

# The Spiritualist,

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## Review.

THE OCCULT WORLD.

*The Occult World*, by A. P. Sinnett. London: TRUBNER & Co., 1881.

The author of this work was well-known in literary circles in England years ago, before his duties on the best newspaper in India, *The Pioneer*, of Allahabad, began. After Colonel and Mrs. W. Gordon accomplished their pioneer work of being the first to forcibly and efficiently draw the attention of thinking residents in India to Spiritualism, through the columns of *The Pioneer*, which journal has always treated the subject honourably, Mr. Sinnett gave earnest and conscientious attention to the phenomena, consequently for some time Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott were the guests of himself and Mrs. Sinnett, as well as of others of their acquaintance, the latest result being the issue of the work published last Saturday by Mr. Trübner.

The book is dedicated to one, the utterance of whose name evolves, as yet, no sympathetic throb in the European breast, namely, Koot Hoomi Lal Singh, “whose comprehension,” says Mr. Sinnett, “of Nature and Humanity, ranges so far beyond the science and philosophy of Europe, that only the broadest-minded representatives of either will be able to realise the existence of such powers in Man as those he constantly exercises.” The author further says that the “gracious friendship” of Koot Hoomi Lal Singh, has given him “his title to claim the attention of the European world.” So much for the credentials.

THE MYSTERIOUS “BROTHERS” OF THE THEOSOPHISTS.

Mr. Sinnett states, in his introduction, that there is a school of philosophy still in existence of which modern culture has lost sight, but that glimpses of it are discernible in the ancient philosophies with which all educated men are familiar, and that he has come “to know” that a knowledge has constantly been present in the world, for which modern metaphysicians and men of science have been blindly groping for centuries. He has “come into some contact” with the heirs of this knowledge, but, disappointingly enough, he does not say where



any reader of his book can call upon one of them and see him.

The mysterious unseen individuals are the "Brothers" alleged to exist by the Theosophists. They are said to be those to whom the men of science in former ages taught their secrets, which secrets have been handed down from generation to generation to carefully-selected initiates, who, says the author, formerly at great public ceremonies "displayed the powers with which their knowledge of natural laws invested them."

The exhibition of great psychical powers is no proof of knowledge on the part of the individual. The Davenport exhibited such powers, but what knowledge and philosophy about their own powers have they been able to impart from first to last? Mr. Sinnett says that adepts of occultism can exhibit "results that prove them immeasurably further advanced than ordinary modern science in a comprehension of the forces of Nature." How can "results" prove "comprehension?" A donkey can switch his tail, a very good result in hot weather when flies are plentiful, but does the donkey therefore comprehend as much about the nature of the act as a physiologist? Again, we are told that occultism can account for the astounding discovery "that secluded Orientals may understand more about electricity than Faraday;" if so, where are the electric telegraphs, electric lights, and electro-motors of these Orientals, and where can the alleged Orientals be seen?

After seven pages asserting the existence of knowledge in the world beyond the pale of the populace, Mr. Sinnett asks: "How is it that conclusions of such great weight have been kept the secret property of a body of jealous initiates? Is it not a law of progress that truth asserts itself, and courts the free air and light?"

The following is his reply, so worded that he does not appear to be at ease with his answer, even in his own mind:—

"Now, it is no business of mine to defend the extreme tenacity with which the proficients in occultism have hitherto not only shut out the world from the knowledge of their knowledge, but have almost left it in ignorance that such knowledge exists. It is enough here to point out that it would be foolish to shut our eyes to a revelation that may now be partially conceded, merely because we are piqued at the behaviour of those who have been in a position to make it before, but have not chosen to do so. Nor would it be wiser to say that the

reticence of the occultists so far discredits anything we may now be told about their acquirements. When the sun is actually shining it is no use to say that its light is discredited by the behaviour of the barometer yesterday. I have to deal, in discussing the acquirements of occultism, with facts that have actually taken place, and nothing can discredit what is known to be true. No doubt it will be worth while later on to examine the motives which have rendered the occultists of all ages so profoundly reserved. And there may be more to say in justification of the course that has been pursued than is visible at the first glance."

"Facts that have actually taken place" prove no comprehensive knowledge of those facts, beyond that of their occurrence, on the part of anyone. If a flying-fish rises from the Red Sea, to the astonishment of those who have never seen one, it is no proof that Occultist Brothers, knowing all about flying-fish, have existed from time immemorial in the fastnesses of the Himalayas.

On page twelve we come to the fundamental point on which we are as yet at variance with the author of the book, namely, that in which he seeks to establish that his occult phenomena are not identical with those of Spiritualism, for after reading about the phenomena of occultism for years, we have never seen a scrap of evidence that they are not of the same nature and origin as those given through ordinary mediums. Mr. Sinnett says:—

"Occult phenomena must not be confused with the phenomena of Spiritualism. The latter, whatever they may be, are manifestations which mediums can neither control or understand. The former are achievements of a conscious, living operator comprehending the laws with which he works. If these achievements appear miraculous, that is the fault of the observer's ignorance."

So far as we know, no Spiritualist believes the phenomena to be "miraculous," but the result of natural laws belonging to the spiritual side of nature, and the cause of Theosophy, whatever it may be, cannot be advanced by the additional inaccurate statement, that the Spiritualist "has never been able to get a clue to any other than a supernatural explanation of the causes at work." We are not aware that any of the readers of this journal look upon the phenomena as miracles, or as supernatural in the sense of not being governed by fixed laws. Why display us in these colours?



In trying to establish a difference, Mr. Sinnett says:—

“Broadly speaking, there is scarcely one of the phenomena of Spiritualism that adepts in occultism cannot reproduce, by the force of their own will, supplemented by a comprehension of the resources of Nature. As will be seen when I come to a direct narrative of my own experiences, I have seen some of the most familiar phenomena of Spiritualism produced by purely human agency. The old original spirit-rap which introduced the mightier phenomena of Spiritualism has been manifested for my edification in a countless variety of ways, and under conditions which render the hypothesis of any spiritual agency in the matter wholly preposterous.”

But on turning to the author's description of the production of raps in Madame Blavatsky's presence, it will be seen that nothing was witnessed by him which may not be observed commonly enough through the mediumship of Katie Fox. And if in the one case the controlling power chooses to say it is a mysterious “Brother,” or Madame Blavatsky's will, and in the other that it is J. B. Taylor, we have nothing but the assertion of an intelligence in either case, without a trace of evidence that the one assertion is more “preposterous” than the other. It is a matter of testimony on the one side, and of faith on the other, in both cases, but in neither is it a matter of demonstration.

In the second chapter of the work, Mr. Sinnett tells us that an occultist can “project his soul out of his body to any place he pleases with the rapidity of thought,” and has thus ascertained that he really possesses a soul. Mediums and psychic sensitives occasionally have had this experience; remarkable cases in point have been given in the book *Spirits Before our Eyes*.

After penning a somewhat materialistic description of the nature of the soul, Mr. Sinnett gives the information:—

“The seemingly magic feats which the adepts in occultism have the power to perform, are accomplished, I am given to understand, by means of familiarity with a force in nature which is referred to in Sanscrit writings as *akaz*. Western science has done much in discovering some of the properties and powers of electricity. Occult science, ages before, had done much more in discovering the properties and powers of *akaz*.”

He further says:—

“It is through his acquaintance with the

properties of this force, that the adept can accomplish the physical phenomena which I shall presently be able to show are within his reach, besides others of far greater magnificence.”

So Mr. Sinnett does not speak from his own knowledge. On testimony he is “given to understand” that *akaz* is the vehicle of the force used, and on the testimony of others “he gathers” that the “Brothers” are the persons who wield the force. Of these mysterious alleged beings he says:—

“They constitute a Brotherhood, or Secret Association, which ramifies all over the East, but the principal seat of which for the present I gather to be in Thibet. But India has not yet been deserted by the adepts, and from that country they still receive many recruits. For the great fraternity is at once the least, and the most exclusive organisation in the world, and fresh recruits from any race or country are welcome, provided they possess the needed qualifications. The door, as I have been told by one who is himself an adept, is always open to the right man who knocks, but the road that has to be travelled before the door is reached is one which none but very determined travellers can hope to pass. It is manifestly impossible that I can describe its perils in any but very general terms, but it is not necessary to have learned any secrets of initiation to understand the character of the training through which a neophyte must pass before he attains the dignity of a proficient in occultism. The adept is not made: he becomes, as I have been constantly assured, and the process of becoming is mainly in his own hands.

“Never, I believe, in less than seven years from the time at which a candidate for initiation is accepted as a probationer, is he ever admitted to the very first of the ordeals, whatever they may be, which bar the way to the earliest degrees of occultism, and there is no security for him that the seven years may not be extended *ad libitum*. He has no security that he will ever be admitted to any initiation whatever.”

As the English branch of the Theosophical Society is not seven years old, it is clear that none of those Englishmen who have been converted to Theosophy of late years have even become probationers, much less adepts. Possibly all their faith in the Brothers at the root of their order rests upon what is testified to them from India. Mr. Sinnett owns that he knows little about the matter. He says:—

“As to what may be the nature of the trials



that await him during the period of his development, it will be obvious that I can have no accurate knowledge, and conjectures based on fragmentary revelations picked up here and there are not worth recording, but as for the nature of the life led by the mere candidate for admission as a neophyte it will be equally plain that no secret is involved. The ultimate development of the adept requires amongst other things a life of absolute psychological purity, and the candidate must, from the beginning give practical evidence of his willingness to adopt this. He must, that is to say, for all the years of his probation, be perfectly chaste, perfectly abstemious, and indifferent to physical luxury of every sort. This regimen does not involve any fantastic discipline or obtrusive asceticism, nor withdrawal from the world. There would be nothing to prevent a gentleman in London society from being in full training for occult candidature without anybody about him being the wiser."

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

Of the history of the Theosophical Society, Mr. Sinnett testifies:—

"That history has been a chequered one, because the phenomena that have been displayed have often failed of their effect, have sometimes become the subject of a premature publicity, and have brought down on the study of occult philosophy as regarded from the point of view of the outer world, and on the devoted persons who have been chiefly identified with its encouragement by means of the Theosophical Society, a great deal of stupid ridicule and some malevolent persecution. It may be asked why the Brothers, if they are really the great and all-powerful persons I represent them, have permitted indiscretions of the kind referred to, but the inquiry is not so embarrassing as it may seem at the first glance. If the picture of the Brothers that I have endeavoured to present to the reader has been appreciated rightly, it will show them less accurately qualified, in spite of their powers, than persons of lesser occult development, to carry on any undertaking which involves direct relations with a multiplicity of ordinary people in the common-place world."

Thus the unseen Brothers who live in an unspecified part of the Himalayas, are remarkably like ordinary mediums in their characteristics. They finally accepted the Theosophical Society as the best agency available for the propagation of occult truths, and their sole link of communication with it is through Madame Blavatsky, who is not a "Brother"

or Sister; she has advanced but to the rank of "Initiate," and has not carried her occult training farther. Our author states:—

"It is obvious that to give any countenance or support at all to a society concerned with the promulgation of occult philosophy, it was necessary for the Brothers to be in occult communication with it in some way or other. For it must be remembered that though it may seem to us a very amazing and impossible thing to sit still at home and impress our thoughts upon the mind of a distant friend by an effort of will, a Brother living in an unknown Himalayan retreat is not only able to converse as freely as he likes with any of his friends who are initiates like himself, in whatever part of the world they may happen to be, but would find any other modes of communication, such as those with which the crawling faculties of the outer world have to be content, simply intolerable in their tedium and inefficacy."

He adds that,

"After a course of occult study carried on for seven years in a Himalayan retreat, and crowning a devotion to occult pursuits extending over five-and-thirty or forty years, Madame Blavatsky reappeared in the world, dazed, as she met ordinary people going about in common-place, benighted ignorance concerning the wonders of occult science, at the mere thought of the stupendous gulf of experience that separated her from them. She could hardly at first bear to associate with them, for thinking of all she knew that they did not know and that she was bound not to reveal. Anyone can understand the burden of a great secret, but the burden of such a secret as occultism, and the burden of great powers only conferred on condition that their exercise should be very strictly circumscribed by rule, must have been trying indeed."

Madame Blavatsky went to America, founded the Theosophical Society there, and subsequently a branch in England, then returned to India. Says Mr. Sinnett,

"Here, however, began the practical blunders in the management of the Theosophical Society which led to the incidents referred to above, as having given it, so far, a chequered career. Madame Blavatsky, to begin with, was wholly unfamiliar with the everyday side of Indian life, her previous visits having brought her only into contact with groups of people utterly unconnected with the current social system and characteristics of the country. Nor could she have undertaken a worse preparation for Indian



life than that supplied by a residence of some years in the United States. This sent her out to India unfurnished with the recommendations which she could readily have obtained in England, and poisoned her mind with an absolutely erroneous and prejudiced conception of the character of the British ruling classes of India and their relations with the people. India and the United States are a good way apart geographically, but they are even more completely separated in other ways. The consequence was that Madame Blavatsky on her first arrival in India, adopted an attitude of obtrusive sympathy with the natives of the soil as compared with the Europeans, seeking their society in a manner which, coupled with the fact that she made none of the usual advances to European society, and with her manifestly Russian name, had the effect, not unnaturally, of rendering her *suspecte* to the rather clumsy organization, which in India attempts to combine, with sundry others, the functions of a political police. These suspicions, it is true, were allayed almost as soon as they were conceived, but not before Madame Blavatsky had been made for a short time the object of an *espionage* so awkward that it became grossly obvious to herself and roused her indignation to fever heat. To a more phlegmatic nature the incident would have been little more than amusing, but all accidents combined to develope trouble."

Mr. Sinnett adds that

"Nothing can be done in India without a European impulse in the beginning; at all events, it handicaps any enterprise frightfully to be without such an impulse if native co-operation is required. Not that the Theosophical Society failed to get members. The natives were flattered at the attitude towards them taken up by their new 'European' friends, as Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott were no doubt generally regarded, in spite of their American nationality, and showed a shallow eagerness to become Theosophists. But their ardour did not always prove durable, and in some few cases they showed a lamentable want of earnestness by breaking away from the Society altogether."

He further says that she had subsequently gained more acquaintances among Europeans:—"She made many friends, and secured some ardent converts to a belief in the reality of occult powers; but she became the innocent object of bitter animosity on the part of some other acquaintances, who, unable to assimilate what they saw in her presence, took up an attitude of disbelief, which deepened into

positive enmity as the whole subject became enveloped in a cloud of more or less excited controversy.

"And it is needless to say that many of the newspapers made great capital out of the whole situation, ridiculing Madame Blavatsky's dupes, and twisting every bit of information that came out about her phenomena into the most ludicrous shape it could be made to assume. Mockery of that sort was naturally expected by English friends who avowed their belief in the reality of Madame Blavatsky's powers, and probably never gave one of them a moment's serious annoyance. But for the over sensitive and excitable person chiefly concerned they were indescribably tormenting, and eventually it grew doubtful whether her patience would stand the strain put upon it; whether she would not relinquish altogether the ungrateful task of inducing the world at large to accept the good gifts which she had devoted her life to offering them. Happily, so far, no catastrophe had ensued; but no history of Columbus in chains for discovering a new world, or Galileo in prison for announcing the true principles of astronomy, is more remarkable for those who know all the bearings of the situation in India, as regards the Theosophical Society, than the sight of Madame Blavatsky, slandered and ridiculed by most of the Anglo-Indian papers, and spoken of as a charlatan by the commonplace crowd, in return for having freely offered them some of the wonderful fruits—as much as the rules of the great occult association permit her to offer—of the life-long struggle in which she has conquered her extraordinary knowledge."

(To be Continued).

MR. WILLIAM BLACKBURN, who died recently, aged 45, son of Mr. Charles Blackburn, of Parkfield, near Manchester, was interred on Thursday, last week, in the family vault at St. Luke's Church, Cheetham, Manchester.

COLONEL BUNDY, editor of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* (Chicago) is about to pay a three months' visit to the Azores, for the benefit of his health. Spiritualists in America cannot well spare him, for his is the only one of the three weekly Spiritualistic newspapers in the States, which tries to put down imposture and swindling inside the movement.

SPIRITUALISM IN MARYLEBONE:—Next Sunday, at 7 p.m., the recorder of the "Historical Controls," published in the *Herald of Progress*, will deliver an address on his experiences, to the Marylebone Society of Spiritualists, Quebec Hall, 25, Great Quebec Street, Marylebone. Next Tuesday, at 5 p.m., a meeting will be held at the same place, to consider whether this useful little society shall come to an end. We believe that most of the work of carrying it on, falls upon the shoulders of the honorary secretary, Mr. Dale, and that his work is not nearly so well supported as it should be.



## THE OLD SHIP.

"The ship is old," he said, "but she and I  
Have sailed for many a year the restless deep,  
Making our stormy story on the deep;  
In doubtful ways where streaming clouds hung nigh;  
In perilous ways, where oft with woful cry  
We've heard the drowning sink to their last sleep.

"I think we shall not part—in calm or gale  
She has not failed us once through weary years;  
She's known my hand upon her helm for years,  
Some day, when great winds blow and tempests wail,  
While every man stands at his post, we'll sail  
Unto that sea whence no man ever steers."

The words rang in my heart; and sleeping so  
I said unto the ship, "In wild woods green  
Thy mates in freest life are strong and green,  
Their branches in the woods to fresh winds blow,  
And at their roots the sweet wild blossoms grow;  
In the far forest thou had happier been."

"Not so, not so!" the tossing ship replied,  
"Though daily winds and storms I have withstood,  
Though oft the battle's storm I have withstood,  
Mind of man's mind, together we've defied  
The cannon's rage, the tempest's wind and tide;  
Grander such life than blowing in the wood.

"The forest trees shall find a slow decay;  
I shall go down at once—the mighty deep  
Shall find me room below her lowest deep—  
I and the noble hearts I bear, some day,  
Doing our very best, shall pass away,  
And men in honor shall our memory keep."

The dream was but a parable. Dear heart,  
The sternest duty is the sweetest rest—  
The constant duty is the surest rest—  
Be glad if storm and struggle are thy part;  
If death should walk with duty, do not start.  
Called from thy work! Ah! surely that is best.

*Harper's Weekly.*

## IN LOVING HONOUR OF THOMAS CARLYLE

BY G. A. BURKE.

"The evil that men do lives after them, the good is oft interred  
with their bones."

"Lo! a star fallen from Heaven!  
Let us be glad and rejoice,  
Good sooth there's one the less to give light,  
The way may be darker, more black the night,  
But the darkness may cover our sins from God's sight."  
So cry the crowd as one voice.

"Lo! and men thought him a god!  
Human clay wrought to its best,  
Follow'd with reverence the pathway he trod,—  
Now he is dead—and safe under the sod,  
We'll have the truth of it, show him a clod,  
Better no whit than the rest.

"Show he was hasty—sometime  
Said a word more than he should—  
Some days his life song made musicless rhyme,  
Some days his life-bells made jangle for chime  
Some days the small things obscured the sublime—  
He whom they all thought so good!

"Come from your pedestal high,  
Down to our level to-day.  
Stand not afar from us, yonder blue sky  
Holds you no longer, your hour has passed by.  
Lo! *we* have found you," the mocking lips cry  
"Idol with feet made of clay."

Nay, but the star shall gleam on,  
High o'er the heads of the crowd.  
Was there alloy? there was pure gold and fine.  
He has left witnesses, line upon line,  
Showing the human life, touched with divine,  
Spite these rude voices and loud.

Lo! *ye* have gazed in the dust,  
Gazed till your eyes have grown dim,  
Gazed till the light and the dark have grown one  
Ye see but failure, not what has been done.  
Ye would see shadow in yonder bright sun!  
Are ye fit judges of him?

Are there not voices that cry  
Clear and distinct from the rest?  
"We are the sheep that this shepherd has led,  
We who have heard him, and *known* what he said  
Loved him while living, and honoured him dead."  
Shall not these judge him the best?"

*He* is not hurt by your strife,  
He is at rest from his wars,  
Fought his long fight, for the making us free,  
Soldier of God to the death-day was he,  
Such in the Kingdom of Heaven shall be  
Shining for ever, as stars!

God give us stars in the night!  
Light up the dark of our skies,  
Hush our loud voices and impotent fret,  
Shame us for being so swift to forget,  
Make us not anxious to know if stars set,  
*Help us to see when they rise.*

## A VISION.

Mrs. A. J. Penny, of The Cottage, Col-  
lumpton, Devonshire, sends us the following  
narrative for publication. The writer of it is  
well known to her, and she vouches for his  
extreme caution in accepting any impressions.

"Feb. 10, 1881. I got up early, at 5.10 a.m.,  
to go to Bunbury (Western Australia) by mail  
van. F. J. had borrowed my horse to go and  
sleep at a neighbour's a few miles off, and re-  
turn next afternoon. Looking out of the  
window, which was open, I was surprised to  
see what I took to be my horse in the paddock  
in front of our house, grazing under a tree, the  
stem of which just hid his rump from view.  
I concluded that F. J. had found it not con-  
venient to his friends to take him in, and had  
returned late, turned the horse into the pad-  
dock and gone to his room. But while I



looked, the horse lashed his side with his tail, and a very long tail it was. I had shortly before cut my horse's tail short and square. 'What horse on earth can that be?' I exclaimed—slipped on my dressing gown and went straight out into the paddock to see. But to my great surprise there was no horse to be seen anywhere; and the only egress was by the gate at which I entered, which is in a direct line from my window to the tree; and the tree sixty yards from the window. The sun rose at 5.32, and it was a bright, clear morning, so you may judge of the amount of light. The weathered dingy appearance of the horse's tail showed distinctly against his side. I have searched in vain for any loose waving branch which might have waved like a tail, or for any object in the background which might have looked like a horse: all is clear behind in that line back to the whitish paled fence another seventy yards further.

"It was a veritable phantom of a horse, and standing too just where my wife saw the ghost ('only a white figure') last March.

"I can only say that it was impossible that a real living horse could have been there, and escaped or been taken out without my meeting it at the gate—the illusion was perfect."

#### THE VISIONS OF MRS. HAWEIS.

In the new number of the *Fortnightly Review* is an article by Mr. Francis Galton, on "The Visions of Sane Persons," some of which visions seem to be akin to some of those of such seeing mediums as are unable to prove spirit identity or to obtain definite useful information by means of what they see.

Mr. Galton says that it is the abiding fantasy of some persons invariably to connect visualised pictures with words. Thus the interrogation "What?" always excites, in one of his correspondents, the idea of a fat man cracking a long whip. Mrs. Haweis informs him:—

"Printed words have always had faces to me; they had definite expressions; and certain faces made me think of certain words. The words had no connection with these except sometimes by accident. The instances I give are few and ridiculous. When I think of the word *Beast*, it has a face something like a gargoyle. The word *Green* has also a gargoyle face, with the addition of big teeth. The word *Blue* blinks and looks silly, and turns to the right. The word *Attention* has the eyes greatly turned to the left. It is difficult to draw them properly, because, like 'Alice's'

'Cheshire Cat,' which at times became a grin without a cat, these faces have expression without features. The expression of course" [note the *naïve* phrase "of course."—F.G.] "depends greatly on those of the letters, which have likewise their faces and figures. All the little a's turn their eyes to the left, this determines the eyes of *Attention*. *Ant*, however, looks a little down. Of course these faces are endless as words are, and it makes my head ache to retain them long enough to draw."

Mrs. Haweis also says:—

"All my life long I have had one very constantly recurring vision, a sight which came whenever it was dark or darkish, in bed or otherwise. It is a flight of pink roses floating in a mass from left to right, and this cloud or mass of roses is presently effaced by a flight of 'sparks' or gold speckles across them. The sparks totter or vibrate from left to right, but they fly distinctly upwards: they are like tiny blocks, half gold, half black, rather symmetrically placed behind each other, and they are always in a hurry to efface the roses: sometimes they have come at my call, sometimes by surprise, but they are always equally pleasing. What interests me most is that when a child under nine the flight of roses was light, slow, soft, close to my eyes, roses so large and brilliant and palpable that I tried to touch them: the *scent* was overpowering, the petals perfect, with leaves peeping here and there, texture and motion all natural. They would stay a long time before the sparks came, and they occupied a large area in black space. Then the sparks came slowly flying, and generally, not always, effaced the roses at once, and every effort to retain the roses failed. Since an early age the flight of roses has annually grown smaller, swifter, and farther off, till by the time I was grown up my vision had become a speck, so instantaneous that I had hardly time to realise that it was there before the fading sparks showed that it was past. This is how they still come. The pleasure of them is past, and it always depresses me to speak of them, though I do not now, as I did when a child, connect the vision with any elevated spiritual state. But when I read Tennyson's "Holy Grail," I wondered whether anybody else had had my vision—"Rose-red, with beatings in it." I may add, I was a London child who never was in the country but once, and I connect no particular flowers with that visit. I may almost say that I had never seen a rose, certainly not a quantity of them together."



It is not difficult to imagine a spiritual meaning applicable to this vision.

## Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents who sometimes express opinion diametrically opposed to those of this Journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

### CLAIRVOYANCE IN PUBLIC.

Sir,—Last Sunday evening I went to hear Mr. Holmes at Ladbroke Hall, Notting Hill, and was much pleased at what he said.

If all so called believers in spirit communion would try to follow the example of the "Great Master" by being more charitable to each other, the movement would make better headway.

Mr. Holmes is a man of no mean ability, and he deserves all encouragement and sympathy from those belonging to our movement, for he has done what very few would do, by being true to his principles and proclaiming himself a believer in the "signs and wonders" of Spiritualism. To-morrow, Sunday, I hope to hear him in the discussion between himself and Mr. Carpenter.

After the service of last Sunday terminated, Mr. Matthews passed into the mesmeric or clairvoyant condition, and made several interesting statements, many of which were corroborated by persons present.

On coming down the centre of the hall, and when in a line with myself, he stated that a spirit suddenly appeared in front of him and indicated that he was connected with me. He could not get any definite message, but saw the name of William Hutchinson before him, but as he could not establish a satisfactory rapport he passed on, remarking that on his return after giving messages to those at the end of the room, he would try to get further information, but he did not do so that evening.

Had I been an enquirer or sceptic I certainly should have thought the whole thing a clever piece of acting and guess-work, but being an old mesmerist, everything he did I understood, although I knew that a person might easily simulate the manipulatory movements of the sensitive, when inducing the abnormal state.

The name of William Hutchinson might easily be guessed; but the facts stated by the controls of Mr. Matthews on the following day, were unknown to myself or the medium, and were of a most startling nature. My brother, a thorough sceptic, was present, by previous appointment, and being the eldest of my family, verified the statements made by the "Prophet," the Indian control of Mr. Matthews.

My brother was simply thunderstruck, for what did Mr. Matthews know about my ancestors, some of whom he traced back for two hundred years. He stated that they were Catholics (Roman) and had lost their property by its being confiscated.

Many of the principal events of my brother's past life were recapitulated, and facts were told him which no person in London knew of.

My brother, who came over to London from Canada to meet me here on business matters, was a lieutenant and adjutant in the Colonial forces of the Cape Colony, and served under Sir Harry Smith in the Caffre war of 1850. Whilst engaged with the enemy he received a wound in the left leg and another in the hand.

In another action he nearly lost his life by being led into an ambush, and with difficulty managed to escape, one of his brother officers being killed close by him.

These and many more facts were told by Mr. Matthews'

guide "Prophet," who began by saying that he, my brother, had once carried a sword in his hand, and during a battle with black men had been wounded in the left leg and sword-hand; that he had a white friend killed close beside him, and so on.

My brother commanded the Fingoe or native levies, who of course were dark, but all the officers being of European extraction were white.

All I can say is that Mr. Matthews, who had never seen my brother before, told him events and stated facts that utterly astonished him. In my own case some remarkable communications were made, some of which have already been verified.

I am well aware that many visitors to Mr. Matthews have been greatly disappointed at getting negative results, and many have expressed a very harsh opinion about his easy way of getting under control, but this has nothing to do with my experiments.

I speak of everyone as I find him, and having had undoubted proof of Mr. Matthews' powers of clairvoyance, as an honest, and I trust impartial, enquirer, I speak as I find him.

Many persons believe that the manipulatory movements (self-magnetising or automatic passes) made by the sensitive, are simply put on.

I don't say that they cannot be easily simulated, but having had a large experience in practical mesmeric experiments, as well as in developing sensitives, I know what mistakes are made by persons totally unacquainted with the subtle power of Mind, jumping to conclusions.

I once, by special request, mesmerised a young gentleman, and in the presence of his friend (to test him) made him take off every stitch of clothing, and then dance like a Caffre before us. For a few seconds I allowed him to become normal, but instantly willed him into the mesmeric sleep again, to save his feelings. After making him dress again as before, I induced the normal condition, but from that day to this, he declares that he never was undressed, and positively quarrelled with his friend, who witnessed the fact, maintaining he was never undressed.

I know some mediums who deny facts which every person present saw them do. Still we know that they are not trying to speak falsely, but because they were probably unconscious at the time, so retained no recollection of doing anything.

If enquirers would go with unprejudiced minds, the results in many cases would be far more satisfactory. The psychological poison emanating from the bodies and minds of many people is often the cause of all the trouble. BERKS T. HUTCHINSON (Of Cape Town.)  
2, Scarsdale Villas, Kensington, London, 4th June, 1881.

## "IS DARWIN RIGHT? OR THE ORIGIN OF MAN?" BY WILLIAM DENTON.

BY FRANK PODMORE, B.A., (OXON).

The aim of this work is to show that the doctrine of organic evolution, as taught by modern science, is not competent of itself to account for man's origin. Though true, so far as it goes, it is only a partial truth, and is insufficient, unless supplemented by some hypothesis of spiritual direction, to explain the facts of the problem. It cannot be doubted that Professor Denton is admirably qualified for the task which he has set himself. He is a thorough master of his own special science



of geology, and, as evidenced by this book, is quite sufficiently conversant with other branches of modern science to enable him to discuss the matter fairly. He is, moreover, something more than a student of science; he is a poet. And by this is not meant merely that he has written a book of "Radical Rhymes." Throughout the little work before us, we see in his wide and generous views of life, in his picturesque epithets, and in his vivid and glowing descriptions, that he is gifted with the poetic vision. There are many passages, eloquent word-pictures of past scenes in the history of our planet, when the new-born life of weed and monad was struggling blindly against the giant forces of volcanic heat and "cyclic storm," that remind us of another poet-geologist—Hugh Miller, the poor Scotch stonemason, drunk with the beauty and the majesty of this earth and its marvellous history. Professor Denton, too, wields a piquant and forcible logic: quaint homely epithets, such as "a day-labouring God," or a happy illustration, such as that on pages 104 and 105, when the naturalist and the theologian wrangle as to the means by which St. Simeon Stylites reached the summit of his pillar, are more telling than unread pages of elaborate argument.

The first part of this book is devoted to a concise summary of the facts and arguments, on which the theory of evolution is based. Mr. Denton is as convinced as Charles Darwin himself, of the natural origin of the human race, and we find little to quarrel with thus far. It is true that he includes amongst the factors in the *natural* origin of man, "Tendency," without which "variation would wander blindly in an aimless maze for ever." This, of course, is begging the question; tendency is not recognised by the biologist, and is, in fact, what Professor Denton afterwards speaks of as "spiritual direction." In being discussed in the first part of the work it is placed out of its logical order. And though he propounds fairly enough the evidence for the theory to be derived from the facts of embryological development, the existence of rudimentary organs, the geological progression, and so on, he considerably understates the argument based on the observed phenomena of zoological distribution in oceanic islands. He shows, indeed, that in such islands, generally, the plants and animals are closely allied to those of the adjacent mainland, from which they have evidently come, but are yet specifically different. But he omits to notice the still more remarkable fact, that whilst the inhabitants of such

islands are almost invariably of species found nowhere else in the whole world, (which must, therefore, on the theory that each species is a distinct creation, have been specially made for and placed in these islands), they yet belong only to such classes of animals and plants as could have been transported thither by natural agencies. Birds, bats, and insects, which can fly; reptiles and land-shells, the eggs of which are uninjured by salt water, or are sufficiently small to be conveyed by birds, &c., are found on oceanic islands. But batrachians (frogs and newts) whose spawn is instantly killed by sea-water, and mammals (other than bats) which obviously could not readily be carried over hundreds of miles of ocean, are invariably absent. If, as your old-world theologian will say, each species came direct from the hand of God, why did God stock His oceanic islands with all such animals as could have got thither by natural means, and omit just those animals which, however, admirably adapted for the situation, yet needed a miracle to place them there? Such conduct would argue either want of foresight or a wish to deceive on the part of the Creator, and, as either alternative is incredible, we are perforce driven back on the conclusion that species, like individuals, arise by a natural process of growth.

But, with this exception, Mr. Denton pleads the cause of the evolutionists impartially and intelligently, and we can applaud him to the echo when he says (p. 101) "As, to the gaze of all intelligent persons, miracle has vanished from the earth, as we now behold it, so will it vanish from the earth of all the geologic past, and it will be universally acknowledged that the earth is alive in consequence of the living spirit that embraces every atom, and that it clothes itself in plants, and produces animals, as naturally as a tree clothes itself in leaves, and produces blossoms and fruit."

The latter part of the work is devoted to proving the insufficiency of the arguments propounded in the first part, and to supporting a position thus stated at page 113, "Leave out spiritual direction in the development of life, and the wisest man is as helpless to account for what we behold as the unschooled child. My opinion is that in every atom of every organised being is a perfect spiritual type, constantly seeking perfect expression in material form." The evidence by which this theory is supported, it is, of course, impossible now to criticise in detail. Nor is it, indeed, necessary to do so. In many cases the most complete answer to Mr. Denton's arguments for the



spiritual origin of man, is afforded by Mr. Denton's own statements when establishing the natural origin of man. When he maintains (p. 155 et seqq.) the persistency of the various types of mankind, we have only to remind him of what he has said (p. 91 et seqq.) of the brutal characteristics of all the earliest human races: we can leave the Neanderthal skull to confront the skull of Engis. And his own enunciation (pp. 41—3) of the doctrine of Natural Selection is the most damaging commentary on such a passage as the following: "Grant a law of variation: then variation would operate to make an animal smaller, as well as larger, less perfect, as well as more perfect, to form an eye behind as well as before, on the tail as likely as the head; it would start a nose on the hand as readily as the face, an ear on the foot, and develop a tongue between the fingers as readily as between the jaws. How long would it be before undirected variation could produce a perfect eye in an animal otherwise blind? About as long as it would take for the letters of the alphabet thrown promiscuously down to arrange themselves into a beautiful poem" (p. 44.) We can only regret that a man of so much real ability and discernment should have allowed himself to talk such childish and undignified twaddle.

But there is one special argument on which Mr. Denton appears to set great store, inasmuch as he devotes to it, under the title "The Manward Progress of our Planet," some 16 pages (116—133), and in an allied form, "The Race Development of Animals," some 4 or 5 more. The argument is summarised in his words on page 117, "as geology enables me to look at the earth, I see it to be a great factory for making men out of granite." Now that is a poetical thought, poetically expressed, but its value as a scientific statement is *nil*. Hugh Miller in his later works used just the same kind of logic against the then nascent theory of evolution: and went so far as to discover in the interlocking scales of a carboniferous fish, the original model from which our tiled roofs are plagiarised, and to find in a Palæozoic coral, the prototype of the latest pattern in Manchester calicoes. So Mr. Denton sees in the structure of animals of past geological periods, a "prophecy" of the anatomy of man. "How much of man there is, even here," he exclaims in viewing a Silurian snail. In the ganoid fish, he sees "a swim-bladder, prophesying of lungs," and "four fins or little bones within, shewing us where the man's finger bones shall eventually grow." And when the apes scold

and threaten in mimic wrath, he cries, "the beast is playing man." Translated from the language of poetry to that of science, the argument may be stated as follows: Throughout the whole scale of animal life, as revealed to us by geology, we discern a unity of plan; from fishes to man, all are constructed with similar limbs: the vertebrate columns, the mechanism of the senses, and the digestive arrangements are in all homologous; the fins and air-bladder of the first answer to the limbs and lungs of the last. Wherever we look we find in the lower animals rudiments of the perfected organs of the human body. The inference is, that there has been all along an intelligent power, to guide the process of development until it should reach its appointed end in Man.

Now, how much is this argument really worth? Suppose a strange dog to be set down in the middle of Regent-circus; and suppose that this dog, wandering aimlessly through the maze of streets, should eventually arrive at Hampstead Heath. What should we think of the intelligence of a man who should argue that the dog must have intended to get to Hampstead Heath—because the chances are at least 100 to 1 against his having arrived there by *chance*. Of course they are, but you could say the same if the dog had arrived at Clapham Common, or Billingsgate, or the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. The dog, if only he keeps moving, must arrive *somewhere*: the chances are not 100 to 1 against that. And what if the man pointed to the fact that the dog's footsteps had on the whole, and despite occasional deviations from the direct track, tended northwards, in further proof of the position that the animal had intended from the beginning to reach Hampstead Heath? The real marvel would be, if having reached Hampstead Heath, whether intentionally or not, we should find that he had done so by walking southwards, say towards Westminster. Yet this is no unfair parody of the argument from the "Manward Progress of our Planet." The process of evolution having for the present culminated in Man, we inevitably find in the lower animals, traces of the steps through which his perfected organs have passed. The fatal objection to the theory of a natural evolution would be to show that it was *not* so, and that Man's anatomy was built on a wholly different plan to that of the rest of the animal creation. For this would, of course, indicate a different origin for him. Or if it can be shewn that their "prophetic" structures are either useless or injurious to their possessors,



it may be fairly assumed that they serve only the purpose of pointing manwards. But Mr. Denton will hardly maintain that the air-bladder of the fish or the four paddles of the Saurian, are useless until they have issued in the lungs and limbs of the Mammalian. And to say that the process of evolution is spiritually guided, because it has resulted in Man, and not in some other being, is only to confess to the limits of our own imagination, in being unable to conceive of any more fitting "lords of creation" than ourselves. But, if in our primæval atmosphere, there had been a somewhat larger proportion of carbon, or two or three new elements, or if that moss-bearing fragment of a shattered asteroid had reached us a few æons earlier or later, there might then have been developed in the place of man some other intelligent being, with a larger allowance of limbs, and a quite other sensory apparatus; who would, no doubt, in the earlier stages of his cerebral development, discourse with much the same logical inconsequence as our American Professor.

As regards another objection urged at some length by Mr. Denton against the theory of natural evolution, viz: the difficulty of accounting for the present geographical distribution of certain species, on the hypothesis that all the individuals of any species are derived from a single ancestor, it is only requisite to point out, that the theory of evolution does not necessitate any such hypothesis, and that Mr. Darwin himself, in the later edition of the "Origin of Species" has retracted the statements which he made on that assumption in first enunciating his theory. A more weighty objection here urged against the theory is its failure to account satisfactorily for the existence of beauty; a point strongly insisted on by the Duke of Argyll in the "Reign of Law." I think it must be admitted, that in our present state of knowledge, we cannot wholly account for our perception of beauty. But that is not to say that the theory of natural evolution is therefore wrong, and the theory of spiritual evolution right. We do not maintain that a tree is spiritually guided in its growth, because we cannot altogether understand how the process of growth is accomplished; nor do we argue, as has been seriously argued, that the tree must have a soul, because the germ from which it springs can be shewn to consist of, at most, some two or three millions of molecules, and there is not, therefore, room enough for the outline of the future oak to be contained in the visible molecular acorn. We

are content to believe that our process of development is natural: why not so the other?

For I do not think that Professor Denton nor all the anti-evolutionists, can ever undo one tittle of what has been done. Each new discovery of science only makes it the more certain that the whole order of phenomena is one order. Everywhere from "the wind that is swept around us by the rush of the rolling world" up through the life of crystals, of plants and animals, to the deeds and words of Man himself, we see the reign of inexorable law. The explanation which is sufficient for one set of phenomena is sufficient for all. If the growth of the crystal from its nucleus, or of the oak from its seed, is natural, then the growth of life from what is lifeless, and of Man from the ape, is natural too. You cannot leave all the rest of the world to the guidance of law, and reserve a special favoured nook for the guidance of spirit. You cannot say the planets are driven round by gravitation, but the actions and the thoughts of a man are moved by the Spirit of God. The first step towards a mechanical explanation of the universe is not made by the biologist, who derives your descent from an ascidian, nor by the physiologist, who traces your actions to the structure of your brain, and the nature of the sensations impressed on it from without. The first step was made long ago by those who, to save Man's free will, conceded that the rest of the world, from the dust raised by the wind, to the stars revolving in their courses, was a piece of lifeless mechanism. And you cannot retrace that step now, by picking a hole here and there in the armour of the "Materialist:" by trying to discern a spirit-finger directing this or that wheel of your cosmic machinery. For what the knowledge of to-day leaves undone, the knowledge of to-morrow will accomplish. The reign of law is everywhere, or it is nowhere: the whole world is miraculous, or there is no miracle at all. If you do not want a Will to guide the rise and fall of the mercury in your barometer, you do not want a Will to nerve the arm of the warrior, or to direct the counsels of the statesman.

London, March 24th.

### Answers to Correspondents.

H.—The position various mediums took up in relation to Mrs. Fletcher's doings is sure to be canvassed to the roots in Spiritualistic society. The Fletcherite journal, when necessity has become a virtue, seems to have turned round to the other side, now that support to the latter is worthless. Motto of the American politician:—"These air my principles, but if they kinder don't suit, they ken be altered."



# THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF PROFESSOR ZOLLNER'S EXPERIMENTS.

## LIST OF ENGRAVINGS.

FRONTISPIECE :—The room at Leipsic in which most of the Experiments were conducted.

PLATE I :—Experiments with an Endless String.

PLATE II :—Leather Bands Interlinked and Knotted under Professor Zollner's Hands.

PLATE III :—Experiments with an Endless Bladder-band and Wooden Rings.

PLATE IV :—Result of the Experiment.

PLATE V :—Result of the Experiment on an Enlarged Scale.

PLATE VI :—Experiments with Coins in a Secured Box.

PLATE VII :—The Representation of Test Circumstances, under which Slate-writing was obtained.

PLATE VIII :—Slate-writing Extraordinary.

PLATE IX :—Slate-writing in Five Different Languages.

PLATE X :—Details of the Experiment with an Endless band and Wooden Rings.

## PREFACES.

Mr. C. C. MASSEY'S PREFACE :—Professor Zollner and his Works—The Value of Testimony considered—Sources of Fallacy—How can Medial Phenomena be Explained?—The Value of Scientific Authority—Mr. A. R. Wallace's answer to Hume's *Essay on Miracles*—Spiritualism an Aggregation of Proven Facts—The Attack upon Henry Slade—Spirit Messages—Slade's

Career after leaving England—Professor Zollner's Polemic—Items relating to the English Translation.

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## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I :—Gauss's and Kant's Theory of Space—The practical application of the Theory in Experiments with Henry Slade—True Knots produced upon a Cord while its ends were in view and sealed together—The principles involved in the tying of knots in Space of One, Two, Three and Four Dimensions—Berkeley's Theory of Vision—The Conception of Space derived from Experience—Kant on Spiritual Existence.

CHAPTER II :—Henry Slade's first visit to Leipsic—Professor Fechner's observations of the movements of a Magnetic Needle in proximity to Madame Ruf, a Mesmeric Sensitive—Professor Erdmann's observations of the Phenomenon—The Experiment repeated with Henry Slade—The Observations of Professors Braune, Fechner, Weber and Scheibner—A Spirit Apology—Destruction of a large Screen by Spirits—Experiments with a Compass—Apparition of a Living Hand—Experiments with a Bell and lighted Candles—Slade and the Grand Duke Constantine—Testimony of the Hon. Alexandre Aksakof—A Test Experiment in Slate-writing—Impartation of Permanent Magnetism to an Iron Needle by Medial Power.

CHAPTER III :—Permanent Impressions obtained of Temporarily Materialised Hands and Feet—A proposed Chemical Experiment—Slade's Abnormal Vision—Physical Impressions in a Closed Space—Enclosed Space of Three Dimensions, open to Four-dimensional Beings—The Muscular Power of a Spirit Hand—A Test with Flour—Experiments with a Polaroscope—Flight of Objects through the Air—A Clue to Research

CHAPTER IV :—Conditions of Investigation—The Knowledge of our Ignorance—Unscientific Men of Science—Herr Virchow's Precept and Practice—"The Martyrology of Mediums," a book of the Future—Slade's reply to Professor Barrett—A Medium's enunciation of the First Rules of Experimentation in Natural Science.

CHAPTER V :—Production of Knots in an Endless String—Further Experiments—Experiments of the same Nature in London—A Dining Table Floating in the Air in Daylight—Manifestations in the House of a Physician—A Medium in Seclusion—The Imposition of *a priori* Conditions—The Apparition of a Pale Hand for Three Minutes—The Knotting together of Leather Bands beneath the Hands of the Author—Professor Weber's Experiences with a Spirit Hand—Disappearance and Reappearance of Ponderable Objects—A Book Vanishes and Reappears—A Table Vanishes; it Reappears in Mid-air.

CHAPTER VI :—Theoretical Considerations—The Axiom of "The Conservation of Energy" valid in Four-dimensional Space—Projected Experiments to prove the Fourth Dimension—The Unexpected in Nature and Life—Scientific Passivity—Schopenhauer's "Transcendent Fate"—Goethe on the Veil of Nature.

CHAPTER VII :—Various Instances of the so-called Passage of Matter through Matter—An Unexpected Phenomenon—The Heat sometimes produced by the Operation—The Burning Power of Psychic Force—That Evidence the best which can be appreciated without the Testimony of Experts—Failures at *séances*

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CHAPTER VIII :—The Phenomena suitable for Scientific Research—Their Reproduction at different Times and Places—Dr. Friese's and Professor Wagner's Experiments in Confirmation of the Author's—Experiments with Private Mediums—Manifestations observed by Professor Nicolaus Wagner at St. Petersburg—Blind Faith and Blind Scepticism—Professor Wagner on the Fanaticism of Blind Sceptics—Investigation of Spiritual Manifestations in a Private Family—Spiritualism a Foe to Atheism—Form Materialisations through a Private Medium—Appearance of the Spirit of Olga—Effect of strong Manifestations upon a Medium—Repetition of one of Professor Zollner's Experiments by Professor Wagner—Psychography—Spirit Identity—Impression made by the Materialised Hand of a Deceased Person—The Value of the Facts.

CHAPTER IX :—Theoretical—The Fourth Dimension of Space—A Miracle to Two-dimensional Beings—The Experiments of Professor Hare—A Ball of Platinum introduced into a Hermetically Sealed Glass Tube by Spirits—An Experiment with Coins—Several Examples of the Passage of Solid Matter through Solid Matter—Clairvoyance—The Fourth Dimensional Theory explains Clairvoyance—The part taken by Slade's Soul in a Manifestation—The Spatial Widening of the Three Dimensional Circle of Sight to Clairvoyants—Why Bodies gradually become Transparent to Clairvoyants—Illustration in the case of Andrew Jackson Davis—The Criterion of Objectivity—The Influence of one Will upon another—Hansen's Experiments—The Philosophy of Berkeley applied to Spiritual Phenomena.

CHAPTER X :—An Experiment for Sceptics—A Wager—Slade's Scruples—A Rebuke by the Spirits—An Unexpected Result—Captious Objections—The Experiment of Professor Wach—Example of the Apparent Penetrability of Matter.

CHAPTER XI :—The Facility with which Material Bodies apparently pass through each other in Slade's presence—Writing through a Table—A Test in Slate-writing conclusively disproving Slade's agency—A Description of the Trance State.

CHAPTER XII :—A "Fault" in the Cable—Jets of Water—Remarkable Heating Effects through Slade's Mediumship—Smoke—Sulphurous Vapours—"Fire Everywhere"—A Bluish-white Light—Abnormal Shadows—A Philosophical Explanation—A Materialised Spirit Hand—A Luminous Form.

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## APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A :—The Value of Testimony in Matters Extraordinary—The Proportional Strength of Evidence—The Contradiction of Experience by Alleged Facts—Mr. Starkie's *Treatise on the Law of Evidence*—Hume's *Essay on Miracles*—The Influence of Preconception—Hume's Principle Mathematically Refuted by Mr. Babbage—The "Uniformity" of Nature—The Lord Lindsay's Experiences—Dr. Lockhart Robertson's Experiments—The Cumulative Force of Testimony—The Universal

Belief of Mankind—Obstruction of Truth by Scientific Men—The Testing of Evidence.

APPENDIX B :—Evidence of Samuel Bellachini, Court Conjuror at Berlin.

APPENDIX C :—Admissions by John Novil Maskolyne and other professional Conjurors—Houdin—Jacobs.

APPENDIX D :—Plate X—Experiment with Sealed Cords and Endless Bands.



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CONTENTS.

Review:—The Occult World ..... 265
The Mysterious "Brothers" of the Theosophists ..... 265
The Theosophical Society ..... 270
A Vision ..... 271
The Visions of Mrs. Haweis ..... 272
"Is Darwin Right? Or the Origin of Man?" By William Denton. By Frank Podmore ..... 270
Poetry:—In Loving Honour of Thomas Carlyle ..... 270
The Old Ship ..... 272
Correspondence— Clairvoyance in Public ..... 269
Paragraph—Spiritualism in Marylebone ..... 269

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