

1887 – Review of Henry Maudsley, *Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings*, *Nation*, 44 (1887), pp. 253-254.

Euripides; and, on page 168, sentimental mention of a visit of Shelley to Severn, which is mythical.

— Strange as it may seem, there have never been but two editions of Pascal's complete works, although his 'Provinciales' and his 'Pensées' have been reprinted almost a countless number of times. Indeed, if the matter were pressed closely, the two editions would resolve themselves into one work, for that of 1819 is little more than a reproduction of the one of 1779. A couple of very cheap reprints which purport to reproduce these do not deserve to be considered. But now the publishing house of Hachette has at last begun, in the collection known as "Les Grands Écrivains," an edition of Pascal which promises to be more complete than any hitherto issued. The editor, M. Prosper Faugère, is a veteran in Pascal literature. As early as 1844 he gave an edition of the 'Pensées,' which was a revelation as to what the original text really was. And now he returns to what was "one of the first admirations" of his youth. The first volume of his 'Blaise Pascal' (Paris: Hachette; Boston: Schoenhof), just published, contains only the first twelve "Provinciales," which he reproduces, not from any previous edition, but from a manuscript in his own possession, which he surmises to have been made about the year 1659, three years after the publication of the first letter. In this manuscript M. Faugère finds readings and minute changes in which he thinks he sees the correcting hand of Pascal. He therefore chooses it for his text, giving at the bottom of the page all the different readings of other editions. As to other notes, the new editor is very sparing in his information, and in this respect the present edition of Pascal will be very unlike those of the other great writers in the same collection. Indeed, except for the general appearance of the volume, it does not seem to be made on the same plan as the excellent editions of Saint-Simon, Corneille, Mme. de Sévigné. Yet where can a reader be more in need of appropriate notes than in reading the 'Provinciales,' full as they are of allusions to disputes about what were burning questions in 1656, and now are as things of a remote antiquity?

— M. Ernest Havet, whose edition of Pascal's 'Pensées' holds so high a rank, has now published 'Les Provinciales' (Paris: Delagrave; Boston: Schoenhof). He has chosen for his text the primitive version of the Letters, as they were published, one by one, beginning in January, 1656. His reason for not following the example of other editors, who have reproduced the last edition, corrected and revised by Pascal himself, is, that the 'Lettres Provinciales,' owing to their polemical and aggressive character, are to be considered in the same light as newspaper articles. The corrections made when they were collected into a volume were made by the author often to satisfy others rather than himself, so that the present editor may well say: "It was rather Port-Royal than Pascal that published these letters." M. Havet has not thought it well to reproduce the orthography, and he has, in every case, given the readings of subsequent editions at the foot of the page. The long introduction of eighty-nine pages gives all the information necessary for a full understanding of the Letters, each of which is in turn followed by several pages of *remarques*, on the language as well as on the subject matter. M. Havet is no friend of the Jesuits, as may be seen whenever he has occasion to speak of the order; nor is his edition wholly favorable to the Port-Royal side of the questions discussed. The doctrines of grace and predestination find little favor in his sight, and this he shows, even in the school edition he has prepared of Letters 1, 4, 13, 14 (Paris: Delagrave; Boston: Schoenhof). In

these the comments are such that perhaps the Municipal Council of Paris itself might accept them. We have, therefore, in M. Havet's edition of the 'Provinciales' an extended historical and literary commentary; the first published in France which is prompted neither by the Jansenists nor by the Jesuits.

— 'Academica Juventus: Die deutschen Studenten nach Sprache und Sitte, lexicographisch, histo- und anthropologisch dargestellt von Herodotus junior aus Halikarnass' (Celle and Leipzig: August Schulze, 1887) is written throughout in a very facetious vein, which at times becomes somewhat tiring. But those uninitiated in the mysteries of German student-life will find in its pages much to amuse and instruct them. The booklet will also supplement the knowledge of many Englishmen and Americans, who, while studying in Germany, did not assiduously attend the *Kneipe*, or otherwise come into very close contact with the students. In the Preface the author speaks of his work as a contribution to the "natural history" of the German student, to remind alumni of joyous days long past, and to serve as a guide to the young student about to enter the unknown *civitas academica*. The information contained in the book is arranged alphabetically. Here are a few of the many words and customs that are explained: Angströhre, Belegbogen, Blume, Bruderschaft, Burschenschaft, Collegienbuch, Commers, Famos, Bemostes Haupt, Altes Haus, Immatrikulieren, Katzenjammer, Kneipe, Landmannschaft, Mensur, Philster, Prosit, Salamander. Subjoined are a few definitions that are doubtless new to many Americans: a broom (*Besen*) is a servant-girl or waitress; to call a person learned (*Gelehrter*) is, according to the canons of beer-etiquette, an insult, which must be duly revenged; a coat is said to "learn Hebrew" when it is pawned; *holzen* means to beat; a student "lies in the basket" when he is confined to his room on account of a duel on the "Mensur"; "to ox" (*ochsen büffeln*) is to study hard; old sack (*alter Sack*) = old friend, 'old fellow'; moss (*Moss*) is a paternal remittance of money; sausage ("Es ist mir Wurst") = indifferent. If "Herodotus junior" had treated the subject more seriously, and devoted more attention to student customs, he would have added very much to the value of his book.

#### MAUDSLEY ON THE SUPERNATURAL.

*Natural Causes and Supernatural Seemings.*

By Henry Maudsley, M.D., LL.D. London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co.; New York: Scribner & Welford. 1886. 8vo, pp. viii, 368.

DR. MAUDSLEY, after his early successes, undertook years since the rôle of a sort of Polonius among psychologists. His latest works show that he is still advancing in a knowledge of his part. Insufferably long sermons, full of rambling and disordered references to Saint Theresa, to the insane, to the confessions of St. Augustine, to the fallacy of human testimony, to the shortness of human life, to the Hindu devotees, to cerebral physiology, to poetry, to metaphysics, to altruism, and to the hallucinations of Swedenborg—such, of late years, are Dr. Maudsley's contributions to science. The present volume is a rather extreme case of this abuse of the privileges of a distinguished position. Because Dr. Maudsley was, not so very long ago, a leading expositor of modern psychology, why must he now deem himself called upon to harangue the world in this dull and useless fashion about the evils of superstition, the terrors of the dark ages, and the sinfulness of mankind? When we want to be scolded, are there not old-fashioned preachers enough in existence to do it for us, if we will

but go to their churches? Must a reputed leader of thought waste his time in this fashion? And if he persists in doing so, must we not ere long begin to doubt the soundness of his reputation itself?

In the seventeenth century, Dr. Maudsley's train of thought, as we find it expressed in this book, would indeed have been more useful. His refutation of witchcraft would have been in place, his triumphant exposure of the doctrine of signatures might have done good, his views about general philosophy would have been worthy of even an enlightened thinker of the time, and the tone of this treatise would thus have been more in harmony with some of the most valuable tendencies of the century. Addressing as he does this age, Dr. Maudsley has to be judged not by his matter but by his style, for he says nothing that is now in the least needed by those who are capable of understanding him. His style in this volume, however, is a hopeless mixture of the commonplace and the confused. It is at times almost incoherent. It is never worthy of his former fame.

The present volume may indeed have been suggested by the existence and the baleful influence of the English Society for Psychological Research. That organization has undoubtedly made more than one bad blunder in the conduct of its work. Intelligent and severe criticism it certainly ought to receive. But Dr. Maudsley here offers nothing that can be called either intelligent, or, for sensible readers, severe, criticism of any present and genuine investigations into anything by anybody, unless the commonplaces of his first two chapters, wherein the simplest of the well-known fallacies of induction are diffusely and solemnly set forth and blamed, can be called such criticism. In all save these first chapters, he tells us how the human imagination must be kept within bounds, how persons of nervous temperament are subject to hallucinations, how such hallucinations have in the past influenced religions, how all religious ecstasy is more or less abnormal, and how, in general, supposed supernatural interference in human affairs must be traced to some form of human delusion. All this, mingled with reflections as aforesaid, makes up Dr. Maudsley's argument. Superstition is, he assures us, pathological in its origin and highly injurious in its individual and social consequences. Hence we should actually go so far as to eschew superstition. We should even believe that we "come into being by natural laws, and by no other laws." We "must be convinced of the futility of pouring forth lamentations and supplications to invisible powers"; and after this there must occur an "evolution of the living sentiment of human solidarity," whereby the world will be saved and religion replaced. Beyond this rather familiar and ancient diet, the reader of Dr. Maudsley's book will find in it no mental food worth talking about.

To a writer of Dr. Maudsley's position, however, is of course due a report of the contents of his book, although we can give no space to detailed discussion. After a summary "Statement of the Argument," the author goes on, in Part 1 (pp. 7-145), to discuss the "fallacies incident to the natural operations of the mind." These are, in chapters i and ii, the regular fallacies of induction, restated and illustrated; while, in chapter iii, the activity of the imagination is similarly treated. The result of the argument, so far, is to show that a false belief in supernatural agencies can spring up through these relatively normal fallacies. In Part 2, "Unsound Mental Action," as a source of belief in the supernatural, is discussed in five chapters (pp. 149-261). Part 3 is devoted to the explanation and demolition of "The Attainment of Supernatural Knowledge by Divine Illumination," and contains seven

chapters. The normal causes of error, and the much more potent abnormal sources of human delusion, having now been discussed, the author proceeds (p. 354, sq.) to summarize his results. "Malobservation and misinterpretation of nature" are the sources of all belief in the supernatural; and supernatural phenomena "have not ever been, nor are ever now, events of the external world, but have always been, and are, fables of the imagination." These are Dr. Maudsley's highly novel conclusions.

One curious problem, however, as we feel impelled to add, remains in this, as in Dr. Maudsley's previous books, wholly unsettled; and that problem concerns the author's personal views about the worth of life. If in the midst of these sermons of Dr. Maudsley's we were not always meeting with lamentations concerning human misery, and even with grave suggestions that the life of man is once for all a vain show, we should never think of vexing ourselves with Dr. Maudsley's opinions upon so metaphysical a topic. But the frequent occurrence of certain remarks in our author's writings has aroused in us a certain languid curiosity such as we cannot manage to feel concerning anything else that Dr. Maudsley of late years has chosen to mention. In his 'Body and Will' we seem to remember a passage where he declares pessimism to be a pathological phenomenon, a symptom of initial mental decay. We also seem to remember another passage where he confessed that, on the whole, he was a pessimist himself. The combination of these passages, as we remember them, has always produced in us a bewildered impression; and we have looked with interest to the present discussion for more light. We fail to get it. Dr. Maudsley sometimes hopes much of "human solidarity," and at such moments thinks that this "solidarity" will make us a very happy folk indeed some day, if it only becomes the triumphant principle of human nature. But, in other passages, he appears once for all to despair of us, now and hereafter. There seem to be, he tells us (p. 240), three classes of persons taking "leading parts in the great drama of human life." These are the "dupes," the "dupers," and the "duped dupers." He defines all three classes at some length. The "dupes," namely, believe "the great drama of human life" to possess "transcendent importance"; they "take it in tragical earnest," and are "ready to sacrifice strength and wealth and even life in its service." That, in fact, is what makes them dupes. The "dupers" are the actors and hypocrites of the world; the "duped dupers" are the people who, like certain reformers, combine selfishness with earnestness, and so become a kind of sincere impostors. These, then, are the typical men of this planet. As for the value of life under such circumstances, Dr. Maudsley admits (p. 143) that, "to the race, as to the individual, wisdom cannot fail to bring disillusion, and increase of knowledge to be increase of sorrow." He especially associates this "increase of sorrow" with the decline of supernaturalism. And, on page 145, he admits that good and heroic deeds, viewed from a standpoint outside the life of man, "may not be of any more moment than the devoted zeal and self-sacrifice of a toiling ant in the busy service of its colony." In short, to judge from all these passages, and others as well, Dr. Maudsley is an out-and-out pessimist.

Yet, on p. 363, we hear of an "enthusiastic optimist" who believes that "incalculable gains" and that "a vast height of power and happiness" await mankind whenever we shall have gotten rid of all forms of superstition. This person is even called, on p. 363, a "scientific optimist," and Dr. Maudsley seems for the instant to sympathize strongly with his glowing hopes. These are of a kind often referred to elsewhere by Dr.

Maudsley; but he leaves all such hopes withered at last when he says, in the last sentence of his book, that whatever man is destined to become, we can hardly help feeling the conviction that it were something better for man "not to be, at the cost of what he has been, is still, and must continue to be in the long and painful process" of reaching the highest development. We see, then, how deeply Dr. Maudsley suffers from that "conviction of the utter vanities of all things under the sun," which, in 'Body and Mind,' he classes among the "forewarning intimations of inevitable decline and death," and distinctly calls a "malady of self-consciousness." Nay, this conviction he even names, in the cited passage, together with "thin and shrieking sentimentalities" and "metaphysical disquisitions," as among the prominent ills of modern life. But still, after all, we will not lose hope for Dr. Maudsley. May he quickly recover from all "maladies of self-consciousness," and long escape any more "forewarning intimations." But may he also never again write such a book as this one on the "Supernatural."

#### THE STORY OF KASPAR HAUSER.

*Kaspar Hauser: Eine neugeschichtliche Legende.* Von Antonius von der Linde. 2 vols. Wiesbaden. 1887.

EVERY one knows the story of Kaspar Hauser; all have been moved to pity at the tale of his confinement in a small dark cell without room to walk or stand—sitting there day and night from early infancy until his seventeenth year; shut off from all the world except the monster who gave him his daily bread, and the companionship that two wooden horses could afford him. Suddenly taken from this living death, he is deserted in the streets of Nuremberg with a letter to a cavalry captain in his hand. Thrown into prison as a helpless wayfarer, he becomes an object of curiosity, and, through the publication of his wonderful story by the Burgomaster, of hero-worship. Thousands travelled to see the "child of Nuremberg." Princes and noblemen paid him tribute. It became the fashion for ladies to dote on him. Scientists studied him as the embodiment of nature's most hidden secrets. Educators hailed him as the realization of Rousseau's *Émile*. Philanthropists made him the object of their special care. His wonderful story was translated into all civilized languages, and it was proposed to adopt him as the child of Europe. And yet all this honor, this attention, this pity, and this study was worse than misplaced—it was ridiculous. The history of popular delusions has been enriched in the nineteenth century by a deception no less thorough than the South Sea Bubble or the divine claims of the mesmeric fluid. The story of Kaspar Hauser is a myth. How did the myth arise? To answer this question Herr von der Linde has written two large volumes—on the whole, much too honorable a tombstone for Kaspar Hauser.

The facts of the case are brief and direct. They are recorded in the official protocol of the district courts on the few days following the lad's appearance in Nuremberg (May 26, 1828) before the "child of nature" myth was invented. This testimony is duly attested and registered; not a single authentic fact was ever added to it. From here on, the story rests only upon Kaspar's own narrations, suggested to him by the stupid credulity of his questioners and by the love of notoriety. From the official records we learn that Kaspar spoke with strong dialectical peculiarities, walked nearly a mile through the city, wrote his name, recited the Lord's Prayer, said that he had gone to school, showed his fondness for horses; and that by means of the letter which he presented on his appearance in Nuremberg he wanted to

be enrolled as a trooper. For the rest, he feigned simple-mindedness to avoid inquiry into his antecedents, and answered all inconvenient questions with "Don't know." The justice recorded the suspicion that the fellow was a simulator. The letter is so framed as to block all inquiry and to quiet suspicion. It says that the boy has been kept in the house all the time, and no one knows of his existence; that he has no money, does not know where he came from, and wants to be a trooper; and that his handwriting is just like that of the writer of the letter. In it is contained a note purporting to have been written sixteen years previously by the mother of the child, but, as was afterwards proved by experts, written on the same paper, with the same ink, by the same hand. As a disguise, it was written in Latin characters. Both epistles are full of dialectic peculiarities and gross errors in grammar and spelling, many of which are repeated in Kaspar's later exercises. This is about all that was known of him. On the basis of this the rumor spread like fire that a wild boy, who did not know who he was or where he came from, was confined in the tower. Every one came to see him, and added to the wonder. He knows nothing of his childhood; ergo, he has been cut off from all humanity; ergo, he is a wild child of nature; ergo, he cannot talk or understand language; ergo, he is an innocent babe; ergo, he is a curiosity. Kaspar accepted the rôle, kept himself as passive and as stupid as possible, and in a few days was buoyed up into fame in an atmosphere of wonder and credulity. Only five days after his appearance Dr. Preu announces that "this lad is neither crazy nor idiotic, but has evidently been violently estranged in the most shameful manner from all human and social culture. . . . He is like a half-wild man brought up in the woods. . . ."

Meanwhile Kaspar was making gigantic strides towards civilization. Though at first he could only blurt out the most simple questions, and could understand only such as treated him like an infant, yet in three days he performed on the piano, soon afterwards knitted a stocking, and, before five weeks were over, had been able to inform the Burgomaster of his entire history. This the Burgomaster published in a long proclamation (33,000 words), in which the whole story is told from the point of view of the "wild boy of nature," and every suggestion of Kaspar's elaborated and expounded as gospel truth. This proclamation, though afterwards amplified and embellished with all the fantastic additions and details that credulity and vivid imagination could furnish, is the real source of the Kaspar Hauser Myth. Had this enterprising Burgomaster waited for the answer of the superior court to which he had submitted the document, he would have learned "that in the official records there was not even the slightest trace" of all this myth; that "the whole story was full of mythical and improbable circumstances as well as of inexplicable contradictions," and so on. But all this came too late.

Kaspar was put into the hands of a Prof. Daumer to be educated. Daumer was author of works on the 'Glory of the Holy Virgin,' 'The Fire and Moloch Worship of the Hebrews,' and on the 'Anthropophagism of the Apostles.' Under this master in one month Kaspar became a model of social elegance, playing at chess and checkers, carrying on witty conversations by the hour, making graceful allusions to the ancient Romans, and yet withal as innocent as a babe. The child of nature proves to be "a sensitive." It is observed that he sees a gnat in a spider's web at a considerable distance long after twilight; recognizes persons by their walk at incredible distances; distinguishes between an apple, a pear, and a plum tree by the smell of their leaves when others can scarcely see the trees, and