

that romantic love is consistent only with a monogamous society and that this kind of society is the bulwark of civilization; consider, too, that the ways of finding one's mate not only gives tone to the social institutions of a nation, but, according as they are in accord with or opposed to the inexorable laws of heredity and selection, make for the amelioration or degeneration of the community; consider, next, that the education of the next generation is profoundly influenced by our views of courtship and marriage; consider how this fact will influence our conceptions of ancient life; consider that the division of labor between men and women, and the admittance of women into occupations until now monopolized by men, can only be satisfactory settled by a settlement that does not interfere with the reign of romantic love; consider, in short, that all that is deep and valuable in cultured life is here at stake, — and all must admit that a knowledge of the laws of evolution as they affect sexual selection amongst us is of the profoundest importance. Such inquiries into the nature of human faculty as Mr. Galton is pursuing are directed towards supplying this information. This knowledge is not for the many; but in the hands of the few it is to be converted into public sentiment against certain customs and ways of thinking and in favor of others, by which, eventually, misery will be checked and happiness increased. If Mr. Finck will accept a suggestion, the present writer would urge upon him the preparation of a review article embodying the main points in the evolution of love, and expounding in a strictly scientific style, and without any feuilletonistic *bon mots*, the anthropological, sociological, and psychological significance of this new¹ contribution to human development.

The Hidden Way across the Threshold. By J. C. STREET. Boston, Lee & Shepard. 8°

The Mark of the Beast revealed by the Shape of the Head. By LUCILLA R. HEDLEY, M.D. Philadelphia. 8°

THE reviewer of books like these is in no enviable position; especially as the reviews are written for those interested in science, and the books any thing rather than scientific. The first is another of those ponderous volumes — a combination of strange mysticism, excited exhortation, wild symbolism, unscientific cant, and childish credulousness — that one finds heaped up on the shelves of a second-hand book-store. The author writes powerfully, makes his points ably, appeals to his reader skilfully, and here and there makes a noble plea for the despal of the sordid and the living of a high intellectual life. But those portions of the book in which one feels the rationality and the earnestness of the writer give the impression of being aloof from the real purpose of the work, — accidental at least, if not inconsistent.

The weirdness of this intellectual conglomerate, it is hard to describe: the cause of such writing seems to be an hypertrophy of that sentiment, common to all specialists, that the public at large does not stand in sufficiently close contact with them; that they live a life exclusive, — the life of an adept, an occultist. Mr. Street, A.B.N., fellow of the order S.S.S., and of the brotherhood Z.Z. R.R.Z.Z., is such an adept: "the mystery which hath been hidden for ages and from generations" is revealed to him. He is in the clouds, but the ladder, alas! is still to be found. The present writer, at least, fails to get the slightest inkling of the process, save that it seems much like dropping common sense and giving one's self over to wild fancy and morbid illusion.

The following extracts will perhaps be sufficient to enable the reader to decide with which one of the categories into which he is accustomed to divide books, this one belongs. Amongst the original contributions to science here announced, we read that "the Sun and Planets in space, as well as terrestrial objects, have their magnetic, odyllic, and astral emanations, and these exert influence upon each other and upon every organized being, in proportion to their size, their distance, and the velocity of their revolutions." "This Astral influence is conveyed to man, and acts upon him through the Astral light. This, the palmist tells us, is composed of the seven fluids which emanate from the seven primary planets respectively.

¹ Mr. Finck thinks that the reason why no one has called attention to this recent origin of romantic love is that no sufficient distinction has been drawn between romantic and conjugal love.

These fluids, separately and in their combinations, are tempered and modified by the sun and moon." And so on. Here is a wonderful discovery: the sensations arising from the cut nerve-strings of amputated limbs we thought explained by the physiological law of the external projection of sensation. But, no! "All this is due solely to the action of the Star-magno, or Astral, vibrating between the amputated limb and the patient. So frequent and almost universal are such occurrences [i.e., cases in which the patient feels amiss because something is wrong with his lost member: a number of such are cited] that all surgeons use the utmost caution in disposing of amputated limbs." "The Astral body, enclosing the Soul like an atmosphere, can be and has frequently been seen by attendants and physicians, leaving the animal body just at the moment of separation between Soul and body, known as death or dissolution." Under proper light, there is seen accompanying the death-rattle "a column of thin ethereal violet blue vapor vibrating and oscillating, ebbing, finally passing upward and fading away." As a piece of logic, the following cannot be excelled: "The golden sunlight produces vibration to the amount of 500,000,000 of millions in a second" proportioned amongst the several colors in such and such a way. "Of course, therefore, different colors must necessarily affect the human soul," etc. "Love comes from pink and bright red, Hope and Faith from violet, Truth of blue, Melancholy of yellow, Epilepsy of pearl white," etc.

Let us hear what the author holds regarding the material basis of modern Spiritualism, that now stands in so bad a light. He gives full details for forming spirit circles, which practically amount to employing all conditions that make rational observation impossible, and neurotic self-deception inevitable, and assures all that the failure of manifestations is always due to the bad influence of sceptics and the like. "Students of occult mysteries," he warns them without seeing the double interpretation of his words, "never permit scientific investigators or psychic-research committees to control or even be present in the room during your efforts at development of mediumship. Remember thought is a potential atmosphere. Their worldly-wise theories create opposing vibrations and congeal the Spirit. Even in large rooms and at a distance their presence is highly objectionable." If to this we add the definition of 'a medium,' the reader will be able to imagine the rest of the chapter. Here it is: "To become a medium is to learn to vibrate the Astral body as a pendulum between Spirit and mortal, and thus to reach the third state of being, the state between sleeping and waking, — Trance — a condition co-equal with both, is to have found the Key that unlocks the mysterious place where actual Soul semblances have their immortal birth."

That this omnivorous 'psychist' unfolds the theory of soul-migrations; shows the rationality of faith-cure (e.g., to cure consumption you must insist that it is not inherited, that "tubercles, hemorrhage, inflammation, and ulcers are only ugly names and beliefs, not spirit and truth of man"); expounds the mysteries of theosophy; and indorses the cabalistic literature of all ages and nations, — is easily believed. For this he has six hundred pages at his disposal.

Considering the volume as the sincere and earnest expression of an enthusiast for the spiritual side of life, — and this is the most charitable point of view, — it is still a pernicious work. It embeds the kernel of truth it contains with a husk of rubbish; it chokes up 'the threshold' with a refuse-heap. By so doing it fosters an immoral trade, — a scandalous appeal to the sentimentalities of simple-minded folk. It debases the value of true spirituality, draws men's activity away from the proper duties of life, cultivates a life of useless solitude, and, moreover, is unscientific and unprogressive. With a healthy public taste, such a book can have no success.

The second book is indeed an absurd piece of pseudo-scientific writing, and can be dismissed with a word. The idea of the book is, that the 'mark of the beast,' as mentioned in the Book of Daniel, refers only to the leopard, bear, lion, and dragon. There are given pictures of the heads of noted criminals, showing their resemblance to one or other of these animals. They had 'the mark of the beast,' and, had we only known it, their crimes could have been prevented. Besides this, there is much phrenology, some little Spiritualism, several untrue statements, and a host of Scripture quotations not always relevant.