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KASPAR HAUSER.*

THERE are certain mysterious incidents in history which may be said to undergo periodical occultations; they appear, they vanish, and they appear again; renewing investigation, refreshing interest, and yet destined to relapse into obscurity. Of such a kind was the story of the "man with the iron mask" in the seventeenth century, and of such a kind was the strangest of all stories of our day — that of Kaspar Hauser. We say justly of our day, for there must be some still living who remember the individual himself; although the greater number of this generation have probably never heard of him. This story has been brought forward again by recent works; it is time therefore to ascertain how far the lapse of time has, or has not, contributed to clear away the mystery in which it has been enveloped. If the narrative transmitted to us can be proved to be true, it represents certainly one of the most extraordinary cases that ever occurred; or if proved not to be true, one of the boldest of impostures. We will endeavor to present both aspects as impartially as may be. Unfortunately there is much to regret, in the confused style in which it is related by the one class of witnesses, and in the sceptical tone with which it is referred to by the other.

The scene opened in the old town of Nuremberg on the afternoon of Whit-Monday, the 26th of May, 1828, when a shoemaker, who lived in an unfrequented part of the town, perceived a young lad not far from him standing against a wall in a constrained attitude, apparently like an intoxicated person unable to control the movement of his limbs. On approaching him, the lad held out a letter directed to the captain of the 4th Squadron of Light Horse in Nuremberg. At the same time he kept repeating some unintelligible words, or rather sounds, accompanied with moans and tears, and signs of the greatest distress. These words, which were repeated so often in the first days of his life in Nuremberg as to be known by heart by many, are printed in German as follows: "*Reuta wähn*," or sometimes, "*I möcht a Reuta wähn wie mei Votta wähn ist*" (I wish to become a rider, or trooper, as my father was); also, "*Woas nit*" (I don't know); and, "*Ross ham*" (Horse at home). He is stated to have known about fifty sounds — those only that we have given being understood, — and to have repeated them without any sense of their meaning. The captain, to whom the letter was addressed, lived close at hand. The worthy citizen assisted the stranger, who was ready to sink with exhaustion, to reach the house. Fatigue and hunger were written in his face. They brought him meat, which he put in his mouth, but spat out again immediately with signs of disgust. For wine and beer he showed the same aversion, but being offered bread and water, he ate and drank eagerly. The officer in question was not at home; and the servant, not knowing what to do with the strange and suffering apparition, took him to the stable, where he sank down on some straw in a deep sleep.

As immediate instances of the inaccuracy and confusion with which this strange incident was greeted, may be cited two different versions of the letter to the captain, both dated "from a place near the Bavarian frontier which shall be nameless, 1828." The writer declared himself to be a poor day-laborer with ten children of his own, and stated that the lad's mother had left him as a child at his house on October 7th, 1812, but that he had never been able to discover who she was, and added that the lad wished to enter the army and the same regiment where his father had served; and that he had been taught to read and write. But the letter was ill-spelt, and marked by vulgar and brutal rhodomontade, evidently intended to mislead. According to one version it concluded thus: "If you do not want to keep

* 1. *Kaspar Hauser, nicht unwahrscheinlich ein Betrüger.* Berlin, 1830.
2. *Caspar Hauser. Beispiel eines Verbrechens,* 1832.
3. *Materialien zur Geschichte Kaspar Hausers, von dem Grafen Stanhope.* Heidelberg, 1835.
4. *Enthüllungen über Kaspar Hauser,* 1858.
5. *Kaspar Hauser, seine Lebensgeschichte.* Von Kolb. 1883.
6. *Kaspar Hauser, neugeschichtliche Legende.* Von Linde. 1887.

him, you may kill him, or hang him up the chimney." According to the other: "If you do not want to keep him, you may put him into a lottery, or get rid of him in any way you please." All this was written in German, and in German characters. There was a note enclosed in the Latin character, still worse written and spelt, but evidently by the same hand and of the same time: "The child is already baptized. You must give him a sirname yourself. You must educate him. His father was one of the Light Horse. When he is seventeen years old send him to Nuremberg to the regiment of Light Horse, for there his father was. I ask for his education until he is seventeen. He was born the 30th April, 1812. I am a poor girl, and cannot support him." It is easy to perceive the counterfeit character of these notes. On the captain's return to his house he could furnish no clue to the letter, no key to the strange sounds, and throw no light on his unexpected inmate. The poor creature was therefore, with difficulty, roused from his sleep, and dragged, with many a tear and groan, to the police-office. When there, he was of course asked the usual questions — what was his name, what his business, and where his passport? He continued to utter the same sounds, though not in the sense of an answer, for he evidently knew not what question and answer meant. And the police as little knew to what class to assign him, whether to that of idiot, madman, savage, or impostor. This last conjecture received at least temporary confirmation from the following circumstance. Not understanding a word he said, and bethinking themselves to try whether he could write, they handed him pen and ink, and laid a piece of paper before him; on which, to the astonishment of all present, he wrote in legible characters the name "*Kaspar Hauser.*" His name being thus given, he was desired to add that of the place whence he came. This produced only a repetition of the same "*Reuta wähn,*" etc. And, as nothing could be made of the strange being, he was led with help, groaning and tottering, to the tower of the Vestner Gate, used as a place of confinement for rogues and vagabonds, and locked in a cell with another prisoner, where he immediately fell asleep. It may here be added that the very name of Kaspar Hauser, which took the police so much by surprise, appears to have been in keeping with the tone of odious derision which renders this tale so peculiarly revolting. For his German biographers interpret the name of "Hauser" to mean one kept always indoors. But that he had received, as stated in the letter, some teaching in writing, was beyond doubt. On the first days of his incarceration the gaoler gave him pencil and paper to amuse him. Kaspar eagerly seized both, placed the paper on a bench, began to write, and continued to do so, without allowing himself to be disturbed, till he had filled the sheet on all four sides. The appearance of this sheet, which is preserved with other documents, is much the same as if he had had a child's first copybook before him.

We may describe him more closely now. On his first appearance in Nuremberg, Kaspar Hauser was four feet nine inches in height, and apparently seventeen years old — the first down being already seen on his lip — his wisdom teeth still wanting. His face was devoid of all meaning, except that of a brutish obtuseness; though, when anything pleased him, a sweet expression flitted over it, like the smile of a baby. There was also a perceptible difference between the two sides of the face. The left side was drawn somewhat awry, and frequently distorted by convulsive spasms. On both arms was the scar of inoculation. His hair was light and curling. He was stout and broad-shouldered, without any bodily defect, except a recently inflicted small wound on one arm; his limbs delicately formed; his hands small and well shaped; his feet the same, though freshly blistered all over; but the soles as soft as the palm of a lady's hand, or as his own, which had evidently never touched anything harder than each other. His dress was of a miscellaneous kind — old things, and coarse and ill-fitting — in some respects like the costume of the peasantry; in others like that of the dwellers in towns. His round felt hat had an engraving of Munich, half scratched out,

inside. Round his neck was a checked red handkerchief, marked in red thread, "K. H." In a pocket was a rosary, a key, a paper of gold sand, and a number of printed German prayers and tracts. No proper importance was attached by the police to these forms of circumstantial evidence; some of which were thrown away. This extraordinary being noticed nothing, recognized nothing; common objects and daily occurrences passed before him without attracting more observation than from a child of a year old. But, like a child, he grasped at glittering, shining objects, and cried when he found them out of his reach. Like a child, too, on first seeing a lighted splinter — the form of a candle apparently then in use — he was so delighted that he put his hand into the flame, and then cried with the pain. Also, when first a looking-glass was held before him, he looked behind it to see who was concealed.

His first days, in what was evidently a new world to him, were not calculated to throw any light on his antecedents. For all Nuremberg flocked together to the guard-house to gaze at the curious being who had dropped apparently from the clouds; and steps that ought to have been at once taken, and depositions that ought to have been at once collected, were neglected in the gratification of vulgar wonder and curiosity. He had fallen in one sense among good Samaritans, but there is no denying that, at that time at least, Nuremberg represented an actual and living Krähwinkel, and her citizens the characters in Kotzebue's "Kleine Städte." When an attempt was at length made to report the strange event with some precision, the official documents show the proceedings of the police to have been so irregular, and the depositions of the witnesses so contradictory, that beyond the undeniable facts, conveyed unconsciously by the poor passive chief witness himself, little that is trustworthy can be gathered. We have therefore only to record those facts as plainly as we can.

It has been said that Kaspar Hauser's person bore no sign of any defect; but it is equally true that it bore unmistakable indications of a peculiar condition and habit continued for years. From the conformation of his lower limbs it appeared that his life had hitherto been passed in a seated posture — his legs stretched out before him on the ground, at right angles with his body. The knees accordingly exhibited a marked deviation from the usual form. Under a normal condition, the patella or knee-pan, when the leg is extended, shows a slight projection — with Kaspar Hauser it lay in a considerable hollow. When seated in his habitual position, with thigh and leg stretched horizontally before him, the knee-joint lay so close to the floor that a common card could hardly be thrust under the hamstring. It was evident also that he had been confined for years in a place where he had neither had room to stand upright, to lie at full length, nor even to creep and crawl as a strong child instinctively does. Here was a human being, therefore, who could neither walk nor speak like other men, whose eyes could not bear the light, who had hitherto eaten nothing but bread and water, and who was not less than from sixteen to seventeen years of age! What a dark tale was outlined here for the human moralist! What a curious psychological subject offered to the scientist and moral philosopher! What a sore problem for the tender and humane!

Those who had the charge of him soon became convinced that, though utterly devoid of all that knowledge which the merest child intuitively imbibes from contact with its fellows, the senses of this unfortunate being were endowed with a preternatural acuteness. His eyes suffered from the light, and became much inflamed; but at the same time no darkness existed for him. In the night he moved about with perfect confidence and security, seeing even more clearly than in the full day. His hearing was equally sensitive. He heard footsteps at distances impossible to one in a normal condition. They also discovered that of all his senses that of smell was the most abnormal. The scent of flowers, even of the rose, was insupportable to him, and never ceased to be so. A walk or drive which took him near gardens or fields was a sort of martyrdom. Nor was it only the scent of flowers which

acted on him. He could distinguish the apple, pear, and plum-tree by the smell of their leaves; he was, indeed, incommoded by smells imperceptible to any one else; the paint on walls and the dye of clothes gave him pain; the smell of raw meat was intolerable to him; while the effluvia from a churchyard, not in the least perceptible to one walking with him, threw him into a state of convulsion. It was to be expected that a being, still retaining such untempered conditions of sense, would be equally over-susceptible to magnetic influences. This became apparent before he left the prison, when a little toy with an iron front was given him, accompanied by a small magnet, by which it was made to move in any direction in a basin of water. On taking up this magnet Kaspar Hauser was disagreeably affected, and made signs that he felt pain. This induced a gentleman to observe carefully further effects. Accordingly, on holding the north pole towards him, Kaspar showed by his actions that he felt himself drawn, as if by a current of air, in an outward direction; while, if the position of the magnet was reversed, the current of air seemed to blow towards him; and, though the experiment was often repeated and varied, he never made a mistake. Such experiments, however, could not be continued without his feeling distressed, and breaking out into profuse perspiration. Nor did he ever err in distinguishing blindfold one metal from another by the difference of sensation and strength of attraction. Even — so the tale goes — when a needle lay, unknown to all, under a heap of blankets, the feeling of being blown upon, which he always expressed, enabled him to detect it. At the same time the veins of the hand most exposed to the metallic influence swelled visibly.

Among the few intelligible words in his small vocabulary that of *Ross* — the German equivalent for our steed — was most frequently repeated, sometimes in accents of entreaty, with tears in his eyes, as if begging to have a horse. Whenever also any trumpery was given him, such as bits of ribbon, a tin toy, or coin, he cried "*Ross! Ross!*" and showed by his actions that he wanted to hang them on something. It was not difficult to procure toys in a city which is their very home, and, as he at first spent his days seated on the floor in the guardroom, one of the soldiers hit on the idea of giving him a wooden horse upon wheels. From that moment a change came over the poor creature. With a countenance beaming through tears, he took the horse to his side, stroking and caressing it, and then proceeded to hang upon it all the glittering and tinkling trifles which the kindness of his visitors had brought him. For hours together he continued thus employed; too much absorbed to observe anything that went on round him. More toy horses were soon added, serving to multiply his occupation, but never to vary it. For day after day found him in the same position on the floor, decorating and undecorating his stud with untiring patience, and wheeling them backwards and forwards, though always as noiselessly as he could; for he explained later that, if the wheels made a noise, he should be beaten. This accounted for the wound on his arm when he first appeared; his keeper, or "the man," as he called him, having struck him for making too much noise.

Thus far we have endeavored to describe the picture he presented, both in mind and body, to the wondering gossips of Nuremberg. This condition gradually changed with the changed conditions around him, but the first teachings he received did not run smooth. Surrounded at all hours of the day by a number of visitors intent only on gratifying the idlest curiosity, it is no wonder that the gentle and orderly system, which nature and common sense would have prescribed towards such a phenomenon, was neglected. Here apparently was a forlorn human creature, whose mind was literally that sheet of white paper, which, in other cases, serves only as a figure of speech. Left at first to the sport of the ignorant and mischievous, it was soon scrawled over with heterogeneous rubbish, worse than useless to it, while the torpor and want of practice, which seemed to envelop his senses, as well as his mind, rendered him the victim of the most unseemly tricks. One person stuffed snuff up his nostrils — another put a pipe in his mouth — a third forced raw brandy upon him, which acted like a kind of poison. His eyes seemed to notice no object in room or landscape, and his ears at first took no note of the ringing of bells or striking of clocks. Feigned cuts and thrusts were accordingly made at him, with a naked sword, without his blinking or showing the slightest fear; while to test his hearing a simpleton discharged a pistol full at him. We do not learn the effect of that; but on the occasion of a military parade, soon after his appearance on the Nuremberg stage, when he was placed close to the great regimental drum, the first blows

on it threw him into convulsions. Nor was he more wisely treated by teachers of a higher class. With that want of practical sense with which, rightly or wrongly, the good Germans are credited, his volunteer tutors, both lay and clerical, set about their tasks in a strangely topsy-turvy fashion. The masters, who proffered to teach him to speak, began by dissertations on the formation of language; while the pastors, who sought to teach him religion, started by such abstruse principles as that God had neither form nor substance, and that he had created all things out of nothing.

But if in certain respects utterly dull to outward impressions, there were signs from the first of more than average intelligence, which, though not to be hurried, was always latently there. At the same time his feeble and undeveloped brain seemed unequal to any exertion. The attention evoked by a new word or thing would immediately arouse the spasms of which we have spoken, and these would be followed by a kind of nervous rigidity; he would then stand motionless, his eyes wide open, without winking, deaf, dumb, and blind to all external impressions, while evidently going through the laborious exercise of the new faculty of thought. All this proved too much for the weak and untried nerves; he lost strength, was continually in tears, and puzzled the doctors how to treat a patient who refused everything but bread and water.

The only relief to the narrative of monotonous folly, with which he was at first treated, is furnished by the account of the gaoler, Herr Hiltel, a plain and sensible man. After observing him quietly for a few days, he became convinced that there was no idiotcy, or any neglect of nature in the case; but that in some diabolical way he had been denied all those means by which the human mind is appointed to learn, to reason, and to grow. He bears witness that, during the early time of his abode in the prison, the poor lad's conduct was, in artlessness and innocence, precisely that of a little child. After the fifth day he removed him from the upper and more strictly kept part of the tower to the lower story; placing him where all his movements could be observed without his knowledge. But it was always the same childish and childlike being; absorbed in his horses and other playthings. In other respects too the same perfect innocence was evinced. This was seen in one particular and pathetic fact, for, on the gaoler and his wife undressing him for the purpose of ablution, his demeanor was exactly that of a little child — natural and unconscious — not knowing that he was naked. The gaoler was his best friend; he could not protect him from the host of visitors, but he admitted him to his own humble table, where, although not able to partake of the food, he learned to sit upon a chair, and to use his hands like a human being. He also allowed his own son and little daughter to be much with him. The boy helped him to speak, and taught him his letters far more successfully than his older masters; the little girl showed him how to string beads, which delighted him for a time. His next occupation was to decorate the walls of his little cell with the small colored prints which his visitors brought him; pasting them on with his own saliva, which — a fact for the pathologist to solve — was of the consistency of glue.

Kaspar Hauser had also another friend in the person of Herr Binder, the burgomaster. Though far from grasping the exceptional nature of the apparent case, he soon saw that the common forms of official business did not apply to it. He directed him to be frequently brought to his house, when, as far as the lad's growing capacity and vocabulary admitted, he questioned him as to the facts of his life. From frequent repetitions of these interrogations, Herr Binder extracted, or thought he extracted, the materials of a statement, which, in July, 1828, was formally issued to the citizens of Nuremberg in the form of an official promulgation. It was to this effect: —

He neither knows who he is, nor where he was born. It was only at Nuremberg that he came into the world, and knew that there were other men in it beside "the man," who was his keeper, and himself. As long as he can recollect he had always been in a hole, or small place which he sometimes calls a cage — always seated on the ground, with bare feet, and a shirt and pair of trousers for all clothing. In this place he never heard a sound, nor saw real daylight. He slept much, and when he woke always found a loaf of bread, and a vessel of water at his side. In winter the place was heated by a small stove, like a beehive. Sometimes the water had a bad taste, what he afterwards knew to be the taste of laudanum; and when this was the case he fell asleep again, not being able to keep his eyes open. And on waking he found that he had on what he now knows to be a clean

shirt, and that his nails had been cut, and his hair trimmed. In his hole he had two wooden horses, and several ribbons. Upon the whole he had been much happier there than in the world where he had so much to suffer. How long he had been shut up he knows not, as he had no knowledge of time. That the man did him no harm; except one day when he had been running his horses too hard, when he struck him on the arm with a stick, causing the wound alluded to. About this time also the man came into his hole, placed a small table over his feet, and spread something on it which he afterwards knew to be paper. He then came behind him and guided his hand backwards and forwards on the paper with something he had put between his fingers. He, Kaspar, was greatly pleased with the dark figures which appeared on the white paper, and was never tired of repeating them. The man renewed these visits often. Also another time he came again, lifted him from the place where he lay, and endeavored to teach him how to stand and walk. This was done thus. He came behind and seized him round the body, placed his feet behind Kaspar's feet, and lifted them forward in steps. The last time he came, he stood before him with his back turned, lifted Kaspar's hands over his shoulders, tied them fast in front, and carried him on his back out of the hole. He was carried either up or down a hill; he knows not which, by which it appears he meant a flight of stairs. The man took much trouble to teach him to walk, which always gave him great pain. The putting on of his boots caused him much suffering. The man made him sit on the ground, seized him from behind, drew his feet up, and forced them into the boots, after which they proceeded more miserably than ever. The clothes he wore were put on him not long before he was seen at Nuremberg. He neither perceived nor remarked any objects around him, nor could he tell in what direction and from what part of the country they had come, nor how long they were on the way. All he knew was that the man, who had been leading him, put the letter into his hand and then vanished.

This may be considered the sum total of what Kaspar Hauser could remember of his life. Glimmerings of a bygone time, affording much speculation to those about him, came out later, but led to nothing.

About seven weeks after his first appearance in Nuremberg the young lad was released from his abode in the prison, and formally committed to the care of Professor Daumer, a schoolmaster, who resided in the town. At the same time the magistrates issued an advertisement announcing the fact, that they had given the charge of the homeless Kaspar Hauser to a well-qualified instructor, and that in future the public would be refused admission to him. At Professor Daumer's house he was for the first time furnished with a bed, which greatly pleased him. He often said, that his bed was the only pleasant thing he had found in a world where everything gave him pain. The process of assuming the faculties of life seems to have been, mentally and physically, as painful to him as that of resuming them is to one recovering from drowning. That restless pain and pleasure of existence, for which children are gradually trained, had to be suddenly and consciously acquired, as by one born out of due time. In Mr. Daumer's family he acquired the art of speech far more rapidly, and it may be considered significant of the unvarying laws of nature, that, exceptional as were the age and other conditions of the learner, the process was the same as if he had been two or three years old instead of seventeen. A child always begins by using the third person. It is "Bobby" who wants such a thing, not "I." It was the same with this old child. "Kaspar very well;" nor did he understand being addressed as "you." His friends had to say, "How is Kaspar?" Like a child also, the question "Why?" was incessantly repeated. We are told that it required immense patience to teach him things which appear matters of course to us; such as the difference between animate and inanimate objects; between voluntary movement and that which is communicated from without. He thought that the picture or image of a man must feel like a man, that the great crucifix on the St. Sebaldus Church must be suffering dreadful pain, and he entreated to have it taken down. He thought that the balls of the ninepin alley ran their course voluntarily; that they hurt the other balls when they knocked against them; and that when they stopped they were tired. To animals he for long ascribed the same properties as to men; appearing to distinguish them only by the difference of external form. He was angry with a cat for taking its food only with its mouth, and not using its paws as he did his hands. If it was replied that such things could not be expected from animals, his answer was immediately ready, that they ought to

learn, as he had been obliged to learn. But one thing in which he differed from a child was his habit of intense attention when taught or shown anything. The poor lad seemed quickly to realize that he had no time to lose, and evidently never compared himself in this respect with real children, but with persons of his own size and age. Nor did he ever show the shyness of a child. Though his importunate visitors tired and interrupted him, yet they inspired him with no timidity, and, unless required, he took no notice of them.

The thirst for knowledge and the inflexible perseverance with which he concentrated his attention on anything he determined to learn, were such, we are told, as only those can conceive who witnessed it. This eagerness to recover that of which he had been defrauded was truly affecting; and after a while, the thought never seemed absent from him.

One of Professor Daumer's most difficult tasks was to induce him to take other food than that of bread only. It was stated at first that while in the tower he had eaten the prison common fare, consisting partly of meat; but it came out afterwards that the prisoner in the same cell with him — a butcher's boy — had willingly dispatched what Kaspar had left untouched. This change could only be carried out with great caution. The bread he had hitherto lived upon was made of rye — that black bread to which in Germany the term "bread" is alone applied. An accident discovered that it had been spiced with caraway seeds and fennel; again affording a slight clue to the past. In due time he took to various forms of *Mehl Speisen*, or flour food, and by degrees even the aversion to meat was overcome. Professor Daumer has recorded that, after Kaspar had learned to eat some meat, his mental activity diminished, and his ardent application declined. This he attributed to the effect of animal food. It is far more probable that other causes intervened, and that the sudden growth of two inches within a few weeks accounted for the slackening of mental power.

Of the beauties of nature, and generally speaking of the works of God, he had of course no comprehension; nor did they interest him otherwise than by exciting the invariable question, "Who made those things?" On seeing a rainbow for the first time it gave him momentary pleasure, but soon the reiterated question "Who made it?" interested him more than the rainbow itself.

It was while under the shelter of a kind, domestic home, that the consciousness of his unhappy fate seemed to open more and more upon him; it was first there that the sacred ties of family life were made known to him. This depression and excitability became so great that his feeble strength threatened to give way, and as exercise was absolutely necessary, the faculty of Nuremberg prescribed that of riding. The riding-master at Nuremberg, who, like everybody else there, knew him, accordingly made him free to enter his *manège*.

Kaspar Hauser was now so far advanced from the utterly negative condition in which he had been found, as to show indications of individual character. And this character was one of no ordinary kind. From the first he evinced a nature of singular gentleness and humanity. He could not bear to hurt a fly. He was docile, and perfectly obedient, and beautifully truthful. His habits were from the first scrupulously orderly. The regiment of toys accumulated by degrees round him were carefully put by at night, and arranged in fresh order in the morning. Child as he was, he had no childish deceit or tricks; on the contrary, as far as his slender powers of expression permitted, he is represented to have shown an almost exaggerated love of justice. One thing of course was wanting, namely, the conception of anything above this world, or beyond this life. Nor, as we have said, could there have been anything more ill-judged than the way in which his first teachers had attempted to supply this void. In his ideas of a God, as in other lower things, he followed the usual instinct of childhood, embarrassing his friends with artless questions about God, just as children do us. Once, when his instructor was dwelling on the omnipotence of the Deity, he went beyond the instincts of childhood, and asked, in sad sarcasm on his own fate, "Can Almighty God also make time go back?" By degrees we are told, it was given to him to grasp the idea of a great and good Maker and Ruler of all things, and to regard his commands as just and his will as supreme; but all notions of redemption and atonement, and, in short, of that Saviour whose love and pity this apparently sinned-against child so especially claimed, probably owing to the manner in which they had been first thrust upon him, failed to reach his mind.

The judicious kindness he received in Professor Daumer's family, and the enjoyment of horse exercise, soon showed their

result in his improved health. He made progress in general knowledge, and especially in reading and writing, so as to yield to the desire of his friends, that he should collect his recollections into a species of memoir for the public. This was in the summer of 1829, rather more than a year after his first appearance. Accordingly it soon became known — being reported in several journals — that Kaspar Hauser was writing his own life. It is reasonable to believe that this announcement aroused those hidden forces, which seemed to have ruled his destiny, but which had hitherto kept concealed from view. The little child, to whom all but life had been denied, who for some reason was not killed, and who showed no signs of dying, had, as time advanced, become a possible source of embarrassment. This had been obviated by exposing him in a public street. But if his actual disappearance, beneath the great wave of that new life into which he had been cast, had been really expected, the invisible agents were now undeceived. The sequel proved that his movements had been watched, and that his residence with Professor Daumer was known. It was on the 17th of October, 1829, that at the primitive hour of dinner — twelve o'clock — the lad was missing. Search being made for him, copious traces of blood were found on staircase, passage, and other lower parts of the house, all leading to a cellar, entered by a door flat with the ground. On lifting this he was seen lying at the further end, bleeding, and apparently dying. On being brought up, he showed signs of life, his first words being "Man! man!" after which he was seized with paroxysms of shivering, and then with a kind of frenzy, in which several persons were scarcely able to restrain him. The next forty-eight hours were spent in delirium, in which the idea of the man, his former keeper, and of his being attacked by him, took the lead. The wound was on the forehead, evidently inflicted by a sharp instrument. It was believed to have been intended for the throat, but averted, by a rapid bend of the head, to the forehead. The flow of blood had been considerable, otherwise the injury was not grave, but in the patient's highly nervous condition it was some weeks before he recovered. His own account was that he had gone into the lower part of the house, when he saw a man stealing along the passage. The man's head was entirely black, and he believed him to be a chimney-sweep, who on a former occasion had frightened him. Suddenly the figure attacked him. He could not see his assailant's face, and thought he had a black covering over his whole head; but, for all that, he was sure it was the man. In his terror he ran up-stairs, and, not finding any one, ran down again and took refuge in the cellar.

This event created an enormous sensation in the town, and judicial enquiries are stated to have been set on foot; though the mystery in which they were shrouded, and the pedantry of German forms, were not calculated to inspire confidence as to results. But the first feeling was a natural anxiety as to Kaspar's safety, and as soon as he was sufficiently recovered he was removed from the house of Professor Daumer to that of one of the magistrates. Here for some time he was carefully guarded and not allowed to leave the house without the escort of two of the police. In June, 1830, he was again moved, and this time to the care of a Herr von Tücher, who was formally appointed his guardian. The town authorities had now in a legal document recognized the mysterious foundling as their charge, and bound themselves not to deliver him to any one, except on proof of legitimate claim. The poor lad had meanwhile secured a powerful friend and patron in the person of Herr von Feuerbach, an old and eminent jurist, residing at Ansbach. He had carefully studied the case, and his work entitled "Kaspar Hauser, — the account of an individual kept in a dungeon, and separated from all communication with the world, from early childhood to about the age of seventeen, drawn up from legal documents, 1832," is the most intelligent we possess; and, though enthusiastically interested in its object, yet bearing the stamp of that careful observation from life which is the pledge of truth. The above work tells us that, although orderly and gentle in manner, yet, that if first seen without being known, he would strike every one by his unready speech, and his awkward and unpliant movements, as "a strange phenomenon," "a mingled compound of child, youth, and man, in whom it seems impossible, at the first glance, to determine to which of these three ages this prepossessing combination of them all properly belongs."

The face [he adds] presents a union of the tender traits of childhood and the harsher lines of manhood — expressing by turns a heart-winning sweetness, with a tinge of melancholy, a confidential openness, and a more than childish inexperience. In his mind there appears nothing of genius, not even any re-

markable talent. What he now learns he owes to perseverance, but the zest, with which at first he seemed anxious to learn all things, has long been extinguished. In every study he undertakes he soon remains stationary. Without a spark of fancy, incapable of uttering a single pleasantry, or even of understanding a figurative expression, he possesses dry, but sound common sense. In understanding a man, in knowledge of any kind a little child, and in many respects more ignorant still than a child, he often utters things which, coming from any other person of the same age would be stupid and silly, but which from him always force from us a smile of sad compassion.

Such words as these go further in vindication of this story than pages of description. If a great dramatist had ever attempted to invent such a character, he would have personated it in a mixture of childishness and sadness, the natural childishness of the one age, and the equally natural sadness of the other. Other touches by Herr von Feuerbach heighten the pathos. Alluding to criticisms already murmuring, and forestalling others that became far louder, he remarks: "Too old to be considered a child, and too ignorant to be regarded as a man, without country, parent, or relations, reminded every moment in the bustle of the world of his weakness, and especially of his dependence, he is, as it were, the only creature of his kind. Hence the expertness and acuteness, which some call slyness and cunning, with which he seizes the peculiarities and foibles of others, and knows how to accommodate himself to those who are able to do him good or harm." The piteous side of his unnatural fate is further told by the clouds of grief which overhang his brow, and frequently pour themselves forth in tears and lamentations. Nor will it be possible ever to comfort him entirely respecting his fate. The final observations of Herr von Feuerbach are thus summed up: —

The extraordinary acuteness of his senses has subsided to almost the common level. He indeed still sees in the dark, so that night is only twilight for him, but he can no longer read in the dark, nor recognize, as he once did, the most minute objects at a distance. Like other men he now bears and loves the light of the sun, which no longer distresses his eyes. Of the gigantic powers of his memory and other astonishing qualities, not a trace remains. He no longer retains anything that is extraordinary, but his indescribable goodness, the exceeding amiability of his disposition, and his extraordinary fate.

By this time a great change had come over Kaspar Hauser's prospects. This change was owing to the appearance of Earl Stanhope on the scene, father of the historian. This eccentric nobleman visited Nuremberg in May, 1831. Having indulged the curiosity felt by all visitors to see what was then considered the most extraordinary sight the town afforded, he immediately conceived the most ardent interest in Kaspar, and declared his wish to adopt him, and to take him to England. Despite the pledge given not to make him over to any one, except on proof of legitimate claim, the authorities of Nuremberg at once acceded to the wish of the earl, whose rank and wealth were novelties of no common kind in that old-fashioned part of the world. At the same time this transfer did not take place without every formal guarantee for his welfare that the legal courts of Bavaria could supply. It is no wonder that the fact of an English nobleman, ready to throw the ægis of his protection over the forlorn young man, should have excited sentiments of romantic admiration, in which the king of Bavaria, old Ludwig of eccentric fame, led the way with an autograph letter of acknowledgment to the earl.

There was another side, however, to this delightful picture. The earl, as might have been foreseen, did not prove the most judicious of foster-fathers. He gave the lad sumptuous presents, and an amount of money of which he was yet far from knowing the legitimate use. He treated him alternately with the homage due to a man, the undoubted offspring of some great princely family, or with the familiar caresses and foolish indulgence suited only to a child. At last, his guardian, Herr von Tücher, evidently a man of sense and honor, after remonstrating in vain with the earl, both by word and letter, felt compelled to throw up his charge. Lord Stanhope now (December, 1831) removed Kaspar to Ansbach, and placed him in the house of a teacher of the name of Meyer. There is no reason to doubt that the choice of this gentleman was judicious, but it is easy to see that a position of responsibility towards two such strange characters was no enviable one. The relations between the English peer and the poor foundling were an anomaly in the eyes even of the gushing Germans. They embraced when they met, and they wept when they parted; and the earl on his way to England wrote to the lad from every station. Kaspar, in the sight of those to whom his education was confided, was the heir to great fortunes, and, like all heirs apparent, was an embarrassing

charge. And by this time the part played by Lord Stanhope had exercised that demoralizing effect upon the poor half-formed lad that was to be expected. It was not all the foster-father's fault. The extraordinary interest which Kaspar's case excited, the incredible personal attention that attended him everywhere, was enough to turn any young head. Told over and over again that he was the most remarkable and interesting young man in the world, and invited to the first houses, he would sit as the chief guest; while the other guests, who thought it a favor to be asked to meet him, recounted his own story before him, touching it up with explanations and elucidations, and ransacking the genealogy of the reigning houses in order to find some vacancy they thought likely to suit him. This prestige was further kept up by his natural gentleness, and even abstinence, which gave a certain charm and propriety to his manner. All this, which now culminated in the weak and doating fondness of an English nobleman, could hardly fail to develop a vanity and wilfulness which by degrees became rampant. Nor is it surprising to hear that a want of truth and a habit of secretiveness and suspicion were in turn added. He showed at length all the faults of the most carefully and curiously spoilt child, and finally, and as a matter of course, there failed not that strong, indigenous vice, which flour'shes most where benefits most abound, that saddest symptom of poor human nature — ingratitude. He ignored his former benefactors; never speaking of them, nor caring to hear of them. Kaspar had now outgrown that halo of romance and tenderness with which "the child of Nuremberg" had been invested. He was in a new place and under new circumstances; the stricter nature of which showed him in a less pleasing aspect; while there is no doubt that the very prospect before him, probably greatly exaggerated in splendor, rendered him the object of unsparing scrutiny, and of considerable envy. From this time, at all events, the tide of prejudice began to set against him. Lord Stanhope himself, instead of returning to Ansbach for him, or empowering some one to convey him to England, began to ask categorical questions with regard to his industry and intellectual progress. Truths which, however natural, were rather disappointing, now came out. Herr Meyer and his other teachers frankly owned that, on coming to Ansbach, he was altogether not forwarder than a boy of eight or nine, and that, instead of desiring to improve, he was full of excuses to avoid all application.

Meanwhile the uncertainty of Lord Stanhope's movements continued to exercise the patience of Herr Meyer and the other sponsors. This was not from any lack of liberality, for the earl spared nothing, whether for the lad's worldly advantage, or for the elucidation of his fate; but month after month, and half-year after half-year went by, and nothing was heard of his intentions. Kaspar's guardians therefore felt it high time to prepare him for some mode of earning his bread — for one of Lord Stanhope's questions referred especially to what he was fit for — and, with Kaspar's own concurrence, they placed him in the lowest class of clerkships in a government chancery in Ansbach, where little beyond a boy's first handwriting was required.

We have alluded to gleams of evidence which seemed to crop up from time to time. An idea, for instance, had arisen that Kaspar's origin was to be found in Hungary. Accordingly a young man who understood Hungarian was admitted to him, accompanied by two of his friends, when, after purposely speaking of indifferent things, he suddenly repeated the Hungarian words for "one, two, three," Kaspar immediately showed signs of excitement. Other words were uttered with the same effect. This was sufficient to induce Lord Stanhope, who has been unjustly accused of frustrating the pursuit of this clue, to send Herr von Tücher and another, with the lad himself, all travelling under feigned names, direct to Hungary, to institute private enquiry. The friends were further directed quietly to watch what impression the sound of Hungarian speech and the sight of the costumes made on him. The result was that no impression whatever, from either cause, was observable. The journey, however, and the talk about it which ensued, sufficed to spread the belief, that he was come of some great Hungarian house. At the same time this discovery ran counter to another favored idea, which was that he was one of the Baden princes, sons of Stephanie, hitherto believed to have died in infancy; the eldest of whom was known to have been born in 1812, Kaspar's own reputed birth-year. This idea was strengthened by the distress notoriously known to have been suffered by the grand duchess at the mere supposition, which was, however, proved eventually to be without a shred of foundation.

Another idea, to which importance was

attached, was occasioned by a vague sense of recognition exhibited by Kaspar on first being taken to the *Burg*, or castle, at Nuremberg, when the grand staircase, the folding doors, like none he had seen before, and the long suite of rooms after the fashion of all German palaces, seemed to touch chords of memory, and roused indistinct images of a time when he lived in such a place, and was attended, Miranda-like, by several female servants.

It was after these barren results, and perhaps in consequence of them, that Lord Stanhope sent the guardians a series of thirty questions bearing on points of Kaspar's reputed history, and especially on the attempt at assassination in October, 1829. No change, however, took place in the provision made by the earl for the comfort and pleasure of his adopted son. He continued to travel, under due escort, from time to time, and was presented to various great personages desirous to know him. On one occasion, passing through Bamberg, where he appeared at a ball, the anxiety to see the mysterious lad produced quite a public commotion.

Still, though he thus continued to excite the same curiosity as ever — some worthy Germans even seriously persisting in calling him "my lord" — there was evidently an increasing tension between him and those to whom he was consigned; he knew that they had lost trust in him, and they gave him to understand that Lord Stanhope had done the same; at the same time, on his own part, he was never open with them, and neglected his light duties at the Chancery under excuses as false as they were frequent. In short there was a feeling, as if this condition of things could not continue long, as if a crisis of some kind were at hand. And a crisis was at hand, though in a most unforeseen form.

In the afternoon of the 14th December (1833), Herr Meyer was sitting in his room, when the door suddenly burst open, and Kaspar appeared, and with wild gestures, and in broken words, gave him to understand that he had been stabbed. "The man — had a knife — Uz monument — gave me a purse, and then stabbed me. I ran as fast as I could. Purse left lying there." He was put to bed without delay. Notice was given of the attack, and a policemen sent to the spot Kaspar had described, where he found a little lilac silk purse. It contained only a scrap of paper, on which were written in pencil characters the following lines: "To be delivered. Hauser will be able to tell you exactly who I am, and whence I come, but in order to spare him the trouble, I will tell you myself: —

I come from
The Bavarian frontier
By the river,
I will even tell you my name — M. L. Oe.

This purse was made over to the town officials, who with two doctors immediately met by the bedside to inspect the wound and obtain and issue a description of the assassin — an object which the state of the patient at first only imperfectly permitted. On the left side of the breast was a small but deep wound. The corresponding cut was seen through wadded coat, waistcoat, frontpiece, and shirt. Meanwhile snow had fallen continuously, and the number of people, who, on the incident spreading like lightning through the town, had at once rushed to the monument, had obliterated all distinctive footmarks. Nor was there a trace of the weapon to be found. On the fifteenth, unfavorable symptoms forbade examination. On the sixteenth he was much better, and was questioned. His deposition was continued at three different intervals, and amounted to this: that on the eleventh of the month he had been accosted at the foot of the steps leading to the Court of Appeal, at 7 o'clock A. M., by a man looking like a workman, who said, "The court gardener sends you his best compliments, and begs you to come a little after three to the court gardens, when he will show you the different clays to be seen in sinking the artesian well." He did not go that day because it was wet, but he told Frau von Heckel, a friend's wife, about it, who begged him not to go. On the fourteenth of December the same man appeared again at the same place and time, and repeated the invitation. The report of this examination was fully given, helping to fill up and also to account for the forty-two large volumes of official documents relating to this mysterious person. But for the formality with which these are given, the irrelevancy of the chief questions would not be credited. He was asked — dying as he was — the color of his assassin's eyes, moustache, and hair; what sort of trowsers he wore; what was the character of his voice, and what dialect he spoke. The report he gave of his own proceedings was simple. He went into the court gardens at the hour appointed, and straight to the artesian well. Finding no one there, he went on to the Uz monument; and there, at the two stone seats, a

tall man suddenly came forward, gave him a purse, and immediately stabbed him. He then let the purse fall, and ran home as fast as he could. He was shown the purse, which he thought was the same. Asked why, considering the attack on him at Nuremberg, he ventured to obey a summons from an unknown man to a lonely spot? answered that he had not thought himself in danger now that he had a foster-father. This was the upshot of forty-two questions!

On the seventeenth the symptoms became alarming. They still continued to ask him questions, but his answers were rambling, though all are printed. The same evening this forlorn being, whose life and death were alike enveloped in mystery, passed peacefully away. A reward of 800*l.* — no slight sum in Germany — was offered by the government for the detection of the murderer, to which Lord Stanhope added 400*l.* more, but time passed on without eliciting the slightest track.

We have said that the tide of prejudice had begun to set strongly against him, murmurs of which had even reached the dying man himself. The catastrophe of his violent death gave them a louder voice, and a more definite object, namely, in the question whether he died by his own hand or by that of another. The depositions regarding his last days must here be referred to. Herr Meyer and his wife both deposed that, for the last week or so, they thought he had been more reserved, and had withdrawn more from their society than usual — certainly that he had also had less appetite; and on the fourteenth he ate so little that Frau Meyer expostulated. In the last week also he was even more than usually reluctant to work, leaving the Court of Appeal daily an hour before his time, under the pretext that he had a lesson to attend. This was not true. Also on the fourteenth he went to a friend's house and stayed there till nearly three o'clock, when he left, saying he had to attend an appointment. This was also not true. Further, he must have known, that the boring of the artesian well had ceased in the month of August. Finally, the court gardener deposed that he had never sent him such a message as he had reported. All these instances of dissimulation tended to strengthen the belief in suicide. It may be added that it was afterwards discovered, that he had put his little possessions in his room carefully in order, and had destroyed papers which had been seen in his keeping a few days before.

A second question mooted was whether he had intended suicide, or only such a wound — as in the case of the reported attack on him in Nuremberg, the belief in which, of course, now shared the same doubts — as would excite interest and help to revive his waning reputation. This question was solved by the wound itself, the doctors all agreeing that the blow was one which, whosoever the hand, was meant to deal death. The direction of the wound was oblique, and from left to right. This was adverse to the supposition of suicide, till it was remembered that Kaspar Hauser was left-handed. A seated position also would have further facilitated the act, and here there were two stone seats at hand. On the other hand, those bent on suicide usually bare the breast to the blow; here the wound went through a great thickness of winter clothing.

One of the doctors gave the committee the benefit of his experience as to the difference of demeanor, after the act, between one wounded, mortally or not, by another hand, and one wounded by his own. That those, namely, wounded by another are anxious as to their own state; frequently asking questions as to the nature of their wounds; while those who have intended suicide are generally quiet, self-absorbed, and indifferent as to the nature of their wounds. Kaspar Hauser's demeanor was of this last class.

The point that puzzled them most was that a man so mortally wounded should have been able — and he was seen by several on the way — to run the considerable distance between the monument and his home. The question of the weapon was another puzzle. Whether at Ansbach or at Nuremberg, Kaspar, by the nature of his semi-public and strictly supervised life, could not possibly have obtained such a weapon without all the small world of either place ringing with the fact. Its concealment after the deed was not such a mystery, for the river Rezat runs through the court gardens. Finally the fact of the small lilac silk purse, of no small significance in the enquiry, remained absolutely unexplained. Some thought they had seen it before in Kaspar's own possession, and even that the writing resembled his own. This last idea was promptly negatived by experts. One thing was certain, that the contents of the paper were marked by the same brutal rhodomontade that characterized the letter to the captain; while another equally certain point was, that its grim humor was utterly beyond the power of Kaspar to invent; at the same

time the unavoidable inference is plain, that the admission of any accomplice in the deed at once dismisses the idea of suicide. The following inscription, therefore, on a stone, placed at the spot where the blow was supposed to be struck, embodies the only conclusion to which all the investigations led: —

Hic
Occultus
Occulto
Occisus est
XIV. Dec.
MDCCCXXXIII.

The question of Kaspar Hauser's suicide immediately opened that of his entire history. This, though in some sense natural, was in no sense logical. The two questions had no real connection. Suicide is based upon conditions common to a small percentage of the human race; Kaspar's reputed condition was one in which he stood alone. We shall be reminded that, in thus supposing his extraordinary history to be true, we virtually abandon the necessity for all proof. But that is very different from abandoning the existence of proof; of which we maintain that there is plenty. Granting, as the reader must have observed, that the narrative is encumbered with contradictions, inconsistencies, and gross improbabilities, yet all these, proved ten times over to be such, do not touch the main fact. Indeed, it may be said, taking all into account that, if there were not inconsistencies in such a narrative, we should the more doubt it to be true. It was easy to discover that Kaspar blundered in what he said, or rather in what people believed that he said, for all received a finish from the conjectures of others, but no one discovered that he blundered in the part he had assumed. It was the man himself who was the evidence, and all abstract doubt, founded on the improbability of the story, was sure to collapse at once before ten minutes contact with its subject. Among the numerous works in which the pros and cons of this case are argued, one by Merker, the head of the police at Berlin, is the most able. It is a very handbook for the detection of imposture; but it lacks the real touchstone, for he never saw Kaspar.

We have told his history, since his first appearance in Nuremberg, in the earlier part of this article, as it was told at the time to the public, and have told it purposely uncritically. With the doubt cast on it by several works contemporary and recent, the time is come to apply to it such criticism as can be commanded. Great stress is naturally laid on the evidence of those to whom the lad first appeared. Witnesses were examined on oath on two different occasions, the earliest being in November, 1829, the latest in May, 1834. Considering the lapse of time, the one occasion a year and a half after the event, the other six years after, it would be strange if they had not contradicted not only one another, but themselves. The questions most needing answers were, first, how a youth so long immured in one position was able to use his feet; and secondly, how he looked. The shoemaker, who first saw him, deposed on the first occasion that he came staggering (*wackelnd*) along, and on the second, that he walked with "firm strong steps;" while the servant at the captain's house stated that he evinced great suffering, and could hardly use his feet. As regards his looks, one policeman deposed that he had a healthy color, as if he had lived in the air, while another swore that he was pale, and looked as if he had been long shut up. Sheets of evidence were filled, all contributing to make up the forty-two volumes, from which no other conclusion can be drawn except the absurdity of evidence taken under such conditions.

On the other hand the deposition of Hiltel, the gaoler, bears all the stamp of intelligence and truth. He deposed that Kaspar, on arriving, was so exhausted that he had to be helped up-stairs; that he repeated the same words *Reuta wähn*, etc., in season and out of season, like a parrot; called every animal *Ross;* had no idea of day and night, or of sun and moon; and showed his ignorance of fire by putting his hand, on the second day, into the flame of a lighted splinter. Hiltel added in 1834, that Kaspar had a good understanding, and was so amiable and docile that, "had I not had eight children of my own, I should not have parted with him;" that the police had directed him to watch him closely, which he did; adding his firm conviction, that there was no deceit about him; and that it was perfectly impossible that he could have kept up such a part, if part it could be called, the only art of which consisted in pretending to be as stupid and childish as he really was. And it must be borne in mind that the gaoler was the man best fitted in all Nuremberg to detect imposture. During that time also Kaspar was visited and talked to by hundreds, without the idea of imposture being so much as surmised. It

is true most of these hundreds were not very wise, many of them much the reverse; but they were wise enough to perceive that he was what he seemed. They would indeed have as soon believed black to be white, as that the poor nondescript, whom they gaped at and played tricks on, was all the while playing far deeper tricks on them.

This is so extraordinary a story that, unless we keep hold of certain facts, we lose ourselves in such a tangle as to be tempted to cut the knot by disbelieving the whole thing. There lie immediately on the surface a whole group of improbabilities; the place of his confinement, the nocturnal visits of "the man" who brought his food, the drugging of the water, the being taught to walk in a place where he could not stand upright, and to write where his teacher could not see, the description of the journey, etc. But none of these incidents, even admitting his imperfect powers of description, are really so improbable as that he should successfully feign the part of an innocent child, at once so difficult to assume, and so easy to detect, that he should further have been able to imitate or even to know the symptoms of an occult element in nature, magnetism, the very existence of which he could by no possibility have known. Nor can all these improbabilities neutralize for a moment the evidence of the state of his saliva, the result of the long and sole consumption of the gelatinous properties of a bread and water diet, nor, as little, the material fact of the malformation of his knees, diagnosed by an eminent surgeon of the time, and induced by the long continuance of one position. And lastly, and still less, can the whole group of improbabilities outweigh a proof of truth which cried aloud from death itself. For the examination of the body divulged an enormously enlarged condition of the liver, so large as to encroach on the heart, which the doctors of Ansbach could only attribute to a seated posture kept up for years; in other words, to that total privation of all natural exercise, the effect of which was also seen in the undeveloped size of the lungs. The case of this strange being would appear indeed to have been far less adapted for the scrutiny of lawyers and constables, and both had ample opportunities to study it, than for that of persons of sound sense and close observation; bearing always in mind the youth of the subject, his utter ignorance of the commonest things in this world, and the confusion sure to ensue from the unequal match between him and his interlocutors; misunderstanding on their part being quite as natural as misstatement on his.

Something, too, must be laid to the account of the well-meant exaggeration on the part of his friends, who, in their ardor to catch at any shred of a clue, were tempted to try to heighten the interest of certain indications, such, for instance, as his love for horses; shown first by his toys, and further confirmed by the inspired manner in which he was described to have at once mounted the animal, and in a few days performed as wonderful feats of horsemanship as the riding-master himself; all pointing to an aristocracy of birth in which such tastes and powers were inherent. Unfortunately for this ingenious theory, it at once gave way before the deposition of the riding-master in question, which states that far from showing any dexterity in horsemanship, Kaspar Hauser had to be lifted on to the animal, with difficulty kept his seat, and could not be said to be a rider in any sense. The riding-master further expressed his annoyance that such a fable should have been published, one far less consistent with his reputed antecedents than the simple truth.

It is a curious feature in this short history of this strange being that, in the first months of his appearance, he gave a far higher promise of power and ability than he subsequently fulfilled. His memory, as we have said, was extraordinary, his thirst for knowledge insatiable. Herr von Tücher found nothing to reprove in him but his over-anxiety to learn. Before that gentleman gave up his charge, he had cause to reprove him for the opposite extreme. This change was attributed, by a not very sagacious process of reasoning, to his having learned to eat meat. One of the doctors who attended the post-mortem, gives a more philosophical explanation. The skull was rather low, in his words, "as if pressed together downwards," and the brain, though normal, was small, and not particularly delicate in its structure; even, he said, somewhat brutish. Altogether, there were signs which indicated a deficient development of the organ, suggesting the belief, that the brain had been arrested in its development by lack of stimulus and action. For it is, as we all know, a law in nature that no organ which remains unused attains perfection, or, having attained it, retains it; but, on the contrary, declines, and gradually wastes away. By about seven years of age the allotted development of the brain is accomplished. But if before that time

its progress has been, from any cause, cut short, it remains stationary both in a mental and material sense, a state which no after opportunities can rectify. The rapid intellectual advance made by Kaspar Hauser in his first year or so, though only the relative advance of a child, proved that the brain was so far matured; but its arrest at that point, and speedy decline from it, showed that it could advance no further.

Finally, we must make that first and last question in all such cases, what interest he had in practising so extraordinary a deceit? if deceit there was. And perhaps the greatest proof, negative, it is true, but strong, that no deceit was practised, is, that no rational or credible answer can be given. Where there are no precedents, there are no rules. Other impostors have objects to seek, and schemes to pursue. Poor Kaspar Hauser wished for nothing but dry bread and water. His daily diet for long cost Professor Daumer, or rather the town, only six kreutzers, or twopence a day; and he was with the greatest reluctance gradually induced to add to his bill of fare. Nothing ever induced him to change his beverage. There was no plan, no plausibility, no pretensions. He was very unhappy in a world in which he could do nothing like other men, and if he attained a marvellous and most troublesome notoriety, it was what he could not possibly have foreseen.

The change in his general intelligence, and the deterioration which for obvious reasons had taken place in his moral nature, were coincident in time; and with them ceased, in great measure, the interest with which the local public regarded him. This was to be expected; but what may be legitimately set aside is the idea that his vanity, want of veracity, and signs of temper, were proofs of his being an impostor. Altogether it was time for poor Kaspar Hauser to die. The so pathetically engaging lad, whom Von Feuerbach had described as "my dear, marvellous, puzzling foundling, for long the first and most important object of my solicitude, observation, and care" — whom Von Tücher describes as "an innocent child, of the purest and most spotless soul, knowing no evil — a *tabula rasa*, with endless powers of receptivity," — this interesting being had disappeared, and given place to a man of untruthful and secretive habits — only too easily contracted under the circumstances that had surrounded him — before whom lay an ever more and more darkening future, who felt that his prestige was gone, who was alone of his kind, and who knew that he could never support himself. His death was the signal for all his worldly friends to throw stones, Lord Stanhope throwing the heaviest in his German work, "Materials for a History of Kaspar Hauser." Happily for the credit of human nature, a touching contrast to this ugly picture was shown in the affectionate zeal with which his best and earliest friends took up his defence.

We have thus endeavored to extract an impartial statement of this unprecedented case, from the numerous works in which it has been discussed with equal warmth on both sides. Strange that its truth or falsity should still be left to the conflicting voice of opinion! not a single fact having come to light to place either on a firmer basis. Nearly two generations have now passed away since this poor waif appeared on the scene, and it is still as difficult as ever to decide whether he was the actor of an iniquitous imposture, or the victim of an unheard-of crime. Considered as an imposture, it is extraordinary that it should have succeeded; considered as a mystery, it is equally extraordinary that it could have been maintained. Two arguments may be urged which may incline others, as they have inclined us, to believe rather in the crime than in the imposture. The first, that only such a fate as his could have produced a Kaspar Hauser; the second, that it is easier to believe his story than his power to impersonate it. He must now be left alone with his secret, best expressed by the epitaph on his tombstone: —

Hic jacet
CASPARUS HAUSER
Ænigma
Sui temporis
Ignota nativitas
Occulta mors.
MDCCCXXXIII.