OCCULT REVIEW

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO THE INVESTIGATION OF SUPER-NORMAL PHENOMENA AND THE STUDY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

EDITED BY RALPH SHIRLEY

"Nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri"

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NOTES OF THE MONTH

THE name of Michael Scot is principally familiar to English readers through Sir Walter Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel.* Shakespeare's *Tempest* and Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* are probably the two best known works among English classics, which breathe throughout the weird and fascinating atmosphere of mediæval magic. Prospero is a magician, and the whole plot of the *Tempest* is based upon his magical practices and their consequences. The Lady of Branksome in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* has also learned from her father the " forbidden art."

MICHAEL SCOT.

> Her father was a clerk of fame
> Of Bethune's line of Picardy.
> He learned the art that none may name
> In Padua far beyond the sea.
> Men said he changed his mortal frame
> By feats of magic mystery.

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For when in studious mood he paced
  St. Andrew's cloistered hall,
His form no darkening shadow traced
  Upon the sunny wall.
And of his skill, as bards avow,
  He taught that ladye fair,
Till to her bidding she could bow
  The viewless forms of air.

In order the more effectually to accomplish her purposes, she dispatches her staunch henchman, William of Deloraine, to Melrose Abbey, where lies buried the wizard, Michael Scot, and buried with him, the Book of Might, which contains those potent spells through which the great wizard had achieved his world-wide celebrity. "The Monk of St. Mary's Aisle," now an ecclesiastical veteran of some hundred summers, had in earlier days fought the Moslem on the fields of Spain, and had there met and become an intimate friend of the much dreaded wizard. He had attended him at his death-bed, and had himself buried him in Melrose Abbey, receiving injunctions from him in his last hours never to allow the Book of Might to be disinterred "save at his chief of Branksome's need." For Michael Scot himself was a native of Teviot Dale, though his life had been spent in Italy, in Spain, and at Palermo in Sicily in attendance at the court of the Emperor Frederick II, whose fame became in a curious way linked with his own. The date of Michael Scot's departure from Sicily for Spain was approximately 1210 A.D., and coincided with the turning point of that long war of centuries which ended in the ejection of the Moorish conquerors from the Spanish peninsula. 1212 A.D. was the date of the decisive battle of Las Navas, which resulted in a crushing defeat for the Moorish forces, and led within fifty years to their retirement from all parts of Spain with the exception of the province of Granada. Scot was at this time in Spain pursuing his studies in Alchemy, Astrology, and the forbidden arts generally, and translating the works of the learned Arabians, Avicenna, Averroes and Geber, and rewriting their paraphrases of Aristotle in the Latin tongue, which was then the universal medium for the dissemination of all scientific and philosophic knowledge throughout Europe.

THE SPAIN OF MICHAEL SCOT.

We may imagine the monk of St. Mary's Aisle in his early days fighting the Moorish hosts in Spain and engaged perhaps in the great battle of Las Navas, which sealed their doom. Here he is represented by the poet as striking up a firm friendship with the student and philosopher, Michael Scot, and learning from him

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the secret of his magical practices. As the monk is represented as telling William of Deloraine—

> In those far climes it was my lot
> To meet the wondrous Michael Scot,
> A wizard, of such dreaded fame,
> That when, in Salamanca's cave,
> Him listed his magic wand to wave,
> The bells would ring in Notre Dame!
> Some of his skill he taught to me;
> And, Warrior, I could say to thee
> The words that cleft Eildon hills in three,
> And bridled the Tweed with a curb of stone:
> But to speak them were a deadly sin;
> And for having but thought them my heart within,
> A treble penance must be done.

These achievements, according to the legend, were attributed to Michael Scot's "familiar," to whom he entrusted first one task and then another, but finding his energies too tireless, and fearing he might engage in some mischief which would react detrimentally on himself, finally sent him to spin ropes of sand at the mouth of the Tweed. This operation being an unending one, is said to be still in progress, and as his biographer relates, the successive attempts and failures of the spirit are pointed out as every tide casts up or, receding, uncovers the ever-shifting sands of Berwick bar. The reference to bridling the Tweed with a curb of stone, is an allusion to the basaltic dyke which crosses the bed of the river near Ednam. Michael, according to the tale, enjoyed that complete mastery of words of power which in the traditions of ancient magic is so potent a force in the working of wonders. As the monk records in his conversation with the knight of Branksome—

SCOT'S "FAMILIAR."

> The words may not again be said
> That he spoke to me on deathbed laid.
> They would rend this abbaye's massy nave
> And pile it in heaps above his grave.

The monk was not unnaturally alarmed at the power that this archworker of spells might have given to the fiends of darkness, and took precaution to bury him

> . . . On St. Michael's night
> When the bell tolled one and the moon was bright,

so that the cross of his patron saint reflected by the light of the moon from the emblazoned window pane might fall on the spot which was chosen for his grave. Once again on this fateful night the Red Cross was reflected on the sepulchral stone, and the

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opportunity which this offered to take possession of the Book of Might undisturbed by the hosts of darkness, must be taken without delay. Within the grave was one of those ever-burning lamps, for the existence of which there seems to be some historical evidence, and which was to serve in the present instance as a further protection for the wizard against the fiends of night. Deloraine's task achieved " by dint of passing strength " with the aid of a bar of iron handed him by the monk, the light

THE "CROSS OF RED."

Streamed upward to the chancel roof
And through the galleries far aloof.
  No earthly flame blazed e'er so bright ;
  It shone like Heaven's own blessed light.
Before their eyes the Wizard lay
As if he had not been dead a day,
  His hoary beard in silver roll'd
  He seem'd some seventy winters old ;
A palmer's amice wrapp'd him round,
With a wrought Spanish baldric bound,
  Like a pilgrim from beyond the sea :
His left hand held his Book of Might ;
A silver cross was in his right ;
  The lamp was placed beside his knee.
High and majestic was his look,
At which the fellest fiends had shook,
  And all unruffled was his face ;
  They trusted his soul had gotten grace.

William of Deloraine hesitated to perform what seemed very like an act of sacrilege. He was used to battlefields, but panic seized him in this strange scene, and the monk was eventually compelled to warn him that delay in such circumstances was dangerous.

Now speed thee what thou hast to do,
Or, warrior ! we may dearly rue,
  For those thou may'st not look upon
  Are gathering fast round the yawning stone.
Then Deloraine, in terror, took
From the cold hand the mighty book
  With iron clasped and with iron bound.
  He thought, as he took it, the dead man frowned ;
But the glare of the sepulchral light
Perchance had dazzled the warrior's sight.

How the knight and priest withdrew from the chapel after the tombstone had been replaced, in the redoubled gloom of the night, " with wavering steps and with dizzy brain," imagining the walls of the chapel echoing with fiendish laughter as they retreated,

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is recounted dramatically enough by the bard of the Scottish border. We are, perhaps, more interested to know what manner of man this Michael Scot was, and how far these records of his magical powers are based on anything more than unauthenticated tradition. The facts we possess with regard to Michael Scot's career convince us indeed that he was a man of the greatest erudition and learning, and far in advance of his contemporaries in these respects. He was a noted mathematician, and not content with gaining the highest honours in the schools of Paris of that day, he subsequently pursued his studies still further at the fountain-head of mathematical and alchemical research at Toledo in Spain. For it must be remembered that we owe the basis of our mathematical knowledge primarily to the Arabs who introduced to Europe not only the Arabic numerals in place of the cumbrous Roman figures, but also the study of Algebra, itself an Arabic word. To the Arabs, too, we owe the basis of our Chemistry—a word that is, of course, synonymous with Alchemy, which again bears the stamp of its Arabian origin. It is curious indeed to note how far the civilization of the Arab was in advance of that of the greater part of Europe in those days Five hundred yea·s before Michael Scot took ship from Sicily for Spain, the Arabs had advanced across the whole of Northern Africa, conquering Egypt, Tripoli ,Algieria, and Morocco in turn, and finally crossing to Spain and there establishing a separate khaliphate in the eighth century of the Christian era. The invasion of Spain by the Arabs introduced into the Iberian peninsula a literary culture of a kind till then quite unknown. Under the sway of the Moorish sovereigns the arts and architecture flourished, and science found a welcome which it met with nowhere else in Christianized Europe.

A NOTED MATHEMATICIAN.

It was to the Moorish capital that students of the medical art repaired who desired to master the latest discoveries and most modern methods in the treatment of the human body. Irrigation with the Moors had become an applied science, and was employed extensively throughout the Iberian peninsula with the most advantageous results in enhancing the fertility of the soil Nowhere else in Europe did the land yield such rich harvests, and nowhere else was the science of agriculture so fully understood. The fertile fields of those days are in many cases replaced by barren deserts and the towns with teeming populations by ruins and uninhabited wastes. The ignorant peasantry that has taken the place of the cultivated sons of Arabia are still in the

INDUSTRIAL AND INTELLECTUAL SUPREMACY OF MOORS.

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matter of civilization and commercial activity hundreds of years behind the busy and intelligent population whom in the latter part of the fifteenth century they finally drove over the seas after subjecting them to the most cruel persecution for adhering to the faith of their fathers. Three million Moors are said to have been ejected from Spanish soil at the bidding of the civil power, instigated by ecclesiastical tyranny. Civilization has not yet rallied from the so-called " triumph of the Cross " in Spain. This ejection of the Moors from the west of Europe coincided, as it happened, with the advent of the Turk at Constantinople ; but here, by a curious contradiction, the Turk as the champion of Mohammedanism represented not progress but the triumph of the sword. The case was inverted, but in each instance it represented the victory of barbarism over civilization, whether the Mohammedan made headway in the east or the Christian in the west. In the east the effete remnant of the Eastern Empire was swept away before the advancing hosts of Islam. In the west a far more highly developed and industrial population was wiped out at the bidding of the myrmidons of the Papal See.

For five hundred years the Moors had ruled all but the northernmost portion of Spain, and for another 250 they retained the province of Granada. Countless examples of their ornate and characteristic semi-oriental architecture remain behind as a record of their artistic culture, and much also of their language intermingled with that of the race which they at first conquered and which in the days of their luxury and decadence reconquered them in turn. But the intellectual life of Moorish Spain which was for so long like a beacon light in the darkness of Mediæval Europe, has passed, never to return. The Inquisition marked the high-water mark of the reaction of Christian bigotry against the tolerant and broad-minded intellectuality which had flourished under the fostering dominion of a race whose glories to-day are but a memory of the far-distant past.

Scot as a mathematician, alchemist and astrologer, had this been his sole life's work, would have merited no insignificant niche in the temple of Science ; but in addition to this he exercised, though in an entirely indirect manner, a marked influence on the history of Europe. His talents and learning commended him for the position of tutor to Frederick II, at that time king only of Sicily, but afterwards "Emperor of the Romans." Frederick was an orphan, having lost both his parents in early childhood, and the receptive mind of the ardent boy responded sympathetically to the instructions of his broad-minded and accomplished tutor,

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who was destined subsequently to become his confidant and friend.

Michael Scot's first efforts as an author had for their aim the education of his royal pupil. For this purpose he first wrote the *Liber Introductorius* and afterwards the *Liber Particularis* and the *Physionomia*. The first two of these books dealt with astronomy and astrology, and the latter with physiognomy and the reading of character from the physical appearance.

Marriages were arranged early in those days, and Frederick when a boy of but fourteen was united in wedlock, at the Pope's desire, with Constance, daughter of the King of Aragon, and widow of the King of Hungary, who was some ten years his senior. This brought the attendance of Michael Scot at the court at Palermo temporarily at least to an end, and led to his setting sail, as already narrated, for the coasts of Spain. It appears that the *Physionomia* was his parting gift on his marriage to his illustrious pupil. On his arrival in Spain Scot betook himself to the headquarters of the scientific activities of those days, the renowned city of Toledo. Here, towards the middle of the twelfth century, a regular school for translations from the Arabic had been established, and it was work of this kind on which Scot himself embarked. Here he translated the *Abbreviatio Avicennæ* with a dedication to the Emperor Frederick in the following terms : " O ! Frederick, Lord of the World, and Emperor, receive with devotion this book of Michael Scot, that it may be a grace unto thy head and a chain about thy neck "—no empty compliment as such phrases generally are, nor one unappreciated by its distinguished recipient. Here, too, he pursued his studies in alchemy, chemistry, medicine, and astrology. Alchemy in those days was a special bone of contention, one school maintaining its feasibility, and the other denouncing it after the manner of nineteenth century scientists, as a mere will-o'-the-wisp. The belief in it which later on took hold of Mediæval Europe had not yet met with any general sort of acceptance, though the Arabian school in the main adopted it, and there seems little doubt that it was held by Michael Scot himself. One book indeed on this particular subject, *De Alchimia*, is attributed to his pen. The book is contained in a manuscript in possession of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. If, however, the main part of the work is genuine, which is somewhat uncertain, the dedication to Theophilus, King of the Scots, is certainly not so. We have in this book a curious formula for turning lead into gold, which runs as follows :—

MARRIAGE OF FREDERICK.

ALCHEMICAL STUDIES.

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Medibibaz the Saracen of Africa used it to change lead into gold in the following manner. Take lead and melt it thrice with caustic (comburenti), red arsenic, sublimate of vitriol, sugar of alum, and with that red tuchia of India which is found on the shore of the Red Sea, and let the whole be again and again quenched in the juice of the Portulaca marina, the wild cucumber, a solution of sal ammoniac, and the urine of a young badger. Let all these ingredients then, when well mixed, be set on the fire, with the addition of some common salt, and well boiled until they be reduced to one-third of their original bulk, when you must proceed to distil them with care. Then take the marchasite of gold, prepared talc, roots of coral, some carcha-root, which is an herb very like the Portulaca marina ; alum of Cumæ something red and saltish, Roman alum and vitriol, and let the latter be made red ; sugar of alum, Cyprus earth, some of the red Barbary earth, for that gives a good colour ; Cumæan earth of the red sort, African tuchia, which is a stone of variegated colours and being melted with copper changeth it into gold ; Cumæan salt which is pure red arsenic, the blood of a ruddy man, red tartar, gumma of Barbary, which is red and worketh wonders in this art ; salt of Sardinia which is like. . . . Let all these be beaten together in a brazen mortar, then sifted finely and made into a paste with the above water. Dry this paste, and again rub it fine on the marble slab. Then take the lead you have prepared as directed above, and melt it together with the powder, adding some red alum, and some more of the various salts. This alum is found about Aleppo (Alapia), and in Armenia, and will give your metal a good colour. When you have so done you shall see the lead changed into the finest gold, as good as what comes from Arabia. This have I, Michael Scot, often put to the proof and ever found it to be true.

Whether the statement appearing in the manuscript under his name, that Michael Scot worked on this recipe, be true or not, one would not envy the task of the modern chemist who was called upon to compound the prescription. The basic idea of alchemy which since the discovery of radium is looked upon with some favour by certain advanced scientists, that all metals are reducible to a single substance, and therefore theoretically interchangeable, does not seem to find much place in this curious prescription, which suggests the idea of what we should call to-day a gold-substitute, rather than the genuine metal itself, in spite of the fact that we are told that the gold in question would prove " as good as what comes from Arabia."

SCOT TRANSLATES AVERROES.

The greatest work of Scot as translator was his reproduction in Latin of the commentary of Averroes on the *De Anima* of Aristotle. This book, which expounded views on theological problems which were the reverse of orthodox, was long held back from publication by Scot's patron, the Emperor Frederick, who hesitated to incur obloquy, and in especial the hostility of the Pope by reason

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of its publication. Friction, however, between the Papal See and the Emperor became so acute in the end that it appeared useless to attempt to placate papal bigotry further, and the publication in question was thus finally given to the world.

The study of the writings of Averroes had indeed taken very strong hold on Scot's imagination, and if the story may be accepted as authentic, he even went so far as to attempt to evoke the spirit of the great Arabian, presumably with a view to securing his assistance in the work which he had in hand. There is nothing intrinsically improbable in the supposition that Scot practised or experimented in such methods of evocation. Averroes had only been dead some twenty years when Scot was in Spain, and holding the views he did, he may well have thought that the philosopher's spirit had not passed so far from the physical plane that some form of necromantic conjuration of his conscious personality would be ineffectual. Here as elsewhere it seems impossible to draw the line between record of fact and that fabric of legend and tradition which has been woven round the story of his life.

A number of the stories told of Scot's magical achievements reduce themselves in the light of modern knowledge to the results of highly developed hypnotic powers. As my readers will be aware, such achievements are not unknown in India at the present day. A Florentine authority gives us one of these anecdotes. Scot's guests at dinner, we are told, once asked him to show them a new marvel. The month was January. Yet in spite of the season he caused vines with fresh shoots and ripe grapes to appear on the table. The company were bidden each of them to choose a bunch, but their host warned them not to put forth their hands till he should give the sign. At the word " Cut ! " lo, the grapes disappeared, and the guests found themselves each with a knife in the one hand and in the other his neighbour's sleeve. Another story of a more or less similar character is told of a feast given by the Emperor to celebrate his coronation at Rome, which took place on November 22, 1220.

SCOT AS HYPNOTIST.

The pages were still on foot with ewers and basins of perfumed water and embroidered towels, when suddenly Michael Scot appeared with a companion, both of them dressed in Eastern robes, and offered to show the guests a marvel. The weather was oppressively warm, so Frederick asked him to procure them a shower of rain which might bring coolness. This the magician did accordingly, raising a great storm, which as suddenly vanished again at their pleasure. Being required by the Emperor to name

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his reward, Scot asked leave to choose one of the company to be the champion of himself and his friend against certain enemies of theirs. This being freely granted, their choice fell on Ulfo, a German baron. As it seemed to Ulfo, they set off at once on their expedition, leaving the coasts of Sicily in two great galleys, and with a mighty following of armed men. They sailed through the Gulf of Lyons, and passed by the Pillars of Hercules, into the unknown and western sea. Here they found smiling coasts, received a welcome from the strange people, and joined themselves to the army of the place; Ulfo taking the supreme command. Two pitched battles and a successful siege formed the incidents of the campaign. Ulfo killed the hostile king, married his lovely daughter, and reigned in his stead; Michae and his companion having left to seek other adventures. Of this marriage sons and daughters were begotten, and twenty years passed like a dream ere the magicians returned, and invited their champion to revisit the Sicilian court. Ulfo went back with them, but what was his amazement, on entering the palace at Palermo, to find everything just as it had been at the moment of their departure so long before; even the pages were still holding rounds with water for the hands of the Emperor's guests. This prodigy performed, Michael and the other withdrew and were seen no more, but Ulfo, it is said, remained ever inconsolable for the lost land of loveliness and the joys of wedded life he had left behind for ever, in a dream not to be repeated.

A MAGICAL ADVENTURE.

On Scot's return to the court of Frederick II after his sojourn in Sicily, he added the study and practice of the medical art to his other activities. Lesley states that he "gained much praise as a philosopher, astronomer, and physician," and Dempster speaks of him as "one of the first physicians for learning." He appears to have treated cases which would not yield to the ordinary medical pharmacopœia, and in particular he specialized in leprosy, gout, and dropsy. Acting apparently under his advice, Frederick II instituted various reforms in the practice of medicine. It was stipulated that the course preliminary to qualification should consist of three years in arts, and five in medicine and surgery. Laws were passed forbidding the adulteration of drugs, while physicians were prohibited from demanding a greater fee than half a *taren* of gold per day, and this gave the patient the right to be visited three times in the course of the twenty-four hours. It was stipulated that the poor should be attended free of charge. Certain recipes of Michael Scot's are still extant, and can be studied in Latin in the British Museum. One of these bears the name of the *Pillulæ Magistri Michaelis Scoti*. They seem to be something in the nature of a universal panacea, and perhaps if the prescription were taken up by some enterprising modern chemist, they might rival the fame of the celebrated Beecham's Pills!

SCOT AS MEDICO.

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It appears that Scot had ambitions in the way of ecclesiastical preferment ; but though the Emperor put himself out to secure his favourite the position which he coveted, and in fact appealed to the Pope on his behalf, nothing practical came of these representations. Probably Scot's fame was of too dubious a kind to recommend him to the heads of the orthodox Church, and the Archbishop of Canterbury, to whom the Pope applied in his interest, does not seem to have responded in any friendly fashion. Finally an offer was made to Michael Scot of the Archbishopric of Cashel in Ireland, but in those days the Irish were little better than a barbarous race, and they spoke the language of Erse, which was a sealed book to their prospective bishop. In any case, though the Chapter had actually elected him to the post, he decided to decline. He apparently had too much principle to accept the position of an absentee bishop, and a home among a wild and uncultured race would hardly have been to the liking of a man who had associated with the most intellectual minds of Europe. These hopes of ecclesiastical preferment having fallen through, Frederick, after long delay, decided to take steps for the publication of the translation of the works of Averroes, and certain books of Aristotle, with the commentaries thereon of the Arabian philosophers. Frederick issued an imperial circular announcing the appearance of these, and sent Scot as his emissary to arrange for their publication in the principal European centres of learning. Finally after visiting Bologna and Paris, Scot made his way to England, where he appears to have visited Oxford, about the year 1230. Tradition says that he journeyed thence to his native land of Scotland. But shortly after this we lose sight of him altogether, and though there is no authoritative evidence with regard to his death, he seems to have passed away by or before the year 1232. In this year the *Abbreviatio Avicennæ* was published at Melfi, in the Latin version which Scot had translated. Henry of Colonia was selected by Frederick to transcribe the work from the imperial copy, and Scot's biographer is probably right in regarding this work as a wreath laid by his imperial friend on his grave. The matter would assuredly have been placed in Scot's own hands if he were still alive.

SCOT REJECTS ARCHBISHOPRIC OF CASHEL.

QUESTION OF HIS DEATH.

Scot is related to have foretold that his own death would take place by the blow of a stone falling on his head, and tradition says that being in church one day with head uncovered at the sacring of the mass, a stone, shaken from the tower by the motion of the bell

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rope, fell upon his head, mortally wounding him. Presumably this incident occurred in Scotland; if, that is, there is any truth at all in the story.

Another prediction is also attributed to Michael Scot by the same chronicler—Pipini. He states that he foretold the manner also of the Emperor's death, which he declared would take place "ad portas ferreas"; that is, "at the iron gates," and in a town named after Flora. Frederick, it is said, interpreted this as referring to Florence, which city he accordingly made a point of avoiding. During his last campaign, however, in the year 1250, he fell ill at Fiorentino, in Apulia, where he slept in a chamber of the castle. His bed, says the story, stood against a wall recently built to fill up the ancient gateway of the tower, the iron staples on which the gate had been hung still forming part of the wall. It is stated that the Emperor, learning these particulars, and calling to mind Michael Scot's prediction, exclaimed, "This is the place where I shall make an end, as it was told me. The will of God be done, for here I shall die." A few days later the great Emperor passed to his rest.

Of Michael Scot's learning and erudition there can be no question, in spite of the unfavourable criticisms of Roger Bacon with regard to his knowledge of languages, which are the less worthy of notice in view of the fact that Bacon's own accomplishments in this direction were far inferior to those of Scot. A fairer criticism of his work would be based on its lack of originality, and the fact that the greater part of his literary output was borrowed either from the Arabians or the Greeks. His talents as a past master of mathematics were never in dispute, and his researches into the problems presented by astronomy enjoyed a great vogue in his own day.

While there is no evidence but that of highly-coloured tradition to suggest that Michael Scot was the adept he is represented as being in magical spells and incantations, there is nothing in our historical knowledge of his career which renders the practice of such arts by him at all incredible, or indeed unlikely. Legend has magnified this portion of his many-sided activities to the exclusion of that branch of his labours which might well, one would have thought, have earned for him more enduring fame. The lovers of the marvellous have thus surrounded with a mysterious and semi-sinister halo the name of a man whose chief work in life lay in the paths of philosophy, astronomy, and medical research. It seems not improbable that the last of these pursuits led this daring thinker into the investigation and practice of what

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we now term hypnotism, and its employment to the bewilderment of his acquaintances in the creation of illusions, the source of which we now recognize in the power of a master mind to mould by sheer force of will the plastic imagination and subjective consciousness of his audience.

For the benefit of readers who may have been disappointed in the past, I may mention that a further supply of copies of *Azoth* is to hand. There are a few sample copies available for applicants, and further subscriptions can be booked.

SOUVENIR

By TERESA HOOLEY

(By kind permission of "The Graphic")

A LAWLESS night of wind and rain,
An open moor, a starry sky,
A sense half ecstasy, half pain,
As we went galloping, you and I—
On one horse galloping, galloping by.

So many lives, so long ago—
Have you remembered through the years?
Where are you now? I cannot know,—
So much between of doubts and fears,
So many loves, so many tears.

Ah, if you come to me again
Shall we not gallop as of yore,
Through howling wind and driving rain,
In darkness, on an open moor,
And love as we have loved before?

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THE OCCULT LORE OF THE MIRROR

By BERNARD FIELDING

READERS of that occult short story of Scott's—" Aunt Margaret's Mirror "—will remember how the supposed narrator, Mistress Margaret Bothwell, records from her own experience the curious power of mirrors to suggest the Unseen and the Uncanny.

" I myself," she tells her nephew, " like many honest folk, do not like to see *the blank black front of a large mirror* in a room dimly lighted. . . . Fancy . . . may call up other features to meet us instead of the reflection of our own . . . some unknown form may be seen peeping over our shoulders."

Every one may not fully endorse Mistress Bothwell's opinions, but the age-long association between mirrors and the Supernatural is, certainly, a plain fact for every one to reckon with. The most practical person can scarcely dismiss it to the limbo of fancy. It is equally certain, too, that it is a power much older than the mirrors themselves ; that it dates back, beyond their invention, to the dim time when primitive man, wandering in the clefts of lone hills or the heart of some deep wood, first saw looking up at him, from dark pool or slow-moving stream, a face like, yet unlike, his own, set in the midst of shadowy ghost-like scenery.

We sometimes speak of the unfortunate youth who " died to kiss his shadow in the brook " as the victim of a mad vanity. His prototypes were, in much greater probability, victims of religious enthusiasm, of the untaught instinct of adoration for an unknown god or genius. . . . The watery element, haunted by shadows, was also, to early imagination, haunted by spirits. Primitive tribes, as is well known, have, commonly, but one and the same word for *shadow* and for *soul*. So a reflecting surface would be as a window thrown open into the Other World—the World whose inhabitants are the immaterial and the bodiless.

To these first mirrors, of pond and river and fountain, we must look for the origin of occult mirror-lore. The man-made " shadow-catchers " of brass and silver and glass merely inherited the eerie things that had been told of their natural forerunners ;

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the mysterious thoughts that had been bred beside still deep waters.

And first among these thoughts we must count the idea of ill-luck associated with the seeing of the shadow. It was, as it were, an *unlawful* sight; an intrusion into the mysteries, which would, in the natural course of things, bring its own prompt punishment upon the intruder.

To see one's wraith was an omen of death; a warning that one's soul, a malcontent tenant, was wandering abroad to seek new quarters. And we may well suppose that tragedies like that of Narcissus, with the dizziness and semi-trance induced by water-gazing, did not tend to weaken this belief.

Pythagoras summed up the feeling of the Ancient World in his famous maxim: "Do not look at your face in the water." The nameless fear, materialized among savages, came out in such crudities as the Zulu "bogey" tale of a strange beast that lay in wait in water, to seize and devour the shadow of any unwary looker-in. And in Melanesia—the name given to the islands that lie between New Guinea and New Hebrides and are inhabited by a strange mixed race, semi-Negro and semi-Asiatic—we hear of a pool "into which it is death to look"; the soul of the gazer being seized by malicious water-spirits, who gain power over it by means of the reflection. . . . to say nothing of the countless folk-tales from Gaelic, Teutonic and Romance sources—of immanent water-spirits whose love and ill-will equally bring misfortune to men—the Undines who crave for mortal bridegrooms, the Kelpies who entrap mortal brides. It is unwise to linger long, or in the dark, by pool or stream. Shadowy shapes may rise and lure us to our doom; weird immaterial arms may be stretched from the deep lair to drag us down to perdition.

The power of the water's surface to receive the rays of the sun or moon, and to throw them back in dazzling bewildering fashion, is also of great import. Among folk who worship the heavenly bodies, reflection of the heavenly rays can never be a meaningless natural process. It links up too closely with the Supernatural. It gives the reflecting medium an awesome sacramental character.

So the first man-made mirror began life with a great heritage! Alongside its obvious service of man, of the needs of body and raiment, it had a mystical character to express, a mystical life to live. In the Japanese temples of Shintoism, where, as in the Jewish tabernacle, idol and image have no place,

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one of the three sacred objects to be found on the altar is a mirror of brass or steel, circular in shape; *a symbol*, in every shrine throughout the Empire, of the Sun-Goddess, Amaterasu; and in the case of the one in the venerable temple at Ise, in the Province of Yamato, traditioned to be her actual gift, thousands of years ago, to her son and servant, a primitive Mikado.

Together with this ritual importance of mirrors, the part they play in Japanese folk-lore is notable. "*A mirror*," says the Japanese proverb, "*is the soul of a woman*." Capable, of course, of allegorical explanation! The soul may be figured as a substance meant to reflect the light of heaven, and to be kept bright and undimmed to fulfil its high destiny and use its sacred privilege!—"The pure in heart shall see God."

But there is also the simpler and more literal interpretation, illustrated in popular legend; in the story, for instance, of the carver, Hidari, who brought to life an image he had carved, by placing a mirror in its breast, and so creating a magnet for the life-giving rays of the sun, a means of union with divine creative power.

It will be remembered that English playgoers have lately had an opportunity of acquainting themselves with this strange Oriental idea. In the fantastical modern comedy, *The Willow Tree*, the hero, a young Englishman living in Japan, falls under the influence of the beliefs around him, becomes enamoured of an image on whose breast he has hung a mirror, and is ready to renounce all that we call reality for the enjoyment of his unearthly love, and the mystical life with her that comes to him in dreams.

Similar thoughts about the supernaturalism of mirrors prevail in China, which has, as we know, its own Shintoism. In China, too, there is a curious talismanic use of mirrors. An old brass mirror—the older the better, for its mystic power ripens with age!—hung up in a sleeping-room, will guard the sleeping person from the attacks of evil spirits, who, it is said, will be terrified and rendered impotent by the sight of their own frightful images in the burnished metal. They will be, as it were, "hoist with their own petard."

A like idea meets us in India, where mirrors are set in rings, for the alleged purpose of keeping demons away from the wearers. Probably it is for much the same reason that the giving of a mirror to the bride forms part of the Hindu wedding ritual. Wedded girls are looked upon as the desired prey of evil and

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malicious spirits; and the talisman would be a timely one, a gracious gift. . . .

In Persia, the showing of a mirror to one about to travel is a luck-bringer for the journey.

In spite, however, of this auspicious view of the light-reflector, the uncanniness of the mirror is not absent from Eastern folk-lore. Sir William Crooke, in his *Superstitions of Northern India*, records the prejudice against looking into mirrors that belong to other people. It is a dangerous practice, equivalent to giving a part of your soul into the power of strangers! When you leave the house you leave a part of your soul behind you, caught and retained by the mirror that has reflected you.

In India also (at any rate, among Mohammedans) the precaution is taken of covering up, in case of illness, all the mirrors in the room where the sick person lies. "The soul, which is just then on the prowl, may be absorbed, and leave its owner a corpse." The line of reasoning here would seem to be the inevitable one. If mirrors are windows into the Other World where "the bodiless gang about," if they are gaps in the stout partition-wall of mortal things and mortal life, then, to leave them unguarded is, obviously, to tempt the spirit to break away, and escape by their means into the world of shadows. Especially would this be the case in hours of mortal weakness, when the chains of the present existence are wearing thin. Especially would the "suggestion" thrown out by the mirror to the sick and ailing be perilous in the extreme.

It is now possible to undertsand why *the breaking* of a mirror is held to bring such incomparable ill-luck. Such a disaster to one's shadow (which, of course, appears to perish along with the mirror that reflected it!) is an omen of signal disaster to oneself, giving rise to the gloomiest forebodings. Perhaps the proverbial "seven years' sorrow" foretold for the mirror-breaker may be a euphemism for the doom of death, the greatest mitigation one would dare to hope for! Perhaps the seven years recall the customary duration of an evil spell, which the mirror-breaker may be said, in some sense, to cast upon himself by his own uncanny action.

We have seen how the water was regarded as a spirit-haunted element, containing not only the shadows of mortal men, but the shadows of unearthly beings too. Equally was the man-made mirror a purlieu of ghosts, and, by the same reasoning, a medium by which ghosts could be invoked and summoned. Divination by mirrors was a very ancient custom. Buddha seems to have

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condemned it, along with other practices that he found flourishing, and that he thought unworthy of the " Entirely Awakened Ones " who had done with seeking after a sign. The disapproval of a Great Teacher for such practices may well be the measure of their popularity with the people.

Sometimes, of course, the divination was artless enough, as when the omen would be drawn from the unusual aspect of some dim-lit mirror, glanced at in passing ; some " giant shadow," half-seen in its depths, and incontinently " hailed divine." But there would soon come to be an observing of times and seasons, a marking of propitious hours ; as witness the Japanese saying that a mirror would foretell the future *at two hours after midnight,* a time when the gazer might well be supposed to be in a state of semi-trance, between sleep and waking, with his eyes, in the supernatural sense, clear and open, and his brain-loom ready to weave dreams.

In Neapolitan folk-lore, we hear how if, on Christmas Eve, you stand before a mirror and invoke the devil he will appear to you, and enable you to become a sorcerer. And some similar tradition, as we know, lingered long about Hallow E'en. The Hallow E'en charms, recounted by Burns in his famous poem, include the eating of an apple before the glass, a daring procedure supposed to result in a mirror-vision of unknown terror.

Burns's " Wee Jennie," who, in the poem, desired to adventure it, is warned by her grandmother against any such tempting of the foul fiend. Indeed she may well, says the old woman, *get a sight,* but she will have cause to rue the charm's successful working. . . . In passing, we may note the curious association of the apple—the forbidden fruit, and cause of the devil's first victory over man !—with the unhallowed spell. It suggests an appeal to Lucifer's memory !

From special *times* for divination by mirrors it is but a step to special *persons,* dedicated to the task of divining, and alone fitted to perform that task successfully.

It was not every one who could look into the seering-glass and interpret truly the Shadow Show.

Very early we trace the idea that some gift, either natural or acquired, was essential to the scryer or gazer. "*None see here but the pure alone !*" as the motto of the mysterious Beryl stone had it ; and chastity would seem equally to have been a *sine qua non* for those who practised the less elaborate crystallomancy. Children, youths and aged men were the favourite seers ; in these the more sensual passions had either not yet

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been exerted, or had spent their force. In these, the clear quiet mind seemed itself as a mirror or as an untroubled pool.

Side by side with this natural seer-ship there was a clairvoyance that could be induced, a gift that a man of any age could bestow on himself by asceticism, *denials* of the self, or resolute *withdrawals* into it.

In the ancient books of magic we have not only the formula for the making of a magic mirror, but also the recounting of the discipline that the would-be seer must first inflict on himself. "Ye shall do no fleshly actions nor sin during the period. Ye shall perform many good works of piety and mercy."

And the prescribed prayers and invocations were to be repeated, devoutly and unweariedly, for many days before the mirror could become possessed of the necessary power from on high, before the Angel *Anael* or *Answerer* (whose significant name occurs so often in the ceremonies of divination and questionings of the Spirit World) could enter into it, and impart to its owner something of his supernatural knowledge.

Mr. A. E. Waite, to whose tireless researches English students of the Occult owe so much, has told us in his *Ceremonial Magic* all about the wonderful "Mirror of Solomon"—Kabbalistic in its origin, but of high repute in all revivals of magic in any age and any land. It consisted of a circular plate of steel, slightly concave, and inscribed at the four corners with four sacred names —the "ink" being the blood of a white pigeon.

Again and again, during the first consecration of this Mirror, Anael was to be entreated with prayers and burning of incense. The Mirror was to be breathed upon, and the sign of the cross made. But when Anael had once appeared (the usual shape he took was that of a beautiful child!) it was afterwards enough, in resorting to the Mirror, to summon him in a few words, such as "Come, Anael, come! May it be thy good pleasure to be with me!" For the victory, once for all, had been won. The Mirror had become an eternal means of communication with the powers of light and truth.

Nor can the student of the Occult afford to forget the many magic mirrors of mediæval literature. Chaucer's Squire tells us of "a broad mirror of glass," which the King of Araby and Ind sent as a gift to the Tartar Emperor, Cambuscan, and of which his envoy declared that it

> Hath such a might that men may in it see
> When there shall fallen any adversitee
> Unto your regne or to yourself also.

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> . . . And over all this, if any lady bright
> Hath set her heart on any manner wight
> If he be false she shall his treason see. . . .

The old traditions of the mirror of the Enchanter Merlin, mentioned by Spenser in the *Faerie Queen*, are of very similar kind ; and readers of the *Arabian Nights* will remember the mirror given by the King of the Genii to Prince Zeyn Alasnam, the surface of which was dimmed at the approach of an unchaste damsel ; and so it acted as a counsellor to the Prince in his choice of a bride.

These tales, with others still more extravagant, are interesting as witnesses to the venerable belief that colours them and gave them birth. They are witnesses, too, to the truth that has long been a commonplace in modern psychical research—the influence of mirror-gazing upon the sub-conscious mind, and the rousing by it of sub-conscious visionary powers.

The superiority of globular mirrors for evoking visions was early recognized by seers of the Middle Ages. Crystal-gazing superseded, to a great degree, the rough and ready divination by an ordinary mirror. The crystals were then, as now, small in size—usually not larger than an orange—but they made up in profundity what they lacked in extent of surface. One had, literally, to gaze *into* them, to watch the vision, as it were, swimming up from the depths.

We have grown familiar with the recorded effects of this gazing. At first, dizziness ; then a singular clearness of brain, and sight. . . . At first, a gradual glimmering mist stealing over the crystal, and seeming like a dissolution of its substance ; then, shadowy figures with recognizable faces, enacting a scene that has already happened outside the knowledge of the gazer, or that may yet be to happen. Some seers have spoken of "a man with a besom grey," who is seen sweeping away the mists before the forming of the picture ; but this would seem to be only a personification of the elemental change.

Andrew Lang instances, too, the persistent recurrence in crystal-pictures of a recumbent figure ; seemingly, a corpse, or sick person ; a mournful omen not always verified by the event, and perhaps only the reflection of a subjective fear.

Of course, in all such divination there is usually a pre-occupation in the mind of the gazer with some absent person, and it is natural that the vision should be of him ; of some incident, disastrous or otherwise, of his possible fate.

In Rossetti's weird mediæval poem, "Rosemary," we get the high-water mark of tragical crystallomancy. The heroine,

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Rosemary, whose lover has to make a dangerous journey, is enjoined by her mother to look into the mystic mirror of the Beryl-stone, that she may foresee there which is the safer road for him to take, and counsel him accordingly. But Rosemary is no longer a fit seer. The spirits that are immanent in the Beryl demand, "from those who seek their counsel," a purity that she has lost. For shame she hides the matter, and essays to see. Sight is given; but the demons that her sin has conjured into the Beryl deceive her with a lying vision, and her lover goes to his death. . . . In her agony, she seeks the enchanted jewel where it lies shrined on its altar, surrounded by mystical shapes, and glowing at the heart with its terrible supernatural light, breaks it to pieces, and sends the exiled demons—"the gyre-circling spirits of fire"—wailing into the darkness. . . .

. . . We may note, in passing, that a peculiar precedence in unearthly power would seem to belong to shew-stones made of *beryl*. As the jewel for magic mirrors it would seem to have been "first among equals." The magic mirror used by the Emperor Julian—that devout follower of all pagan paths of divination!—is said, for example, to have been made of beryl. Perhaps the peculiar lustre of this stone—at once so radiant and so shadowy; fiery cloud and cloudy fire, like the mysterious Guide in the wilderness!—suggested its special kinship with the Ghost-World.

Of the famous Dr. Dee, in whom Queen Elizabeth took a half-believing interest, and who had considerable European repute, we hear that one of his magic mirrors was "a crystal globe which presented apparitions, and even gave forth sounds." Another is described as "a disc of highly polished cannel coal."

With men like Dee, clairvoyance hardened into "a profession," and showed the usual "professional" faults and frauds. He claimed that his shew-stones had been brought to him by angels, who came and went at the bidding of the scryer.

In the eighteenth century, too, the revival of popular interest in Magic produced many charlatans who abused the faith placed in them and their seering-glasses. Scott, in the already-quoted "Aunt Margaret's Mirror," probably drew from one of these his Paduan doctor, Baptiste Damiotti—a person, however, of considerable dignity, in whose mystic powers Scott himself seems half-willing to believe, and who, certainly, strikes awe into the reader.

Eliphas Levi has said of visions in crystals or magic mirrors that they are but the reflections of the Astral Light, mistaken

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"Thinking I might get some ptarmigan, I took my gun and rowed myself on shore, landing near where the *yurt* had been. After hauling my boat up I turned round, and saw my dog rushing frantically towards me. She kept right on, taking no notice of me as she passed, although I called and whistled to her. With her tail between her legs, her eyes bulging out, her head turning from side to-side, as if fleeing from some pursuing horror which she feared every moment would overtake her, she looked the picture of terror. She ran straight down the beach to where the boats were getting water, then took to the sea, and swam off towards the vessel. Fearing she might be attacked by cramp and drowned, I shoved my boat off again and went after her, picking her up after she had swum about a quarter of a mile. When I got her into the boat, she cowered between my legs, trembling violently, and uttering short grunts rather than barks, and still bearing that expression of intense fear. I took her on board, put her in my cabin, and did what I could to try and comfort the poor little beast; but it had little effect: a shadow passing the skylight would start her fears afresh. In endeavouring to account for this, I thought some one had been thrashing her, or perhaps burnt her with a match or something of that kind; so when I went on shore again I asked my hunters what they had done to put the dog into such a state of terror. They were as surprised and nonplussed as myself. Their story was: 'She kept close to us all the time, and was in amongst us when we stopped; then she appeared to see something which scared her so much that she scooted away down the beach as if the devil were after her.'

"I thought no more about the matter, went into the hills and got some birds, and returned on board. The dog was still in the same nervous state of fear. By noon our water and wood were replenished, and every one was on board again. An hour or so later I was on deck, and saw a European, accompanied by a dog about the size of a pointer, making his way down over the high bluff on to the beach, and down by the sand-dunes. Three hours or so later, as he again appeared on the beach and hailed the schooner, I sent a boat and brought him off. He was a hunter, an American, belonging to a schooner lying in a small bay some three miles farther up the straits, and had come across the high land to reach a swamp on the southern side of our bay, in the hope of shooting some wild-duck there. After dispensing the usual hospitality and exchanging hunting news, he prepared to leave, asking me to put him ashore on the north side of the bay, as it would save him some distance. When about to get into the boat, he remarked: 'I've lost my dog; and if you should see him on the beach, I wish you would take him aboard, and when we meet in the Bering Sea I can get him again.' I asked him how and where he had lost him. He said: 'Well, it was mighty curious. You see, when I got down about them sand-dunes there'—pointing towards the spot where my dog had got her fright—'the darned dog, who was trotting quietly alongside me, suddenly seed somethin' that scared the critter so much that he started off

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THE STRANGE ADVENTURE OF A SPORTSMAN

EDITED BY H. B. ALLAN

THE following weird experience told by H. J. Snow, F.R.G.S., in his book *In Forbidden Seas* * (Edward Arnold), is probably unknown to many who are interested readers of matters psychic but are unacquainted with the literature of sport. For me the story is of peculiar interest in that my father, as a young man, passed several months hunting the sea-otter † in company with Captain Snow, and is able to testify to the latter's exceptional nerve and level-headedness, so that one feels that the story coming from such a source springs from no over-heated imagination nor from grounds so slender as to be little more than a fantastic idea embroidered to suit a graphic recital. In particular, my father remembers one incident—that of the overtaking of their small schooner by a typhoon in the Straits of Tsugaru, between the islands of Yezo and Nipon. While my father and the Japanese crew were on deck the whole night, expecting each moment that the vessel would be capsized, Captain Snow chose the very height of the storm as the moment in which to retire below for his night's rest—which he apparently obtained—with a remark to the effect that things were "sure to be all right"—an incident which certainly seems to show plainly how little of the excitable or nervous went to his composition! The setting of his strange story is the Kuril Islands where the schooner had called in for wood and water, and I give it here in his own words:—

"We anchored in Ottomai Bay, in Little Kuril Strait.‡ On the way in one of my hunters told me he had been there the previous autumn, and found a Japanese living alone in a *yurt*, which he had built amongst some sand-dunes on the upper part of the beach. Before coming to anchor we saw the *yurt*, but no sign of any human being. It was late in the afternoon of June 25, too late to start wood and watering, so we had an early meal, and then three hunters and myself went ashore. We landed near the *yurt*, it being but a few yards above high-water level. It was constructed in the usual way, half underground,

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† *Hunting the Sea-Otter*, by Alexander Allan (Horace Cox).

‡ This was "a year or two later" than an expedition in 1889.

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THE TAROT CARDS

By J. W. BRODIE-INNES

THE strange, weird-looking cards known as the Tarot, with their bizarre designs, have interested and puzzled archæologists, mystics and occultists for over a century; and many books have been written, from ponderous and learned tomes to popular manuals, from M. Court de Gebelin's *Monde Primitif* in 1781 to Mr. A. E. Waite's *Key to the Tarot* in 1910. Yet the mystery remains unsolved. What was their origin? What do they mean? Are they primarily an occult treatise told in hieroglyphics, or merely the implements of a game of chance or skill, used as an afterthought for purposes of divination? Was their origin Egyptian, or Indian, or Chinese, or some as yet unguessed source? There is no reliable evidence, though there is plenty of bold assertion. The fact remains that we know they existed in the fourteenth century, and prior to that they are wrapt in impenetrable obscurity. Having read all the books I could get access to on the subject, and studied many theories and speculations, I finally arrived at the Scottish verdict of "Not proven." Under these circumstances I should hesitate to intrude into the distinguished circle of writers on the Tarot, even to the extent of an article, but that it so chances that I have one or two slight contributions to the study, which may be of interest to inquirers.

Many years ago it was my privilege to examine at leisure the magnificent collection of playing cards made by my friend, Mr. George Clulow, one of the greatest living experts on the subject. That collection is now in America, where I am told it is the model for all such collections. The item that chiefly interested me was a splendid series of Tarot packs of all ages and all countries. And the point that struck me most was the continuance of the designs throughout, often it is true corrupted, where an ignorant engraver, copying from a copyist, and obviously unable to understand a symbol, had expressed it by an unmeaning flourish, or substituted a flower, or some object he was acquainted with, for an uncomprehended symbol. Thus the Bateleur who in the oldest examples had magical implements before him, came to have a shoemaker's tools. But by com-

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parison of one pack with another these could easily be rectified. Occasionally some local or political cause had produced variations, but these also were detected without trouble. One such occurs in a modern French pack in my possession, where a strong antipapal bias has occasioned the substitution of the figures of Juno and Jupiter for the original La Papesse and Le Pape. Now and then some enterprising innovator has redrawn the entire pack to suit his own ideas of the symbology, as did the fantastic peruquier Alliette, who under the pseudonym Etteilla (being his own name spelt backwards) posed as an illuminated adept. But these have attained no vogue, and are now merely of interest to collectors, for they embody, not the ideals, whatever they may be, of the old Tarot, but only Etteilla's notion of what they ought to be. Discounting however these variants, the persistence of the designs through some five centuries, and many countries, is, to say the least of it, remarkable. And whether or no those designs are comprehensible, one feels thankful that the redrawers have not succeeded in displacing the old traditional patterns.

That the cards have long been used in Italy, and perhaps elsewhere, for a game is certain, and that before ever they were written about as occult emblems or implements of divination. Lord Mahon, in his *History of the Forty-Five*, quotes an English lady who met Prince Charles Edward in Rome in 1770 at the Princess Palestrini's, when he asked her if she knew the game of Tarrochi, and she spoke of his handling the Tarot cards and explaining them. But one may conclude from the designs that they were originally intended for more than this. As played in Italy to-day the 22 Atus or Trumps are often omitted, and many packs are sold without these. But taking the ordinary pip cards, if they were simply used for a game, the ancient designs, which have persisted through so many years and in divers countries, would seem meaningless. The numbers of pips as in the common English packs would be sufficient. Why, for example, should the two of pentacles have a serpent coiled round the two pips in the form of the algebraic symbol of infinity. And here we may say that those well-meaning writers who have redrawn the cards have gone on the wrong tack. Admitting that we have no evidence of the original meaning (there may or may not be a secret tradition, I wish to make no assertion as to this) it is surely the part of wisdom to preserve the ancient symbol as clearly as we can, and await enlightenment, rather than to assume a meaning, and form a new symbol consonant

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thereto, which may be miles away from the primitive intention.

This at all events was the thought that came to me on examining Mr. Clulow's wonderful collection, and noting the persistence of the designs, and the variants of which I have spoken.

With regard to the 22 Atus or Trumps the case is different. It would be impossible in the compass of a single article to go into all the various interpretations that have been put upon them, nor am I sure that it would serve any good purpose to do so. In the absence of evidence as to the intention of the original designer they must remain as merely the speculations of individual writers. But there is much to be said for the idea of Eliphaz Levi that they were to be referred to the Hebrew alphabet. Students of the Qabala, who are familiar with the symbology of the Hebrew letters, have often been struck with the correspondence of some of the Atus with some of the letters. There can be no doubt that these cards are hieroglyphics of some kind, though the meaning seems to be in dispute ; but whether they represent a series, such as the history of the soul, or cosmical evolution, or the grades of training of an initiate, or a synthesis of all of these and possibly others, there seems no positive evidence, but a great wealth of speculation. The connection with the Hebrew alphabet would largely depend on the attribution, and as twenty-one out of the twenty-two cards are numbered, the position assigned to the card marked zero called le Mat, or the Fool, must be the crucial point ; and as to this there is wide divergence among commentators. The wise student will maintain an open mind, and wait for further evidence ; Eliphaz Levi appears to take one a certain distance, and then slams the door in one's face, but whether because he did not know, or whether, knowing the secret tradition, he was unable to tell more, who shall say ? In any case all are agreed as to the fascinating quality of his work, and undoubtedly no one can read it without having his interest profoundly stirred in these ancient cards.

It is generally supposed that they were unknown in France, or at all events in Paris, prior to M. Court de Gebelin, who it is said, found and introduced them to the French occultists. This, however, may be doubted. I have in my possession a French Tarot of the early eighteenth century, a very interesting feature of which is that some of the cards have MS. inscriptions of their meaning, and apparently the records of an experiment in divination, which from internal evidence would seem to be Pre-Revolution. This, so far as it goes, would support the theory that they

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were known in France before M. de Gebelin wrote about them. I would not, however, press this further than as a warning against too confident dogmatism concerning the date of the Tarot, and the history of its introduction into Europe.

The cards have been called the "Tarot of the Bohemians," and have often been popularly spoken of as the gipsy fortune-telling cards. As a fact, however, when gipsies lay the cards for the fortune of an inquirer it is the ordinary pack that is used, and it seems certain, as Mr. Waite points out, that the Tarot cards were known in Europe before the arrival of the gipsies. Moreover gipsy folk-lorists, with the exception of Vaillant, have very little to say about the Tarot.

The only evidence on this head that has come under my own observation was from a woman of pure Romani blood, whom I knew many years ago, a Mrs. Lee, but of what tribe I cannot say; she was reputed to be an Epping Forest gipsy, but she said herself that her people belonged to Norwood, and only left there when Norwood became a wilderness of villadom, and their old haunts were desecrated by the incursion of Cockney residents. She once showed me an old tattered and much thumbed Tarot pack, of the ordinary Italian design, and told me that these were the cards she used among her own people, but never for Georgios. She also gave me the principles of interpretation, not under any seal of secrecy, but with a general request that it should not be published, and this, needless to say, I have honourably observed. I may, however, state that it was a thoroughly logical and complete system, the four suits representing the four elements, and the four temperaments, and being judged according to their position. Thus wands representing fire and the sanguine temperament, a wand card occurring in a bad position would indicate danger from rash and hasty action, anger, or quarrelling; the same card in a good position would show noble and generous action, courage, energy, and the like. Curiously enough the numbers of the pips were interpreted on a system very much akin to the Pythagorean system of numbers, especially in regard to the occult meaning of odd and even numbers. Mrs. Lee laid particular stress on the arrangement of the pips on the cards, pointing out its similarity to the arrangement of spots on dice and dominoes. (The connection of this with the Pythagorean system is obvious.) In the light of this explanation the appropriateness of the serpent in the design of the two of pentacles is manifest.

Whether Mrs. Lee's explanations were common to the gipsy tribes, or merely a system of her own, I cannot say. She seemed

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to regard it as very private, and only shown to me as a special mark of favour.

The last time I saw Mrs. Lee was some twenty years ago at Yetholm, when the son of the late Queen Esther was crowned Gipsy King. Mrs. Lee was very contemptuous of the Yetholm gipsies—"Tinker trash," she said, "not a hundred words of Romani among the lot." This, however, may well have been the prejudice of a different tribe.

I was interested to find that what she told me of the Tarot was well known to another friend of mine, the late Mrs. Florence Farr Emery, who herself claimed Romani descent, and had a great store of strange learning. She it was who first pointed out to me the correspondence of the interpretations of the pip cards with the Pythagorean system, greatly to my delight, for the meanings usually ascribed to the cards had seemed merely empiric, and founded on no system, as indeed are the meanings ascribed to cards by the ordinary type of fortune-teller to-day. More doubtful were Mrs. Emery's suggestions of Egyptian correspondences. She was a diligent student of Egyptology, though perhaps not quite as much of an authority as her friends claimed, and with natural enthusiasm was apt to see ancient Egypt everywhere.

Another unexpected gleam of light came to me from a friend of the late Charles Godfrey Leland, who told me that Leland had some special knowledge of a peculiar system of Gipsy Cartomancy, which for reasons known to himself he was not at liberty to divulge, and of a special pack of cards used by them. The friend who told me this had never seen the cards, but from the evidence of the Tarot pack shown me by Mrs. Lee it seems more than likely that these were in fact the Tarot cards, and that the interpretation thereof had been communicated as a secret to Leland. So then there appears to be a probability, in spite of the scepticism of the folk-lorists, that the connection of the Tarot with the gipsies may have a solid foundation in fact, and on this also we must await further evidence.

Meanwhile a guess may be hazarded that, although the cards arrived in Europe before the gipsies, they may yet have a common origin. Both the tribe and the cards arrived roughly about the same time, from an utterly unknown and mysterious source; and though the cards arrived first, there is no evidence to show that they did not come from the same origin. This will be a problem for future investigators, and a problem that I would humbly suggest is to be solved, not by negations, but rather by

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careful and open-minded examination of all the minutest traces of evidence available. It may be perfectly true to say there is no evidence of the Egyptian origin either of the cards or the people. But like other negations it takes us no farther. It may be right to deprecate the hasty dogmatism and superstition of those who proclaim loudly, on the very slenderest authority, that the secrets of the Universe have been laid bare, and the key to universal knowledge is in the hands of some certain mystic writer or teacher, who poses as a divinely inspired final authority and revealer of mysteries. There be many such nowadays, specially of the discredited German brand. But in this deprecation we should beware of falling into the opposite error, and because there is no proof, rashly assume that there is no evidence. It is by the patient examination of minute, almost invisible, and nearly obliterated traces, that true scientific investigation triumphs at length. There are traces, faint and infinitesimal it is true, of an Egyptian origin both of the gipsies and of the Tarot cards; and until some clearer indications of another origin are discovered it is wisdom to preserve these, and make the most of them, examine them with minutest care and search for others, meantime not neglecting any other clues pointing in any other direction. Above all, the careful examination of the designs of the cards, from the very earliest that can be discovered, with all their variants, must be an essential part of the inquiry. No good end can be served by redrawing the cards, however skilfully or artistically it is done. They will remain nothing but an evidence of the taste, and skill, and opinions of the artist, or his inspirer. But anyone who can in any way contribute to a reproduction of the original designs as they were, not as he thinks they ought to be, will do a real service to the study of the Tarot. Even the well-known and accepted symbols on the best of the current packs, well-drawn and coloured, and well printed to replace the crude and poor examples which are the best we can get now, would be a boon to Tarot students, and would demand neither archæological nor mystic learning.

In common with many Tarot students I welcomed Mr. Waite's little manual, and found therein as I expected, and as one always expects from his work, the results of careful research, set forth in graceful and elegant diction, an invaluable summary for those who have not the time or the patience, perhaps not the opportunity, to study the original works, of which he gives an excellent bibliography. But after all it carries one very little farther. *En passant* I was rather surprised that he should have taken

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the swords of the Tarot as the prototypes of clubs. So learned and accurate a writer must have had some authority for this statement, but none is given, and the obvious idea that in Italian swords is spadi, and the form of the pips in modern cards suggest a conventionalized drawing of the Roman broad sword, is not so much as alluded to. The original symbology as I have said remains unknown, and is open to any conjecture, but it must be said that the form of the club pip is singularly unlike a bludgeon or quarter staff. But if we take the suit of denarii, or pentacles, to represent earth forces, and suggest that money or coins might symbolize material powers, and that the clover or trefoil leaf, as a product of the earth, might also symbolize the earth forces, it might be as good symbology as the derivation of bludgeons from swords. In any case it seems to be generally assumed the cups are the prototypes of hearts, and sceptres of diamonds, and if swords or spadi become spades, there is only left the correspondence of Pentacles with modern clubs.

There are then three ways in which we may regard the Tarot cards. Firstly the most obvious, as implements of a game of chance or skill, and this is only historically interesting. Secondly as a book of hieroglyphics, revealing, if properly interpreted, some great mystic truths. It may be some cosmogony, or history of evolution, either of the universe, or the human soul. And thirdly as a means of divination. Clearly the second of these depends entirely on our having the correct order of the cards; and as to this at present no light comes from antiquity, and modern authorities differ, as we have seen. The third, or divinatory use, depends on the chance laying down of the cards, the order in which they turn up after certain prescribed shufflings and cuttings by the querent. Mr. Waite inclines to the belief that the series of 22 Atus, or Trumps, were solely referred to the second of the above ways of regarding the cards; and the 56 pip cards, which he calls the lesser Arcana, were for no other use than for divination or fortune telling. This may be correct. Certainly there are examples of the Atus alone without the pip cards, and there are packs of pip cards sold now in Italy for the playing of Tarochi with no Atus. Yet there are early examples in Mr. Clulow's collection of packs containing both, and clearly related. One form at least of the game is played with both, the Atus have a very special power justifying their name of trumps; and certainly also the system of divination shown to me by Mrs. Lee made use of both. I can only say that after examining all the evidence—that cited by

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Mr. Waite as well as some others—I have myself come to a different conclusion, but I consider the point still open to investigation.

As to divination or fortune-telling, there are many ways of laying out the cards; I have myself been shown over a dozen, and I am persuaded there are many more, some of them peculiar to individual diviners. The first method described by Mr. Waite has long been familiar to me. It was sometimes used among others by Mrs. Florence Farr Emery, but the divinatory meanings were entirely different. Rightly or wrongly they were logically formed by the combination of the general meaning of the suit with the mystic properties of numbers, which Mr. Waite apparently disregards. This divinatory meaning is broadly borne out by the old symbolic designs. The theory, therefore, is that the Tarot was in its origin a symbolic book, whose meaning can now only be remotely guessed at; that the original designers worked upon the fourfold division of all created things, whereof well-known examples are the four beasts of Ezekiel's vision, and of the Apocalypse, the four cherubim, the four archangels, the four letters of tetragrammaton, and many others; to which they added the mystic virtues of numbers, and upon each page of the book they placed a symbolic design still further to elucidate it. Each page on this theory would in fact form a chapter in the book, describing the good and evil influences operating from the spiritual on the material world. By the theory of divination the process of shuffling and cutting the cards according to the prescribed method would indicate the influences operating on the querent. We may perhaps compare the symbolic designs to the vignettes illustrating chapters in the Egyptian Book of the Dead.

If this theory is in any way correct it is obvious that it is of supreme importance to preserve by all means the ancient symbolic designs, and if possible to restore them to the state in which the original designers intended to set them forth. Archæological research is continually bringing to light new and unexpected discoveries, and it may well be that any day some fresh evidence may be forthcoming on the forms of the Tarot, before the earliest that are now known, evidence that perhaps will without doubt connect these mysterious cards with one or other of the great races of antiquity and the great systems of philosophy or prove the fallacy of this idea. I trust that Mr. Waite may some day find time to tell us from whence he derived his interpretations, and the designs illustrating them.

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Taking as an example the two of pentacles, of which I have spoken before. Pentacles represent the earth forces—the material influences ruling our mortal life—and two according to the Pythagoreans is the number of divided councils, of Good and Evil, the first number to separate itself from the divine unity, hence associated with the dual nature of the serpent, or the two serpents, the serpent of the temptation, and the brazen serpent of healing lifted up by Moses in the wilderness, which was a type of Christ. Appropriately then in the old designs is the two of pentacles illustrated by the serpent coiled in the symbol of infinity. The interpretation may be true or false, I claim no special inspiration for it. It is merely a suggestion. But from whence comes Mr. Waite's dancing man? If he belongs to any of the old forms of the Tarot, or is in any way connected with the original designers, he is worthy of serious consideration. But one would like to know his origin and credentials. And the same remark applies to the other designs.

I am aware that my contribution is exceedingly small, but in tracing a path so obscure the faintest gleam of light may be of great value. I wholly agree with Mr. Waite in deprecating the attitude of those who assume a mighty air of mystery, and hint that an they would they could tell much. This is not the attitude of the real occult student. Those who know the secret tradition (supposing there is one) should either set forth their knowledge, if they may, and are not restrained by any pledges or honourable understanding, or should be silent; and those who have any interpretation to give should give their authority, or if the source be their own intuition or clairvoyance, should frankly say so. If all commentators would follow these simple rules of scientific investigation, we might be nearer to solving the two mysteries of the origin of the Tarot cards, and the origin of the gipsies, and either proving or disproving their alleged connection.

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THE POLTERGEIST AND HIS CRITICS

By LEWIS SPENCE

NO department, perhaps, of the great mass of evidence in favour of the existence of a supernatural world is so triumphantly vindicative as that which deals with the phenomena emanating from the poltergeist. Nowhere in their criticism of occult happenings have the antagonists of the supernatural thesis floundered so hopelessly or advanced so many absurd explanations as in connection with its manifestations. The spectacle of the psychologist who, while taunting his opponents with an undisciplined imagination, permits himself the wildest flights of hypothesis, may be humorously grateful, but nevertheless arouses impatience by reason of his manifest impudence. But the cold gravity of far-fetched interpretation undoubtedly makes its appeal to that inferior type of mind which plumes itself upon the discovery of petty inconsistencies, and espies in the occult, regarding the lore of which it is almost invariably ignorant, a butt for levity.

The constancy and similarity of poltergeist phenomena in climes and ages the most remote from each other is alone the best evidence that it does not arise out of imitative deception. We encounter it in the tepee of the savage, in the pious household of the Wesleyan parson, in the dwelling of the average citizen, in the houses of rich and poor alike. We find notices of it in the papyri of ancient Egypt and the satiric verse of the eighteenth century, and its geographical radius is as far-flung as that of hypnotism or thought-transference, or any other of those outer manifestations of the Occult which have succeeded in the battle against incredulity and self-satisfied intolerance. Yet we are asked to believe that the phenomena which baffle even the obstinacy of the Great Unconvincibles are caused—and caused invariably—by the agency of little children who are capable of hallucinating their elders with the ease of practised prestidigitators—that in all climes and ages there have not been wanting little folk, who, without training in the conjurer's art, were still able to hoax keen observers, not on one or on several occasions, but for months together!

That cases have occurred in which children have undoubtedly

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attempted to deceive their elders by trying to reproduce occult phenomena, I freely admit. I also admit that in many cases children or half-witted young people have been the unconscious media in poltergeist phenomena. But that all such phenomena are explicable in the light of juvenile deception is a statement of boundless folly, of which even some of the most extreme critics of these occurrences have not been guilty. Yet others have not hesitated to cast the entire onus of these marvels upon the shoulders of mere infants, who, it was alleged, out of their own consciousness and craft evolved a system of hallucination so intricate and so ingenious as to necessitate the intervention of trained observers, ecclesiastics of high rank, and lastly, of the officers of the law!

I do not intend to dwell at any length upon the Cideville case, as its incidents are familiar to most occultists. But I desire to indicate what has been recorded about it concerning the children who have been credited with "organizing" its manifestations. Briefly, M. Tinel, curé of Cideville in 1851, had two pupils, Gustav Lemonnier, aged twelve, and Bunel, aged fourteen. In the presence of these two lads loud rappings occurred, fire-irons left their places on the hearth, coverlets flew from beds, heavy desks moved as if by their own accord, and similar phenomena took place in abundance. I will quote here, *verbatim*, what the several investigators have to say regarding the conduct of the children:—

M. LEROUX, curate of Saussay: "I . . . placed myself under the table, to make sure the children could do nothing, and yet I heard noises."

The MARQUIS DE MIRVILLE: "I did not believe him (one of the boys) to be the cause of it."

MADAME DE SAINT VICTOR: "It was not possible for the children to do these things. I watched their feet and their hands and could see all their movements."

M. ROBERT DE SAINT VICTOR: "I am convinced the children had nothing to do with this" (the moving of desks). M. Bréard testified that the children could have had no hand in the phenomena.

In face of all this Mr. Podmore alleges: "The margin between what was possible and what in the view of the witnesses was not possible for the children to have accomplished, was very narrow." Thus they were capable of making the fire-irons leave the hearth by themselves before the eyes of the Mayor of the Commune. ("My eyes," he says, "were fixed on them to see what moved

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them, but I saw nothing at all.") *When sleeping in bed*, too, the boys could make objects dart about the room as if instinct with life! They could render themselves invisible and shake their elders vigorously! They could move a table with three people seated upon it without seeming to do so! They could produce knockings and rappings *behind* the wainscoting, whilst standing in front of it! They could make "phantom-like vapours" glide through the corridors!

"On a superficial reading," continues Podmore, "it would seem as if the marvels recounted could not be due to the trickery of a couple of children. But we may see by the account given by the untrained observer of a conjuring trick how widely the thing described may differ from the thing done. . . . We 'see' in a conjuring trick something which does not really take place." That is, these two youngsters were *expert conjurers!*

It is clear that Podmore had perused only one account of the Cideville happenings—that which Lang received from the Marquis d'Eguilles. Had he read the account of M. de Riko as furnished to Mrs. Hardinge Britten or that of the Marquis de Mirville in his *Les Espirits*, he could not have arrived at the conclusion he did. Riko tells us that the riot made in the Abbey of Cideville attracted crowds of people, that wreaths of smoke wound through the apartments, that footsteps and the rustling of silk dresses could be heard by all. "Some one suggested that pointed irons should be driven into the walls at every place where the blows were heard. A large party proceeded to follow this advice. Immediately upon this flames burst out from every hole, together with such thick smoke that the witnesses were obliged to open doors and windows to get rid of it and desist from all further attempts of the kind. All the party there assembled testified that they distinctly heard the word 'Pardon' cried out in a piteous voice."

All this, then, was the work of a couple of youngsters aged twelve and fourteen respectively! The curé blamed a shepherd named Thorel for causing the disturbances by witchcraft, and the man summoned him for libel in the local courts, which could find no explanation for these strange occurrences. Yet the professional "investigator," who was not on the spot, and wrote on the phenomena nearly sixty years later, had no difficulty in ascribing the whole thing to an outbreak of boyish mischief! Copious newspaper reports of the phenomena are in existence, but it does not seem as if these had commended themselves to Mr. Podmore's attention any more than M. de Riko's narrative.

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But a mind more acute and more experienced in weighing the value of evidence than that of the late Mr. Podmore was at work upon the poltergeist question. In his work *The Making of Religion*, the late Mr. Andrew Lang dedicated an appendix of some sixteen pages to a consideration of Mr. Podmore's " explanations," which he entitled " The Poltergeist and his Explainers." After showing that Tylor had laid stress upon the necessity for " careful observation in a scientific spirit " of these phenomena which " would seem apt to throw light on some interesting psychological questions," Lang shows that Podmore, " acting on Professor Tylor's hint," put forward as explanations, " fraud, and hallucinations caused by excited expectation." Taking the Worksop case as a sample of Podmore's collection of cases, Lang shows that fraud was in this instance out of the question. Once more we find that Podmore had neglected to examine the evidence afforded by the local newspapers. " To do this," says Lang slyly, " was more necessary, as he lays such stress upon failure of memory." The Worksop case occurred in a household of the lower middle class, in 1883, and was believed by Podmore to be the work of a servant girl, Eliza Rose. A doctor and a policeman were called in and saw crockery fly from cupboards, cups jump into the air and smash themselves on the floor, a basin float through the air, turning over and over as it went, and so forth.

The inmates of the house, suspecting Eliza Rose of destructive or uncanny tendencies, sent her away, and the phenomena ceased. Mr. Podmore reviewing the case says : " The phenomena described are quite inexplicable by ordinary mechanical means," yet he remarks that the girl Eliza Rose may have been guilty of them " as the instrument of mysterious agencies." To admit so much is to stultify his pronouncement upon the Cideville case. Fraud there might be in France where Mr. Podmore had not been to view the phenomena, but at Worksop, where he had himself spoken to the people who had seen these things, there had been an irruption of " mysterious agencies ! " So it is with the Podmores of this world, who float on the tide of surrounding opinion. It is *de rigueur* to fence with the facts of Cideville in the atmosphere of the Psychical Research Society, but it is not the fashion at Worksop, where people have seen things with their own eyes, and pretty wide-open eyes too !

But after all Podmore's is only a half-admission. One cannot divest himself of the judicial attitude of the Psychical Research Society in a moment, nor of its dubious and tortuous philosophy, the faulty character of which is so scathingly revealed by the

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clear-if-caustic cross-examination of Lang. " A half-witted girl, in Mr. Podmore's theory, can do ' what is quite inexplicable by ordinary mechanical means.' The phenomena began . . . *before* Rose entered the house . . . (Lang had provided himself with the local newspaper accounts, which Podmore had neglected) and if she *was* present, she could not have caused them ' by ordinary mechanical means.' " After trouncing Podmore for the neglect of contemporary evidence in the local prints, Lang shows from the statements of the protagonist of Psychical Research himself that human fraud was in this case an impossibility. To do Podmore justice this seems to have occurred to him as a half-truth, for he falls back on the " mysterious agencies " which in the Cideville case he attributed to the conjuring abilities of a couple of accomplished but misguided boys.

And what of his theory of hallucination ? It is always well to have two strings to your theoretical bow—if you are a critic of the supernormal. But if you are an archer in the ranks of the Believers it is of the nature of an atrocity and against the laws of civilized warfare. Poltergeist phenomena, then, may be the result of " sensory illusion, conditioned by the excited state of the percipient." "Good," says Lang, " let us take the case of the disturbances in a carpenter's shop at Swanland, near Hull." In this workshop pieces of wood and similar missiles were thrown about or sometimes slowly sailed about in the air for six weeks on end.

" This case," says Lang " has a certain interest *à propos* of Mr. Podmore's surmise that all such phenomena arise in trickery, which produces excitement in the spectators, which excitement begets hallucination, and hallucination takes the form of seeing the thrown objects move in a non-natural way. Thus, I keep throwing things about. You, not detecting this stratagem, get excited, consequently hallucinated, and you believe you see the things move in spirals, or undulate as if on waves, or hop or float or glide in an impossible way. So close is the uniformity of hallucination, that these phenomena are described in similar terms by witnesses (hallucinated, of course) in times old and new." Ergo, a man can remain " excited " for six weeks, as in the Swanland instance, and such excited hallucination can persist through the ages. " This," remarks Lang, " is a novel and valuable psychological law." In a word Podmore, through nervousness and fear of the " scientific " spirit of his day, to placate it assumed an ultracritical attitude towards all occult phenomena, upon which he descanted with an obstinacy of nescience which he paraded as judicial impartiality. Thus might some aspiring

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counsel, aware of the foibles of a judge upon a certain point of law, and seeing the court bent upon conviction, beat down and ignore every vestige of favourable evidence.

The importance of the poltergeist question to occult research as a whole and as a key to our better understanding of things supernormal, never seems to have occurred to Podmore, or, for that matter, to more friendly investigators, although it certainly commended itself in some such light to the brilliant and incisive intellect of Lang, who regarded it as the *fons et origo* of fetishism. The poltergeist is, indeed, the Borderer of the great Land of Beyond, the first skirmisher of the vast army of the supernatural. He is to the explorer of the Other Side as the first Indian encountered by Columbus, and I would plead that our investigation of the phenomena connected with him be pursued in a more intensive spirit and be granted a larger publicity than has hitherto been given to it. In this place I would draw attention to two cases of poltergeist phenomena which do not appear to have gained any wide currency and which seem to me peculiarly fitted to exemplify the genuine character of these occurrences, which their circumstances, I think, place beyond the reach of doubt.

The first of these is that which occurred in the house of M. Joller, a lawyer of Lucerne, from 1860 to 1862, and which was commented upon by Howitt in the *Spiritual Magazine* of February, 1864. Joller was an estimable man of affairs and a member of the Swiss House of Representatives, dwelling at the village of Stans, near Lucerne, who tells his own story in a small brochure of some twenty pages, now almost as rare as that which recounts the Bealing affair. The house in which he dwelt had belonged to his father, and he had resided in it since the death of his father in 1845. He had "seven healthy children," four boys and three girls; and the temper of the whole family was antagonistic to superstition and even a little so to a belief in things spiritual. Manifestations commenced by rappings and knockings on the bedstead of the servant-maid and spread to the bedroom of his wife and second daughter. The maid, cleaning boots in the kitchen, saw grey shapes rise from the cellar, and heard sobbing in the lumber-room upstairs. In October 1861 the feeling among the Jollers was that the maid was to blame, so *she was dismissed and left the house.* All was quiet for a while and the medium seemed to have left with the maid. But in the summer of 1862 the disturbances recommenced. In August of that year M. Joller paid a visit to Lucerne, accompanied by his wife and eldest son, and on his return his children expressed great alarm at what

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had occurred in his absence. They had been driven out of the house by a spectre, and on returning after some hours spent in the garden, had once more encountered the apparition on the staircase.

Joller tried to explain away the occurrences by the time-honoured method of attributing them to rats. He himself disbelieved all this " nonsense," and dealt sternly with the children. But the phenomena came thicker and faster. The humming of spinning-wheels was heard in the house, strange music sounded, and the furniture began to move about as if impelled by invisible hands. A melancholy voice was heard singing the " Prayer " in " Zampa," and speaking in the Nidwalden patois. The hearing of voices is not an uncommon circumstance in poltergeist phenomena, and is usually accounted for by investigators by the ventriloquial abilities of tricksy children! But this by the way.

M. Joller himself soon heard and traced the knockings, and found that when he made knockings himself they were replied to in the same rhythm and with redoubled energy. When the family were at prayers the riot became so deafening that at length they sought refuge in a bedroom on the upper story. But here the spirits followed them, and the bed which the room contained was raised and dashed against the wall, time and again, with terrific violence.

Matters soon became intolerable, and the news being spread that the Jollers' house was haunted, the unhappy inmates knew little peace. Crowds of people flocked to witness the phenomena —and their curiosity was appeased, nay glutted. Suddenly opening a door upon which loud knocking had sounded, Joller found himself face to face with an apparition, which was thrusting out a long, bony arm in the very act of knocking once more. Grey clouds floated through the house, and a voice groaned " Take pity on me."

Called next day to a sitting of the Court of Justice at Lucerne, Joller was sent for ere the Court rose, his house being in the most frightful uproar. Arriving, he found all his family in the open air, surrounded by crowds from the neighbouring countryside. Entering the house, he saw doors wildly flying open and banging to with the utmost violence, and knockings sounded on every side. He at once formed a small commission of inquiry which included the President of the Court of Justice, Judge Schollberger, with several councillors, and other men of standing, all of whom witnessed the phenomena, but went away sorely bewildered.

The police now took charge of the house, and during the six days they occupied it nothing occurred. But when the Jollers

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re-entered it the disturbances recommenced. The extraordinary thing is that when the Joller children were outside of the house among the crowd the disturbances were as marked as when they occupied it. At length the place became untenable, and Joller was compelled to seek another home in October, 1862.

The second case to which I wish to draw attention is that which occurred in the house of Andrew Mackie in Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland, in 1695, and which has been recorded by Mr. Alexander Telfair, Minister of the parish of Rerrick in that county. It will be found as an appendix to Law's *Memorials* and was separately printed for Andrew Bell, at the Sign of the Cross Keys, Poultry, London, and at Edinburgh by Mosman in the Parliament Close, 1696.

Mackie was a farmer, renting a small farm at Ringcroft of Stocking, which had no very good repute as the erstwhile dwelling of one MacKnaught, a reputed believer in sorcery. In February, 1695, disturbances began. Mackie found his cattle tied up in an extraordinary manner, and while the family slept some peats were placed on the house floor and set on fire. Some days later stones began to be thrown into the house, but from whence or by whom thrown could not be discerned. On a Saturday the children entering the empty house, saw "what looked like a body" sitting by the hearth, and were afraid. It was covered with a blanket, and the youngest child, a boy of nine, ran up and pulled the blanket away, to find a four-legged stool beneath. The stone-throwing grew worse when the family were at prayers. Mr. Telfair, the Minister, being called in, was struck several times by "a great staff," the blows made by which could be heard by all. "That night, as I was at prayer," says Telfair, "leaning on a bed-side, I felt something pressing up my arme; I, casting my eyes thither, perceived a little white hand and arm, from the elbow down, but presently it vanished."

The trouble increased, Mackie and his children saw the apparition of a lad who seemed about fourteen years of age, red-faced, with yellow hair, dressed in hodden grey, with a bonnet on his head—the immemorial costume of the Scottish peasantry. Soon the stone-throwing grew so dangerous that the family were at times forced to leave the house and the surrounding yards, and several were more or less severely wounded. The spirit gripped Mackie by the hair and dragged the children up and down the house by the clothes. It tore savagely at the side of John Kiege, a miller of Anchencairn, so that he cried loudly for help. Objects sailed through the air as if of their own volition, and at night a

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voice was heard crying, "Wisht, wisht," and a noise of whistling was heard.

Two ministers, Andrew Ewart and John Murdo, visited the house and spent the night fasting and praying. The first was badly injured by a great stone cast at him, and his wig was pulled from his head. It bruised Murdo sorely and cast a blazing peat in the midst of the assembled company. A few days later some thatch-straw was set on fire in the barn-yard. A stone near the threshold trembled curiously beneath the feet of Mackie's wife, and on raising it in the morning she found seven small bones with blood and some flesh, wrapped up in a piece of paper. So scared was the woman that she ran off to a farm a quarter of a mile away, leaving the children in bed with her husband. Immediately the uproar made by the spirit became most violent, and large balls of fire rushed through the house, vanishing as they fell. A red-hot stone fell into the bed among the children and could not be handled an hour and a half later. When the bones were at length taken up by a neighbouring farmer the disturbance ceased.

Two days later when Andrew Mackie rose he found a letter written and sealed with blood lying on the floor. It read as follows: "Woe be to thee, Scotland. Repent and take warning, for the door of Heaven is already barred against thee. I am sent for a warning to thee to flie to God. Yet troublit shallt this man be for twenty days," and more that seems incoherent.

A meeting of six ministers was then convened at the house, whereupon the spirit dashed itself against the building with such force that it broke an opening through the timber and thatch and poured in great stones. It broke down the barn-door and party-wall and tripped up the reverend gentlemen who were attempting to exorcise it. Objects once more began to fly about, and a sieve was torn out of the hands of one of the inmates and destroyed.

On the night of April 15 the spirit was the cause of such uproar as affrighted all in the house, so that they feared for their lives. The groaning and crying were redoubled with hideous sounds of "Bo, bo" and "Kick kuck." That night the family left the house, but five neighbours who remained heard or saw nothing. Only the cattle were maltreated and set loose. On the following night when the family returned all was well, but in the morning they found that the sheep had been tied in couples by the spirit, which had made straw ropes to bind them. On April 20 it spoke and shouted, striking the Mackies and calling out "Take you that till you get more." On the 26th it called those in the house "witches," and said that it "would take them to hell." "Thou

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shalt be troubled till Tuesday" it cried threateningly. On which Mackie asked: "Who gave thee a commission?" To this it replied; "God gave me a commission: for I am sent to warn the land to repent: for a judgment is to come if the land do not quickly repent," and much more in the same strain.

Next day the spirit set the house on fire in seven places and in the evening pulled down the end of the house so that the ministers had to take refuge in the stable. On the first of May the disturbances ceased and the wretched crofters were left in peace.

I would urge that the circumstances of the two unfamiliar cases which I have here cited absolutely preclude the possibility of juvenile trickery. It seems clear that in both cases the poltergeist or disturbing agency was an unquiet spirit, in the latter instance probably the victim of a terrible crime. In the case of the Jollers the spirit or spirits who afflicted them evidently desired human aid for the purpose of breaking an earth-bound connection. But the spirit which pestered the Mackies had undoubtedly all the vindictiveness which frequently characterizes those who have been hurried out of life. It is noteworthy that both visitants seem to have belonged to the neighbourhood they haunted, as one spoke German Swiss and the other Lowland Scots.

Nowhere are the conclusions of "Science" so glaringly in error as in connection with poltergeist phenomena, and if these pages succeed in drawing attention to the necessity for the re-examination of the whole question the writer will feel that they have not been penned in vain.

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CORRESPONDENCE

[*The name and address of the writer, not necessarily for publication, is required as evidence of bona-fides, and must in every case accompany correspondence sent for insertion in the pages of the* OCCULT REVIEW.—ED.]

THE MORALITY OF KILLING.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—One is prepared to grant that all matter on this physical plane is subject to rearrangement under the phenomena of disintegration and decay, but the point is rather how far we can deliberately interfere with the duration of the employment of this matter by the intelligences which make use of it for evolutionary purposes.

The indulgence of the appetite to kill can hardly be recognized as other than one of the lower animal and most unsympathetic instincts, and as such it is not surprising if it chains its devotees, even within the limits of physical recognition, to the appropriate lower levels of evolution.

This does not necessarily apply to killing in order to support life or to eating killed food, inasmuch as the desire to preserve the body is assisting evolution and the act of killing may not be inspired by any lust to kill or give any personal gratification to the consumer in depriving another being of its body. One unwittingly destroys myriads of small lives. There is all the difference between the lust to kill and bowing to circumstance. The degree of mischief done in killing may be taken as directly proportionate to the evolutionary progress of the victim, and although it is not improbable that a resentment against the agent of its premature death may be carried over as an instinctive antipathy into a future incarnation, that too is dependent upon the intent which inspired the act. Even fallible human judgment does not rate highly the public executioner, who usually is a man in sympathy with his gruesome profession.

Man creates his own Nemesis, a very real and fearful being fortunately invisible to most people, who leads him mercilessly through that set of experiences which the victim wittingly or unwittingly courts, and into contact with those agents who will benefit or damage him during the passage.

Sympathy with life animal, vegetable, and even mineral, is not misplaced or an emotional extravagance. It is the loftiest quality of human nature, having its foundations in understanding and unselfishness.

Although most of us are not independent of animal food owing to the conditions of our daily life, we unquestionably make more

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difficulties for ourselves thereby. Even as those who have reached a certain stage of enlightenment have found it necessary to eschew meat in any form, so a considerable section of civilized humanity must inevitably follow suit. Those who have experienced a suitable diet without meat know the extraordinary difference it makes. But apart from that, the growth of civilized races has created a demand for which there is a limit of supply. Although this demand is likely to increase for many years to come, and meat be necessary for the masses of great populations, nevertheless there is a growing body of people who find they can replace it advantageously by other foods.

These people are not unlikely to provide the leaders of thought and government in the not too distant future. Game shooting, preserved and wild, may come to be looked upon equally as a species of butchery, and the big game hunter fall from the pedestal of the hero he is popularly supposed to be.

The conscience of civilized humanity is being gradually awakened.

Even the foolishness of war is impressing itself upon the more intelligent element of populations.

I may add that I have travelled more than most men, and have shot game, big and small, dangerous and harmless, in most parts of the world, in the ignorance of my youth for sport and later for food. It is not therefore that I do not know what it means.

Three years in the firing line in France has shown me the brutalizing effects of war upon those whose instincts are not antagonistic to killing. Others have realized that life has mysteries deeper than appeared to them before passing through the valley of the shadow.

No man or woman will be the worse for realizing that animal life has not been created for his or her especial benefit and for giving it that sympathy which it so fully deserves. Yours, etc.,

P. H. F

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—As a Theosophist and vegetarian I cannot but lament the ignorance displayed by some of your correspondents on the subject of the killing of stags, as it can only lay them open to ridicule.

Has it never occurred to them that a given tract of land cannot support more than a certain number of deer, and that, therefore, were these animals allowed to multiply indefinitely, many of them would certainly be "condemned to death" by starvation? True, they might stray down to lower ground, and try to feed on the crops of the farmers and crofters, but would your correspondents think it likely, or even desirable, that this should be patiently submitted to? The stag is a pugnacious animal, and if they were too thick on the ground, they would fight, and the stronger ones would destroy the weaker.

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"To be consistent," P. V. must advocate that rabbits should never be killed, with the result that the countryside would soon become a wilderness. No one regrets more than I do the necessity for killing animals, but that it *is* sometimes a necessity no one with any experience of country life can deny.

Yours faithfully,

G. WINDSOR CLIVE.

OAKLY PARK,
LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE.

IMPOSSIBLE TO ESCAPE GUILT FOR ANIMAL KILLING.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—Whilst apologizing to Miss Collins for thinking she eats flesh, I cannot exonerate her from being the cause of death in animals.

The leather of her boots, shoes and gloves is derived from animals killed for that purpose, the poor little kids being killed almost as soon as they are born; each pair of gloves she wears means an innocent baby goat murdered for her to be "in the fashion." If she tries to keep warm with a fur boa, or feather one, or even puts an eiderdown on the bed, she is responsible for as many deaths of animals; and fur-bearing wild animals are often skinned alive to make their fur softer.

Any felt she uses is from murdered rabbits, every egg she eats is from robbing a poor hen of her young, or milk robbing a calf which has to be slaughtered so that the cow's milk is available for your correspondent.

All moth and insect powders and disinfectants are murder of animal life, and every breath we take or yard we move means death to millions.

WALTER WINANS.

CARLTON HOTEL,
PALL MALL, S.W. 1.

WHY THE DEER WERE SHOT.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—P.V. repeats (what I keep denying) that the deer were killed because they were condemned to die FOR SPORT.

As I said twice before and again repeat, the deer were condemned to die by the Government of this country in order to supply food for the people. P.V. forgets that there was food rationing, so as to keep people from starving, and deer were one of the foods, and that each deer had to be properly accounted for and not a pound of meat wasted.

I am one of the Venison Committee and know what I am talking about. P.V. perhaps will now understand that the deer were *not killed for sport*, but to *prevent starvation of human beings*, and that I was working to "do my bit" in the War even more so than P.V. in abusing those whom he cannot understand and misrepresenting their motives.

WALTER WINANS.

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To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—Surely the person who abstains from all meat because it involves the killing of animals should likewise abstain from use of leather or any form of dressed skins.

Yours faithfully,

ROYAL SOCIETIES CLUB. G. TREVOR.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—People are always trying, in one way or another, to find some satisfactory theory which will explain the mysteries, paradoxes and injustices of the world. And they never do it—because they cannot! Humanity cries out for something higher than itself: it stretches out hands to heaven—as a far away place—and prays for release from evil; and when it finds evil still present, in spite of its praying, it makes excuses for God, asserting that He sends evil that good may be appreciated, and that sin and misery are part of a great Whole, directed by a perfect, though incomprehensible Wisdom.

What has not generally been taken into account is that sin, disease, misery and death are utterly unreal. Humanity may have its perfect Creator without having to turn a blind eye to the imperfections of His creation—for His creation *is* perfect.

What Mr. Walter Winans says in his letter is quite correct, that "everything runs on just like a cinematograph film." This view was first put forward, I believe, in modern times by Mr. F. L. Rawson, and the whole scheme of life is set out in detail in his book *Life Understood*. Everything was fixed at the beginning of the material world (that mysterious origin of evil which no one has explained and which cannot be explained because it was the origin of a myth), but where I do not agree with Mr. Winans is that he says this process goes on "from eternity to eternity." I hold a certain faith that things temporal are the very opposite of things eternal, and that the cinema film is one of the temporal things.

Mr. Winans' difficulty seems to be that, whilst a believer in God and a believer in predestination, he is a fatalist. He says: "We cannot change a single thing." Now, there is one way by which the cinema picture may be changed, and that is by prayer—the true method of prayer as taught by Jesus the Christ. That a change takes place after prayer is a certain proof that the first condition was not ordained by God, and this is true because scientific prayer is not asking a distant God for something or to do something, but is the realization that God is indeed good, the only Creator, and that He has made all things "very good." As Mr. Rawson says, man is really spiritual, being in heaven now, and therefore the love, life, joy,

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wisdom and beauty which are part of heaven show through the cinema pictures, giving them the appearance of reality. When one turns in thought to God one opens the human mind, and the action of God takes place, destroying some of the evil in the cinema pictures, making them a clearer transparency for Truth.

Let every one prove this for himself. If you see a discordant condition, whether of illness, want, anger, etc., realize for a moment that God is really omnipotent, omnipresent; then deny the reality of the evil, immediately affirming the opposite good, dwelling in thought on that good, knowing that God is Love, Truth and Life. You must not picture the material good you wish for; you can trust absolutely that if you will recognize that what God wills *is* best the best will happen, and the reason for the quick response you will get is that all is mental, that the material world is merely a false mental concept of God's perfect world, and that as soon as the belief in the reality of this false world is abandoned the action of God takes place and God's world appears more as it really is. Did not the greatest Teacher ever known say, "The Kingdom of God is within you." This "within" must be in consciousness.

Mr. Winans concludes his letter with the words "God's thoughts are higher than our thoughts." Certainly, for God's thoughts are true and eternal and man's so-called thoughts are but misconceptions, illusions, deceptions.

Misconceptions, however, must be about something true, something real "seen through a glass darkly," and always the fog is being cleared away, never to return. Just now a dense mass has lifted. It is within the power of all to thin the mist more and more for themselves and for their fellows. Yours faithfully,

20 HARRINGTON SQUARE, N.W. E. C. M. DAVIS.

THE TAROT CARDS.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

SIR,—It has occurred to me that it might be either interesting or useful to recall your readers' attention to the Tarot Cards, which are not as well-known as I would like, even among Theosophical students, while in some cases, in which people are interested in occult matters, I have found the said cards unknown.

When a matter relating to myself was a little uncertain some years ago in Bristol, a friend "divined" on my account by means of the Tarot Cards with surprisingly accurate results, and so after some practice on my own account I have continued to use them to date.

To give three examples, I would add that a few months ago, after having given one of the Government Departments some exceedingly useful information, I was requested to interview one of the official solicitors, and being uncertain as to my reception (for one never knows

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one's " luck " with a Govt. Dept.) I hurriedly resorted to divination before the interview, the answer not only being satisfactory, but even giving the type of man the solicitor turned out to be. In a social matter I have still in hand, I have asked the Tarot questions in respect to the same since the end of October, with unvarying accuracy. Lastly, to mention a trifling case, when we missed our pet cat near Christmas time, I found from the cards that he was imprisoned somewhere, and would not be lost, and the next morning he was released from a neighbouring flour store where he had been accidentally locked.

I have found that on certain occasions a little modification of the strict letter of Mr. Waite's interpretation is advisable. For instance, if one is inquiring into a matter of more or less militant nature and the tenth card is the five of swords, the previous cards being favourable, it would mean success for the querent (the " disdainful person "), but if the other cards were unfavourable, the two retreating figures would refer to the querent or the matter inquired about.

The method of divination as set out on pages 299 to 305 of the 5*s*. book is, I think, the best, and I wish that more people knew of and used the Tarot.

Yours faithfully,
ARTHUR MALLORD TURNER.

A SCIENTIFIC CRITICISM.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—I read with interest an article in the December number of your magazine, " The Ethereal and the Material," by R. B. Span. But, as one who is concerned in the scientific side of the matter, I should like to point out one or two inaccuracies, which detract considerably from its scientific value.

Thus (on page 349) he says : " The human body is composed of electrons which are charged with electricity and is akin to an electric battery, and is thus in close contact with the world of ether."

In the first place, according to the modern atomic theory, *all* matter is built up of atoms, which are supposed to consist of a positively charged nucleus, around which are disposed the electrons. Electrons are particles of negative electricity. When an atom lacks one or more electrons it is said to be positively charged, and when it has too many electrons it is negatively charged. It is therefore incorrect to speak of the electrons themselves as being charged with electricity, since they *are* electricity.

In the second place it is absurd to say that the body is akin to an electric battery, being composed of electrons. However highly charged a body may be, it can never supply electric current (which is the function of an electric battery) unless the necessary chemical conditions are fulfilled. Again, I believe all physicists and psychic students maintain that Ether is all-permeating. Presumably, therefore, all

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matter is in equally close contact with Ether. The fact that a body is charged with static electricity or is at a high electromagnetic potential (it is not clear to which state Mr. Span refers) can make no difference to the closeness of contact between that body and the Ether or the world of Ether.

On page 351, Mr. Span says: "As the human brain is an electric battery, it is easy to understand how we can communicate with our friends who have passed beyond the grave, by means of the electric currents which permeate the ether." No electric battery that has ever been made is capable of sending electric *currents* through the ether, without the assistance of a material metallic conductor. Electric *waves* may be set up in the ether with the assistance of an induction coil, and discharges of static electric electricity are waves in the ether. Although I agree with Mr. Span in his conclusion as to the possibility of our communicating with those who have passed over, I confess I do not find it easy to follow his explanation.

If assistance is to be expected from scientific men for the investigation of psychic phenomena, facts such as these should be expressed in correct scientific language, or else all technical terms should be eschewed.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
G. G. BEAMISH.

50 CRYSTAL PALACE PARK ROAD,
LONDON, S.E. 26.

P.S.—I presume that the word "sound" in the sentence, "Ether transmits *sound* waves at the rate of 192,000 miles a second," is a misprint for "light."
G. G. B.

DREAMS.

To the Editor of the OCCULT REVIEW.

DEAR SIR,—Many of your correspondents have sent you very interesting dream stories, and I do not propose to add to their number, though I could tell many; but certain experiences seem to me to afford a possible clue to the subject of dreams in general, and as such may be of interest. The idea came to me many years ago when travelling in a railway carriage, as the evening was closing in and the lamps were lighted. I was sitting by the window and therein saw clearly reflected the inside of the carriage and my fellow passengers as if in a mirror, but I accidentally noticed that without moving in the least, by merely altering the focus of my eyes, I could at will see also the external landscape, and the reflection of the carriage almost passed out of sight. I could see a road and a man walking along it. I could see the village he had come from, and the farmhouse he was approaching. Many miles of country were visible simultaneously, and various incidents going on, all to be seen at once. Sometimes involuntarily the reflection of the carriage became visible again, and blended queerly with the external images. I thought little of this at the time, it was

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an ordinary enough experience. But long afterwards, when dozing by the fire, and just on the edge of sleep, I became conscious of a dream figure, very faintly visible among the ordinary chairs and bookcases of my study. That figure had nothing to do with the room, nor with anything I had been reading or thinking about. But as I passed into a state of dream that figure became clear and distinct, and the room vanished entirely. There was nothing interesting about the dream or the figure. But on waking, which I did after about five minutes, I recalled the double appearance, and determined to try and renew and investigate the experience of the moment of passing from material to dream vision. The habit of endeavouring to notice and remember the sensations at the moment of passing from waking to dream consciousness developed the power of doing so, and I found that the first beginnings of the dream were very varied ; sometimes it was a word, or a phrase, which seemed to be either heard or seen in written or printed form. Sometimes an utterly irrelevant phrase will obtrude itself on a book I am reading. Sometimes it is a figure, known or unknown, either dead or still living, or perhaps a landscape. Sometimes a symbol will faintly appear against the back of a chair. But in every case it is always utterly unconnected with surroundings, with occupation, or thoughts ; and from it the dream develops. Sometimes bodily conditions, as for instance rheumatic twinges, force themselves on the consciousness, forming a bizarre combination. Sometimes the surroundings refuse to vanish entirely, and the material objects blend quaintly, often distressingly, with the dream images. Sometimes a voice, or a striking clock, or some other sound, will rouse memory pictures, as it would arouse them in waking consciousness. But with practice I find I can nearly always disentangle them. One characteristic I notice in the pure dream consciousness is the wide expanse seen at once, and therewith the idea that to see it waking, it would be necessary to traverse the track slowly, and see the events in sequence. All this seems to find a fairly exact parallel in my railway carriage experience. The outer world being the dream consciousness, the reflection of the carriage being the consciousness of material things, conveyed by physical senses only imperfectly dormant. Sometimes the dream consciousness reflects only the latter, but with no regulation ; physical discomfort, heard sounds, etc., being mixed with disconnected memory pictures. Occasionally I have succeeded at the moment of passing into the dream consciousness in strongly visualizing a particular symbol, and thereby inducing a particular dream. This is rare, but it opens wide possibilities. On the whole my experiments have convinced me that the pure dream comes entirely from without, and is independent of surroundings, or of memory, or physical sensations. But these undoubtedly may, and very frequently do, obtrude themselves into the dream consciousness, causing bizarre effects.

Yours faithfully,

J. W. BRODIE-INNES.

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PERIODICAL LITERATURE

THERE are three articles in the new issue of *The Quest* which stand out for ourselves among the contents of an excellent number. The first is Mr. Mead's consideration of "current rumours" concerning the "Hither Hereafter." It is a contribution to be welcomed as a kind of confession of faith, based on reasoned inferences. In his opinion the careful and competent analysis of existing masses of psychical evidence seems to point in one only direction, after ample allowance has been made for "secondary or adjunctive hypotheses." The factors which remain over are inexplicable on any other supposition than that of surviving personalities which at times and seasons enter into communication with humanity here on earth. This being postulated, there emerges the purpose of the paper, which is to analyse communicated "descriptions of the state affairs of after death." The correspondence established is with "average men and women striving to adapt themselves to the new conditions" in "a vast intermediate life of probation" suited to the needs of each soul. They are not "bodiless spirits," in the state conceived by Thomist theology prior to the general resurrection, nor are they in an altogether new vesture, but in that so-called psychic body which is already "part and parcel of our equipment and economy potentially now in earth life." In such vesture the physically disembodied being is neither wraith nor ghost, but "more alive than ever he was before," and is encompassed by "an order of a subtler material nature"—realistic, objective, sensible and in intimate relation with that manifest material order "which we know through our physical senses." Many of the rumours locate it within "the earth's surround," but there are grades and degrees ascending. There is no record of toil, such as we understand it here, no eating to live; there are no mechanical tasks: yet it is not a state of idleness. There is all that corresponds to educational, moral and social problems, under a law of "being benefited and benefiting in turn." The legitimate ambition of the soul seems that of progressive development, "so as to become a more efficient helper or guide to others less fortunate." This is on what Mr. Mead calls the "decent" side, but there are also the unhappy states. "Even so one does not meet with any dogma of endless misery." Hope remains even for the worst; remedial agencies are at work; whatsoever may correspond to official hells of theology is remedial also, and not merely punitive. Such are the rumours summarized, and while recognizing "the very great obstacles in the way of clean and clear communications," Mr. Mead believes that they are "within their scope and measure truth-telling." . . . The second paper is Dr. Astley's cheering speculation as to whether "animals cease at death"; the personal reminiscences of so-called dumb favourites are delightful; while the affirmative citations from poets and others are

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full of suggestion and in a few cases new to us. On this question the dogmatic, affirmation, outside all region of debate and beyond the jurisdiction of science, is: "Life is life, and life is everlasting." . . . The third paper raised curious expectations and stifled them in due course. Those who know Mrs. Atwood's *Suggestive Inquiry* may remember that Mr. South, her father, wrote something on the same subject, namely, an *Enigma of Alchemy* in verse, one specimen of which was quoted in his daughter's work. The "poem" was destroyed, with the *Suggestive Inquiry* itself; but now at this late day a duplicate proof of sixteen printed pages—as a specimen of the whole—has turned up between the leaves of a volume said to have belonged to a friend. About the thing as a whole one had wondered often, and our minds are now at rest, for the sheet is reproduced in full, here in the pages of *The Quest*. It proves that an incapacity for intelligible writing descended from father to child, for setting aside grammatical slips and bad punctuation it is impossible to construe many passages, and some fail to make sense at all.

> "The wonders of the trance how few there be,
> Of those who go about strange things to see
> In Photogenics, or Photography"—

stands as a finished sentence. The fragment for the rest is an expatiation on somewhat miscellaneous subjects. It appears, however, that what is called "our Chemic School" has a practice somehow connected with mesmeric trance, or some form of that experience. There are allusions to "two beings lapp'd in one" and to a conjugal union "when the double soul blends into one." In competent hands they might point in directions not remote from the mystic path, but in Mr. South's case it seems likely that they evaporated in a whirl of unclassified words. On the whole therefore—as we have the *Suggestive Inquiry*, at its value—it may be well that we have been spared more of the *Enigma* than we owe to the good offices of *The Quest*.

Dr. T. G. Pinches explains in *The Expository Times* how the stars for the ancient Babylonians were not only "for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years," as the Scripture phrase expresses it, but were tokens especially of the gods to men—meaning portents of things to come. His article on Assyro-Babylonian astrologers and their lore is a learned contribution to the subject and may be commended to students of astrology who are concerned with its past history. Dr. Pinches inclines to the old view that "as chemistry is the offspring of alchemy, so astronomy is the child of astrology." The divinatory interest led to careful study of the movements of heavenly bodies, and so opened the door to real experimental knowledge of stars and stellar systems. The records of the tablets are explored and valuable citations therefrom are presented in a very clear manner. . . . Since the regrettable suspense of our old friend *The Word* in September last, without completing an elaborate study on the Secret Doctrine

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of the Tarot by Paul F. Case, this writer has transferred his pen to *Azoth*, and is publishing therein an introduction to the study of the same strange symbols. The last instalment deals with the Kabalistic attribution of the Hebrew alphabet, the letters of which were first connected, we believe, with the Grand Trumps of the Tarot by Éliphas Lévi. *Azoth* has commenced a new volume with several excellent papers. . . . Mr. A. P. Sinnett writes in *The Messenger* on Masters and their method, with the object of affording theosophists more express information concerning those whom he calls the "elder brethren" of humanity. He reminds us that his own books gave the first glimpses concerning "the White Lodge." Mr. Sinnett claims that the communication established at that time has continued, and it would appear to be fuller at this day than it was in the past. He is too old a friend and too well understood and remembered for us to have the least doubt of his utter sincerity. For the rest, such claims and memorials remind us inevitably of those "high guides" in the better circles of spiritualism. These also are still in activity, and it would seem that many orders, classes or hierarchies of discarnate humanity are *ex hypothesi* in communion with mankind. When we are told that the Masters are or may be partially incarnate in several earthly personalities at once, we cannot help thinking that the spiritistic theory of so-called control offers a simpler explanation of facts alleged. However, when we hear that the Comte de St. Germain is now hard at work in Russia, mitigating the chaos of misrule, we are assuredly in agreement with Mr. Sinnett, who says that only "poor success" has attended his efforts so far. Meanwhile, "the White Lodge" Masters have had to withdraw from Germany, "since Satan has monopolized spiritual influence in that country." . . . *La Revue Spirite* has a short study of that once famous dealer in "the Absolute," Hœne Wronski, about whom we hear seldom in these days and are glad to be reminded. Éliphas Lévi bore witness that it was the writings of Wronski which enabled him to recover—in his own opinion—the lost keys of the occult sanctuaries. Wronski was an officer of the Polish army in the service of France, and he died at Paris in 1850. His earlier life was devoted to mechanics, physics and astronomy, but later on he turned to the study of philosophy, and especially to the doctrines of Böhme, Kant and Hegel. He was also a mathematician, and the time came when he believed himself to have discovered the Absolute—presumably in an intellectual understanding of the term. Man, in his view, came on this earth to create for himself an eternal existence. The path of this realization was duty, regarded as an essential code of honour. It was possible also for man to place himself beyond the sphere of evil, and in that of holiness, which is the beatitude of goodness. Wronski's blessed state was, however, one of certitude in knowledge, and the attainment of immortality on earth by means of knowledge was held to be possible. So also was the power of penetrating mentally into the very essence

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of the Creator. There seems to have been no room for love in the system, and its frigid formalities found few whom it could attract or lead. Wronski's supposed mission proved a failure, and his books are forgotten at a period when there is great activity in searching the records of the past for the discovery of spiritual values which were overlooked in their own day. . . . The *Islamic Review* gives some views on the creation and function of the soul, affirming that its manifestation in a material form is as yet an unsolved mystery. The conclusion reached is that the body is mother of soul, and this view is said to be in harmony with Islamic doctrine. The hypothesis that soul and body are two distinct entities is condemned as detrimental to the welfare of men, and so also is transmigration—including presumably the doctrine of successive re-embodiment in human forms. As maintaining a curious position, there is something to be said for the article, were it not so badly worded ; but it would seem to be the work of a foreigner. . . . A writer in *Rays from the Rose-Cross* attempts a distinction between practical mystics, of whom St. Teresa is cited as an example ; devotional mystics, such as St. Thomas à Kempis and Böhme ; symbolical mystics, Swedenborg being a typical case ; and Nature mystics, at the head of whom it may be well said that St. Francis of Assisi stands. It is a pleasant little essay, but calls for correction in the use of the word practical, which connotes in the example quoted what is termed business ability, of which St. Catherine of Siena was another signal instance. But she and St. Teresa were not less devotional than St. Thomas à Kempis, and *qua* mystic each and all were practical ; for mysticism is a practical science, its masters being distinguished invariably by the business ability which belongs to the other world. Additionally some of them had talents which counted in the affairs of this material life.

Our friend Mr. Dudley Wright is producing in serial form, and in the columns of *The Freemason*, a work on the Eleusinian Mysteries and Rites, some time since projected. Owing to his easy familiarity with Greek and his acquaintance with recondite as well as ordinary sources of reference, we believe that the undertaking will prove of considerable consequence. Dr. Fort Newton has contributed a sympathetic introduction, in which he dwells on the mysteries of antiquity as founded in a real need and as " evoking that eternal mysticism which is at once the joy and solace of man." The section of Mr. Wright's work which has been completed so far deals with the Eleusinian legend, concerning the abduction of Persephone by Pluto and Demeter's quest for her child. The god of Hades was compelled ultimately to restore Persephone, but so contrived that henceforward she dwelt for eight of each twelve months with her mother and four in the underworld. Demeter, who had been entertained hospitably by the Eleusinians during her search and sorrows, initiated its princes into certain Sacred Rites, being those celebrated subsequently at Eleusis.

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REVIEWS

Umbræ Silentes. By Frank Pearce Sturm, M.D. Cr. 8vo, pp. 98. London: Theosophical Publishing House. Price 6s. net.

Dr. Sturm has published certain volumes of verse, and if I may judge by a few poems which appear between the covers of the present volume, they are assuredly of no common order. I must term his prose essays also a contribution to literature. He handles herein the haunting and ever fascinating subject of pre-existence, apart seemingly from any definite views on successive re-embodiments in the flesh of our life on earth. There are intimations of recollection on his own part, as well as of an abiding presence of the idea throughout his life. The impression produced is therefore more convincing and vital than would be likely in a formal thesis; and yet I have been reminded there and here in these pages of excellent old Joseph Glanvil, though his *Lux Orientalis* is a tract of all things formal, and pre-existence is presented methodically therein as a "Key to the Grand Mysteries in respect of sin and misery." Dr. Sturm offers no dogmatic key but gives that which has come to him, and is with him; he does not argue or debate, and Glanvil is really his contrast. I have been reminded also of an obscure but immortal poem of Bayard Taylor on the *Metempsychosis of the Pine*, though it is a poem of re-embodiments. Here is, therefore, another contrast; but to myself it is like an organ recital of things which were, and are, and are to come, while Dr. Sturm's more subtle suggestions do also open vistas, and so there is some analogy as well. That awareness of the soul as to her antenatal history which is a precious element in literature is, of course, very different from mystical realization, but it proves sometimes one of the doors, and these "silent shadows" which yet have found a voice are welcome for that which they are, and for that also which they may presage, as I see that Dr. Sturm is announcing other books. A. E. Waite.

Songs of Wales and Devon. By Winnifred Tasker. Cr. 8vo, pp. 62. London: Erskine Macdonald, Ltd. Price 2s. 6d. net.

Of the winding lanes of Devon and the Llynn betwixt its hills, of the lights of Lundy Island and Clovelly Street; again of the Buried Palace and Nantfrancon Pass; of these and many more Miss Tasker gives us, in this her first volume, some part of that which is hers—the findings of an open eye directed lovingly towards things without and intimations occasionally which belong to the vision within. Moreover, she communicates vision, which means, of course, that she awakes it in those who have gifts of seership on their own part. A little poem called *Eryri* is an instance and is quite enchanting, telling of white streams about Snowdon, of low shores about a mountain-lake, of the lights which flicker, of the shadows which come and go. They may be streams which one does not know and shores we have never seen, but it may happen that we see them now—as it were—quite plainly, and discern their message. The verse-description which does this is doing and deserving well. But it happens also—and I have found it there and here in some of these

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poems—that other scenes are stirred up and other sounds, forgotten in the wells of memory. Then it is not Snowdon or any of its wild waters, its lights and its voices, but the sheen and the voices of places very far away, in some other story of our spirit—most true memories, but we know not of where or when. I have to thank Miss Tasker that she has awakened them, and wish her God-speed in her future making of verse.

A. E. WAITE.

WINNING SUCCESS. By Eric Wood. London: Health Promotion, Ltd., 19–21 Ludgate Hill. Pp. 91. Price 1*s.* 6*d.* net.

So many books of this type issue from the Press nowadays that one is bound to conclude that there must be an unceasing demand for them. Mr. Wood's is better than most of its kind, for he looks at success from an ideal as well as a practical point of view, and does not aim at helping his readers to attain merely material prosperity. "Never," he says, "has the golden present held such promise for the young man and woman; never has the future beckoned to greater things. . . . Youth has its arms full of promise which is not all privilege." Further, he recognizes that in some cases failure is far greater than success, for "if as the result of crooked methods or sharp practices you amass a million pounds you will have failed," whereas to have been content with the first thousand pounds earned honestly would have been success, "because you would not have dwarfed and distorted your personality." The book contains some really helpful advice on the development of personality, mind and memory-training, etc., and can be especially recommended to any young person of either sex who is thinking of taking up a business career. E. M. M.

REALITY WITH FAERIE MEETS. By Monica and Margaret Painter. Cr. 8vo, pp. 64. London: Erskine Macdonald, Ltd. Price 2*s.* 6*d.* net.

IT meets after a certain manner: perhaps it is a modified reality, and perhaps Faerie is in a certain state of substitution. The hills beyond Hoxton and the brooks beyond Bethnal Green are not Faerie, unless the eye which sees them is Faerie-gifted; but then the same eye can find the same wonders in Brick Lane. Moreover, the true Faerie is not over against Reality—as if it were the opposite mode. Miss Monica Painter knows this perfectly well. The meetings of That and This take place in her poems, at one time and another. There is a reality of her *London in Twilight*, and a reflected reality of Faerie comes over the hills and hails it. But sometimes she gives us no more than the normal word of the country-side—a singing of pine-trees heard in the "tired street" of Bethnal Green. It is to be expected that a few things are merely formulæ and transcript: of such is the *Fairy Song*. On the other hand, an authentic note sounds in *The Hoxton Child*, while there is a subtlety in *The Veil of the World*—which if not indeed a spell is at least its shadow. These things are of Monica, and Margaret is of another spirit. I hold no balance to weigh each with each. A sense of the infinite is hers whose songs follow—rather than the sense of Faerie. Witness one, *Song for a Birthday*, being her own surely. I love such voices of women, and I catch between them far off the note of that other voice which I have been listening for all my life.

A. E. WAITE.

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