perceive in her something of the divine. But while such very inadequate and erroneous ideas are entertained respecting her by men of science and historians, we can scarcely expect that the public, who naturally follow these as their leaders, will attain to a due estimate of her truthful and exalted character. We pity the barbarous credulity of mediæval ignorance, but an age is at hand that will look with equal derision on the barbarous scepticism of

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modern knowledge. To write the history of Joan of Arc while ignoring ecstatic illumination, with its prevision, thought-reading, intuition, &c., is like treating of maritime discovery without an allusion to the science of navigation by which it has been accomplished. Contemplated as a lucide, her every thought and achievement is perfectly and easily explicable, and her whole life constitutes but a beautiful episode in the history of interior illumination, while without it she seems an unaccountable and meteoric manifestation, sent to dazzle and blind, not to enlighten. When will learned men have the courage to throw off their unworthy prejudices, and cease to write that for the applause of the present which cannot fail to procure them the contempt of posterity.

No. 7.—Ignatius Loyola.

The Church of Rome although rigidly unbending in doctrine has shown herself in many ways sufficiently pliable in practice. Immutable in her dogmas, she has proved flexible in her arrangements. Unalterable in her creed, she has manifested a wise spirit of adaptation in its advocacy. Thus her monastic orders were regular developments, in strict accordance with the requirements of successive ages, the evolution in logical sequence of her vitally expansive ecclesiastical organization. Whatever her sins and shortcomings, she seems to have always possessed the ten righteous, who might prove her safeguard in the hour of danger, and has thus far warded off the impending judgment, ever about to be inflicted for the crimes of the many by the virtues of the few. She does well, indeed, to revere her saints, for they have often proved her aegis when nought else would have availed. In no other church is there such provision for utilizing the fervour of a repentant and returning sinner. Many of her mightiest champions and greatest heroes were once "miserable offenders." St Augustine, St Francis of Assizi, and St

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Ignatius de Loyola, were all "brands plucked from the burning." Fallen angels, they, in their rebound, once more reached the empyrean, where they have since shone amidst the brightest stars of the moral firmament. It is thus, perhaps, that she has so often falsified the calculations and disappointed the anticipations of those who have been long looking for her downfall. She has always had some spiritual Marcus Curtius, ever ready, with heroic self-devotion, to leap into the gulph prepared for her and her iniquities. And of such we can cite no nobler or more effective example than the founder of the order of Jesus.

The law of supply and demand, however, well understood in political, seems to be but imperfectly appreciated in spiritual economy, yet the latter is as really invariable as the former. Does an ancient and corrupt church want reformation. Then will a Wickliffe, a John Huss, and a Jerome of Prague be called forth in due sequence, till eventually a Martin Luther shall appear, the time and the man now coinciding for the production of a great and long impending event. Do the troubled waters of mutation threaten to prematurely submerge a venerable ecclesiastical structure before it has effectually discharged all the mission of conservation to which it was appointed. Then verily shall an Ignatius Loyola be evoked to found an order of men, who for enthusiastic devotion to the cause of the Papacy, and a spirit of unquestioning obedience, have been unequalled in all the records of church history. How marvellous, too, seems the choice of instruments. What ungifted eye could have detected the hero of Worms in the little chorister who obtained his education upon public charity, and who would have supposed that the gay and courtly young officer was destined to close the floodgates of change and say to the tide of reform, thus far and no further. No doubt Martin was a genuine man, a bold truth-seeker, and a brave truth-speaker. But are we so sure that Ignatius was a false man? had not he too a mission? Was not he also a Godsent some to declare one side of a veracity as his opponent the

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other? Is there not a charity sufficiently enlarged to embrace both in its wide category of worthies? Where there is work to be done, whether of pulling down or building up, there must a befitting man, equal to the occasion, be provided. Are we quite justified in doing such despite to God's appointed agencies? Are not the destroyer and preserver alike his commissioned agents; aud if we hold only by the one, and do uttermost injustice to the memory of the other, are we not thereby demonstrably mere party men, utterly devoid of that all-embracing universality whereby alone Divine justice can either be accomplished or appreciated?

The following is a condensed summary of the principal facts in the life of Loyola which have a direct bearing on the subject of our present inquiries. He was of noble birth, being the eighth son and thirteenth child of Bertram, Lord of Ognez and Loyola, and Mary Saez de Balde and Ricalde, his wife, and was born in 1491. From childhood, he was distinguished by beauty of person, and by natural grace of demeanour, together with an aspiring disposition, which indicated one destined for distinction, if not command. To insure his effectually acquiring every gentlemanly accomplishment, he was sent at an early period as page to the court of Ferdinand and Isabella. He, subsequently, became a soldier; and although indulging somewhat freely in the gallantry then everywhere prevalent in the South of Europe, he was nevertheless distinguished during the whole period of his youth, whether at court or camp, by many peculiar traits indicative of a superior mind. He never used profane language, disliked gambling, and behaved with becoming reverence to the ministers of religion. In short, Inigo, for such was his baptismal name, must have rejoiced the hearts of his aged parents, as a most discreet and promising young gentleman, never likely to bring disgrace or sorrow upon their gray hairs. Among his comrades, he was remarkable as a peace-maker; and from his tact and delicacy, had the management of complicated negociations often intrusted to him by public functionaries. Thus gallantly and prosperously, then, did he pro-

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ceed to his twenty ninth year, with a military rather than a sacerdotal generalship, as apparently the appointed reward of his virtues and abilities. Providence, however, had determined on the latter, and during the defence of the citadel of Pampeluna, against the French, Inigo received a wound in both legs, which for ever disqualified him for the profession of arms. Kindly sent by his polite captors to the paternal castle for restoration, he there underwent many excruciatingly painful surgical operations, with an unshrinking firmness and resolution, which astonished his attendants, who apparently had failed to discern that latent strength of character, which only waited for duly evocative circumstances to astonish the world by its force and persistency. It was here that he manifested that susceptibility to visional illumination, which has procured him a place in our gallery of ecstatics.

When apparently almost at the point of death, when his physicians despaired, and the priest had left his room, St Peter, towards whom he had always cherished an especially devout reverence, appeared at the foot of his couch, and administered that aid which could come from no earthly skill. From this moment, his recovery commenced, so that it seemed as if a new life had been vouchsafed to him by the heavenly assistance of the prince of the apostles. At a subsequent period of his illness, when his mind was in the throes of a spiritual regeneration, when the passions of the man and the ambition of the soldier warred with the excelsior promptings of the saint, the Virgin Mother, with the infant Jesus in her arms, effulgent in celestial majesty, appeared before him, and remained for some time benignantly in his view. As St Peter had renewed his corporeal vigour, so this vision of the Divine Mother seems to have purified his spirit: for, ever afterwards, the earthly emotions which had characterized his former state of consciousness deserted him, and from this period he might be said to have achieved a complete and lasting victory over his inferior nature. It is worthy of remark, that Loyola never spoke of these visions as undoubtedly miraculous, he simply narrated them as facts in his experience, leaving their inter-

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pretation to the judgment of his auditors. (The first was obviously analogous to the sanative revelations obtained in the temples of Æsculapius, and the last was the *form* under which his moral nature announced its ultimate triumph over temptation.)

It was while under the high-wrought mental excitement which accompanied the preceding visions, that the grand idea of an individual mission dawned upon him, and he began to say: "Why may not I, too, be a devoted St Francis, and a holy St Dominic?" Accordingly, as soon as his state of health would permit, he visited the monastery of Montserrat, where he devoted himself afresh to the service of the Virgin by a vow of perpetual chastity. After this, although still but imperfectly recovered from his wounds, he commenced a series of austerities, seldom surpassed in the annals of self-inflicted suffering. Having purchased a pilgrim's staff and drinking bowl, a rope for a girdle, a tunic, a hempen cloak of the coarsest texture, and a pair of shoes of matted Spanish broom, he, after full confession of the sins of his past life, and the bestowal of the entire remainder of the contents of his purse in charity, endued himself in these strange vestments, depending for the future, as a mendicant, wholly on the bounty of others. He determined, however, that this formal devotion of himself to the Christian warfare, should be accompanied by a solemn observance, similar to that of the ancient knights on their initiation. From dewy eve to smiling morn, then did he watch by the altar of the blessed Virgin, now standing, and then kneeling, dedicating himself to the divine service, and seeking more especially to propitiate the favour of "the blessed Mother of God." It is a note-worthy fact, that this was on the eve of the Annunciation 1522, near the time when another deeply moved and fervent spirit, summoned to the Diet of Worms, did there defy, not devils within, but fiends without, clothed in all the pomp of principalities and powers of this world. Strange and mysterious coincidence, furnishing fertile subject-matter for thought, not merely to Catholic and Protestant, but also to him whose in-

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tellectual altitude is sufficient for contemplating all creeds, however contrasted, but as harmonious parts of one divinely arranged scheme of universal progression.

It might have been supposed, that for a gallant and courtly cavalier to array his graceful person in palmer's weeds, and for a haughty noble to beg his daily bread, was punishment sufficient for any previous misconduct. Not so, however, thought Ignatius: for, in addition, he, three times every day, smartly chastised his bare shoulders with the lash; thrice every day he attended prayers at church, and underwent besides seven hours of solitary devotion. Not thus, however, did he attain to peace. On the contrary, he became so distressed as to his spiritual affairs, that he was even tempted to commit suicide; and, in addition to the foregoing austerities, underwent an entire fast: first, of one day, then of two, and ultimately he abstained from food during a whole week. No enlightened student of the laws of lucidity will be astonished to hear, that soon after this, while reciting the office of the Virgin, a light shone around him, amidst the effulgence of which he beheld a triangular figure, symbolizing the mystery of the Trinity. Nor is it matter for surprise, that he should have spoken continuously and perspicuously on this profoundest of theological subjects immediately afterwards. Nay, it is even added, that although, at the time, barely master of the arts of reading and writing, he composed a treatise on the same, in twenty-four pages, which has unfortunately perished, but which his disciples declared to have been inspired.

On another occasion, he had an extraordinary revelation made to him of the deepest secrets of nature; the elements of all science, sacred and profane, being imparted to him in a vision. He seems at length, indeed, to have become an habitual crisiac: for, during the twelve months that he remained at Manresa, a village near Barcelona, he forty times beheld the humanity of our Lord, not in the distinctness of its members, but as an undefined resplendence (odic light). In a similar manner, the blessed Virgin also frequently revealed herself to him. In addition to these celestial visions, he appears to

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have had some of an opposite character; but, happily, he could always distinguish between demoniacal glitter and true heavenly splendour!—(Probably by difference in the colour of the odic light, that from the passional region being diverse in hue from a purely moral or intellectual emanation).

It was immediately after these manifold visions, that he undertook what has usually been considered his most Quixotic enterprise, namely, a missionary pilgrimage to Jerusalem, without money, or any other aid, than that of casual charity on the road. This extraordinary feat, the proud son of the lordly Bertram, and the delicately nurtured page of Isabella, nevertheless successfully accomplished, stoutly denying himself the sinful luxury of even a pair of shoes till he had once fairly turned his back on the holy city. His sufferings by the way, were, as may be supposed, almost unspeakable. Having landed at Gaeta, he arrived in Rome, famished with hunger, and exhausted by fatigue; a pestilence, raging at the time, which prevented even the benevolent from affording the usual amount of succour to pious wayfarers. From Rome, still in the habit of a pilgrim, and with only the resources of a mendicant, ignorant of either Latin or Italian, he found his way to Venice, where he embarked for Palestine. While waiting to procure a passage, which, in accordance with his vow, had to be gratuitous, he usually slept under the portico of St Mark.

One night, a noble senator, who lived near that structure, was awakened as by a voice from heaven, bidding him seek a pious pilgrim who was destitute of shelter. He arose, found Ignatius, invited him to his mansion, entertained him with profound respect, and was much edified by his devout conversation. But the saint declined a long sojourn in such sumptuous quarters, and, for the remainder of his stay, took up his abode with a humble countryman from the Asturias. On his voyage to Joppa, which occupied two months, the Lord often appeared to him, as heretofore, in an indistinct manner. When about to leave the holy places, on his return, he, contrary to regulations, separated himself from the

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body of pilgrims, determining to revisit some of the more sacred spots previous to his departure. Not answering to his name when the muster-roll was called, an officer of the Franciscan convent was sent in search of the wanderer, who meeting him on his descent from the Mount of Olives, began to drag him forward with threats and violence. To all which, the once haughty soldier, meekly submitted with true Christian humility, and was rewarded by that divine apparition, which had so often solaced him in moments of fear and suffering. His farther return was apparently unmarked by anything of a visional character. And, from this time forward, his career, though decidedly indicative of a man possessed by a great idea, shows the gradual commingling of reason with enthusiasm, till eventually the two assumed their due relationship, the latter as a motor, and the former as a directing influence of thought and action.

On his arrival in Spain he commenced a course of study, beginning with the very rudiments in a boy's school at Barcelona, where, it is said, he submitted to the same corporeal chastisement as his juniors. After which he removed in succession to the Universities of Alcala and Salamanca, at both of which, strange to say, this redoubtable champion of orthodoxy was so persecuted on suspicion of Lutheran heresy, that he found it convenient to remove to Paris, where he finished his curriculum. It was while at the latter that he selected those coadjutors who subsequently became the fathers of the society. During his six years' study, he ceased not to exhort and preach, thus winning back many souls to the faith who, without his aid, would have been for ever lost in heretical pravity, or more practical errors of conduct. At length, after several additional years of voluntary poverty and incessant toil, Loyola and his ten companions assembled at Venice in 1537, and when, consequently, he was in his forty-seventh year,—not in haste was this great man to complete his projects. He had learned to wait in faith and patience for the fulfilment of God's promises in the time and manner which divine wisdom might judge best. His pur-

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pose was still a mission to Palestine; but as this, in consequence of war with the Turks, was for the present impracticable, he, with two chosen companions, Lainez and Faber, retired to Vicenza. In a miserable suburb of this place was a deserted building, and unprovided with either door or window. This was their only home. Here these extraordinary men digested the rules and constitution of the society, begging an alms by day, and sleeping on straw by night. Forty days having been spent in penitential exercises, the fathers commenced their apostolic labours in the town, winning many to righteousness. The reader will not be astonished to hear, that, under these circumstances, Loyola's visions were renewed, and that he had visitations and consolations such as had not occurred since he was at Manresa. His grandest experience in this way, however, was yet to come. It took place while on his journey to Rome, whither he was proceeding to make a final offer of himself and companions to the Holy See. On this pilgrimage, his days and nights seem to have passed in recurrent ecstacies. At length, when near the city, he entered a ruined chapel alone, where he seemed to behold the first person in the Trinity, and by his side the Messiah, bearing an immense cross. The Father presented Ignatius to the Son, who uttered the oracular response, "I will be favourable to you at Rome." *Ego vobis Romae propitius ero.* And from this incident, we are informed, the society derived its appellation. Let no suspicion of unveracity rest on the memory of Ignatius for these opportune visions. His renewed austerities, together with his prolonged and especially fervent devotions at Vicenza, are quite sufficient to account for the return of his constitutional tendency to interior illumination there. While the superadded mental excitement of his journey to Rome, where his life-long labours were about to be crowned with success, by a formal inauguration of the society, and its recognition by a Papal bull, was doubtless the predisposing cause of that greatest of his spiritual visitations which we have just described.

It may not, perhaps, prove altogether uninteresting to the

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student of physico-psychology to state, that both at Manresa and Vicenza, Loyola suffered from a disease of the stomach, produced, probably, by a combination of mental excitement with insufficient and indigestible food. While at the latter, he was, in addition, afflicted with a complaint in the eyes, brought on, it is said, by excessive weeping, but indicative, we suspect, of over-cerebration. Everything, indeed, demonstrates that he was, both mentally and physically, in an abnormal state during the period of his highest visional ecstacies, and that his visitations may be studied under this aspect medically, as symptoms of deranged nervous function occurring in a pre-eminently susceptible patient, exposed, during a lengthened period, to a multiplicity of disturbing forces.

It must not be supposed, however, that Ignatius was only subject to visional ecstacy. If we are to trust his Papal biographers, he effected many miraculous cures, uttered several subsequently-fulfilled predictions, appeared occasionally with a radiant face (luminous from the powerful emanation of odic light), and was found at times floating in the air, a foot or more from the ground, engaged, or shall we not rather say absorbed, in his intensest devotions. Of course, sound Protestant writers reject these narratives of the marvellous as monkish fabrications. There is, however, no need for such scepticism, as all the foregoing statements might be strictly true, and yet no law of nature violated, the production of such phenomena simply indicating the presence of superior forces, whereby extraordinary would supersede ordinary results. Whether true or false in the case of Ignatius, it is certain that similar facts have been narrated, on credible testimony, of the saintly crisiacs of all ages, and that as humanitarian experiences, they claim an amount of belief, and a degree of attention not yet accorded to them. Sanative power and prophetic faculty imply no miraculous gifts in their possessor, neither are such endowments alone sufficient to demonstrate the purity of his life, or ensure the authenticity of his teachings. They simply demonstrate the existence of cer-

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tain corporeal and mental conditions, which, from their rarity, are wonderful, but in their essential character, are by no means preternatural. Luminosity and lightness of body are also dependent for their manifestation on a peculiar state of the nervous system, whereof intensity of action is one important feature, under which the radiation of nervovital force is such, that the emanation becomes visible to common observers in daylight, while under ordinary circumstances it is only perceptible by odic sensitives in the dark. Ponderables are subject to gravitation, imponderables to radiation, and it is apparently to a temporary predominance of the latter, that high-wrought crisiacs owe their occasional and partial liberation from the centripetal tendency which characterises all the grosser forms of matter.

When Loyola had reached his fiftieth year, 3d October 1540 was issued the Papal bull which gave authoritative ecclesiastical existence to the new society as "The Company of Jesus." Thus were the labours, fastings, prayers, austerities, and visions of this extraordinary man finally crowned with success, after a period of delay and probation, that would have exhausted the energies and chiled the zeal of any less enthusiastic, devoted, and concentrated being. Throughout these twenty long years of trial and suffering his exalted faith seems never to have deserted him. He had thoroughly learned the great lesson of entire submission to the leadings of Providence, and was thus enabled to wait in calm and lowly, yet sublime and persistent faith for the ripening of those plans, and the fulfilment of those anticipations which had constituted the purpose and the solace of his existence. Installed by the unanimous vote of his colleagues as General of the order, he saw it gradually expand during the remaining fifteen years of his life, till it covered, and in some places extended beyond the area of the Roman Church. Houses were founded and Provincials appointed in all the great Catholic countries of southern Europe, and in such esteem were the Jesuit fathers universally held, that not only were they made the guardians of youth and the teachers of the

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rising generation, but they became the confessors and confidential advisers of princes, and only by most resolute and repeated denials, escaped the nonour of a mitre and the temptations of a cardinal's hat. Ignatius remained through all this unchanged, holding fast by his one master idea of a spiritual government of men, now apparently on the eve of realization. For nine years he discharged the duties and endured the anxieties of office unaided, when the advance of years telling on a constitution so severely tried, he proposed to resign. The fathers, however, would not hear of the dethronement of their founder, and eventually as his infirmities continued to increase, a coadjutor was appointed, who, without infringing on the absolute authority of the General, transacted the minor and official business of the society. Thus prematurely old from toil and suffering, but with a name indelibly inscribed on the pages of history, a saint to his church and a moral hero to the world and posterity, died in his sixty-fifth year, the great and good, though to some communions terrible, Ignatius Loyola.

And now, with the foregoing data in our possession, are we prepared to explain this human phenomenon and his specialities? Is Ignatius with his submissive faith and unalterable purpose, his profound humility and his aptitude for command, his clear intellect and visional susceptibilities, explicable on the principles of our philosophy? Is there a plane contemplated from whence his apparent contradictions harmonize and seeming extravagancies disappear? A Biscayan noble, apparently of Gothic descent, with frequent grafts from the Shemetic stock, having probably Phoenician, Arabian, and Jewish blood mingled by intermarriage with the more physically vigorous Teutonic element introduced by the northern invaders. Ethnologically he was descended from the highest Caucasian types of the East and West, and he possessed many of the more ennobling attributes of each. Individually he presented a magnificent phrenological and physiognomical development. The profile both of head and face is strongly marked, arising from the predominance of

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the central over the lateral organs, and from that statuesque prominency of feature which is the usual accompaniment of this form of cerebral structure. His self-esteem, firmness, veneration, and benevolence, constitute a magnificent coronal arch, and indicate in connection with powerful concentrativeness, strongly marked perceptive and vigorous reflective faculties, altogether predominating over the imaginative, that aptitude for direct yet persistent action under the guidance of faith, and that consistent unity of idea, by which "the founder of the society" was so pre-eminently distinguished. His temperament was intensely nervo-fibrous, with in youth and prior to his ascetic inflictions, a dash of the sanguineous. The deeply set eye, the aquiline nose, the firmly closed and strongly pronounced mouth, slightly protruding, and the oval face with these its powerfully chiselled features, were all in strict accordance with the cranial contour, and eminently suggestive of similar conclusions as to fixity of purpose and decision of character in their possessor. Here then, we may safely say, was a man born to command, nay, one who only wanted a fitting occasion and sufficiently evocative influences, to emerge into effective manifestation as a true master-spirit. These were provided, and the world had Ignatius Loyola and his reverend confraternity.

Such we say was the man. Now let us look at his discipline and opportunities. Born towards the close of the fifteenth century, he was contemporary with some of the greatest men and most momentous events that Europe had seen since the decline of ancient civilization. The world wanted master-minds, and it found one in him. The Reformation after many preparatory and apparently futile attempts was at length becoming an accomplished fact. Rome was alarmed. Her ancient orders were obviously insufficient for the new crisis, and her troubled spirit in the agonising throes which produced Jesuitism, settled upon the devout and ardent young soldier lying wounded in the castle of Loyola. The spirit of an age, whether it be that of movement or conservation, after attaining a certain degree of intensity, ever becomes

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incarnate in an individual, who from that time is not simply its representative but its organ. It would be a denial of Providence to assert that under such circumstances the right man is not chosen. His selection is not of earth but heaven,—he is called not of men but God. The man for the work, a Luther to attack, a Loyola to defend, each righteously discharging the mission to which he was appointed by the Omniscient Ruler of all worlds.

Reason is no doubt a great and ennobling attribute, and he would be unwise who should seek to disparage its influence in mundane affairs, but it is a mistake to suppose that true humanitarian movements have generally originated from this source. Prophetic spirits usually become commissioned not in the calm of reflection, but in the thunderstorm of inspiration, of whose awful tones and elemental voices their message is an echo to the ages. Peruse the records of all faiths, and you will find seer-vision at their basis. They were founded not by sages but saints, not by philosophers but prophets. Master-builders are not framed amidst the intellectual luxuries of the closet, but in the furnace-fire of affliction. The insight which grasps a fundamental idea comes not of laboured excogitation. The heaven-sent conception, whose lightning force is to rive the old and found the new, wells up spontaneously as a free gift from the profoundest depths of unconscious being. Revelation is a gushing spring, dependent not on aptitudes without but supplies within. To apply these remarks, Jesuitism was not a thought but an inspiration, and its founder was not a logician but an ecstatic. He did not with infinite effort master the idea, but on the contrary, the idea with resistless power mastered him. In reference to his mission, he was an unresisting instrument, the passive recipient of influences from above, although in relation to his fellow-men, his moral magnetism was in proportion to his spiritual obedience, the degree in which he was possessed from within, determining that in which he commanded from without.

But these the reader will say are mere assertions. Let us then to the specification. We have seen Loyola as courtly

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page and gallant soldier, maintaining an wholly external and thoroughly objective existence till his twenty-ninth year, his vast susceptibility to profound emotion, and his capacity for conceiving and entertaining great ideas lying latent. Suddenly the currents of this gay and sprightly life receive a decisive check. Sickness, solitude, and inaction compel self-examination, and for the first time his own soul stands revealed in all its grandeur and weakness, in all its wondrous possibilities and lamentable failings, to the man of thirty. He is horror-stricken. "Know thyself" had proved more terrible than an order to march to the cannon's mouth. Moral and physical causes combine to produce the most intense mental excitement. Regret and remorse, passions that had never known restraint now forcibly pent up, a frame habituated to continual exercise now compelled to remain dormant, what wonder that, under such a combination of circumstances, the brain eventually assumed an undue predominance, and became preternaturally active, projecting its conceptions as visions, and surrounding its possessor, while in a state of vigilance, with all the phenomena of dream-land. He sees the objects of his youthful adoration, the traditional gods of his kindred and country, St Peter, Christ, and the Virgin. Of these, his previous impressions were the mould, his exalted state of nervous action, his intense cerebration, furnishing simply the projecting force. And now, too, it is that, in strict accordance with the laws of his centrically developed organization, he begins to ask himself,—"Cannot I, too, be St Francis, or a St Dominic?" "Yes," responds his interior Ego, "provided thou, too, wilt undergo the requisite amount of suffering. Saints walk not their excelsior path upon velvet, neither lie they on beds of down, or sit often or long at rich men's tables. If thou wouldst be great or holy, deny thyself."

Such were the inspired promptings of the conscience-stricken young noble. In so decisive a character, there is neither hesitancy nor compromise. The barefoot and the uncovered head carry him from door to door, and even to the

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far-off Jerusalem, and back, without money and without scrip, —the master-spirit of Papal Christendom bowing his lordly form and commanding brow to the simplest peasant, or meanest artizan, for a morsel of bread. Such is ever, after some fashion, the fate of genius, whereof we hold saintship to be a by no means ignoble species. "Perfected by suffering," Gethsemanes and Calvarys are its doom; which whoso would foolishly escape fails of his mission. Behold Dante composing his Divina Commedia in exile, and Camoens expiring in an hospital. In our day, see an expatriated Byron gnashing his teeth in agony, and writing Don Juan in madness; and even a seraphic Shelley, with his slender form prematurely bent by care, uttering harmonious wails, that might have melted even demons to tears. "Blind and old," was he "of Scio's rocky isle." And he also, who next in rank, amidst this celestial hierarchy, dictated in solitude and disappointment the everlasting chant of "Paradise Lost." God hath many furnaces; but through one or other must his chosen ever pass. Happy they who tread the fiery path without blaspheming, exercising patience and long-suffering even to the end.

Self-inflicted torture, doubtless, seems to us good, comfortable, rational—well-meaning Protestants, the most absurd of all forms of affliction. Yet it is doubtful whether without this painful discipline on the part of their founders, Rome would ever have had either her Franciscans or her Jesuits. The earnest spirits who set such potent machinery in motion, seem, from some cause, to have required such additional opportunity for endurance, and probably sought this apparently needless pain from some high instinct of their aspiring nature. Let us remember that the tendency of Rome, with all her short-comings is to spiritualism. She punishes the body that she may awaken the soul, and our only just cause of quarrel with her is, that she does not teach her devotees to await calmly the allotments of Providence in this matter; but rather urges them to a suicidal crucifixion, as if doubtful whether God were competent to the infliction of sufferings

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proportionate to their several occasions. Be this, however, as it may, Ignatius is a notable example of an energetic spirit marching by this path to the accomplishment of his purposes. From the moment of his spiritual awakening, and more especially from the time when he felt himself commissioned to a great work, self-denial, under every form, was his motto. And to such an extent was this carried, that but for the supporting influence of enthusiasm, he would doubtless have perished beneath his accumulated austerities. The reaction of all this upon his naturally fine and susceptible organization, the extent to which it must have exalted the action of his nervous system, and increased his tendency to visional ecstacy, need scarcely be mentioned. Now it was amidst the first outburst of this soul-consuming fervour, and while his prolonged fasts, approaching to starvation, together with other mortifications, threatened him with immediately impending death, that he commenced the composition of that famous work, The Spiritual Exercises, and developed the idea of a sacerdotal or rather spiritual government, whereof Jesuitism is the approximative realization. It is no objection to this, that the order, as a fact, was the slow after-growth of many years, that incalculable thought and care, together with consummate prudence, and unceasing industry, were necessary to its consummation. We are speaking of the primal conception whence it originated, not of the processes by which it was completed; of the seed whence it grew, and not of the gardening by which it was trained. Jesuitism, we say, was the creation of a visional enthusiast, who, however fortunately for the success and permanence of his fraternity, gradually cooled down so far towards his normal temperature, as to redevelope his unusually clear and forcible reasoning powers, which in combination with diplomatic tact and military decision, were applied with unwearied zeal, and unresting assiduity, to the edification and consolidation of that spiritual power, which receiving its impulse from vision, nevertheless obtained its direction from thought.

To his Papal biographers, Ignatius is soluble as a saint.

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To them his visions are divine vouchsafements, and his austerities commendable mortifications. They do not regard him as exceptional, but only as an exalted specimen of an order wherewith their church has been favoured at intervals from the beginning. In so far they may be said to understand him. But to Protestant writers he looms out as an almost inscrutable mystery, so that they are sometimes fain, in their perplexity, to look elsewhere for the real "founder," and to regard Loyola but as his well-meaning puppet. When he is calm, prudent, and forecasting, they fancy that for a moment the real man is revealed; but precisely where he is most inspired, when the spiritual triumphs over the corporeal, and the eternal absorbs the temporal, there, with amusing perversity, they loose sight of him. These rather grave misapprehensions, however, inevitably arise from testing Papal lives by Protestant principles.

Ignatius, endowed with exalted moral sentiments, and a profound susceptibility to all purer influences, yet, from position and training, habituated till nearly his thirtieth year to manifold indulgences and luxuries, is suddenly awakened to a deep and agonizing sense of the utter spiritual destitution in which he has hitherto existed. Raised to a higher plane, he thence contemplates his previous life of trifling and dissipation with the abhorrence of a noble nature, fully aroused to a consciousness of its innate powers, and its befitting destiny. In the revulsion of feeling accompanying so painful a self-revelation, what wonder, considering his age, country, and faith, that he should have oscillated to the opposite extreme of ascetic severity, determining rather to crucify himself in the flesh than to perish in the spirit. No burlesque of holy poverty, no masquerade of sanctity, was his begging a morsel of bread from door to door, to the gently reared young noble. He was never more in earnest, and therefore never more spiritually favoured than when so engaged. It was ever amidst sickness and privation that his visional susceptibility was most effectually aroused, and his intercommunion with higher beings seemed most frequent and intense.

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It was under such circumstances that his grander ideas were developed, and his greater enterprizes originated. His was an ardent temperament, shall we say it, an extreme nature, incapable of the golden mean of commonplace rationality of conduct, that ever sank through comfort into voluptuousness, or rose through self-denial into privation. His visions were in a certain sense natural to him at a certain stage of mental exaltation, under which his thoughts took form and became embodied in symbolical imagery. To speak of these as something unworthy of, or extraneous to the man, attaching to him by accident, and which respectable biographers would rather not narrate, is simply absurd; they were an integral portion of him, constituting indeed one of the most important features of his peculiar but powerful mind. An unvisioned Ignatius might have been an ardent devotee, but never the founder and moving spirit of the Society of Jesus. His lucidity was the prophetic aspect of his many-sided character, the sublime accompaniment of his culmination, the glory-crowned apex of his entire being, the source of his inspiration, and the well spring of his greatness.

8.—George Fox,

THE FOUNDER OF QUAKERISM.

In nothing is the gigantic power of a true master-mind more clearly exhibited, or shall we say more forcibly demonstrated, than in the extent to which the followers of a religious leader, generation after generation, unswervingly obey his precepts and devoutly conform themselves to his example. Truly may it be said that such men are the moulds of time. They are divine instrumentalities by which the work of moral creation is being effected. The force which they exert can never be known to their contemporaries, for the ideas which they develope are not simply a gift to the present, but also a

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bequest to the future. The systems which they found are not simply a passing power, they are also an enduring inheritance for the ages. And this is true in a minor degree even of those lesser spirits, whose mission is not to found, but to modify, creeds, who do not speak with authority but in utter submission to a predecessor: who profess not to originate but interpret, whose sphere is not the primary but the secondary, and whose intuitions reach not to divine annunciations in the stilly depths of their own souls, but to a more correct appreciation of the wondrous revelations vouchsafed to others. Such a man was Fox, the founder of Quakerism, the leather-jerkined enthusiast of Drayton, whose deep, quiet, and faithful meditations on the Scriptures eventuated in the development of a new internal light, under which the pages of inspiration became the vehicle of "knowledge from above."

The mystic is in very truth a practically important as well as morally interesting character. His *visions and aspirations* are no doubt psychological phenomena, which the metaphysician may study with advantage as abnormal manifestations of human intelligence; but they are also motor forces which, it may be, the ages must recognise and the historian will have to chronicle as among the veritable facts of the past. The mystic is himself however, we must remember, but an embodiment of the higher influences of his era. He is ever, when we come to profoundly examine him, in a certain sense derivative, the result of antecedent influences, a high-wrought effect of preceding causes. As a feature of his time, he is deeply significant, and may be considered as an index of the force and direction of the deeper spiritual currents of his epoch. Neither is he in his simple individuality the sum-total of all the elements of mutation, for not only the extent and success, but the very character of his mission, will to some extent depend on the time and the people to whom he may be sent. Had the fiery, energetic, and poetical son of the Koreish been reared in the sober England of the seventeenth century, who can say how his naturally combustible constitution might have been modified in its manifestations

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by the specialities of our then prevalent Puritanism. As it is, his followers, bedizened in the many-coloured and loose-flowing robes of their oriental costume, bearded to the girdle, and turbaned to the brow, gravely pay their devoirs to a multitudinous host of odalisques, the earthly representatives of their anticipated houris. While perhaps under other conditions they might with equal pertinacity and fully proportionate gravity have yielded a preference to drab-coloured habiliments, broad-brimmed head-gear, closely shaven chins, and that monogamatic system of domesticity on which the stringent occident plumes itself in comparison with the looser orient. Man, it is said, is the creature of circumstances, and we may affirm, even of the greatest, that their highest commission is but to sound the trumpet-blast of destiny, their most exalted office that of herald to a resurrection morn.

England during the time of the Commonwealth was the hotbed of theological excitement. From the tyrannical Laud to the uttermost Puritan, all men were more than usually in earnest about either the forms or the spirit of religion. Despite the tremendous political changes then taking place, the theological idea really predominated. It was an age of faith; and men, if we are to trust to their professions, then lived rather for heaven than earth. The more earnest minds of that time were no doubt greatly absorbed by serious considerations respecting spiritual and eternal things. It was an age of gloomy but high-principled fanaticism, of stern but heroic enthusiasm. The saints when triumphant might occasionally have proved tyrants; but, when defeated, they knew how to suffer like martyrs. It was a time too stirring and momentous for the development of philosophic indifferentism. Creeds were then among the living and moving powers of the world. The earthquake changes of the Reformation yet lived in the memory of the aged, and the noises of the new time seemed to them but a reverberation of its thunders. Science and literature were then for the few; but religion was the grand object of interest to the many. Papacy, Prelacy,

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Presbyterianism, and Independency, how could men farther go? So no doubt thought the pulpit orators of that day.

To find a still farther remove from hierarchial despotism was left for the Leicestershire shoemaker, whose internal light sufficed for that which college learning and merely ministerial zeal could never have accomplished. George Fox, in short, was an *ecstatic*, a *natural clairvoyant*, a *seer*, a prophet, a lowly brother of the great and good of old, one of that truly spiritual hierarchy of God-filled minds whose mission it ever is to make war unto death against the hierarchy of forms. Devout from childhood, serious, earnest, thoughtful, and enquiring, he seems from the first to have had the elements of seerdom deeply seated in his nature. These were of course especially developed by the tendencies of his age and country. During his internal conflicts, he, like most of his order, sought refuge in solitude, and dwelt much in hollow trees and other rustic conveniences, occasionally seeking alleviation from his sore travail of spirit on commons, moors, and barren hills, where his deeply-tried soul held long and well-nigh despairing communions with itself on the origin of evil and the purposes of the Creator. Poor, young, and uninstructed, bnt honest, pious, and determined to find the truth or perish in the search, the Drayton artizan tried priest after priest, vexing them with strange inquiries, and putting their best school logic to the test by such strong arguments and startling instances as could scarcely fail to excite the bile even of such reverend and much-enduring men: and then going in quest of a sister ecstatic, some Lancashire woman, who had been in a trance for twenty-two days, but who seems at his visit to have been "under a temptation." Truly it is no wonder that what with constitutional tendencies, exciting influences, long fastings, and the sympathetic re-action of other trance-sleepers, it is no wonder we say that at last the devout and thoughtful religionist should have fallen into a *vision* himself, wherein he tells us "a great work of the Lord fell upon me, and I saw into that which is without end, and things that cannot be uttered, of the greatness and infiniteness of the love of God," so that

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" men thought I was dead, and afterwards many came to see me for about fourteen days' time, *for I was very much altered in my countenance and person, as if my body had been new moulded and changed.*" The over-thoughtful child, the morbidly excitable youth, and the visionary man, what student of ecstacy but must here perceive all the symptoms of its successive stages of development? In these last fourteen days of *corporeal somnolence* and *spiritual vigilance*, the mystic culminated. It was his cave at Mecca, nay, with his body " new moulded and changed," was it not a species of lowly transfiguration, in which the high-wrought and radiant spirit, beaming through and in a measure overflowing its earthly tabernacle, shone forth a spectacle of lucidity even to carnal beholders? How the future of his earnest life was fashioned by the revelations afforded in this prolonged trance, to what extent even modern Quakerism is indebted to it for its present form and substance, it were difficult, if not impossible, to say. Suffice it that we have here indubitable evidence of that seer-vision, by which we are enabled to place this skin-covered preacher of the moral and physical wilderness within the grand category of prophetic souls, albeit, perhaps he was not the very highest of that exalted order. Even physically we find similar and corroborative evidence afforded, for when they advised him in the fever of early zeal to be bled, the lancet being then as now the never-failing remedy of the legalized manslayer in a difficulty, behold they could draw no blood, his juices being dried up by reason of the world's sore iniquities, and the inward troubles of his deeply agitated spirit. Verily, whether upon the top of Pendle Hill, " the Lord let him see in what places he had a great people to be gathered," or whether sitting still in the house, " the elements and stars came over him, so that he was in a manner quite clouded with it;" in either case have we not unmistakable indications of a true *vates*, evoked and commissioned from within, and so having withal a notable contempt for outward ordinances, which to him and his were needless accessories, productive of hinderance rather than furtherance.

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But what shall we say to the Elijah-like act of slaying the doughty Protector of England with a look, for, meeting the veteran Oliver riding into Hampton-court at the head of his life-guards, "*I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him, and when I came to him he looked like a dead man.*" Of a verity, even the profligate Stewart, could he have been but fully certified hereof, would doubtless have held the plain spoken apostle of interior illumination in such respect as a a spiritual David after his triumph over the political Goliah deserved.

A plain, simple, earnest, honest man was good George Fox, his leather jerkin and ecstatic visions notwithstanding. His whole life was one long inspiration. His every thought a high intuition, his every act the result of an internal monition: his earthly pilgrimage was that of a wayfarer guided through the valley of the shadow by spiritual presences and Divine vouchsafements. To him miracles were no vague tradition, but experimental realities, nor could the theory of coincidences ever prevail to cheat him out of a supporting faith in Providential deliverances. An absorbed and devoted enthusiast, to him dreams were realities, and the interior life with its direct relationship to God, the all-important concern of existence. The wonder is not that he should have founded a sect, but that his followers subsided at so early a period from world-despising enthusiasts into worldly prosperous men of business; that the most impracticable of founders should have given birth to so practical a discipleship. This was due in a great measure doubtless to the nature of the ground in which his seed was sown. Had the taught been mystic Hindoos or fiery Arabs, the result of his tuitions would have been widely different. But the logic of Barclay, and the practical knowledge of Penn, acting on the constitutional sobriety of British converts, soon gave a form and colouring to the movement, such as few who beheld the shaking devotees, or listened to the singing preachers among the early Friends, could have anticipated. In no sect has the change, from ranting fanaticism to quiet respectability been more marked

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or complete, and yet perhaps in none has so much of the real spirit of the founder been preserved, while his minor formulas have been modified or dispensed with. The Quakers are still disciples of George Fox, albeit, were the rudely clad wanderer of Lancashire to be now introduced into the comfortable parlours, and even splendid drawing-rooms, of his modern followers, he might perhaps find subject-matter for remark, if not reproof; but take him to the anti-slavery platforms, meetings for social reform, and other spheres of beneficent action, and he would still say, these are my children.

To the philosophic student of ecstatic exaltation, the quakings, shakings, jumpings, and even flagellations of the various religious bodies who have at different periods emerged into manifestation, are not without profound significance. They all exhibit a generic identity, and are mere varieties of nervous excitation, generally propagated by sympathy, and are usually accompanied by prophesyings and preachings in the more enthusiastic and susceptible of the votaries of this strange terpsichorean inspiration. In addition to this, some of the early Friends appear to have been gifted with the power of affecting others by their breath, so that in America they were even accused of witchcraft, in consequence of the sudden and extraordinary command which they thus acquired over those whom they wished to convert. The mesmerist will of course be at no loss to interpret this—it is simply an instance of sympathy purposely transmitted, and has its analogue in the processes which his science has adopted. Altogether, good George Fox and his Friends furnish many interesting and valuable illustrations of those laws which regulate the evolution of the higher faculties of ecstatic intuition and lucid vision, and his journal, together with those of his more distinguished disciples, will be found to abound with narratives too honestly told, and too truthful in every way to nature, to permit of our doubting for a moment the integrity of the narrators; but which are yet, to those ignorant of the mysterious domain of man's inner being, a stumbling block and rock of offence.

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9.—Sir Isaac Newton.

The inductive philosophy in its lower departments, at least, is eminently prosaic. The observation of facts, the institution of experiments, and even the deduction of conclusions, imply aught but the labour of a creative mind. Intellectual mechanism might accomplish all the achievements of our ordinary savants, though there were no soul behind it. But in this, as in all other departments of human activity, the higher phases of manifestation demand the presence of a constructive and reproductive mind. A true discoverer has ever the intuitive element in his composition. His works are the product of inspiration. He is a poet manipulating nature, an artist, and not an artizan, in her mystic laboratory. All original minds are *a priori* in their essential character, and condescend to induction, as the gods of heathen mythology occasionally veiled the exceeding brightness of their divinity from a kindly spirit of accommodation to the weakness of mortality. This living universe, irradiant with the shadeless glory of the indwelling Godhead, becomes at best a piece of dead mechanism, and but too frequently a cesspool and a grave, in passing through the alembic of a commonplace mind, trained in the schools, and suffused with the spirit of modern materialism. We have lost the high vantage-ground of our Titanic predecessors. We are pigmies perched on the Alpine heights, reared in their conflict with unveracity; and because our prospect is wide, we fancy our souls must be large. But this is an error, as posterity will doubtless not be slow to discover. The collossal facts which have been growing with the centuries, have become too vast for our tiny grasp. They have escaped from the mastery of our contracted minds, and lord it over us, as the unresisting slaves of their overawing magnitude. We can scarcely apprehend, much less comprehend, them. Who, save the late Humboldt, now

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thinks of embracing the grand scheme of nature as a mighty and harmonious whole, to be reflected in all its sublime entirety on the mirror of consciousness? Most, on the contrary, prefer attempting its cognition by ineffective raids into different provinces, that endow us not with clear and adequate ideas, but unsatisfactory and chaotic impressions. We look *up* to the material forms of being, from the low level of experience, instead of *down* upon them from the commanding plane of first principles, that is of spiritual perception. Conscious of our inferiority, we endeavour to excuse it by dwelling on the vastitude of our possessions, like puling heirs of mighty houses, who miserably dwarfed in the presence of ancestral greatness, yet rest in pitiable vanity on the length of their pedigrees, the number of their quarterings, and the extent of their estates. Science has outgrown our individual capability; and, as a necessity, we resort to the division of labour, and become, as a consequence, converted more and more into mere wheels and pinions of a dominant mechanism, which employs us but as its subordinate tools and inferior agencies. All this, however, is no doubt analogically correct. We are in the age of analysis, and while disintegrating things in our experiments, are ourselves subjected to a corresponding process, by the spirit of the time in which we live.

We admire the ancients; but we pity and despise their pupils and successors, the mediæval schoolmen. Yet, from the tuitions of these pedantic masters, issued those collossal thinkers, by whose profound meditations we have been made wise, and by whose sublime aspirations we have been led onwards. Our guides were their sons, and our excelsiors were their children. Truly we do well to be angry with these mighty teachers, for they made giants, where we, for the most part, only manufacture mechanical approximations to a sickly manhood. In the Aristotlean schools, Machiavelli acuminated his astuteness, and Dante intensified his almost superhuman energy of thought and conception. While from their training issued those stalwart champions

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to whom we are indebted for the revival of learning, the reformation and the inductive philosophy. The logical and *a priori* masters of the middle ages fell, as Gods only can, by the usurpation of their sons. In the revolution of Destiny's grander cycle, the hour of their dethronement arrived; but they succumbed, as became divinities, only to their own immortal progeny.

We mistake in thinking that Protestantism and the experimental philosophy are the product of two separate movements of the human mind. They are simply different branches from the same trunk, duplicate effects of the same cause. They were necessary sequences in a descent from principle to fact, from law to phenomena. While making these frank admissions, however, let us not, we repeat, be hopelessly discouraged. The strongest eagles must at times alight, and not always on mountain tops; for while soaring sunwards for prospect, they must sometimes swoop earthwards for prey. The human intellect which had dwelt for well nigh two milleniums, at the sublime altitude of first principles, became at length an hungered in the pure though rarified air which engirdled its lofty eyry, and so bethought itself of the lowly vales of experimental knowledge, where it has now been feeding and fattening, till some almost begin to fear that the bird of Jove must, by some deplorable transformation, have been converted into a foul vulture, redolent of offal, and ravenous for putridity.

But to return, Protestantism is simply the reign of experiment in theology, while the inductive philosophy is only a manifestation of Protestantism in science. Authority was at an end, whether based on principles enshrined in churches, organized in institutions, or deposited in persons. The revolutionary movement commenced with the two former, and is concluding with the two latter. The era of mutation set in on philosophy and religion, and is ending in society and the state. Its first blow was at the priest and the professor; its last will be at the king and the noble: it began in the sanhedrim, and will terminate in the senate. It is "the mighty

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wind," predestined from of old, to thoroughly purge the garner floor of an encumbered earth—" the fire " in which the chaff of ages is to be consumed—" the flood " wherewith the Augean stable of a world's iniquities will be swept clean of its impurities. Let us not be too seriously alarmed at this rather sombre and threatening aspect of affairs. We have arrived at " the beginning of the end." Let the friends of reconstruction thank God and take courage. The storm, if not well nigh overpast, is at all events approaching its maximum. Let all good souls, who can prevail to veritably believe, amidst the manifold delapidations of these latter days, in the existence of " law and order," as dependant, not on an armed force obeying the behests of earthly kings, but on principles which are the vicegerents of a heavenly one; let such, we say, gird up their loins as for a day of battle, and rejoice as at a coming victory. In the interval, is there not work for such as can labour, even though it were but to gather microscopic facts, those pretty pebbles on the beach of the universe, wherewith nature's more industrious children seek to weave a tiny carkanet for the neck of TRUTH, who, majestic, yet beneficent goddess, smiles in loving condescension on their infant efforts, and playfully disposes of the toy on that magnificent yet mysterious form, which none, save the Omniscient, ever yet beheld unveiled.

Of the Olympian progeny of the *a priori* school, Francis of Verulam must undoubtedly be considered as the first in order of rank, the one in whom most of the paternal power survived, and who consequently became, " by right divine," the Jove of the *a posteriori* method, which arose on the ruins of the former. Not of accident, but design, not by chance, but law, did the grandest expounder of the inductive philosophy, Lord Bacon, and its greatest examplar, Sir Isaac Newton appear in Britain, the western terminus of existing, and the focal point of emergence to impending, civilization. Anglo-Saxons both, of the newest imperial race, and the latest imperial country. Golden links whereby a past of

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heroic endeavour is to be joined to a future of sublime fulfilment. Of the mighty chancellor and his works, we may, perhaps, find opportunity to speak in some other place, and in some other connexion. Suffice it here, that we hold in unutterable contempt the theory of his being addicted to low and grovelling habits, animated by inferior motives, or governed by perverted principles. On the contrary, we hold him, and William of Stratford, to be, in all points, the most nearly God-like men that have anywhere appeared in these latter ages.

Our business now is, not with the collossal hierophant of induction, but his worthiest pupil; not with the inspired architect, to whose gifted vision the beauty and proportions of the fair temple of science arose as by the revelation of a celestial magic, vouchsafed to truth's most ardent worshipper, but with the great master-builder, under whose direction and superintendence, and, in great part, by whose personal exertions and gigantic labours, its principal blocks were hewn into form, and placed in position. Without a Bacon, we could scarcely have had a Newton, and yet without the latter the former had been almost useless, *vox et preterea nihil.* The first was the thinking head, and the last the executant hand of experiment. Let not these figures, however, imply too much of disadvantage to him, who so bravely achieved what the other had so wisely designed. They may be compared together, and their diversities of endowment stated; but they have no rivals without, and stand apart from their successors, like transfigured prophets on a mount of glory, while even their most honoured disciples rest afar off, like common mortals, unable to endure the celestial radiance of this beatific vision, unless at a distance, which may tone down its supernal splendours to the visional capacity of an earthly observer. If Lord Bacon were the inspired seer of induction, Sir Isaac Newton was its ecstatic labourer, who wrought with Sampson-like energy for the fulfilment of its wondrous promises. What the first profoundly foresaw, the last nobly

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realized; what the first, with prophetic prevision, announced as possible, the last, with almost superhuman energy, rendered actual.

Descended from the English yeomanry, Newton was, as we have already observed, of Saxon race, having all the grander qualities of this noble type of humanity in full perfection. With a powerful brain, of unusual magnitude in the anterior and well-developed in the coronal region, his reflective faculties predominating over the imaginative, and the logical preponderating over the analogical elements in his mental constitution, with accurate perceptions, and a retentive memory, he was richly furnished with all the higher qualities of an analytical intellect of the first order. A careful and attentive observer, his data were correct; a profound and sequential reasoner, his conclusions were sound. With him, knowledge was ever converted into subject-matter for thought. Incapable of resting contented with the observation of effects, he, as by a law of his nature, ascended to their causes. To him, phenomena were but the indications of a power whence they proceeded; the angel's ladder which leads from the world of fact to the heaven of principle, was never absent from his consciousness. Of nervo-lymphatic temperament, he was solid rather than brilliant, and exhibited the vastitude of his genius, less in the facility of his processes, than in the magnitude of his results. He was essentially, and in all points, an Englishman, whose gigantic practicality, however, embraced the universe and its laws; the creation and its forces. To say that the homesteads of Britain contain many such might sound like an exaggeration; but of the colossal brood whence he sprang, Titans have often come, and giants, we may trust, will never cease to be born. This intellect, so grandly massive, was united to a moral nature proportionately elevated. Benevolent, almost to a fault, he who could pursue the powers of nature to their ultimates, with the unerring exactitude of mathematical calculation, who, in the pursuit of his sublime vocation, shrank from no conclusion, and hesitated at no truth, was so merciful to animals, as to disapprove

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of the sportsman's pastime from its cruelty. Profoundly reverential, his intimate acquaintance with the mechanism of the universe, never for a moment withdrew his worship from the Creator to his work, his admiration for the latter, only sufficing to increase his devotion to the former. Of incorruptible integrity, and unspotted morals, he was as unimpeachable in his private, as he was illustrious in his public life. Gifted in mind, and unblemished in conduct, affectionate to his relatives, attached to his friends, and beneficent to his kind, he discharged every duty, and fulfilled every obligation, not only with a religious consciousness of the requirements of his position, but with that tendency to goodness, which seems to be manifested by some few superior beings, as if from the proclivity of an exalted nature to every species of moral and intellectual excellence.

Of studious habits, and intent on the acquisition of knowledge, Newton was a persistent and laborious experimentalist. Largely endowed with concentrativeness, he seems to have been always capable of giving his undivided attention to whatever was for the time the especial subject of his thought. With a mind constituted like one of his own lenses, he could focalise every ray of light on a given point, till under this intense luminosity even its minutest specialities became revealed. The habits established by systematic study, reinforced a tendency originating in native endowment, until at last he became so absorbed as to sit occasionally on the side of his bed, half-dressed for hours, lost to the sense of all external objects, in rapt meditation on some abstruse mathematical problem, or some phenomenon not yet fully illustrated by a sufficiently satisfactory experiment. In his moods of severer study, he frequently forgot his meals, and needed to be reminded of many requirements that commonplace minds seldom or never overlook. In short, he was preeminently an *absent* man. And it was generally during these fits of abstraction, that his brightest conceptions dawned upon him, it was then that he was favoured with his clearest intuitions, and originated or completed some of his most no-

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table discoveries. He had thus attained, at least, to the earlier stage of absorption, and was endowed consequently with more or less ecstatic intuition. Every man to his vocation. Gifted with this interior light, and the supersensuous perception, and preterlogical apprehension which it confers, a Napoleon achieves miracles in strategy, a Socrates developes moral, and a Newton discovers physical truth.

Sir Isaac was a man of genius, devoted to the illustration of nature, and wrought at his glorious task with faculties originally powerful, but, beyond question, wonderfully exalted at times in function. His ability to see at a glance through all the successive stages of a demonstration in Euclid is an instance in point. It was intuition transcending not the *range*, but the *rate*, of deduction, outrunning it in the course, and leaving it at a hopeless distance in the rear.

This tendency to abstraction and exaltation, which, if not always morbid, has ever a liability to become so, culminated and apparently collapsed in his fiftieth year, about the period of life at which Swedenborg's and Cardan's lucidity began to manifest itself. In these two illustrious men it would seem that the nervous crisis eventuated in something like victory, while in Newton it resulted in an approach to defeat. With visional ecstacy, the first united an analogical power of reasoning hitherto unexampled, and while retaining, and even extending, all his previous knowledge of science, extensive, varied, and profound as this was, beyond that of almost any man of his time, he seems to have ascended to a plane of thought, whence he not only intuitively beheld those truths to which he had previously attained by induction, but from whence, as from a watch-tower of the spirit, he was enabled to behold them in all those far-extending relationships united, by which they constitute that majestic whole—a divinely fashioned universe. It cannot be doubted that Swedenborg was a greater man after than before his crisis. One evidence of this is, that his fame depends on his subsequent rather than his previous works. But, independently of this, which some may be disposed to consider rather falla-

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cious evidence, and looking only to the inherent capability of his mind during the two epochs, it is obvious that in clearness of intellectual perception, in grasp of thought, in logical acumen, in profundity of meditation, in the diversity of his subject-matter, and in the order, method, and treatment of his wondrous themes, the inspired dreamer of Stockholm was grander in his visions as a seer, than in his investigations as a savant. Ecstacy, though it somewhat disturbed the normal equilibrium of his faculties, in some measure compensated for this, by the almost preternatural aggrandisement of every endowment by which it was accompanied. In him lucidity was in a measure mastered and methodized, and so, while acting doubtlessly as a powerful and dangerous excitant, nevertheless, conduced to a certain growth and increment, perhaps unattainable without its weird presence and mysterious aid. Even in the instance of Cardanus, the development of lucidity was accompanied rather with an increase than a diminution of mathematical and other power. But in the case of Newton, despite the desperate, though hopeless, endeavours of well-intentioned biographers to make it appear otherwise, it is obvious that his maximum of ability was attained before, and not after, the crisis. With those who think his Biblical Chronology and his Dissertation on the Prophecies greater works than his discoveries in light and his Principia, it is of course useless to reason. They have a standard of excellence, which being compounded of the moral rather than the intellectual, of the devotional rather than the thoughtful, has no doubt its own peculiar merits as an admeasurement of worth; but it is one to which the metaphysician must demur, and which the philosopher will refuse to admit. His mission as a discoverer was at an end; his career, as the master-pilot of humanity, into the realms of the unknown was brought to a termination; and, for the greatness of his world-wide fame and the permanence of his everlasting renown, he might as well have expired in the convulsions of phrenitis at fifty, as have survived to vegetate during thirty additional years in the ease and comfort of a glorious, but in

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comparison with his more radiant youth, a sterile and unproductive old age. The lightning-like intuition, beneath whose sudden flash truth stood revealed from amidst the rayless gloom of antecedent darkness; the lucid perception to whose electric movement the most rapid deduction had the lethargic slowness of a tortoise march, these had utterly disappeared, and their place was supplied with simply the profound attainments of an eminent Cambridge professor, and the learning of a deeply read and accomplished scholar, competent, no doubt, to the verification of previous discoveries and the annotation of earlier works, but, alas! utterly incapable of rivalling much less surpassing them. The Newton of the Principia, the divinely illumined and inspired sage, to whom nature communicated her most recondite secrets and her deepest mysteries as to a holy prophet receiving revelations of truth in the rapt ecstacy of beatific vision, *this* Newton had departed Elijah-like to his proper home, leaving behind him nothing but the mortal simulacrum, which had served as the cloak of his earthly sojourn.

There has been much needless controversy on this subject of Newton's ailment, the discussion being maintained not so much with a view to the elicitation of truth in connection with the matter in hand, as for the supposed purpose of maintaining the peculiar religious or sceptical opinions of the combatants. The fact that Newton was a distinguished savant prior to his disease, and a theologian subsequently to it, has given an interest to his malady in the estimation of certain extreme sections of the scientific and religious public, quite independently of its pathological peculiarities. It is these, however, that we have here to explain. More especially affecting the nervous system, although apparently accompanied with an abnormal condition of the alimentary, it was doubtless produced by those habits of intense and protracted thought, in which for years it had been his custom to indulge. His overwrought brain, exercised by severe study in youth, and strained by the severer labours of manhood, became at length incapable of duly performing its

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normal functions, probably from that accumulation of nervous force which, in a more active and excitable temperament, might have burst forth in an irrepressible explosion of mania, but which, in his naturally sluggish and unemotional nature, eventuated rather in stagnation and bewilderment. Where a poetically constituted mind would have experienced a violent paroxysm of delirium, and either perished in or victoriously surmounted this magnetic storm, with its thunder-voiced revelations and lightning flashes of thought and conception, this profoundly meditative, yet unidealistic genius, to whose inner consciousness passion was unknown, sunk overwhelmed by mephitic vapours, which would not blaze into creative light—the former might have become a burning volcano with its molten lava and lurid flame-clouds; but the latter was converted into a dismal swamp, begloomed by those fœtid exhalations which brood over fecundity reduced to putrefaction. The age at which it occurred is one of crisis with all men, but more especially the class of severely cultured and hardly wrought thinkers to which Newton belonged. It is the period at which the grosser animal nature generally subsides into comparative quiesence, and when the intellect, with its attainments matured and its capacities enlarged, assumes a more assured sway over the impulses and emotions, which had previously accorded but an imperfect allegiance to the royal supremacy of judgment. Under its expansive and exalting influences, Bacon arose to the vast meditation and far-seeing wisdom of the Novum Organum, and Milton culminated in the previously unattainable sublimities of Paradise Lost; while, at a remoter epoch, Æschylus emerged into the dramatic grandeur of the Prometheus, and Plato arrived at the exalted spirituality of the Phædron. In certain unfortunate cases, however, this mental victory is replaced by defeat, and he who should have been the conqueror of Chaos becomes the captive of confusion. Such was for a time, at least, the unhappy destiny of Newton, who, on emerging from the cloud, was found shorn of his previous radiance, and reduced more nearly to the level of

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ordinary humanity. The essential distinction between the mental condition of Newton before and after his disease, was that between creation and possession, the power to originate and the ability to understand. He sank from genius to talent, from intuitive insight to deductive conclusion, and, as an unavoidable consequence, became but the editor and annotator of his former sublime, and now unapproachable, productions. The sunlight of inspiration was exchanged for the lamp of intellect. The flash, whose sudden radiance had brightly illumined a whole province, was now, alas! superseded by the dull glow of a few expiring embers, ever waxing fainter in their approach to final extinction.

Let not the religious world be troubled at the thought, that such a conclusion, if generally received, will prove at all injurious to those mighty interests for which it exhibits so laudable a zeal. Newton was ever a firm believer in, and devout worshipper of, his Spiritual Father. To him the universe was never a piece of dead mechanism, but, on the contrary, a glorious manifestion of Divine power. It remained for after times to develope that weird spectacle, a great and gifted mind, thoroughly furnished with the higher lore of nature, resting satisfied in this outer-court of the great temple of being, and never seeking to penetrate into those adyta, where, in the Holy of Holies, an ever-present Shekinah brightly burns to illumine the soul of each devoutly expectant and worshipfully reverend hierophant. And such was Newton, who in his best and strongest days, in the noble fervour of his ingenuous youth, and in the unequalled vigour of his maturer manhood, lived a consecrated priest of God, ever placing on the altar those priceless gifts of new knowledge, richer than all the preceding ages had supplied, and in comparison with which, our most costly offerings are unspeakably contemptible. Let not the religious world be discomfited and cast down, then, because the latter days of Newton may be esteemed inferior in mental force and clearness to the earlier portions of his transcendently illustrious and grandly useful career. Commentaries on the Scriptures have

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generally been the work of devout but second-rate minds, the artisans, not the artists of literature. Let Scripture readers be assured, that in perusing the sacred volume of nature with a sage's eye, in deciphering the characters, and penetrating into the mysteries of her holy pages, he was engaged on a labour as sublime in itself, and as sanctified by the frame of mind in which he undertook and prosecuted it, as if he had not only commented on, but actually *composed* those books on which they look with such unspeakable reverence. The exalted devotion of Newton's majestic maturity, the undoubting faith, and child-like simplicity, which so beautifully characterized him, when at the maximum of his vigour, and in the midway course of his discoveries, these are the specialities of this gigantic master-mind, on which they may dwell with enlightened satisfaction, and to which they may point in just pride, when taunted with the shallow scepticism and grovelling materialism of scientific men, immeasurably inferior in every higher moral and intellectual attribute. This is their strongest ground, and to descend from this to the comparatively puerile manifestations of his declining years, is but to exchange this unassailable position, for one altogether inferior in logically defensible qualities.

But we may safely leave this department of the subject in the hands of those professionally devoted to the advocacy and defence of faith. Suffice it for our present purpose, that Newton was obviously an ecstatic, although developed under rather peculiar conditions, and with his illumination devoted to the elucidation of somewhat unusual topics. His was pre-eminently an intellectual and thoughtful, as contradistinguished from an emotional and imaginative lucidity. It was an exaltation of the perceptive and reflective powers, but more especially of the latter. Hence not only the accuracy of his observations, but their definitive application to a given purpose, and their entire subordination to the one grand object of demonstrating the veracity or fallacy of a presumed truth. His experiments were crucial in character, and tended to confirm or destroy the hypothetical views of him whoole.

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stituted them. Hence also the grasp and grandeur of his ideas, whose profundity and vastitude seem almost commensurate with that universe to the discovery of whose laws these mighty powers were so assiduously devoted. Hence also the remarkable and apparently contradictory fact, that, although constitutionally slow in many of his other mental operations, Newton was so largely gifted with intuitive insight, that many of his discoveries flashed upon him as by inspiration, while some of his mathematical processes were accomplished with a rapidity and facility, all but incredible to ordinarily gifted men. It is this especial combination which renders him so interesting, and in a sense unique; but, perhaps, it was this also which ultimately conduced to his defeat. His cold and phlegmatic nature, susceptible of the *light*, could not endure the *heat* of ecstatic action, and succumbed precisely at that stage of development, where more warmly enthusiastic and imaginative beings have usually attained to their highest manifestations, and thus when he should have emerged into seerdom, he sank into annotation.

10.— Swedenborg.

Science justly prides itself upon the exactitude of its processes, while the mathematics repose with dignified assurance on the certitude of their results. As schools of thought each is supposed to produce habits of precision, which if not positively hostile to imagination are at all events eminently calculated to regulate and methodize, if not subdue the native wildness of an undisciplined fancy. The restoration of Paradise Lost to its enthusiastic lender, an ardent admirer of the author's genius, with the cold and almost cynical remark, "that it proved nothing," was a feat that no one but a student of the exact sciences could have performed! As a mere tale, its probability would vanish if told of any other order of the

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intellectual hierarchy. We strongly suspect, however, that, after all, this notion of a profound antagonism between the magnificent real of true science and the glorious ideal of pure poesy is nothing more than a popular fallacy, founded on the grossest misconception of what really constitutes the *savant*. We have elsewhere spoken of the epic grandeur of conception which characterized the author of the *Novum Organum*. And descending from the chief of the inductive philosophy to his humbler, though still worthily exalted, disciples, what vigour of conception do we find in the speculations of the elder Herschel on the stellar arrangements of distant space, and the gradual formation of solar systems from the advancing concentration of misty nebulosities! And what is the *Cosmos* of the late venerable Humboldt but a beautifully descriptive poem, in which the otherwise dry if not sterile facts of pure science become instinct with life, and redolent of the most gorgeous beauty and magnificence, when contemplated through the richly-endowed mind of the deeply-studious and far-travelled sage, whose naturally vigorous imagination, so far from being oppressed, is but invigorated by the truly Atlantian load of his acquired knowledge. Are his descriptions of mountain-scenery less sublime, are his chasms less dark and awful, his declivities less precipitous, or his snow-clad peaks less radiant, as they shine forth amidst the cloudless glories of the tropics, because the accomplished author knows the geological structure of their interior, and is competent to explain the meteorological laws on which so many of their surface phenomena depend for the varying peculiarities which they present? Do his descriptions of the luxuriant vegetation of equatorial savannahs lack one element of the beautiful because he is competent to enter botanically into the minutest description of the multiform flora of these magnificent regions? Are his skies less blue, his sunsets less grand, or his prospects more tame and uninteresting, because in his vast mind he enfolds that all but universal knowledge, which, when needed, enables him to enter into the minutest detail of scientific investigation, in every province of nature to

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which man has yet directed his attention? And who that has read Professor Nichol on astronomy but must have perceived that the attainments of the philosopher have in no respect detracted from, but rather added to, the native endowments of the accomplished orator and truly idealistic poet!

The cold and cloudy north, land of the mountain and the mist, is the natural home of rude but forcible energy of character. Its short and fleeting summer is followed too soon by the blustrous gales and long dreary stormful nights of winter for the mind to become habituated to easy repose on the bosom of nature. It is no region for languid and voluptuous souls, whom its howling tempests soon rouse from their castle of indolence. The uncongenial elements without afford an environment which is ever compressing the mind upon itself, compelling it to look, if even mournfully, within, for the resources of intellectual existence. Hence high and stern resolve in action and intense concentration of thought have generally distinguished the master-spirits of the Scandinavian race. The vikinger are their earthly heroes, and the gloomy grandeur of the Sagas the most befitting embodiment of their genius, while the bloody onslaughts and barbaric feasts in the halls of Odin are their ideal of heaven. Such at least are the roots of their racial ideas; the black tuberosities of their mythical Igdrasil, ever, as the ages roll away, shooting skyward, till the radiant suns and shining stars become but the adornment of its branches. Of this noble race, which, taking it morally and physically, as well as intellectually, is perhaps the grandest type which humanity has yet developed, was born Emanuel Swedenborg, the son of a Lutheran bishop. Thus reared under paternal influences, which could scarcely fail to prove favourable both to his intellectual and moral growth, he had also the advantage of a first-class education, and the subsequent benefit of a rather enlarged experience in the management of public affairs. Studious from choice, and qualified by nature to become both a scholar and natural philosopher, he was still farther stimulated in the acquisition

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of varied knowledge by the diversity of posts to which his eminent talents, rather than his family interests, provided for him a comparatively easy promotion. At the early age of twenty-four, conveying ships overland by his engineering skill, for the military purposes of his warlike sovereign, Charles XII., by whom his extraordinary merits seem to have been fully recognised, he was in after years made inspector of mines and governmental assayer, and throughout the vigour of his manhood seems to have discharged a variety of important offices with credit to himself and with satisfaction to his government. Raised for his eminent services to Equestrian rank, and possessing a gentlemanly competency, he seems to have travelled rather extensively, and made himself personally familiar with the manners, customs, modes of thought, and general condition of the more important nations of western Europe. Gifted with literary as well as scientific abilities, his works on various departments of physics and statistics would alone entitle him to a distinguished place among the more influential minds of the earlier part of the eighteenth century. For fifty-seven years was this massive intellect assiduously devoted to all the higher purposes of exact science, and to all the more practical applications of scholastic attainment. No high-dried political economist ever speculated more effectually, or we might suppose at times more absorbingly, on the best means for developing the national resources. No dull chronicler of small facts ever surpassed him in the assiduity with which he collected the requisite data for his conclusions, and no mere mathematical formalist ever transcended the cool precision with which he worked out his conclusions. Of all men of his time, the rigidly scientific and laboriously studious Swede seemed in the maturity of his systematically-cultivated intellect, and in the meridian splendour of his hardly-earned reputation, the very last of whom a proclivity to the occult and visionary could have been safely predicated. His entire training and experience his whole life environment, educational and official, seem to have been diametrically opposed to the development of that

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interior life on which the manifestation of seerdom so essentially depends. To an ordinary observer, he would seem for the first half century of his learned existence to have dwelt of necessity in the objective, and might consequently be supposed very legitimately to have eschewed everything more especially connected with the subjective sphere.

From the first, however, he appears to have been an earnest, and with the advance of years an increasingly serious and religious, man. He seems ever to have loved truth with paramount fidelity, and, while involved in physical investigation, to have regarded matter as the symbol of spirit, and the universe not as a vast sepulchre for the reception in endless succession of death's helpless victims, but rather as the lowly yet glorious portal to eternal sublimities beyond. Studious, thoughtful, and sedate, ever accumulating fresh stores of scientific and other knowledge, sinking from persistence into deeper and yet deeper fits of abstraction, ever becoming more profound in his thoughts, and more solitary in his habits, it is no wonder that eventually an utterly abnormal condition of the nervous system was induced, and ecstacy in some of its highest forms evolved. In a mind of an inferior mould, this might have eventuated in a fit of hypochondriasis, or perhaps of vulgar and chaotic insanity; but in this calm, self-possessed, and faithful man, the crisis terminated not in a subsidence but an exaltation of all the higher mental powers. He emerged from the fiery furnace not a victim, but a victor. He trod Chaos under foot, and, mounting the whirlwind which must otherwise have proved his destruction, converted the dreaming of insanity into the lucidity of inspiration. A mind so profoundly analogical has not elsewhere appeared in these our latter times. A spirit so grandly symbolical in its utterances has not spoken since the seer of Patmos gave his revelation to the seven churches of Asia. Drawing his imagery not from the burning plains and vine-clad hills of Palestine, but from the gloomy grandeur of the cloudy north, he looms on the intellectual horizon, not as a fiery son of Shem, who might ultimately mount heavenward

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in the blazing chariot of his own consuming zeal, but rather as a stern and frowning child of Odin, around whose Lutheranized soul the heathen horrors of the Walhalla feasts still lugubriously linger. His gleams of brightness are like the lurid light of a volcanic eruption, or the occasional flashes of a midnight tempest struggling convulsively for manifestation amidst the surrounding and overwhelming immensity of blackness by which they are everywhere engirdled. He dwells on the "night side" of creation, and contemplates its glories by the fitful radiance of his own northern aurora rather than the cheerful luminosity of the morning dawn. In so far as it is possible for a man to be a prophet without being a poet, he was the seer thus clipped of his soaring pinions, exhibiting his strength of wing indeed not so much by sublime ascents into the shadowless translucencies of the empyrean, as by headlong, yet still daring, descents into those regions of rayless darkness whence hope has for ever departed and where despair is tyrant for eternity. He is no artist, and knows no distinction between the terrible and disgusting, the beautiful and the ridiculous. Anthropomorphous in all his ideas of the Deity and things spiritual, his heavens are terrestrial translations, while his hells are simply the reeking cesspools of earthly abominations. Analogically grand, he is idealistically feeble, and his portraitures of the spiritual are interesting only as psychological curiosities, exhibiting to us at full length the subjective sphere of a grand and gifted, but wayward and perturbed, intellect.

Scientifically, Swedenborg was a spontaneous ecstatic, and in his lucid crises, which seem at last to have become habitual, if not permanent, his subjective conceptions were projected into apparent objectivity, and the spirits of the dead, devils, angels, and God himself, assumed to his interior eye the form and semblance of seemingly sensuous objects, for which, however, he seems never to have mistaken them. He was a conscious clairvoyant, and as such could transfer the knowledge and experiences of his trance-life into the sphere of ordinary consciousness. Modern mesmerists indeed have no

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difficulty in affording him honourable recognition as among the most decisive instances of spontaneously developed lucidity which have occurred in recent times. From the volume of his brain and the extent to which it had been previously disciplined, he was probably the most powerful lucid of the Christian era, and, had he been of an active and energetic instead of a dreamy and sedentary character when his visionary tendencies commenced, there is no calculating the extent to which he might have influenced the faith and practice of Christendom. To say that he would have been a western Mahomet is by no means to exaggerate the possibilities which might have ensued from the appearance of such a being. Gravely informing the governor and inhabitants of Hanover that a fire was then actually raging at Stockholm, and having his description of the conflagration subsequently verified even to the minutest details of time and extent, who shall estimate the influence of such a seersman, had he but felt himself called to found a new instead of modifying an old faith! His authority, with those who believe in the reality of his visions, is of course primal; it is that of a seer who comes commissioned directly from the throne of Omnipotence. Granting his premises of a divine intercommunion, and from his revelation of the truth there is no appeal but to the counter-statements of a similarly favoured ecstatic. He transcends reason and stands on the lofty ground of direct intuition. His first apprehension of the truth is through the spiritual eye, and his subsequent demonstration of its possibility, probability, or necessity, is but a kindly accommodation to the inferior powers of those who dwell in the lower sphere of excogitation. To the members of his Church he is not only a prophet but the chief of the prophets, and stands second only, in the grand hierarchy of spiritualities who have come clothed in flesh, to him over whose birth the angels sang their celestial anthems, and at whose death the sun was clothed in the darkness of a mourning robe. He is the grand complement of the Christian scheme, the mighty angel whose millenial trump announces to earth the descent of that New

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Jerusalem whose analogical archtype was beheld by the rapt Apostle at Patmos during his lonely visions in the Levant. Since the Paradisaical Patriarchs of the primeval church, no son of man has held equally free and unrestrained intercourse with the Lord and his angels. To no mortal mind since the fall has the privilege of direct intercommunion with every order of being been equally vouchsafed. Such is of necessity his aspect to a devout and unexamining believer, who knows Swedenborg and Swedenborg only, and to whom the phenomena of ecstatic illumination, with the mystic sphere of our interior life and its manifold forms of radiant existence, have been revealed only through the multitudinous dissertations of the indefatigable Assessor. Once without this charmed circle, however, with larger data for comparison, and we at once perceive that such an overweening estimate of his special position and authority is quite unwarranted by the facts of the case. We then discover that, though great, he was not unique, although vast, he was one of an order, and has had many predecessors of equal pretensions, and who, without the aid of the press and other advantages which fall to the lot of master-spirits in these latter days, nevertheless achieved greater results than have yet ensued from the labours of the exassayer. The Menus and Hermes', the Gautama Budhas, Zoroasters, and Mahomets, of all ages and countries, were his psychical kin, the variously gifted seermen of their successive generations, to whom it was given to "teach with authority and not as the scribes." Who were in a sense primal and not derivative minds, and spoke from their interior consciousness and not from the exterior and merely deductive intellect, and who thus standing on the plane of intuition commanded thence, as by the right of the strongest, all inter-sphered intelligencies occupying the lower level of reflective thought.

To estimate justly the relative greatness of Swedenborg, then, we must compare him with minds of his order. As an ecstatic there is no other standard by which to estimate his mental stature. Thus admeasured his apparent vastitude

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diminishes, from the Titanic and divine to the gigantic and human. He is still seen to be great, but not pre-eminently overawing, and occupies not the imperial throne of a *founder* but the footstool of an *expositor* of faith. He is not in this highest sense a primary, but a satellite, and revolves with all his dependencies around the grander centre of Calvary, and, in the strictest meaning of the terms, is not a master but a disciple in things spiritual.

Having thus fixed his rank and defined his position in the hierarchy of prophetic souls, let us now look at some of the details of his system and endeavour thence to trace its origin and ascertain its character. Its basis then is immediately Christian and more remotely Judaic and Patriarchal. It accepts without questioning the existent faith of Europe in fundamentals. Hence we learn that Swedenborg was geographically limited as to the impressions whence his ecstatic visions were derived. The son of a Lutheran bishop, his revelations are ever conditioned by the essentials of his paternal faith. He never ascended to the sphere of the absolute, but, in his loftiest moments, was still the dependent creature of time, and place, and circumstance. The accident of his birth in Protestant Sweden, in the eighteenth century, provided that mould for his conceptions of things, both celestial and infernal, which would, doubtless, have been far otherwise fashioned had he been a good Catholic of southern Europe, an orthodox Mussulman of Constantinople, a devout worshipper of Brahma, or a true believer in the manifold incarnations of Budha. In the fundamentals of his creed, he was the child of tradition, and hence, as we have said, can be considered only as a profoundly expository prophet, following in the train of a greater, and never feeling the dread evocation to publish anew the thunder-voiced commands of Omnipotence speaking afresh its Messianic messages to the ages.

On this Christian foundation, however, a superstructure was reared, composed apparently of somewhat heterogeneous materials, derived very obviously from the lucid teachers of the East. Such is his conception of a God who is utterly

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beyond the cognition of his highest creatures, and his consequent manifestation under a human form—that of "the Lord," not only on earth but in heaven, not only through time, but in eternity. To such an extent, indeed, is this dogma pushed that it would eventuate ultimately in the war-cry by his followers, "There is no God but Christ, and Swedenborg is his prophet." This is Budhism—it is the idea of incarnation carried to the extent of a virtual dethronement of the primal intelligence. From Brahminism also comes his other anthropomorphous notion, that not only heaven itself, but all its several societies and individualities, are in the human form, and collectively constitute the grand or celestial man, whose head is occupied by the highest order of angels, his breast and arms by the second order, and his loins and legs, in gradual descent, by those of inferior condition. No Sanscrit scholar will here fail to recognise the teachings of the Vedas. It is simply the transference of a Brahminical legend, by which the institution of Caste is supported, to the Christian heaven. This similarity is indeed admitted by Swedenborgians themselves, who account for it by the assumption (on their teacher's authority) of a primeval church, whose members were ecstatics, and from the fragments of whose purer doctrines the great Eastern creeds of an historically remote antiquity were either directly or mediately derived, and that, consequently, the agreement between Swedenborg and the Vedantic seers is due to both having had an independent intuition of the truth. Even granting this to be the case, the profound student of seerdom would come to the conclusion that, in each instance, this phenomenon of consciousness assumed its peculiar form, from the human speciality of the ecstatic being projected upon the subject-matter of his visions and consequently framing and colouring them with its own peculiarities. Like a spectator on the Brocken, each saw the gigantic reflection of himself, limned on the vapours of a morning sky, and mistook this shadow of mortality for the revelation of a divine personality gloriously manifested amidst the grandeur of the

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dawn. From the prevalence of anthropomorphous ideas in all religions, it is obvious that seers have seldom if ever been unconditioned by their special relationship to the human form of organic life. In the system of the sage of Stockholm this subjection of ideas to the influence of an animal type is so all-pervading that it occasionally becomes a source of the ridiculous, in his portraitures of celestial scenes and supersensuous occurrences. To receive such grotesque conceptions as the everlasting vestment of eternal veracity, indicates an abject subjection to the teachings of seer-vision, from whence we may calculate the power of an ecstatic in ages and among a people less enlightened than our own.

The following facts in the life of Swedenborg decidedly indicate his possession of the clairvoyant faculty, and demonstrate him to have been an ecstatic of no mean order. His gift of seerdom, or, as his followers term it, intromission into the spiritual world, was developed between his fifty-fifth and fifty-seventh year, at that period of crisis, to which we have already alluded in our remarks on Newton, when the passions subside and the merely animal life is subordinated to the moral and intellectual. When the conflicts of antecedent years have subsided into a holy calm, when the studies of youth and the experiences of manhood are ripening into the autumnal fruit of matured wisdom, and the man stands a crowned and laurelled victor upon the dread battle-field of a well-fought life. It appears, however, that from his childhood there was a peculiarity in his respiration, which under intense mental excitement, more especially of a devotional character, could be suspended for a considerable period without inconvenience. This he informs us himself was a preparation for his intercourse with spirits. He termed it internal breathing. It is a condition of the system to which the Indian Yogi sometimes attains by austerity and self-denial, and is considered as the accompaniment and evidence of his absorption in AUM. It is a state approximated to and sometimes fully developed in the trance-sleep, whethe

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spontaneous or induced, and it would appear that Swedenborg was occasionally subject to the former. During his moments of vision also, his countenance beamed with peculiar and almost unearthly intelligence, and his eyes were lit up with a brightness, "like unto a flame of fire," as his gardener's wife expressed it. As with most persons subjected to supposed spiritual visitations, he was occasionally annoyed by the presence of the evil as well as comforted by that of the good, and his attendants could generally judge by the expression of his physiognomy as to the character of his mysterious guests. He spoke much to himself, or rather with his invisible interlocutors, and occasionally rose in the night, to wrestle prayerfully against demonaical assaults and temptations. The experienced phreno-mesmerist will, of course, be at no loss to interpret these oscillations of feeling, and variations in experience. The alternate predominance of coronal and basilar influences, combined with the reaction of a stomach, that had obviously much of the morbid sensibility usually attaching to the digestive function of genius, being amply sufficient to account for this successive presentment of celestial and infernal scenery with appropriate *dramatis personæ* to the mind's eye of the devout philosopher. After the commencement of his seer-life, he became also to a considerable extent a vegetarian and abstainer, partaking largely of *strong*, sweet coffee and gingerbread, and sleeping not at fixed hours, but whenever he felt inclined to rest. The pathologist will here perceive not only the indications, but inducing causes of nervous exaltation, which re-acting on a system predisposed to lucidity, could not fail to increase the number and heighten the character of its manifestations.

The anecdotes which illustrate his possession of supersensuous knowledge are numerous and apparently authentic. Thus, it is said, that after the death of the Prince of Prussia, brother to the Queen of Sweden, her majesty said, "Well, Mr Assessor, have you seen my brother?" "No!" was the reply. But, eight days afterwards, Swedenborg entered

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the queen's apartment, and whispered something in the royal ear, upon which her majesty was taken suddenly ill and did not recover for some time. Upon coming to herself, she said, " only God and my brother can know what he has just told me." It appears that he had informed her of the last subject of her correspondence with the Prince. He afforded similar evidence to a merchant of Elberfield, whose last conversation with a deceased friend was in a similar manner narrated to him by the wonderful and obliging old man. The widow of the Dutch ambassador at Stockholm was also enabled to recover some valuable documents and jewels, by a dream, which she seems to have obtained through the agency of Swedenborg, who being requested to ask her husband respecting the missing articles, called on the lady, in a few days, to state that he had met her deceased partner in the spiritual world the night before ; but he had excused himself from conversation, on the ground that he had something of importance to communicate to his wife. Her dream, it appears, was coincident with this spiritual communication, and must be regarded, on the lowest view of it, as, at least, an extraordinary case of magnetic rapport. While at Amsterdam, in July 1762, he suddenly became absent in the midst of company; and, on being questioned, and repeatedly pressed, he said, " this very hour, the Emperor Peter III. has died in prison," mentioning the manner of his death. The resemblance between this and the vision which Apollonius had at Ephesus, of the death of Domitian, will not fail to strike the attentive reader, and suggest to him the existence of some yet undiscovered law, in virtue of which certain susceptible beings thus obtain cognition of passing events in a manner unattainable by the majority of their race. When starting on a voyage from London to Stockholm, he has been known to announce the very hour at which the vessel would arrive at the latter port. Finally, he foretold the day of his own dissolution, and seems to have passed from this phenomenal world of sorrow and death with the calm joy of one who felt that he was going to his everlasting home, in that

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spirit-land of eternal realities with which he had become so happily familiar.

The foregoing facts are amply sufficient to demonstrate that Swedenborg was a lucid ecstatic of no mean order. On his farther claims to direct spiritual intercourse and authoritative religious teaching, it is not our province to decide. We may here, however, remark, that his annunciations of truth do not depend for their reception simply on his visional cognitions; but as propositions addressed to the rational faculty, carry with them their own evidence, independently of the source whence they were derived. His ordinary followers, doubtless, receive the major part of their faith directly from him, and appeal to his supposed revelations as final in all matters of controversy, this being in strict accordance with those laws of leadership and subordination whereby society has been regulated from the beginning. But his more advanced disciples ever show a tendency to leave the man for the system, and even to regard the latter but as a vestibule to the temple of universal truth. It is as a school for thinkers of the latter order, that his works, and the church which has been founded in his name, are so valuable, and it is through them that the prospective benefits which his grand analogical teachings are calculated to confer on mankind may be reasonably expected. It is from such minds that his obviously extending influence on the higher literature of our age has been derived, and it is to such that we must look for an ultimate winnowing of the chaff from the wheat, and the evolution of those principles, liberated from their needless accessories, which doubtless constitute the real basis of that sublime superstructure of ideas, which this gifted and extraordinary man was permitted to bequeath as his intellectual legacy to posterity.

Like Apollonius, Swedenborg wanted that crowning glory of the prophet, a life of suffering. He ever knew where to lay his head, and never needed the ravens as his heaven-sent servitors. His life was passed in the calm of competence, and hence as his evocation was easy, his mission was peace-

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ful. He was essentially a man of thought, and not of action. A sublime meditationist and not a God-commissioned organizer. And his message in strict accordance with this, was doubtless a preparatory trumpet-blast, and not an ultimate fulfilment. As a promise of good things to come, his system looms largely on the theological horizon. A baptist-messenger of such an order is indicative of a subsequent advent of no common character. If such the man, what will be the master? If such the shadow, what must be the substance? His disciples, naturally, regard his as the great and final, and will doubtless so continue till a greater be manifested. They see not the coercive logic of events, and thus blind to the tremendous concatenations of destiny, flatter themselves that their link is the last in that mystic chain of sequences, which, beginning with time, ends not save in eternity.

As the truthful revelation of an individual subjectivity, the visions of Swedenborg are no doubt eminently interesting, and as a contribution to the facts of psychology their value cannot well be over-estimated. As the analogical vestments of spiritual truths, as the peculiar form under which, from his mental idiosyncracy, he had to conceive of and embody his conclusions respecting a higher stage of existence, his *Heaven and Hell*, his *Arcana Cœlestia* and other theological productions, contain many valuable hints and ideas, and indeed superabound with materials for thought that would not have been so long neglected, but for the rather grotesque, and occasionally even repulsive form under which they were presented. Still, with all their faults, his religious writings constitute a very important addition to our means for the analogical interpretation both of the Old and New Testament, and indeed, we may say, of all sacred books whatsoever.

After all, however, the true greatness of this extraordinary man is to be found, not in his visions, but in his meditations. He is the father of analogy, the master of correspondences, and the revealer of final causes. Here he stands alone, the collossal founder of a sphere of thought in which he had no

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predecessors save those primal sages of the Orient of whose sublime tuitions but the faintest echoes have survived. He is the Bacon of an *a priori* philosophy, and marks the dawn of a return from the microscopic minuteness of analytical experiment dwelling in ultimates to the vastitude and grandeur of synthetic meditation, ascending as by a "right divine" to the sublime altitude of first principles. Of a genius, however, too diffusive for the composition of an organum of analogical science, his modes of thought and investigation must be sought rather in the manifold examples which he has afforded, than in the formal directions which he has provided. His voluminous works are a vast mine of illustrative exposition, in which God and nature, history and philosophy, are presented under aspects which, if startling, are profound; and, if now and then extravagant, are at the same time generally original; a mine which others may work to advantage, and whence blocks will yet be hewn that a more plastic mind shall hereafter fashion into the pleasing forms of perfectly symmetrical beauty. He was essentially a *precursor*, and came not to conclude but to introduce a system. Thus contemplated, his merits cannot well be exaggerated. A born giant, a native Titan, he stood like lesser men with his feet on fact, but, from the godlike greatness of his mental stature, his majestic head at the same time swept the empyrean of principles, where his glance rested on the starry dwellers in their eternal courses, and he listened, as of compulsion, while the spheral harmonies rang out into the supersensuous music of their everlasting anthems. What wonder, then, that he at length grew giddy, and in a sense confused, mingling profound discourse of nature's highest and holiest mysteries with vain babble respecting fantastic visions and waking fancies, at which fools may mock, and whereby the unwary may be led astray, but over which the wise and good will sigh, as a sad, though perhaps instructive instance of limitation even to the noblest faculties, and of fallibility as attaching even to the greatest minds.

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Modern Ecstatics.

The Present is ever the commonplace and prosaic, except to those few gifted minds who prevail to lift the mystic folds which hide the open secret. Genius alone is consciously engirdled with the wonderful; not to the superficial can the profounder depths be directly revealed. Matter of fact is ever blind to the awful, and the man of routine never perceives the gulph in which his diurnal repetitions are to be swallowed till it has already opened beneath his feet. Mediocrity worships the Past, while contemplating it through the medium of those great souls whose revelation of its grandeur has become a traditional inheritance; but is incompetent to perceive the growing greatness of an heroic Present, because this demands independent insight. The existing aspect of the world offers unmistakeable evidence that faiths *have grown*, and history tells us in its dim and inefficient way how, in some instances, men of giant mould have prevailed to found them. But that this should ever occur again, nay, is occurring now, seems to the great mass of believers in all existing creeds the most remote of probabilities, nay, the very direst of impossibilities. That cycles should ever revolve their entire circuit, and recommence with all the increment of the epicycle, may be admitted as an abstract proposition, but its rigid application to any existing scheme is of course most carefully eschewed as a fatal heresy. We may believe that Mahomet flourished in Arabia, and that Menu lived and legislated in India, but the recurrence of such a phenomenon, as it would not prove desirable, is of course to be discredited. But we err; seed-time and harvest will no more fail in the moral than in the physical sphere and the forces which evolved the forms of the past will not be wholly inoperative during the future. The demands of the ages ever suffice to evoke competent instrumentalities for their effectuation, and men of mental stature proportionate to the necessities of successive eras will doubtless be in due

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time provided. Whether any of our more immediate cotemporaries belong to this Titanic class is of course a problem, which coming time alone can solve. They and their schemes will be weighed in the balance, and if found wanting, will of necessity undergo the fate of all inadequacies. In the interim, it may not prove altogether uninteresting or uninstructive to contemplate the character and pretensions of some of the more prominent and influential ecstatics who have lately been, or who now are, on the scene of action.

No. 11. Mrs Buchan.

Antiquity had many sybils, but they were not all equally famous with her of Cumaea; and Arabia has produced many religious reformers, but they have not all proved equally successful with "the camel-driver of Mecca." A favourable position, in reference both to time and place, must be combined with innate ability, ere great and effective results can be achieved in the prophetic career. The seer that in one age or country might have been received with the profoundest reverence, may in another be incarcerated as a lunatic, or maltreated as an imposter. There must not only be energy in the founder of a faith, but receptivity in his disciples. There must not only be the man, but the circumstances; not only the eloquent words and wondrous deeds, but also a combination of favourable influences, ere success in the origination of a creed can be accomplished. Religions are not accidents but logically sequential results; not portents, but growths, and have their seasons, whether for seed time or harvest, which whoso neglects will fail in his husbandry. Seerdom, in short, like all other forms of human activity, is conditioned by the laws of its manifestation, to run counter to which is but to ensure a nullification of our endeavours.

Coarse, ignorant, gross, sensual and impetuous, but nevertheless fearless, eloquent, earnest and enthusiastic, Mrs Buchan possessed, with many apparent disqualifications,

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most of the fundamental and essential elements of leadership. Impulsive in her passions, ardent in her affections, and yet fervent in her devotions, she exhibited the phenomenon so often observed, of intense religiosity of feeling, induced on a life of previous immorality. Capable, when aroused, of vigorous thought and energetic action, innate force of character seems to have given her commanding power over weaker, though better cultured minds, despite the offensive vulgarity of her manners, and even the open profligacy of her habits. A fanatic rather than an impostor, a visionary rather than a hypocrite, she was herself a victim of the delusions which she taught, and impressed others, not by conscious trickery and deception, but by the earnestness of her manner, the rude eloquence of her discourses, and above all, by the many undoubted marvels which were wrought through her instrumentality. Why, then, it may be asked, did she not achieve a wider success, and leave a permanent result like her cotemporary Ann Lee, or her successor Joanna Southcote? Our reply is, that she promulgated her doctrines in a country, and to a people peculiarly unfitted for their reception. Cool, cautious, logical, and discriminative, the Scotch are slow in the formation of opinions. Habituated to doctrinal discourses from the pulpit, their religious convictions are the result of thought rather than feeling. Distrustful of emotion, both in themselves and others, they generally restrain excitement within the limits of reason, and subject even devotional enthusiasm to the control of the judgment. To such an audience Buchanite rhapsodies would seem little other than the ravings of insanity, and where they did not arouse indignation, would simply excite pity. In addition to this, her laxity of conduct could not fail to disgust and offend a people who, with many lapses in practice, still strenuously uphold the principles of the moral law. Scotland, in short, was not the sphere for Mrs Buchan, and so Buchanism has become utterly extinct, perishing with its last surviving disciple, honest Andrew Innes, to whom through the instructive little work of Joseph Train, entitled

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"The Buchanites from First to Last," we are indebted for the following outlines of extraordinary but to us perfectly credible facts respecting the founder and her followers:—

Elspeth Simpson was born in 1738, in the neighbourhood of Portsoy, where her parents kept a small roadside inn. Removed from her father's house at three years of age, in consequence of the death of her mother, she passed a childhood of poverty and privation amidst distant relatives in the country, to be exchanged for a youth of shame and profligacy amidst the brutal excitements of the quays of Greenock. Married eventually to a potter named Buchan, the moral respectability of her new position seems to have utterly failed in producing an effectual reformation of her conduct, of which her husband becoming thoroughly ashamed, a separation took place, apparently by mutual consent, and Mrs Buchan once more commenced life on her own account, first as a schoolmistress, and finally as a prophetess. In the latter capacity she began by passing from house to house, exhorting the astonished inmates to a religious life, by quotations from Scripture, and their subsequent exposition in a strain of wild and fervent eloquence, and ended by declaring herself the mysterious woman spoken of in the Revelations. Thus far, however, her career was simply the common routine of vulgar fanaticism, of which the records of religious enthusiasm could furnish many far more attractive examples. It is not as a preacher, but as a lucide—and even in this character, not for her mental but her corporeal manifestations—that we have selected her as an instance of ecstatic exaltation supervening on a nature in every way so rude as to seem altogether unsuitable for the action of so refined and subtle an influence.

Her first symptoms as a crisiac seem to have occurred in her 36th year, and are thus described by herself:—"In the year 1774 the power of God wrought such a wonderful change in my senses that I overcame the flesh, so as not to make use of earthly food for some weeks, which made all that saw me conclude that I was going to depart this life,

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and many came to hear me speak, which was all about God's love to mortals." Here we have that incipient stage of ecstacy which is indicated by a predominance of the nervous over the alimentary part of the system. On one occasion when unusually exalted, she became transfigured, a phenomenon which is thus described by her faithful follower, Andrew Innes:—"Her face shone so white with the glory of God as to dazzle the sight of those who beheld it, and her raiment was as white as snow." Here we have that powerful radiation of odic light which is so characteristic of the highest state of luminous crisis, and which has been the distinguishing attribute of many of the more eminent saints of all creeds, countries, and ages. In her case the emanation must have been very potent, as it not only lit up her head and face, but seems to have pervaded even her clothes, like moonlight shining through a fleecy cloud. It is observable that this occurred when she and her followers were expecting an immediate translation, and when, therefore, she was probably affected by symptoms of that "lightness of body" to which more favoured ecstatics have occasionally attained. And, finally, she seems to have expired in the full odour of sanctity. "The savoury perfume that rose from her body ere the lid of the coffin was laid down filled the room with its fragrance." So again says plain Andrew Innes. This remarkable change in the character of their emanations has been noticed both during the life and at the death of exalted crisiacs, and is doubtless due to some change in their secretions, resulting from increased action of the brain and nervous system generally.

Such, then, were some of the more remarkable manifestations connected with Mrs Buchan, which it is of course easy to meet by denial. The mesmerist, however, has no occasion to cast any such slight on human testimony. To him they are not impossibilities, but only rare and interesting phenomena, worthy of careful study, and demanding thorough and searching investigation; yet when authenticated, susceptible of easy explanation as facts within the legitimate sphere

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of nature's laws. And so he leaves the blinded prejudice that would reject them without due examination to the weak fanaticism that fears a living rivalry to its traditional wonders, or the bigoted scientialism that would circumscribe the vast resources of the universe by the contracted boundaries of its own limited knowledge.

No. 12.—Joseph Smith,

The Founder of Mormonism.

Nature is the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. The wise know this, but the foolish are ever exclaiming in reference to the rarer phenomena of the present, "never before," and of the past "never again." Nevertheless, what has been shall be, and whatever was still is. Could we see the courses of the grander currents of destiny, shall we say rather the entire outline of the vaster plans of Providence, we should find that even the most seemingly stupendous marvels are recurrent, only their cycle is longer in its revolution and their appearance therefore less frequent than that of ordinary occurrences. The sun sets every evening, but it is only on rare occasions that he is eclipsed. The earthquake is as natural though not so common as the storm, and the comet whose revolution exhausts the centuries is as integral a portion of the universe as the fixed star which shines permanently in its own constellation. Nature was not in convulsions when she birthed a Homer, nor was her equanimity disturbed when she produced a Shakespear. She is equal to all emergencies, sufficient for all demands, and can never be found wanting or taken at unawares. There is no conjuncture to which she is unequal, and no difficulty for which she cannot find a solution. The ages are her schools, and men are her children to be therein educated. The real necessities of a time are the truly evocative spell under which the master-

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spirits of eras are called forth. The man is ever in proportion to the crisis, albeit the true has but too often his precursors in the false. Did France in the agonising throes of her first revolution cry aloud for a deliverer? Verily at the first shall none seemingly be vouchsafed, for what were your Dantons, Marats, and Robespieres but insufficient attempts, apprentice-like failures, in the effort to produce that imperative requirement of the time, a competent leader. But fear not, when the shadows shall have vanished, then will the substance be revealed and a Bonaparte shall appear.

Prophetic visions and inspired calls are not every day occurrences. But they have been, and therefore they will be, "facts in nature." Seers even to the highest were men, and to their cotemporaries loomed forth perhaps not so grandly as to posterity. Elijah "clothed in a garment of camel's hair, and having a leathern girdle about his loins," running before the chariot of Ahab, did not doubtless to an ordinary spectator seem exactly the glorious personage who should eventually mount heavenwards in a fiery vehicle of his own. Distance lends enchantment to the view in things moral as well as physical. The poetry of a worshipful fact is never fully revealed till it be seen in due perspective:—then its grandeur, beauty, power, and sublimity, come boldly out from the mass of surrounding common-place, and stand forth in ever-increasing and awe-inspiring vastitude, to the admiration of an endless posterity. Time is the great canonizer. He makes the vulgar venerable. There is a halo from the ages to which the existent can never attain. Thus the prophet survives and sanctifies the man, till at length, as with the "son of the Koreish," the very mending of shoes and patching of cloaks becomes an indication of nobility.

Joe Smith was beyond all doubt a vulgar fellow, a man to all outward appearance of an order the most irretrievably common-place, a rustic Yankee, whom nature not only makes by the gross, but the million, and of whom the like might be found in any village throughout the Union. Coarse, ignorant,

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and cunning, a more unlikely person than our friend Joseph for the prophetic mission could scarcely be conceived; yet this was the man chosen out of twenty millions to found a new creed and seal its truth as with a martyr's blood. Truly, "vessels of grace" are not always comely in the eyes of their own blinded generation. Thus, in the present case, beneath this very unpromising exterior, mental and corporeal, was there most obviously a spirit, of which the equal is not, from some cause, of daily manifestation among us sons of mortality. Seriously then it may be asked, what was Joe Smith, and what is Mormonism? The former we reply was a *natural ecstatic*, and the latter is one of those nascent creeds to which, in the days their nonage, vision and miracle are usually vouchsafed. As to the first assertion, let Joseph himself be spokesman. He tells us that in the spring of 1823, when he was fifteen or sixteen years old, he began to think about the salvation of his soul. He went one day to a secret place in a grove, knelt down, and began to call upon the Lord, and, praying fervently, at length *beheld a very bright and glorious light* in the heavens above. This was accompanied with a peculiar sensation throughout his system, his mind was caught away from surrounding objects, and he beheld two glorious personages, who foretold somewhat of his future career. On the 21st of September in the same year, he seems to have had *another vision*, in which he saw a personage of a pleasing, glorious, and innocent appearance, who intimated to him the locality where he might find the golden plates of the Book of Mormon. Here are the distinctive features of ecstacy, such as the saintly biographies of every creed in its infancy are sure to provide in abundance. Nor is this all: Joseph it seems was also "a peeper," that is, he was odically *susceptible to the influence of crystals*, for, having when engaged in sinking a well found a bright stone of a peculiar appearance, he placed it in his hat, and said that he could see in it. This it appears originated the Urim and Thummim, by which he was greatly aided in translating the ancient language of the golden leaves. In

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addition to this, it would appear that during many years the ostensible employment of the Smith family was digging for money, an occupation not unfrequently pursued by those who are gifted with susceptibility to the influence of the divining rod. The evidence then that Smith was an ecstatic or natural clairvoyant is not only satisfactory and sufficient, but must prove irresistible with all duly qualified judges. The symptoms are unmistakeable, and the patient stands confessed a *rustic seer*, who in another age or country might have proved a harmless dreamer of dreams, or, at the worst, have been suddenly and effectually snuffed out, like "mad Tom of Canterbury," a man by the way in many respects immeasurably superior to the rude Vermonter.

Such was the author. Now what is his book? A convicted plagiarism. A religious novel by the Rev. Solomon Spaulding, converted into the pretended production of a Hebrew prophet. The story of the golden plates is doubtless a pious fraud, but, in all probability, sanctioned to the mind of the inventor by the directions of some ghostly visitant. The real origin of the Book of Mormon is, however, of little importance to the world. The question is, what are its fruits? And Destiny replies, 300,000 converts in twenty years, with society organised on a new basis, and a propaganda whose missionary enterprises insure aggressive action on all the leading nations of the civilized world. How this has been accomplished by an instrumentality so apparently inefficient is a problem which literary criticism, as such, cannot solve. We laugh at the Koran, and treat the Mormon Bible with contempt: but facts are against us, for these confused, bombastic, and thoroughly ridiculous works, are nevertheless received as inspired productions, on whose sentences men are not only contented to live but prepared to die. In our learned refinement we forget that it is not solely by his intellectual gifts and graces that a prophet generally impresses himself, either on his cotemporaries or posterity. Mahomet was, and Schamyl probably is, a barbarian in this respect. Not by the legerdemain of elegance or fluency in

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composition, but by the grandly contagious enthusiasm of a deeply-moved and profoundly visionary spirit, is it that the electric fire of sympathetic excitement is roused in duly sensitive minds, who, once intersphered with an appropriate master or a duly prepared school, become from that moment hopelessly enthralled.

Such are the prophet and his book, and now let us ask what is the system to which they have given birth? Facts compel us to answer, that in a moral point of view, it is a profligate fanaticism under which men, on pretence of being guided immediately by inspiration, have found occasion to indulge in the most unbridled licentiousness. While in their endeavour to legalise such proceedings, and obtain for them the sanction of religion, they have, so far as their own community extends, rolled back society on the barbarous institutions of remote ages and restored the rudeness without the innocence of primeval times. The possession of power is a sore temptation to our weak and erring humanity. Success and not failure is the touchstone of the sage. The Mormon leaders are obviously men, and of them we can scarcely say,—

"Their failings lean to virtue's side."

To the philosophic observer of men and manners, this reappearance of Oriental institutions in the far West, where it begins to face the extreme East, is not without significance. But on this we cannot here dilate. As we have already said, the Mormons profess to be guided by direct inspiration, and to possess the power of healing the sick by the laying on of hands. There is probably a basis of truth in both these towering pretensions. Founded by an ecstatic, they have doubtless inherited from their leader a proclivity to interior excitement, and will, like all similar bodies, transmit it as an heirloom to their more immediate successors. The following passages from the history of the Mormons by Lieut. Gunnison, of the Topographical Engineers, U. S., will afford an idea of the scenes sometimes enacted among these high-wrought enthusiasts. He is describing what took

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place at Kirkland, Ohio, in the early days of the Church: "There were ecstacies—men and women falling on the floor in the public assemblies, wallowing, rolling, and tossing of hands—pointing into the heavens at the cloud of witnesses, uttering Indian dialects—there was swooning, rushing out of doors and running into the fields. Some would pick up stones, and read from characters of writing which were miraculously made and then suddenly disappeared. Others found pieces of parchment falling upon them which they declared were sealed with the seal of Christ, and which they no sooner copied than they vanished. Visions, tongues, trances, shoutings, weeping and laughing, the outpouring of prophecies, and terrible cursing of the Missourians, and preaching to unseen nations, were among the signs following at Kirkland." No student of ecstacy will here be at a loss to perceive all the signs of its presence. The people were obviously wrought up to a pitch of fanatical enthusiasm, under which every form of morbid manifestation was to be expected. Such is the inspiration of the saints: while their miraculous healings are simply mesmeric and biological cures, wrought by the combination of faith in the patient with confidence in the operator, which unwise and prejudiced opponents may foolishly deny, but which a truly enlightened and liberal science will acknowledge and explain.

It has been often observed that extremes meet, and hence we suppose it is, that plain, practical, utilitarian, dollar-loving America proves to be precisely the place for fanatical outbursts and theological commotions. Revivalist camp-meetings, spirit-rapping circles, and Mormon migrations, are the tributary streams of that great current of religious enthusiasm which has been long setting in on the States, probably as a needful counterpoise to that very direct practicality of thought, which has itself arisen from the stern necessity imposed on the inhabitants of the new world for rapidly developing the material resources of their imperfectly settled country. This aspect of the subject, however, has more extensive bearings than the geographical boundaries of the

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Union. Mormonism finds comparatively ready acceptance here as well as there, and attracts its disciples from the crowded cities of the old as well as the thinly peopled prairies of the new world. Straws, in themselves insignificant indicate the direction of the tempest. The success of heterodoxy is, as we have elsewhere remarked, the admeasurement of orthodoxy's incompetency. So contemplated, Mormonism is a sign of the times not altogether devoid of importance. People do not go by the 100,000 into the wilderness without an adequate motive. The desert is not converted into a garden, nor do cities arise as by magic amidst the primeval rudeness of the mountain and the forest, without the presence of a powerfully evocative and effectually creative spirit. That the apparently primal agent of such immediately extensive and grandly prospective changes was, as admeasured by all ordinary standards of moral worth or intellectual greatness, inherently and unutterably insignificant, nay absolutely contemptible, only adds to the real importance of the movement, for it shows all the more clearly how thoroughly prepared must have been the soil whence a harvest so substantial and abundant could be gathered from seed so very indifferent and by tillage so very unskilful. Such phenomena indubitably and forcibly demonstrate the existence of a deeply seated and widely pervasive feeling of dissatisfaction on the part of no inconsiderable portion of the Christian public of Britain and America with the prevalent systems of theology. Were there real contentment, such facts could never exist, for they arise from a morbid craving for change, a diseased hankering after pseudo-religious excitement, which having sought relief in vain, by making the circuit of ordinary sectarianism, eventually embraces the blasphemous doctrines and brutal obscenities of Mormon impiety.

As we have said, Utah in the wilderness is a sign which those whom it may concern would do well to note. Its real importance, however, we hold to be rather prospective than present. Smith was but a precursor. He had none of the qualities of a true master builder. To him pure eleva-

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tion of thought and real earnestness of feeling were unknown. He had none of that overwhelming sublimity of conception, that innate grandeur of purpose, that overawing nobility of nature, which we find ever attaching to the veritable architectors of theosophy. He was so essentially vulgar that even visional ecstacy could not raise him above the commonplace. His tale of the golden plates is a clumsy fabrication, and his narrative of their exhumation prosy in the extreme. Compared with it, the Gabriel of Mahomet and the Egeria of Numa are poetry embodied. Smith, in short, was a Yankee edition of the seer, a New England phase of the prophet. The success of a pretender so unutterably contemptible is, however, a grave reality, to whose indications we should not remain wilfully blind or foolishly insensible. Let us remember that shadows ever precede substances, and where the former have loomed so largely the latter cannot be far behind. The want of a teacher must indeed have been urgent when Joe Smith could be accepted as a heaven-sent witness of the truth. Of Mormonism itself, then, we have no fear. It is a vulgar fanaticism, whose force will be expended in less than a century. But, as a premonitory symptom, its importance cannot well be over-estimated. It is No. 1 of a series whereof the rapping excitement may be considered as No. 2, and the late revivals as No. 3. The theological atmosphere is electric, and it requires no great exertion of vaticinatory power to determine that a thunder-storm is impending.

The rise and progress of Mormonism affords an instructive lesson to those who bigotedly oppose the diffusion of mesmerism. Had there been anything like a general knowledge of the phenomena usually attendant on abnormal states of the nervous system, or had the mass of the people been habituated to the wonderful cures which mesmeric manipulations occasionally effect, Joe Smith's visions and the Mormon saints' miraculous healings would have proved perfectly innocuous. As it is, they have led many thousands of other-

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wise respectable men and women into courses from which on the ground of morality alone, without any reference to religion, they would, but for such lamentable mystification, have shrunk with disgust and horror unspeakable.

No. 13.—Schamyl,
Leader of the Caucasian Tribes.

Of all the individuals now attracting public attention, few perhaps are more really worthy of careful and attentive study than the warrior-prophet, Schamyl, the heroic chieftain of the Caucasus. Of his military achievements all have heard, but comparatively few perhaps are aware that to this distinction he adds that of the prophetic founder of a new faith. Of a frame originally small and weak, he is nevertheless endowed with invincible courage and an indomitable will. The frail tenement encloses a mind whose robust hardihood more than compensates for the feebleness of its corporeal instrument. Endowed with all the energy of commanding genius, he has, like many others of his class, compelled an inferior physical organization to the performance of its appropriate duties, till at length it has in some measure partaken of the force of its prime mover. The great soul has at length energized the incapable body, and the sickly boy has eventuated in the enduring and adventurous soldier. Thoughtful and profoundly meditative even in early youth, of a retired and quiet disposition, he was from many causes prone to solitude. This he found in the rugged grandeur of the rocky altitude which surmounts his native village of Himry, where, in a spot wild, desolate, and romantic as his own young thoughts, he cultivated those habits of abstract contemplation which prepared him for his subsequent mission. Alone, yet not afraid, he often lingered long into the night in this rudely sequestered retirement, perhaps not the less attractive to such a mind because reported by his countrymen to be the abode of

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troubled spirits whose presence was announced by the volcanic flames which would suddenly burst from the mountain precipices around.

Asia seems the cradle of religions. All enduring theological forms have hitherto had their birth in the weird elements which there engirdle every thoughtful mind as with an atmosphere of devotional mysticism. If the West be essentially intellectual in its mental constitution, the East is as essentially moral. If the one be thoughtful, the other is emotional; and, if philosophy be the mission of the former, theosophy is equally that of the latter. The heroes of Europe have been political leaders; the master-spirits of Asia have been legislators and prophets. The second sight of the Occident may be a *curiosity*, but the seerdom of the Orient is a *power*, before which thrones have crumbled and dynastic distinctions have been obliterated. The claim to preternatural authority based on supernatural illumination sounds strange and quackish to European ears, but the Asiatic regards it as a time-honoured respectability, in which it would be disreputable not to believe, and on the examination of whose merits he enters with a foregone and decidedly favourable conclusion. Prophets are regarded as beings in the course, if not of nature, at least of Providence, and the occasional manifestation of such a phenomenon is among the ordinary expectances of human affairs. Hence the emergence of men of obscure lineage and moderate learning into the distinguished position of spiritual guides, teaching "not, as the scribes," by traditional authority, but by a light directly vouchsafed to them from above, is not so uncommon as to excite unbounded astonishment, or so opposed to the general current of public opinion as to arouse distrust. The dreamer, the enthusiast, or the visionary, has here no fear of being considered and treated as a lunatic on the one hand, or an impostor on the other. He has simply to make good his claims by the performance of works sufficiently wonderful to give him an influence over the vulgar, or by the announcement of doctrines so far imbued with mysticism and profundity as to stimulate

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the curiosity and test the logical acumen of the learned and select.

Schamyl has promulgated a new phase of Soofeeism, that hereditary and highly spiritualized theosophy which underlies the dogmas of nearly all Asia's manifold and apparently dissimilar sects. Implying the gift of lucid vision and mental sympathy in varying degrees in its different ranks of disciples and teachers, it places the higher orders of its hierarchy in immediate communication with the essences of things, but in the special form developed by Schamyl it presupposes its prophet-founder and hierophant to be in direct communion with God and occasionally to be absorbed into his being. Stripped of its conventionalities, this is *ecstacy systematized*, the varied gradations of susceptibility, as being supposed to afford evidence of successive ascensions into light, knowledge, purity, and spirituality, constituting the claim of the subject to a certain position in this hierarchial constitution. More complicated than the system of Mahomet, it implies greater educational attainments in its founder, and perhaps a more advanced stage of mental development in its believers. But it is doubtful whether with all this it has the same boldness of outline or the same grandeur and originality of conception in its dogmas. It has obviously lost in breadth what it has gained in height and depth, and has, we should think, little of that simplicity and practicality in its doctrines and ordinances which would qualify it for the rapid and extensive diffusion which awaited the faith of Islam. Schamyl is an extraordinary man, but he is not equal to the son of the Koreish. He did not begin this spiritual despotism, the basis of which was laid by Kasi Mullah, his perceptor and leader, whose mantle he inherited after the fatal fight at Himry, where Kasi Mullah was slain with most of his devoted followers, and Schamyl fell, pierced by two balls, at the side of his master. The present hero indeed rather occupies the position of Ali or one of the earlier caliphs than of the primal founder of a new faith. The dangers and difficulties of his position may suffice to keep up his own ecstatic exaltation, and stimulate

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the veneration of his followers: but we greatly doubt whether this mere adaptation of the old tenets of Soofeeism to the temporary necessities of a mountain clan will long outlast the passing circumstances which have called it forth, or prevail to spread beyond the geographical limitations of the people and country of its birth.

Conclusion.

Altogether ours is an unsettled age. The prairies of America, the mountains of western and the plains of eastern Asia, are simultaneously enkindled with the lurid light of visional illumination. There must be a demand for such weird phenomena or they would not be evolved. We think the present forms are transitory. We see no indications of the commanding genius of a Menu or a Mahomet in such a vulgar dreamer as Joe Smith, or even in the dauntless hero-prophet Schamyl. These men are, we think, obviously of the temporary and provisional order only, but are they not premonitory indications of a futur theologically tempestuous beyond any past? Once more we say, let those whom it may concern look well to the signs of the times, for verily they are momentous to a degree seldom equalled.

Let not the reader suppose that we have exhausted the subject-matter of these prelections, that history and biography furnish no further materials for such dissertations as the foregoing. This were a grave mistake, and would indicate an utter incompetency to estimate aright the immense, we might say with truth, the quite incalculable, influence which ecstatic illumination has exercised over human affairs. Do we behold those plastic forces, the mighty creeds and the enduring codes which have fashioned the minds of men from age to age? Therein may we contemplate the effects of that mental exaltation under which the master-spirits of our

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race have spoken with a power which ensured obedience, and with an authority from whence there was no appeal. We speak of Genius; in the ecstatic we behold this glorious, and shall we say it, divine, endowment in its highest form of manifestation. Would we in any respect approach to a comprehension of the vast capability which may re-found the polities and re-edify the institutions of humanity's future, would we even in part understand the mental constitution of those Titanic souls whose Promethean fire has been the light and the life of the ages, we must first study the phenomena of interior illumination, and thus be enabled to understand that grandeur of conception and vastitude of thought which made their possessors the moulds of time. Have we anywhere indubitable evidence of originality, do we at any period discern the traces of a veritably creative intellect, there also, may we be assured, are those giant vestiges which ecstacy ever leaves upon its path, the enduring monument, *perennius ære*, which giants alone could prevail to erect.

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