

## **Second sight, or, Deuteroscopia / by W.A.F. Browne.**

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*With the Author's kind regards.*

# SECOND SIGHT

OR

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## DEUTEROSCOPIA

BY

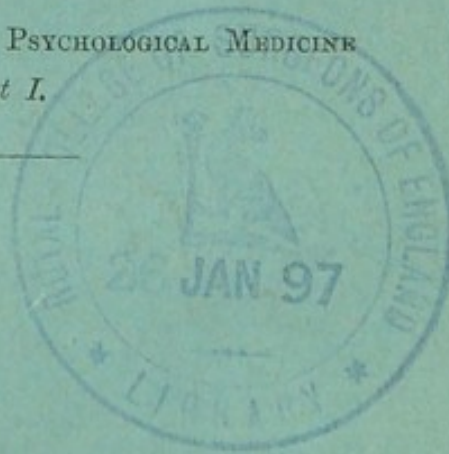
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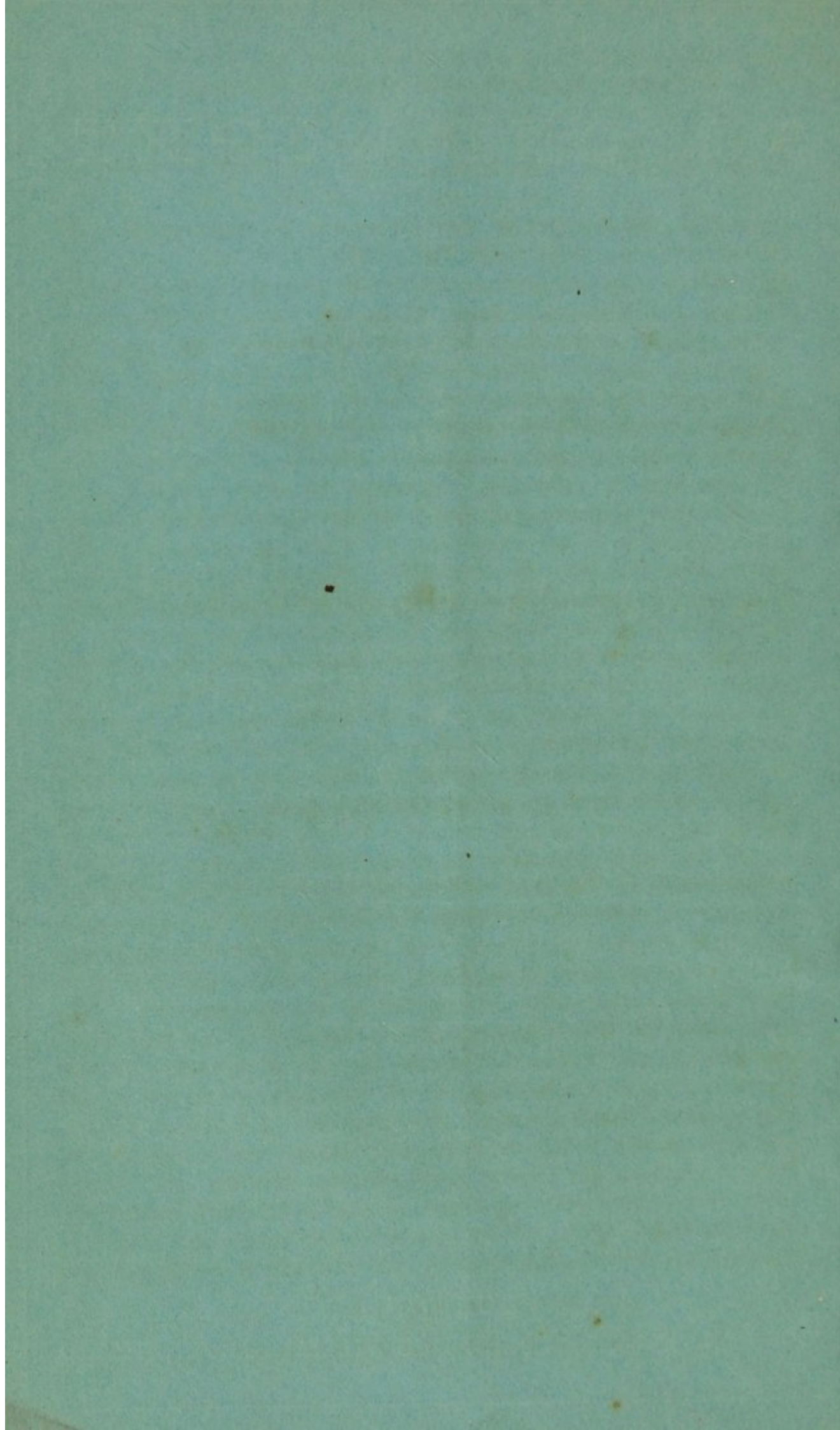
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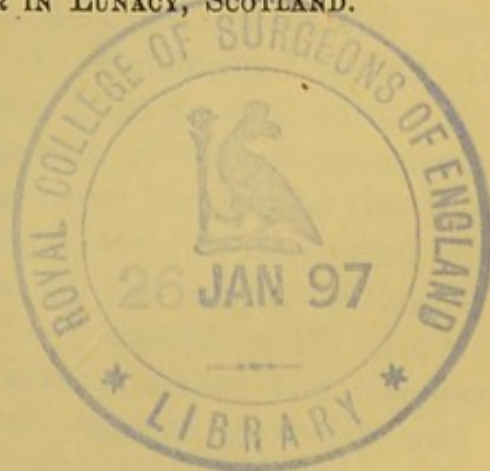
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## SECOND SIGHT; OR, DEUTEROSCOPIA.

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W. A. F. BROWNE, Esq.,

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONSULTANT, CRICHTON INSTITUTION, DUMFRIES; RECENTLY  
MEDICAL COMMISSIONER IN LUNACY, SCOTLAND.



(The following is the list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the President of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, for the year 1881.)

## SECOND SIGHT; OR, DEUTEROGOGIA.

M. A. BROWN, Esq.

The following is the list of the names of the persons who have been elected to the office of the President of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, for the year 1881.



## SECOND-SIGHT; OR, DEUTEROSCOPIA.

BY W. A. F. BROWNE, ESQ.,

Psychological Consultant, Crichton Institution, Dumfries; recently Medical Commissioner in Lunacy, Scotland.

"I never could advance my curiosity to conviction, but came away at last only willing to believe."—Johnson's *Tour to the Hebrides*, p. 347.

SECOND-SIGHT must not be confounded with the visions, vaticinations, spiritual apparitions, omens, or auguries which have in all places and periods extorted belief from the sage, the simple, the savage. Deuteroscopia may have a connate origin with these, but admits of the special definition of being an involuntary affection, a supersensuous impression, involving a portent which does not inspire fear or foreknowledge in the seer, who has not, generally, any personal interest in the coming event. It is likewise susceptible of the characteristic description that it is more prevalent in Northern regions, though observed universally; that death or disaster is generally foreshadowed by funereal processions, by corpses so placed as to be connected with the coffin, the cerement, or the cemetery, by shrouds generally concealing the features of the doomed wearer, and the position of which on the body indicates the proximate or remote time of death, and by the facts that the visitation is intimated to those around previous to the fulfilment of the portent, and that real objects are mingled with, or seen beyond, those which are accepted, or recognised, as supernatural, and so on.

It has been customary to identify this mental condition (superstition or delusion is the more popular solution) with the transitory insanity of the Laps, the extatices of the Samoiedes and Ostiaks; indeed, Brierre de Boismont\* attributes this group of phenomena to an Arctic climate and cold. Yet Hibbert† gives no positive confirmation of this supposition. The localisation in this country has been limited to the Highlands and Islands, and to the Celtic race, even to Skye and the vexed Hebrides, where the burst-boom of the mighty Atlantic echoes and expends itself amongst the gigantic cliffs which wall in the semi-sterile hills, or morasses; where the shepherd, his flocks—mayhap the hardy deer—secure drowsily and slowly a scanty nourishment; where mists, and exhalations, and long-continued twilight favour visual deceptions; and where a people that have passed recently and rapidly from Paganism‡

\* *Des Hallucinations*, 1845, p. 262.

† *Philosophy of Apparitions*.

‡ Note 16, Sir Walter Scott's *Lord of the Isle*



to Catholicism and to Protestantism, to Christianity without its twin civilisation, and are by constitution gloomy, dreamy, and uneducated, are prone to superstition, to create and to credit imaginary communications and warnings from the world of spirits. Another fallacy, flattering it may be to the spirit or the vanity of the age, has obtained circulation, that the influence of their belief is dead—has died under the doubts and preaching of the priesthood—has been laid by the blaze of enlightenment: yet in Skye, certainly, the focus where the rays of weird illumination from the cluster of islets around were concentrated—where this “local habitation and name” were illustrated by a literature, and by the collection of the largest number of examples extant—it would appear that this belief still survives; and this although the pulses of the steamboat and the scream of the locomotive mingle with the roar of ocean, and the tide of Cook’s tourists bring as various and as curious novelties to the shore as the Gulf Stream, and the doubts and difficulties of Protestantism have supplanted the credulity and sanction of Catholicism as to communion with the unseen and the unknown. If any diminution has taken place in the dominion of such convictions in these remote and ungenial lands, it must be by the migration of such convictions southward. The most copious and authoritative record of such revelations in the region to which they are supposed to be indigenous is to be found in Martin’s Treatise on the subject, incorporating Tracts by Theophilus Insulanus and Aubrey. These narratives were written at different times in the eighteenth century, but are contained in a work called “*Miscellanea Scotica*,” published in 1820. The frequency of this credence may be estimated from the assurance made in the first edition of the Statistical Account of Scotland by the minister of Applecross—still, notwithstanding continued emigration, numbering 1,129 inhabitants—that the belief is general among his parishioners, although they reject that in witchcraft. Martin’s Collection embraces 178 distinct histories, in many instances related to the authors by the seers themselves; in others derived directly from, or traced to, trustworthy sources. An analysis of these facts appears to show that the gift or power of perceiving such marvels was sometimes hereditary, sometimes communicable by touch; that it was never acquired; that there was no college or school of seers or prophets; that it was exercised independently of the will in a trance-coma condition, and often only once in the life of the individual. The senses of hearing, touch, even smell, as well as that of vision, seem to have been channels through which the phantom impressions reached the mind; and the objects or pictures thus conveyed were of the



most different and dissimilar kind—from the sound of a saw employed in the construction of a coffin, or the sight of a corpse or a shroud pointing out the spot on which the vision was to be realised, to the most minute accidents and details of a shipwreck—to the solemn pomp and pageantry of a funeral procession, in which the features and dress of many of the attendants, the texture of the mortcloth, even the name, age, &c. of the deceased, not always known to the seer, were recognised. The import of such intimations was invariably lugubrious, and shadowing forth misfortune or misadventure of some kind. Prescience of the precise evil impending was not always accorded to the observer, who, however, generally announced its approach, its formidable or fatal character, and the person or persons involved. The appearances were visible at noonday as well as at midnight; were seen by many or few, but generally by one seer; assumed the form, aspect, and actual condition and relations of surrounding objects, or were associated with abnormal phenomena—such as seeing and recognising a second and more distant series of objects, houses, animals, &c., previously known to exist through and beyond the supposed spectral illusions. This diaphanous character of the vision, which permits of two distinct impressions passing each other, or being present consentaneously on the retina or in consciousness, is not so frequent as the more inexplicable anomaly of the phantasm or imaginary picture obstructing the view of a real known familiar scene; nor is it peculiar to this locality or its inhabitants, as Müller\* refers “the seeing the images of external objects through the phantasms as through a veil” to all Northern visionaries. The concealment of the thorax and lower limbs of a skeleton, who haunted and hunted to death an unfortunate victim, by the body of the physician while the skull peered over his shoulder, when attempting, experimentally, to lay the ghost, is a frightful instance of this peculiarity. Abercrombie† mentions a gentleman who was accustomed to amuse himself by gazing at the furniture seen through an apparition by which he was repeatedly visited. Martin’s long catalogue is swelled and disfigured by numerous incongruities, inconsistencies, redundancies. The latter comprehend dreams, previsions, prophecies, prodigies, which cannot possibly be placed under the category of Second-sight, as they include specimens of almost all spiritual agencies, spread over the whole range of history, from the Siege of Jerusalem and the age of St. Polycarp to the author’s own day. Yet,

\* Müller’s *Physiology of the Senses*, p. 1393.

† *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers and the Investigation of Truth*.



after making ample deductions of what is extraneous and absurd, there remains a residuum, which may be dealt with philosophically, and for the reality of which the amount of evidence adduced is as great as of any event, recent or remote, where legal or judicial evidence has not been obtained—a reality which shall at present be limited to two facts: 1st. That the seer was conscious of seeing certain unusual or exoneural objects; and 2nd. That subsequent occurrences corroborated or confirmed the interpretation attached by the seer to such objects. It would be as legitimate and reasonable to question the trustworthiness of all human testimony, as to denounce the narrators as impostors, imposed upon, deluded, or demented. The Rev. M. Kirk, minister of Aberfoyle, much referred to for supernatural or legendary lore, who is perfectly trustworthy as to human and everyday events, describes, in his “*Secret Commonwealth*,” the seers as unperverted by their belief, and as intelligent, candid, honest, and sociable citizens.

Either because certain localities are less prolific than others, or because inquirers are less zealous or more accurate, portions of wild and mountainous country at no great distance from Skye, though fertile in ghosts, goblins, warnings, werewolves (*Scoticè*, worry-cow), yield no undoubted instance of Second-sight. Thus Mrs. Grant of Laggan,\* a clever and popular authoress, in her “*Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland*,” published in 1811, embracing the magnificent tract between the Spey and the Spean, gives eight descriptions of apparitions of different kinds, only one of which even approaches the mental condition now under discussion. She writes that one of two widowers, who keenly felt their bereavement, while walking in a wood and conversing upon this subject, threw himself upon the ground, exclaiming, “Alas, that I had but one sight of my dark-haired Anna!” At this very moment his companion saw in a ray of sunshine the figure of the said Anna, and pointed it out to her sorrowing husband; but ere the individual principally concerned could see the apparition, it had vanished, “the flowers remaining unbent where it seemed to stand.”

The easiest course in escaping from the dilemma created by such experiences, is either to deny and disbelieve the facts, or to allow their influence to fade away with the state of society with which they were identified. More strong and stringent remedial measures, however, have been resorted to. In 1824 appeared Dr. Macculloch’s work on the Highlands,† designed and, when

\* *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland*, by Mrs. Grant, Laggan (London, 1811), Vol. i. pp. 197–276.

† Macculloch’s *Highlands: Letters to Sir Walter Scott* 1824.



viewed superficially, calculated to dissipate the glamour or roseate romance shed by Sir Walter Scott's genius like a sunset glory over the traditions, social condition, tongue, modes of thinking and feeling of the Celtic race. In his long and clever disquisition upon Second-sight, based, to a certain extent, upon Martin's observations, Dr. Macculloch employs the weapons of scornful satire and scepticism, and, even where reasoning is resorted to, the basis is rather that of humour than of logic. He first uses the universal solvent of disputing the occurrence of every supernatural impression, whensoever or wheresoever such may have been recorded; but, suspecting that this *aqua regia* may be rejected, as inapplicable to many of the moral difficulties presented, he condescends to enumerate a long series of secondary explanations, which are true within a certain, but only a certain range.

Among these causes, the operation of which cannot be conceived to be limited to the Highlands, are dreams, delirium, hypochondriasis, lazy indolent rumination, shepherd life, superstition, remnants of their ancient creeds, and starvation. By a singular inappreciation of the difference and irreconcilability of the antecedents and positions of the seers, he cites the miraculous temptations of St. Anthony and the enthusiastic endurance of St. Simon Stylites as illustrative of the Taisch of Hebridean carle or cobbler. In his wide survey and exposure of supposed spectral appearances, Dr. Macculloch admits that Second-sight is not more preposterous or incredible than many convictions that have been admitted and cherished by kings, mathematicians, divines, even sceptics—by those of high intelligence and pure life; but he scouts, and justifiably scouts, the theory that what many or the majority of men believe must necessarily be true. But this is not logically the point at issue. The proposition which he was called upon to determine was, can it be that a faculty or feeling to believe in the marvellous, and to receive impressions which are not communicated by the external senses, be given merely to deceive, to plunge in error and fear, and to disturb the ordinary manifestations of mind without benefit or purpose?

A more formidable because scientific critic and commentator on such relations was found in Sir David Brewster, in his "Natural Magic," 1838. His principle is, that the pictures reaching consciousness may be so distorted by the physical condition of the organ of sight, and may be so influenced by certain optical laws, or deviations from such laws, as to suggest or represent the phenomena regarded as supernatural or spiritual. In his essay, avowedly written for the purpose of demonstrating the fallacies and delusions which may arise from accidental or



diseased deviations from the ordinary and natural laws of vision, he conceives that the origin of apparitions may be traced to the following facts and experiments:—

1. Phosphorescence, iridescence, and ultimately redness, are produced in the interior of the eye by external pressure on the ball, or by disorganisation of its structure, as is noticed in double-vision, half-vision, colour-blindness, &c., and the insensible part of the retina may be stimulated by impressions falling upon other parts of the eye.

2. That when the eye is directed on a burning fire, or irregularly-shaded surface, a variety of distinct forms, such as letters, sentences, appear.

3. That the spectral illusions always appear in front of the eye, and partake in its movements, exactly like the impressions of luminous objects, after the objects themselves are withdrawn. This continuity is exemplified in the cases of Newton, Boyle, &c., where the image of the sun was retained for several years—such impression generally lasting only for one-eighth of a second.

4. By looking steadily at one coloured wafer, you lose sight of another coloured wafer on the same sheet of white paper, and so whenever one object is intently and steadily regarded—such effects being varied by the colour of the object and luminosity of the atmosphere.

5. All objects seen directly are seen indistinctly; and confusion is produced by effort to direct the eye upon objects through an indistinct medium, or in darkness, when the pupil is so dilated that near objects can only be seen imperfectly.

6. Spectres are seen as white, because this colour is the one that can be seen in imperfect media, and will assume a different form (human, for instance), according to the actual colour, &c. of the object seen.

7. Spectral colouration, effected by fixing the eye upon a particular colour.

8. Deceptions produced by whirling a lighted stick, or by the Thaumatrope

9. Deceptions from luminous objects in or near the eye, as where a speck of sealing-wax on the palpebræ reflected images of candles above and behind the head of the observer.

Sir David Brewster puts, hypothetically, that if a living figure had been projected against the strong light which imprinted these durable spectra of the sun mentioned above, which really might happen when the solar rays are reflected from water, and diffused by its ruffled surface, this figure would have necessarily accompanied all luminous spectres which the fancy might create; but he confesses that no



supernatural effects have been actually produced by the causes described. He however asserts, as an event coming within his own knowledge, that a figure dressed in black, and mounted on a white horse, proved to be, from the state of the atmosphere, &c., a figure in white upon a black horse. An actual spectre in dark habit, on a white horse, is asserted to have saved a clergyman from murder, but there is no evidence of any substratum, or plane for reflection.\* Like other philosophers of this school, Sir David Brewster naturally and inevitably holds that the retina is the seat of the supernatural, and that the images from without and the spectral illusions from within equally impinge thereon, differing only in the degree of vividness. Postponing any examination of such a theory, and taking each of the sources of fallacy described individually, or taking the whole together, there would be required as great an amount of credulity to accept them as explanatory of spectral illusions as is required to place implicit faith in apparitions, Second-sight, &c., such as it is the aim of physicists to account for. We are inclined to echo the opinion of Müller: "The spectral phenomena, or visions, are not more extraordinary than the ordinary function of sight." How, for instance, could any or all of the deviations from natural and direct vision, whether referable to ocular or atmospheric phenomena, even if dread or disturbing emotions were superadded, produce or elucidate any of the visions, and above all the culminating apparition in Mrs A.'s case, upon which Sir David Brewster builds so much—where a carriage-and-four is seen by her, when seated in her drawing-room, driving up the avenue to the porch of her house, in bright daylight, which was occupied by skeletons, the postilion himself being a skeleton? It suggests a smile and a suspicion, when the same writer, obviously distrustful of his previous premisses, declares that the cause of the spectres of Nicolai, Mrs. A., &c., was "deranged action of the stomach." Indigestion, in common with every form of disease, undoubtedly influences all mental operations, and the manner in which the communications from the external senses are received by the mind. Health, however, is a mere abstraction, and, although intelligible under the words *mens sana in corpore sano*, is, perhaps, never positively possessed by any individual. The cradle may be denominated a miniature or potential coffin, as in the tiny body which it contains begins at once a succession of transformations and changes, developments, diseases, in preparation for death, all of which are accompanied by characteristic phases of instinct, ideation, and passion. But it is not

\* Bouchier, see p. 16.



demonstrable that such conditions, whether physical or psychical, except in insanity, subvert the will, the intellect, or the laws of perception and belief. It would be "a leap in the dark," a transcendentalism which even modern physiologists would repudiate, to assert that any bodily ailment or unhealth placed us in nearer relations to the supersensuous or the supernatural—in other words, prostrated us as victims before superstition and delusion; or that certain modifications of unhealth may not rouse and raise greater mental energy, perspicacity, and illumination; or that some of the greatest efforts of genius, and even of useful discovery, have been prosecuted contemporaneously with, and in despite of, decrepitude, decay, and suffering—as in the cases of Pascal, Coleridge, &c. Dyspepsia is the concomitant or heritage of a gluttonous and luxurious indulgence, and of a state of society such as at present prevails; so that the frequency of apparitions among the wealthy, the worldly, the delicate and refined, and their supposed rarity among those whose diet is porridge and potatoes, and who have no access to condiments or golden vintages, may to a certain extent be explained. But there appear no data for regarding the Second-sight-seers as diseased, or other than as robust, hardy, abstemious mountaineers: sometimes educated, and not disturbed in sentiment or sensuality, receiving the impressions, which they accepted and interpreted as coming from another world, without excitement, in their own homesteads, in their daily walk and work of life, clothed in familiar guise, and, so far as can be learned, unaccompanied and unmystified by any affections of the organs of vision, or by any new combinations or corruscations of the grey and sober lights which fell around, or by any colouration than that of their native heather.

Dr. Carpenter, an able censor and expurgator of all spiritualist phenomena, has, within a short period,\* essayed a new exposure of such impressions. The central gist and gravamen is to show that science, and that vague and vapouring process called "human progress," are undermining beliefs; that, in Locke's words, "the doctrine proves the miracle, not the miracle the doctrine;" but in his sweeping generalisations he includes all convictions that cannot be logically or mathematically proved. As sources of fallacy, in dealing with the miraculous, the mysterious, even the unusual, he enumerates—1, prepossession; 2, the non-correspondence of states of consciousness with external impressions; 3, the accordance of the impression and its interpretation, being the effect of mental character or condition; 4, mental expectancy of result; 5, fixity of gaze; 6, religious enthusiasm;

\* *The Fallacies of Testimony in Relation to the Supernatural*, by Dr. W. B. Carpenter: *Contemporary Review*, January 1876.



7, prejudice in limitation of evidence; 8, amplification of simple into romantic fiction; 9, popular opinion; 10, fear, as under Obi curse; 11, unquestioning faith in external power; 12, action of mind on body. While most thinkers would experience as much difficulty in discovering a physiological law explanatory of the removal of the tumour, by mere reliance on the prediction of Sir J. Paget that it would be removed, as in believing that the removal was the result of Divine interference, and while it may be readily conceded that the intellectual defects and emotional disturbances do elucidate or fully explain many of those impressions which are vulgarly regarded as supernatural, it becomes imperative to inquire as to the causation of such impressions when received by the impassive, the indifferent, the doubting, the disbelieving—when there is no prepossession, no expectancy, no faith, no fear, no influence of prejudice, popular opinion, and no corporeal excitement or malady. By such a process any body of facts might be so disintegrated and dissipated as to render an actual witness doubtful as to the evidence of his own senses, and to place any secondhand relation under the same category that the existence of Napoleon I. was rendered by the destructive analysis of Archbishop Whately.

There are, however, affections of the nervous system which it has been conceived may be assimilated to the state of Deuteroscopia, or to be reducible to the same psychical elements. Socrates is reported to have stood immovably in front of the army in which he served for twenty-four hours, gazing fixedly forward, perhaps into futurity, and perhaps in concert with his familiar spirit, "as if his soul were absent from his body." George Foxe, the heresiarch, lay for fourteen days mute, motionless as if dead, "but his sleep was full of divine visions of beauty and glory." Engelbrecht, previously subject to sensorial illusions, and after protracted fasting, revivalism, and forebodings, became partially unconscious, receiving occasional intimations from without, while transported to the spiritual world as a participant in things unspeakable, while he remained for twelve hours with rigid and insensible limbs, and as if vision and life were extinct. Closely allied to these states are death-trance, trance-coma, trance-sleep, somnambulist trance, whether natural or artificial; but these differ mainly and materially from Second-sight in the complication of the muscular system, in the suspension or perversion of the external senses, in the acts of consciousness being visions, but not previsions, and in the revelations consisting of imaginings, not of surrounding objects. The perversion, conversion, or transference of sensibility has been principally marked in somnambulism, where difficult and dangerous acts have been performed with the eyelids closed, where



sounds reach the ear only when in the circle, or connected with the perception present, or the predominating feeling; and where it has been asserted the functions of the eye, the ear, and of the other channels of sensation, have been exercised in remote parts of the body, in normal states endowed only with common sensation, and all this without any knowledge or memory on the part of the individual. Thus, in the celebrated and often-quoted case, resting upon the authority of the Archbishop of Bordeaux,\* a student rises nightly during profound sleep, rules selected paper, writes themes, music, corrects and improves his manuscript, even when pasteboard is placed between his face and the objects to which attention is directed, even knowing when his pen requires ink, when the paper is changed, &c.; or, in the more common but equally curious instances, when the sleep-walker ascends precipices, roofs of houses, rides long distances, and performs acts and feats to which when awake he is unaccustomed, and of which he is incapable—there appears to be a creative, adaptive, and new-developed power independent of consciousness. There is no exact parallel of correlative manifestations in Second-sight, but rapture and ecstasy have been observed to accompany the prevision of which we treat. Trance may be represented by a concentrated stare, and in one case it is said that the eyelids required to be readjusted; but the discriminating properties of the seer are, that the portent is shadowed forth by ordinary occurrences or objects; that the pictures, whatever may be their nature, are compatible with perfect health in the participant, and are unaccompanied by fear, or wonderment, or perplexity.

There are, besides, conditions which are closely allied to that under consideration by many points of coincidence, especially by the characteristics of spiritual apparition and portent. Without attempting to systematise or exhaust these, they may be fairly classified under the following heads:

I. Where the spectre or semblance of a deceased person, or of one about to die, appears to a friend or acquaintance at the moment or time of death, not to prefigure, but to announce, event.

The following illustrations of this order may suffice:

1. Two young officers of the 33rd Regiment, subsequently distinguished as Sir John Sherbroke and General Wynyard, are, at 4 P.M., October 1785, in broad daylight, seated in their barrack-room in Cape Breton. The room had two doors—one from a passage, one into a bedroom, from which there was no other exit. Sherbroke, raising his eyes from his studies, saw at

\* *French Encyclopædia*: Mayo's *Popular Superstitions*, 1851, p. 103.



the former entrance a tall emaciated youth, clothed in summer costume, while they were wrapped in their winter furs, and who cast a melancholy glance on his companion, as he seemed to enter the inner room. The latter, having his attention directed to the figure, horror-stricken exclaimed, "Why, good God, that's my brother!" There was no brother in the body there. Willing to regard the appearance as a practical joke, silence was at first observed, but the anxiety and misery of the sufferer revealed the cause to his brother-officers long before any explanation could be obtained. That at last arrived from England in the announcement that Wynyard's favourite brother had died, making an allowance for the difference of latitude, at the precise moment when he was supposed to be seen at Cape Breton. Both officers until their death believed that they had really seen this apparition.

2. Captain Wheatcroft, an officer in the Inniskilling Dragoons, having exchanged into the Carabineers, was present, and was gazetted as having perished, at the siege of Lucknow, on the 15th November, 1857. His wife, who remained with her mother in Cambridge, on the night of the 14th November, saw, first in dream, and then apparently standing by her bedside, her husband, wearing his regimentals, agitated, pain-stricken, but not blood-stained. The image remained sufficiently long that she noted particulars, such as the whiteness of his shirt, &c. So convinced was the lady of the reality of this interview, that she disclosed her secret to her mother, and reported herself as a widow. Delay and difficulty occurred in reconciling the discrepancy which existed between the official report in the War Office and the conviction of Mrs. W.; but ultimately, six months afterwards, it was placed beyond a doubt that Captain W. fell in a charge on the 14th. A painful blunder was thus corrected by an apparition, whether seen by the material or the mental eye.

3. Mr. John Williams, of Scorrier House, a man of property, probity, and practical talent, sees in the lobby of the House of Commons (where he never had been), on the 12th of May, 1812, a man with the precise lineaments and habitual dress of the Prime Minister, Mr. Perceval (whom he had never seen), and another man dressed in a brown coat and yellow basket-buttons, being the dress of Mr. J. Bellingham; the latter drawing a pistol from under his coat, and discharging it at the former, who instantly fell, bleeding from a wound in the left breast. He was then told that the victim was Mr. Perceval. This dream, or spectral drama, passed thrice before him during one night, twenty-four hours after the murder had been committed, and was described to his wife, and to a numerous circle of acquaintance, long before intelligence of the cir-



circumstances reached or could reach Cornwall. The exactitude of the appalling picture presented to or by his imagination with the actual scene was afterwards verified by the accounts transmitted from London, and on his visit to the place where the tragedy was perpetrated.\*

4. Lord Chancellor Brougham, while travelling in Sweden, arrived at a country inn, cold and fatigued. While taking a hot bath, and enjoying the luxury of the warmth, he saw, seated on the chair where he had deposited his clothes, G——, with whom in former years he had held many and animated discussions as to the Immortality of the Soul, and with whom he had entered into a compact, written in their blood, to the effect that whoever predeceased the other should return from beyond the grave, and thus resolve the awful problem which had agitated their youthful doubts. His Lordship seems to have been powerfully affected, as he afterwards fainted. This occurred, and was recorded at the time, on the 19th December, 18—. Although he had almost forgotten the existence of his early companion, he had a clear recollection of their agreement, and, although attributing the vision to dream, he seems to have accepted the warning. From feelings of shame and agitation, he does not appear to have mentioned this strange eventful history to anyone, either then or subsequently, although its influence is confessed by him to have been unfading. On his return to England, he received letters announcing that the death of G—— had taken place on the day when the apparition was seen. This story, here condensed, was transcribed in its entirety by his Lordship into his diary, 16th October, 1862.† This is nearly a parallel to the death-pledge between the Marquis de Rambouillet and the Marquis de Pr  cy.‡

These cases are selected because they are not deformed by fanatical or sensational adjuncts, because they affect notable or notorious individuals, personages little likely to be influenced or deceived by superstitions, national prejudices, or defects of education. Had there been any disposition to introduce the marvellous or the horrific into the inquiry, there would have been preferred such confessions as that of the celebrated Marshal Blucher, made to his royal master, the King of Prussia, immediately before his dissolution, who, demanding to be tested as to his reason and self-possession, clearly and circumstantially recounted that, after the sad struggles of the Seven Years' War, he returned to his native home, arrived in a dark stormy night,

\* Abercrombie's *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers*, p. 301, 5th edit.

† *Life and Times of Henry, Lord Brougham, written by Himself*, vol. i. ch. iv.

‡ Calmet's *Phantom World*, vol. ii. p. 143.



found the house closed and in darkness throughout ; but the front door yielding to his knocking, or spontaneously, he groped his way to his father's accustomed room, and there saw, by a dim light, both his parents and four sisters. His father waved off his embrace, he kneels before his mother as if in one of the sportive games of childhood, while his sisters whisper inaudibly ; but the act reveals to him that his parent is a skeleton, and that the whole spectacle is a shadow of past misfortunes and death. At the crisis, impelled by terror, he escaped ; but returning, to realise the whole truth, and to inter the remains of his family, he found only a female hand wearing a golden bracelet on the floor of the apartment where the apparition appeared. The same group of spectres again appeared to him two months previously, announcing that his death would take place on the very day and hour when he was addressing the King. The narrative has been purposely denuded of all appalling and melodramatic features, but when it was concluded, the King held the hand of a corpse !

On the other hand, had it been desirable to widen the illustration by an immense accumulation of instances, the Catena constructed by Glanvil\* (1726), or by Howitt† (1863), would have been reproduced. The latter, in addition to a long catalogue of special examples, declares his opinion that the belief in such is universal, that every family could afford testimony of the same kind, and that one member of the Cambridge Ghost Club had collected 2,000 of a similar kind. Mr. Howitt's instances range from the knockings, sawings, rappings in the house of John Wesley, and similar unexplained and inexplicable sounds and signs, to the perfect personification and significant warnings of recognised individuals.

II. The second order is where the spectre or semblance of a deceased individual appears to a living and indifferent individual in order to predict the death of a third party. Of this division it is only necessary to adduce the statement that the apparition of the father of Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, stood by the bedside of Mr. Twose, in Windsor Castle, who had been in the household, and knew all the members of the family ; and, through his instrumentality, thrice premonished his son, that unless he ingratiated himself with the people, by changing his measures, he must die, strengthening his counsel by disclosing two secrets known only to the parties principally concerned. The revelation was conveyed to the Duke, and believed in by his mother ; but although he admitted its truth, and the

\* *Evidence Concerning Witches and Apparitions*, by Joseph Glanvil, 1726.

† *History of the Supernatural*, by William Howitt (1863), pp. 428-460.



accuracy of the test, he did not adopt the counsel, and died by the hand of Felton. A similar omen or oracular intimation is said to have been conveyed to Louis XIV. The psychical relations of the dead with the living are solemn, perhaps inscrutable, but it would be a retrograde philosophy to pronounce all incredible which is inexplicable.

III. The third order is where the spectre or semblance of the deceased appears to a living person, with whom or with whose family some previous connection had existed; and for some purpose, affecting the seer it may be, or to predict death, misfortune, or impending events, involving himself or his connections. The following examples may be cited:—

1. The clever, profligate, infidel Lord Lyttelton was awakened, during the night of the 25th November, 1779, by the fluttering of a bird, which gave place to a figure recognised as Mrs. Amphlet—whom he had greatly injured, and who had expired immediately before she was perceived by him—who warned him, first spontaneously, and then in reply to a direct question, that he must die within three days. Sceptical as to this communication, he pursued his ordinary course, preparing a speech to be delivered in Parliament on the subsequent day, entertained a party in his own house, and tried (in his own words) “to jockey the ghost” beyond the prescribed hour; but died at twelve o’clock exactly on the third day, while retiring to bed. Almost at the moment of his death Lord Lyttelton appeared in the bedchamber of his friend Andrews, who had been prevented from attending his lordship’s party on the same night, and uttered the words, “Ah, Andrews, it is all over!” Although an understanding had existed between these individuals that he who died first should appear to the survivor, Andrews treated the supposed intrusion as a jest, and cast his slipper at the disturber of his rest.

2. Lord Chancellor Erskine encounters in Edinburgh the family butler, who seemed greatly changed, but who stated that he was in search of him, in order to secure his interference that a sum of money due to the speaker, but of which he had been defrauded at the last settlement by the steward of his father, might be refunded. He asked the butler to follow in order to prosecute the inquiry, but the semblance had passed away. Recollecting the residence of the man’s wife, he discovered that he had been dead for some months, that he had revealed his wrong on his deathbed, adding that when “Master Tom” (the future Lord Chancellor) returned, “he would see her righted.” The allegation was correct, and restitution made. This impression, although received in youth, was declared by the narrator to be “indelible.”



3. During the American War of Independence, two officers of rank, seated in their tent, heard the voice of their comrade-in-arms, Major Blomberg, at the door, earnestly enjoining one of them by name to seek for a certain box, in a room in a house (all minutely described), as it contained documents of great importance to his infant son. On inquiry the sentinel had seen nothing, but intelligence was obtained that Major Blomberg had been surprised and killed. On the return of the parties to England, the house, box, &c. were easily found. The papers contributed to secure an heritage to the child, who, in consequence of the interest created by this tale, was chosen by Queen Charlotte as the foster-brother of George IV.

4. We are indebted to fiction for by far the most picturesque and popular illustration of this class, in the Bodach-Glas (grey spirit) which appeared to Fergus M'Ivor on the eve of his capture and execution, as it is recited he had so appeared to his ancestors immediately before death. But the magic wand of Sir Walter Scott's genius had in this, as in every instance, converted every object it touched into "a thing of beauty and a joy for ever." For we find, from another of his works,\* that the genuine familiars or spiritual watchers and warders of Highland families were in that of Grant of Grant (now represented by Lord Seafield), a girl with a hairy arm; in that of Grant of Rothiemurchus the Bodach-au-dun, or Ghost of the Hill; and that the Ban-Schie, associated with so many clans and Highland communities, was nothing more than an old woman, in a blue mantle and streaming hair, who shrieked piteously, in prognostication of disaster to those to whom she was attached. But modern times, and persons whom we might have touched, afford similar evidence.

5. The late excellent and justly popular Earl of Eglinton—whose sudden death was truly felt as a national loss in Scotland, and who is famed for an attempt to revive an ancient custom of mediæval times by the Tournament held at Eglinton Castle in 1839—was engaged, on the 4th of October 1861, in playing, on the Links of St. Andrews, at the national game of golf. Suddenly he stopped in the middle of the game, exclaiming, "I can play no longer—there is the Bodach-Glas. I have seen it for the third time; something fearful is going to befall me." Within a few hours Lord Eglinton was a corpse; he died the same night, and with such suddenness, that he was engaged in handing a candlestick to a lady, who was retiring to her room, when he expired. Henderson, in "Folk Lore," mentions that he received this account of Lord Eglinton's death from a Scotch

\* Notes to Canto III., *Lady of the Lake*.



clergyman, who endorses every particular as authentic and perfectly true.\*

The stories of Lord Tyrone and Lady Beresford, and of Colonel Gardiner, have been avoided, both because they are hackneyed, and have been so appropriated to religious purposes as to be almost removed beyond the pale of literary discussion.

IV. Where spectre or semblance of deceased intimates to strangers death, or evil by foul means:—

1. A coach driving to Oxford, in a dark snowy winter night, comes into contact with some object, which the coachman and passengers had the moment before conceived to be a countryman in a blouse, to whom they holloa'd in vain. Immediately afterwards the coach was tilted to one side, as if the wheels had passed over a solid substance of some size, which it was dreaded might be the body of the labourer. The search at once instituted revealed neither traces of the living nor corpse of the dead; but at the next stage, the scared looks of the stablemen, on hearing of the frightful suspicion that a man had been run over, provoked further inquiry, when it was ascertained that a man had been murdered, exactly a year before, on the very spot where the imaginary accident had occurred.

2. Mr. Hamilton related to Captain and Mrs. Hastings that, failing to find suitable accommodation in the town of Portsmouth, he sought shelter in a small alehouse in an obscure lane, where the arrangements were so bare and humble that he had to promise a large premium in order to secure a bedroom for his own use. In this apartment, which contained two unoccupied beds, he retired early to rest, having previously secured the door. He awoke during the night, and saw in the bed opposite what appeared to be a sailor, semi-recumbent, wearing immense black whiskers, and having a red handkerchief round the head. He suspended his indignation, and again fell asleep; but, in the morning, the light enabled him to see that his companion was still there, and that the redness of the bandage was caused by blood. While dressing, the impression ceased. Threats, and the vividness of the scene depicted, extorted from the conscience-stricken landlady the confession, that a sailor, wounded in a fray, with the aspect, dress, and bandage, as seen by Mr. Hamilton, had, three nights before, been placed upon the bed in the room specified, had died there from loss of blood, the body having been subsequently buried in the garden in order to conceal the whole of the unfortunate transaction.

\* *Apparitions, a Narrative of Facts*, by the Rev. Bourchier Wrey Saville, M.A. (London, 1874)—a volume to which a general acknowledgment is due.



3. A settler in Australia engaged a convict servant, who reported to his friends that he had suddenly sailed for England. One of these, while travelling in the evening in the country, saw the absentee seated on a paling, but headless. Horrified by the sight, the witness persuaded his brother to accompany him to the spot on the succeeding evening, where the decapitated trunk was again seen in the same position. Suspicions led to the employment of a native, endued with bloodhound properties, who tracked the body of the murdered settler to an adjoining pond.\*

It is somewhat curious that the sources from which these gloomy anecdotes have been extracted, the Memoirs of the brilliant and virtuous actor who so long contributed to the amusement of the public, and of the reverend critic and caricaturist of dreams, delusions, diablery, &c., should have been converted by their sons into rich repertories of the marvellous—a circumstance which corroborates the supposition that the Celts leave their Second-sight in their native glens, and that the condition upon which such presages or presentiments depends has established a congenial home in the South.

V. It is expedient to add to the definition previously attempted, that sanctioned by so high an authority as Dr. Jamieson, who says, in his "Dictionary of the Scottish Language," that "Second-sight is a power believed to be possessed by not a few in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, of foreseeing future events, especially of a disastrous kind, by means of a spectral exhibition to their eyes of the persons whom these events respect, accompanied with such emblems as denote their fate,"† in order that both of these definitions may be compared with the narratives of recent events to which they seem applicable:—

(a) An inhabitant of the district of Rannoch was met, when crossing a bridge which narrowed the path, by a funeral cortège in which he saw many friends and acquaintances. He not only easily recognised by the moonlight these individuals, but when passing close to the coffin, the mortcloth, which was a plaid of a particular tartan, was blown aside or displaced, as he read on the lid the name, age, &c. of a person whom he believed to be alive, but who, on reaching his home, he learned was ill, and whose death occurred the day following. This took place within a few years.

(b) In like manner it is recounted that a young gentleman, calling at Garth Castle, addressed a nurse, who was struggling to

\* *Memoir of Charles Mayne Young*, by Julian C. Young, his Son: London, 1871.—*Life of Rev. R. H. Barham*, Author of *Ingoldsby Legends*, by his Son: London, 1870.

† *Dictionary of the Scottish Language*, p. 573: Edinburgh, 1846.



place a pair of boots on the feet of a recusant child, in the words, "They will fit him before he will have occasion for them." Bantered by other members of the family on his new talent for prophecy, he stated that on his way thither he met, at a bridge, the funeral of a child, attended by his own father, and that of his little friend in the nursery, both of whom he knew to be at a distance, and that the procession wended its way towards the parish churchyard. The child died next day. In "Brand's Popular Antiquities" (Vol. iii. p. 159) it is mentioned that such phantom obsequies frequently show forth death in the Isle of Man, and that spectators have been convinced of their reality by bearing the bier on their shoulders, which were bruised by the weight.

(c) In 1775 one of his farmers confided to Lord Breadalbane, in great sorrow, that his son, and many others, had been seen by him lying dead on the field of battle, but was consoled by the assurance that no engagement had taken place. The news of the Battle of Bunker's Hill, however, proved to his lordship that the prevision of the farmer had been faithful, and that the son was killed at the time and in the manner described.\*

(d) Of a family, consisting of the parents and two daughters, the father was in England, the mother and one daughter in a city at a distance, while the second remained at home. The latter, while entertaining a party of friends, cried "Oh, my mother!" fainted, and on recovering divulged that the cause of her indisposition was the semblance of her mother passing through the room. The day and hour corresponded with the death of the lady. The informant of my authority is still alive, and confident as to the accuracy of her statement.

(e) The same correspondent describes a scene in North Uist, communicated to him by a reliable friend, where a seer, with a reputation for perfect veracity, summons his neighbours to witness a wreck of a vessel, then amongst the breakers on the shore, which he minutely described. Those thus called saw nothing, but a few nights subsequently they witnessed the actual destruction of a ship and her crew, similar to what the seer had delineated, and in the spot indicated by him.

(f) A clergyman of the Established Church of Scotland, in Invernessshire, writes: "In March, 1847, a woman, whom I believed to have the gift, and who seemed to be at the time in a walking trance, told me, and four or five other persons, that she saw a vessel being wrecked, and a man in the act of drowning. She described the man, his age, appearance, &c.; and

\* *Sketches of the Character, Manners, and Present State of the Highlanders of Scotland*, by Colonel Stuart of Garth, vol. ii. p. xxxii. (1822).



three days after a vessel was wrecked, just as she described it, and a man drowned of the age, size, and appearance, exactly as in her vision. The only difference was that she said it was midnight, whereas it was as exactly as possible noonday of a day in the second week of March.

(g) Mr. D. M'Rae, North Uist, writes to my friend, that a joiner being engaged in making a coffin, his father's servant-girl entered his workshop, and in a frivolous way stated that that coffin was too small for her. The man immediately fainted, and on his recovering, reluctantly told that he saw the servant's dead body placed in the coffin. This girl died suddenly within a short period.

(h) The same seer predicted from vision that two sailors would enter a certain house bearing the dead body of a third, who had been drowned upon the coast, and this was realised.\*

(i) An intelligent schoolmaster, engaged in Lanarkshire, though of Highland origin, and so fervent a disbeliever in apparitions as to have assailed a phantom of Hugh Miller, which accompanied him for miles on a journey, with a cudgel, writes: "I had a little sister lying hopelessly ill of scarlatina, and had been despatched to a friend's house, about half a mile off, for some slices of bacon to apply to her throat, which was swelling rapidly. As I returned I quitted the highroad, and ran through a field bordered by an open ditch and a gnarled hedge, set with stunted alder-trees. On casting my eyes across the ditch and hedge, I saw the little child gliding parallel to me. I stood—she stood, calmly looking across; there was no mistake; she presented the exact appearance she had when I left the house. I became terrified, and ran in desperation. I found, on reaching home, that she was sinking rapidly, and she expired in about an hour."

(j) Dr. Aitken, of Inverness, gives, as a veritable tradition, that F—— of G—— saw in a dream or fainting-fit, three times, a man drowned in the locks of the canal at Dochgarroch, and thrice, as he looked down in the lock, he discovered that the face of the drowned man was his own. He was drowned in the very lock, and was found in the very position in which he saw himself in his dream, and which he had described to some of his relations.

(k) A physician, settled near Loch Carron, describes his conversation with various seers, and ventures on the theory that they often belong to families in which insanity has appeared—that they have something "queer about the eyes;" and affirms that they generally vomit after a vision, in consequence of the revolting objects seen.

\* See, likewise, Ferrier's *Theory of Apparitions*, *passim*, *Demonologia*, p. 201.



(*l*) In 1760 two ladies, one of whom is blind, were seated in an apartment in the ancient mansion-house of Hal,—in Kirkcudbrightshire, awaiting the return of the proprietor. Though late at night, the Laird of M—— walked into the room, booted and spurred, and asks for their father. He was conducted to the library. On the return of the proprietor, the library is found to be empty; but forthwith there arrived from M——, a messenger, craving the presence of the proprietor, who, on reaching the residence of his friend, found that he had died suddenly, at the time of his apparent visit to Hal,—crying earnestly for its owner while in the agonies of death. This was related to me by the grandson of the lady who received and conversed with the apparition.

The following may be added as a suitable appendix:—

“Sir Walter Scott declared to Mrs. Hughes, and that many years before the event took place, he had heard of a prophecy in the Seaforth family, uttered, or said to have been uttered, by a second-sighted clansman more than a century before, to the effect that, ‘When the Chisholm and the Fraser should be baith deaf, and the McPherson (McKenzie) born with a buck-tooth, the male line of the Fraser should become extinct, and that a white-hooded lassie should come from ayont the sea and inherit a’.’ All these contingencies happened in the late Lord Seaforth’s time, who, on reverting to the prophecy, showed two fine lads, his sons, to Sir Walter, and observed: ‘After all’s said and done, I think these boys will ding the prophet, after all.’ He was wrong, however. The two boys died immediately before their father, and the present Lady Hood (a widow) came from India after his decease, and inherited the property. The prophecy is said to have included yet another family misfortune, and to have foretold that the ‘white-hooded lassie’ (the widow’s cap is clearly alluded to in the epithet) should cause the death of her own sister. This also came to pass. By the upsetting of a pony-carriage which Mrs. Stuart Mackenzie (as Lady Hood had become by marriage) was driving, her sister was killed on the spot, and she herself so fearfully injured about the face as to be compelled to wear, for the remainder of her life, a head-dress of a fashion which enabled her to conceal the greater part of her countenance under bands of black velvet.” \*

The histories in both of these series have been selected from a large collection possessing similar import and interest. They have been studiously divested of every fact, and every phrase, which could have been dictated by or have appealed to the imagination; every collateral circumstance which did not

\* *Barham*, p. 153, *ut supra*.



bear upon the essential characteristics has been excised; but, after this privative treatment, there remained the residua of a vision and a portent. The former has never before existed in consciousness; the latter possesses properties and meanings interpreted only by subsequent events. The former depends, generally, upon the evidence of one or more persons; the verification is substantiated by many. The second series are given as orthodox cases of Deuteroscopia, on the testimony of persons, many of whom are still alive, creditable and not credulous. But there are exceptions or modifications in the operation of this power, as where the seer beholds his duplicate self. Such seems to be the invariable form of the augury in St. Kilda, though many instances have been known elsewhere. The shadow-figure corresponds with the original in shape, size, garb, moves at a certain distance as he moves, simulates every movement, and, should he vary any article of apparel, whether a straw rope round the leg or a plaid, presents its counterpart. "Thirty of the inhabitants," records Martin, "being on the Island of Soa, espied the body of a man with a grey coat and plaid floating on the sea on his belly, with a sea-mew pecking at his neck, which, after being seen for a quarter of an hour, disappeared. Shortly after one of the spectators was drowned in the sea, and his death resembled in all things the foregoing vision, even to the presence of the sea-mew."\* The connection of two natures of a double self, this replica of personal identity, is supposed to have analogues in various states, normal or abnormal, delineated by philosophers, physicians, and poets. Such are the phenomena of the Transmigration of Souls—as the change of a man into a wolf, or a wolf into a man †—of double or alternate consciousness, of antagonistic volitions; of the dual cerebral action advocated by Dr. Wigan, of the contradictions in human character, as where profligacy is combined with piety, science with superstition, as in Swedenborg, suggesting the coexistence of two personalities. Even a grave and reverend author, carrying such speculations beyond the confines of secular experience, has advocated, in support of the doctrine of Immortality, that there is a spiritual as well as a flesh-and-blood body; that these are generally conjoined, but may be separated during our physical life; and has written ingeniously, both in prose and verse, in support of this dogma, for into such a rank he would fain elevate his thesis.‡ Even savages are conjectured to cherish similar notions, and the Chinoos§ are said to conceal their names, in case their

\* *Miscellanea Scotica: Martin's Narrative of a Visit to St. Kilda*, vol. ii. p. 66.

† *Traditions, Superstitions, and Folk-Lore*, by Charles Hardwick (1872) p. 232.

‡ *Light Leading unto Light*, by J. C. Earle, B.A.: London, 1875.

§ *Bancroft*, vol. i. p. 245.



confidant should thus obtain power to communicate with their spiritual twin; and Herbert Spencer conceives that men so situate could not arrive at any other conclusion, after seeing their own shadow, their likeness, or any external scratching suggestive of a human simulacrum. Confirmation has even been sought, from such speculations, of the spiritual portraits or doubles supposed to be caught by photographers of aerial essences carried within range of our senses by the actinic rays in the atmosphere.

A beautiful glimpse of the influence of this belief is afforded by Sir Walter Scott in the wild episode of the Children of the Mist, in his "Legend of Montrose," where the gloomy Allan McAulay is haunted by a spectre assassin plunging a dirk in the bosom of his rival. He never can trace the features of this double, for such he knows it to be by noting that when he reversed his plaid so did the apparition. This may be accepted as a mocking picture of his own dark designs, but the evil did not fall upon the intended victim, but upon the designer.

To turn from romance to biography. Aubrey relates, in his "Miscellany," that "the beautiful Lady Diana Rich, daughter to the Earl of Holland, as she was walking in her father's garden at Kensington, to take the fresh air before dinner, about eleven o'clock A.M., being then very well, met with her own apparition, habit and everything, as in a looking-glass. About a month after she died of the smallpox. It is said that her sister, the Lady Isabella Thynne, saw the apparition of herself also before she died."\*

This seems an appropriate stage for the introduction of the various causes assigned for this faculty, and what it reveals:

(i.) An actual apparition, seen or heard through ordinary channels, portending death, or some future event, in which the seer is but remotely interested.

(ii.) Ameredelusion or deception (this is the view of Ferrier), having no connection with past, present, or future, resulting from the ignorance, superstition, abstinence, or unhealth of seer.

(iii.) A vision in consciousness of seer, resulting from his religious creed or credulity, the reproduction of external impressions, but influencing subjectively the faith and feelings—such as the prefigurations of St. Augustine.

These observations would be incomplete did they not embody a reference to the visits and visitations of St. Teresa and St. Catherine of Siena, and of other saints and celebrities of the mediæval Church. Of the reality of such appearances there cannot be a doubt. They were as real in the mind of the seer as any recollection of friends or familiars—as any picture

\* *Bourchier, op. cit.*



of the past or foreshadowing of the future. But these reflections, or restorations of external impressions on the mirror of consciousness, differed in several respects from the phenomena treated of here. The imagination to which such forms became present and palpable had been prepared by penance and prayer, rapture or ecstasy and expectation, for their reception. They followed or emanated from acts of desire and emotion, if not of volition. They were copies, images of the paintings and statues of Deity and Divine personages, and of holy and heavenly scenes, which glowed from the walls and the altars by which the enthusiast, perhaps the ecstatic, was surrounded. They were not necessarily prophetic; they were personal, and did not involve the death, or fate, or fortunes of other and indifferent persons. They were supersensuous, and although embracing death, judgment, and eternity, did not condescend to the trivial, transient, and commonplace events of vulgar and ordinary life.

(iv.) Dr. Abercrombie attributes such experiences to the reminiscences of a forgotten dream.

(v.) Professor Laycock refers such conditions to exaltation of the sensibility—Morel to abolition of the sensibility, but both hold them to be signs of disease.\*

(vi.) Another solution is found in an actual impression on the retina, coming from within, through the reproduction of former impressions from without, but actually seen by seers—in other words, a picture interiorly impressed upon consciousness is recalled by memory, and repainted or impressed anew upon the retina. This hypothesis is supposed to explain the experience of certain seers, who have believed that they saw and recognised the real and familiar objects in the surrounding scene, through the funeral procession, or whatever phantasmata might be present, these known and substantial objects forming the distance or background of the whole picture. Two impressions were thus conceived to cross or pass each other, or to mingle together at some point in the eye, and at some stage in the process of vision. This is Sir David Brewster's theory, but (a) even he was struck by the difficulty in conceiving that two impressions, from within and from without, could coexist, or that the same nervous fibre could at the same time convey images to and from the brain; (b) he ignored the sad truth that in 30,000 blind people in Great Britain, in whom the retina has been destroyed by glaucoma, &c., many continue to see visions or pictures of the external world; and (c) he omits to explain in what manner memory could conjure up faces, figures, objects never seen before, or assuredly not seen in the same circumstances and concatenations.

\* Laycock's *Nervous Diseases of Women*, p. 339.—Morel's *Études Cliniques*, vol. ii. p. 178.



(vii.) That it is a result of a peculiar power or property, possessed by a certain number of individuals, in virtue either of their mental constitution, or of the adaptation of the mechanism of vision, or of both, by which impressions treasured in memory can be projected upon walls or surrounding objects, as formerly distinguished, forming perfect pictures, and seen distinctly in this locality, even in darkness, by the external eye. Ruskin attests the exquisite fidelity with which a painter of Cologne transferred from mental images to canvass a large altar-piece, which had been taken away by the French Army. But there is more in such a process than mere acts of recollection. These productions were creations or new combinations of impressions previously received. Goethe is quoted as stating, in his tract, "Zur Morphologie und Wissenschaft," "When I closed my eyes and depressed my head, I could cause the images of a flower to appear in the middle of the field of vision; this flower did not for a moment retain its first form, but unfolded itself, and developed from its interior new flowers, formed of coloured or sometimes green leaves. These were not natural flowers, but of fantastic forms, although symmetrical as the rosettes of sculptors. I was unable to fix any one form." \* Others have possessed this ideal painting power.

(viii.) It may be the result of a partially-developed sixth sense, such as is supposed to guide migratory uncivilised races, birds, certain animals (dogs, cats) in reaching home by routes which they have never previously followed, or by the exaltation of certain instincts already known to exist in other animals (such as ants, bees), or by the compensatory strength and scope displayed by the unimpaired senses in the blind, deaf, &c.

Lastly, that Second-sight is the creation, the innate outcome, of a certain feeling or faculty implanted, though in different degrees, in all men, resembling the elevation or discoveries in imagination, giving the belief in the supernatural, giving the perception of certain objects, conditions, and relations among the surroundings of human beings, not cognisable to the external senses, and which may, or may not, require for its active operation excitement, physical or psychical, but which must be regarded as normal. Theologians as well as psychologists have admitted a sense of the marvellous and the supernatural, which transcends the ordinary operations of mind, and which is not less reducible to the elements furnished by sensible impressions, than veneration, pride, pity, and which transcends, but is congeneric with, the supersensuous states; where the telescopic or microscopic range of vision is vastly increased, as naturally, or in somnambulism; where exaltation of memory takes place

\* Müller's *Physiology of the Senses*, translated by W. Bailey (London, 1848), p. 1395.



during sleep ; where sensibility, even pain, are abolished, or suspended by the will, or during fear or ecstasy ; where there is a transference of the ego to a second person whose passions and fate have been temporarily assumed and represented, as in the celebrated Mrs. Siddons and others.

It might constitute a ground for truce or suspension of hostilities in the death-struggle at present maintained between certain controversialists, were it admitted as possible that the evolution or development now conceived to be going on in the human frame and functions might ultimately attain such a degree of elevation as to place consciousness within the reach of other unknown or partially-known qualities than those of matter, that we might grow up to what all men have believed in, but what only a privileged few had felt to be demonstrated. These considerations apply only to what may be designated the first stage of Second-sight, the perception of a vision ; but, were this placed beyond doubt, the second stage, or prevision, might be conceded as possible, under laws involved in the first of which we are as yet as ignorant as of the origin and nature of our intuitions.



