

## WHO WAS CASPAR HAUSER?

RECENT publications have again attracted our attention to a subject which about thirty years ago was the cause of great excitement and innumerable speculations. The very extraordinary advent, life, and death of Caspar Hauser, the novelty and singularity of all his thoughts and actions, and his charming innocence and amiability, interested at the time all Europe in his behalf. Thrown upon the world in a state of utter helplessness, he was adopted by one of the cities of Germany, and became not only a universal pet, but a sight which people flocked from all parts to see. It became a perfect fever, raging throughout Germany, and extending also to other countries. The papers teemed with accounts and conjectures. Innumerable essays and even books were written, almost every one advancing a different theory for the solution of the mystery. But his death was still more the occasion for their appearance, and for some time thereafter they literally swarmed from the press. Every one who had in any way come in contact with him, and a great many who knew him by reputation only, thought themselves called upon to give their views, so that in a little while the subject acquired almost a literature of its own.

But this excitement gradually disappeared, and with it most of the literature which it had called forth. There are a few names, however, which occur frequently in connection with that of Caspar Hauser, to whose opinions we shall subsequently call attention. They are Feuerbach, Daumer, Merker, Stanhope, Binder, Meier, and Fuhrmann.\* Of these, Binder was his earliest protector; Feuerbach conducted the legal investigations to which Caspar's mysterious appearance gave rise; Daumer was for a

\* Daumer, in his *Disclosures concerning Caspar Hauser*, refers to a great many more than these; but it is impossible to follow his example in so limited a space.

long time his teacher and host; Stanhope adopted him; Meier afterwards filled Daumer's place; and Fuhrmann was the clergyman who attended his death-bed. Merker, though never thrown very closely in contact with Caspar, was a Prussian Counsellor of Police, and as such his opinion may perhaps have more than ordinary weight with some. Most of them published their various opinions during Caspar's life or soon after his death, and the subject was then allowed to sink to its proper level and attract no further attention. Within a few years, however, it has again been brought into prominent light by some new publications. One of these is an essay written by Feuerbach and published in his works edited by his son, in which he endeavors to prove that Caspar Hauser was the son of the Grand Duchess Stephanie of Baden; another is a book by Daumer, which he devotes entirely to the explosion of all theories that have ever been advanced; and a third, by Dr. Eschricht, contends that Caspar was at first an idiot and afterwards an impostor. Before considering these different theories, let us recall the principal incidents of his life. These have, indeed, been placed within the reach of the English reader by the Earl of Stanhope's book and by a translation of Feuerbach's "*Kaspar Hauser. Beispiel eines Verbrechens am Seelenleben des Menschen*,"\* published in Boston in 1832; but, as the former has, we believe, obtained little circulation in this country, and the latter is now probably out of print, a short account of the life of this singular being may not be deemed amiss.

On the 26th of May, 1828, a citizen of Nuremberg, while loitering in front of his house in the outskirts of the town, saw, tottering towards him, a lad of sixteen or seventeen years, coarsely and

\* *Caspar Hauser. An Example of a Crime against the Life of Man's Soul.*

poorly clad. He held in his hand a letter, which he presented to the citizen; but to all questions as to who he was, whence he came, and what he wanted, he replied only in an unintelligible jargon. The letter was addressed to the captain of a cavalry company then stationed at Nuremberg, to whom he was taken. It stated substantially, that a boy had been left at the writer's door on the 7th of October, 1812, that the writer was a poor laborer with a large family, but that he had nevertheless adopted the boy, and had reared him in such strict seclusion from the world that not even his existence was known. The letter said further, that, so far from being able to answer, the lad could not even comprehend any questions put to him. It therefore discouraged all attempts to obtain any information in that way, and ended with the advice, that, according to his desire, he should be made a dragoon, as his father had been before him. Inclosed in this letter was a note, professedly by the mother, and pretending to have been left with him, when, as an infant, Caspar Hauser was first cast upon the world, but, in reality, as it was afterwards proved, written by the same person. This note gave the date of his birth, pleaded the poverty of the mother as an excuse for thus abandoning her child, and contained the same request as to his joining a cavalry regiment when he should arrive at the age of seventeen.

The first impression produced by Caspar's appearance and behavior was, that he was some idiot or lunatic escaped from confinement; it remained only to be shown whence he had escaped. In the mean time he was placed under the protection of the police, who removed him to their guard-room. There he showed no consciousness of what was going on around him; his look was a dull, brutish stare; nor did he give any indication of intelligence, until pen and paper were placed in his hand, when he wrote clearly and repeatedly, "Kaspar Hauser." Since then he has been known by that name.

When it became evident that the first conjectures concerning him were wrong, strenuous efforts were made by the police to sound the mystery, but without the slightest success. He himself could give no clue; for he neither understood what others said nor could make himself understood. With the exception of some six words, the sounds Caspar uttered were entirely meaningless. He recognized none of the places where he had been, no trace could be obtained of him elsewhere, and the most vigilant search brought nothing to light. The surprise which his first appearance produced increased as he became better known. It then became more and more evident that he was neither an idiot nor a lunatic; at the same time his manners were so peculiar, and his ignorance of civilized life and his dislike for its customs so great, that all sorts of conjectures were resorted to in order to explain the mystery.

It was ascertained that he must have been incarcerated in some dungeon, entirely shut out from the light of the sun, which gave him great pain. The structure of his body, the tenderness of his feet, and the great difficulty and suffering which he experienced in walking, indicated beyond a doubt that he had been kept in a sitting posture, with his legs stretched straight out before him. His sustenance had been bread and water; for he not only evinced great repugnance to any other food, but the smallest quantity affected his constitution in the most violent manner. It was also evident that he had never come in contact with human beings, beyond what was necessary for supplying his immediate wants, and, strange to say, teaching him to write.

That these inferences were well-founded was proved by the subsequent disclosures of Caspar himself, after he had acquired a sufficient command of language. The account he then gave was as follows.

"He neither knows who he is nor where his home is. It was only at Nu-

remberg that he came into the world. Here he first learned, that, besides himself and 'the man with whom he had always been,' there existed other men and other creatures. As long as he can recollect, he had always lived in a hole, (a small, low apartment, which he sometimes calls a cage,) where he had always sat upon the ground, with bare feet, and clothed only with a shirt and a pair of breeches. In his apartment, he never heard a sound, whether produced by a man, by an animal, or by anything else. He never saw the heavens, nor did there ever appear a brightening (daylight) such as at Nuremberg. He never perceived any difference between day and night, and much less did he ever get a sight of the beautiful lights in the heavens. Whenever he awoke from sleep, he found a loaf of bread and a pitcher of water by him. Sometimes his water had a bad taste; whenever this was the case, he could no longer keep his eyes open, but was compelled to fall asleep; and when he afterwards awoke, he found that he had a clean shirt on, and that his nails had been cut.\*

"He never saw the face of the man who brought him his meat and drink. In his hole he had two wooden horses and several ribbons. With these horses he had always amused himself as long as he was awake; and his only occupation was, to make them run by his side, and to arrange the ribbons about them in different positions. Thus one day had passed the same as another; but he had never felt the want of anything, had never been sick, and—once only excepted—had never felt the sensation of pain. Upon the whole, he had been much happier there than in the world, where he was obliged to suffer so much. How long he had continued to live in this situation he knew not; for he had had no

\* When he resided with Professor Daumer, a drop of opium in a glass of water was administered to him. After swallowing a mouthful, he exclaimed, "That water is nasty; it tastes exactly like the water I was sometimes obliged to drink in my cage."

knowledge of time. He knew not when or how he came there. Nor had he any recollection of ever having been in a different situation, or in any other than in that place. The man with whom he had always been never did him any harm. Yet one day, shortly before he was taken away, when he had been running his horse too hard, and had made too much noise, the man came and struck him upon his arm with a stick, or with a piece of wood; this caused the wound which he brought with him to Nuremberg.

"Pretty nearly about the same time, the man once came into his prison, placed a small table over his feet, and spread something white upon it, which he now knows to have been paper; he then came behind him, so as not to be seen by him, took hold of his hand, and moved it backwards and forwards on the paper, with a thing (a lead pencil) which he had stuck between his fingers. He (Hauser) was then ignorant of what it was; but he was mightily pleased, when he saw the black figures which began to appear upon the white paper. When he felt that his hand was free, and the man was gone from him, he was so much pleased with this new discovery, that he could never grow tired of drawing these figures repeatedly upon the paper. This occupation almost made him neglect his horses, although he did not know what those characters signified. The man repeated his visits in the same manner several times.

"Another time the man came, lifted him from the place where he lay, placed him on his feet, and endeavored to teach him to stand. This he repeated at several different times. The manner in which he effected this was the following: he seized him firmly around the breast, from behind, placed his feet behind Caspar's feet, and lifted these, as in stepping forward.

"Finally, the man appeared once again, placed Caspar's hands over his shoulders, tied them fast, and thus carried him on his back out of the prison. He was car-

ried up (or down) a hill. He knows not how he felt; all became night, and he was laid upon his back."—By the expression, "all became night," he meant that he fainted away. The little which Caspar was able to relate in regard to his journey is not of any particular interest, and we omit it here.

This is all that is known with any certainty of the early life of this unfortunate being. The conjectures to which it has given rise will be considered later. Let us first finish his history.

As was to be expected, Caspar Hauser's faculties developed very gradually. His mind was in a torpor, and, placed suddenly amid, to him, most exciting scenes, it was long before he could understand the simplest phenomena of Nature. The unfolding of his mind was exactly like that of a child. Feuerbach, in his book on Caspar Hauser, gives the main features of this gradual development. We can only pick out a few.

It is remarkable that in the same proportion as he advanced in knowledge and acquaintance with civilized life, the intensity of all his faculties diminished. It was so with his memory. He was at first able to exhibit most surprising feats. As an experiment, thirty, forty, and, on one occasion, forty-five names of persons were mentioned to him, which he afterwards repeated with all their titles,—to him, of course, entirely meaningless. So, too, with his power of sight. At first, he was able to see in the dark perfectly well, and much better than in the light of the sun, which was very painful to him. He very frequently amused himself at others groping in the dark, when he experienced not the slightest difficulty. On one occasion, in the evening, he read the name on a door-plate at the distance of one hundred and eighty paces. This keenness of vision did not, however, retain its entire vigor, but decreased as he became more accustomed to the sun. For some time after he made his appearance he had no idea of perspective, but would clutch like a child at objects far off. Nor had he any

conception of the beauties of Nature, which he afterwards explained by saying that it then appeared to him like a mass of colors jumbled together. Nothing was beautiful, unless it was red, except a starry heaven,—and the emotion which he felt, on first beholding this, was truly touching. Until then, he had invariably spoken of "the man with whom he had always been" with feelings of affection; he longed to return to him, and looked upon all his studies as merely a temporary thing; some day he would go back and show the man how much he had learned. But when he first looked upon the heavens, his tone became entirely changed, and he denounced the man severely for never having shown him such beautiful things.

All his senses were thus at first wonderfully keen. It was so with his hearing and smell. The latter was the source of most of his sufferings; for, being so exceedingly sensitive, even the most scentless things made him sick. He liked but one smell, that of bread, which had been his only food for seventeen years. It was a long time, indeed, before he could take any other food at all, and he only became accustomed to it very gradually.

The effect produced upon Caspar Hauser by contact with or proximity to animals was also very curious. He was able to detect their presence under singularly unfavorable circumstances. Metals, too, had a very powerful effect upon him, and possessed for him a strong magnetic power. But it is impossible to give all the details, however interesting; for them we must refer to Feuerbach.

His mind, as has been already said, was at first sunk in almost impenetrable darkness. He knew of but two divisions of earthly things,—man and beast, "*bua*" and "*ross*." The former was a word of his own. The latter, which is the German for *horse*, included everything not human, whether animate or inanimate. Between these he for a long time saw no difference. He could not understand why pictures and statues did not move, and he regarded his toy-horses as living

things. To inanimate things impelled by foreign forces he ascribed volition.

Religion he, of course, had none. He possessed naturally a very amiable character, and his thoughts and conduct were as pure as though guided by the soundest system of morality. But he knew nothing of a God, and one of the greatest difficulties Daumer had to encounter was instructing him on this point. His untutored mind could not master the doctrines of theology, and he was constantly puzzled by questions which he himself suggested, and which his instructor often found it impossible to answer satisfactorily.

Physically he was very weak. The shortest walk would fatigue him. At first he could scarcely shuffle along at all, on account of the tenderness of his feet, and because his body had always been kept in one position. He so far overcame this, however, as to be able to walk a little, though always with an effort. But on horseback he never became tired. From the first time that he mounted a horse, he showed a love for the exercise, and a power of endurance utterly at variance with all other exhibitions of his strength; and he very soon acquired a degree of skill which made him an object of envy to all the cavalry-officers stationed in the neighborhood. So inconsistent and incomprehensible was everything about Caspar Hauser!

In October, 1829, while residing in the family of Professor Daumer, an attempt was made upon his life, which was only so far successful as to give a very violent shock to his delicate constitution. The perpetrator of the crime was never discovered. Caspar was afterwards adopted by the Earl of Stanhope, and by him removed to Anspach. Feuerbach gives a very interesting description of him, as he appeared at this time.

"In understanding a man, in knowledge a little child, and in many things more ignorant than a child, the whole of his language and demeanor shows often a strangely contrasted mingling of manly and childish behavior. With a serious countenance and in a tone of great im-

portance, he often utters things which, coming from any other person of the same age, would be called stupid or silly, but which, coming from him, always force upon us a sad, compassionate smile. It is particularly farcical to hear him speak of the future plans of his life,—of the manner in which, after having learned a great deal and earned money, he intends to settle himself with his wife, whom he considers as an indispensable part of domestic furniture."

"Mild and gentle, without vicious inclinations, and without passions and strong emotions, his quiet mind resembles the smooth mirror of a lake in the stillness of a moonlight night. Incapable of hurting an animal, compassionate even to the worm, which he is afraid to tread upon, timid even to cowardice, he will nevertheless act regardless of consequences, and even without forbearance, according to his own convictions, whenever it becomes necessary to defend or to execute purposes which he has once perceived and acknowledged to be right. If he feels himself annoyed in any manner, he will long bear it patiently, and will try to get out of the way of the person who is thus troublesome to him, or will endeavor to effect a change in his conduct by mild expostulations; but, finally, if he cannot help himself in any other manner, as soon as an opportunity of doing so offers, he will very quietly slip off the bonds that confine him,—yet without bearing the least malice against him who may have injured him. He is obedient, obliging, and yielding; but the man who accuses him wrongfully, or asserts to be true what he believes to be untrue, need not expect, that, from mere complaisance, or from other considerations, he will submit to injustice or to falsehood; he will always modestly, but firmly, insist upon his right; or perhaps, if the other seems inclined obstinately to maintain his ground against him, he will silently leave him."

But the fate which had been pursuing this unfortunate being, and without which the tragedy of his life would have been

incomplete, overtook him at last. On the 15th of December, 1833, he was induced by some unknown person to meet him in a retired spot in the city of Anspach, under the pretence that he should then have the secret of his parentage revealed to him. The real object was his murder, and this time it was successful. Caspar was stabbed to the heart. He still had sufficient strength left to walk about a thousand paces; and, indeed, the wound was outwardly so insignificant, that it was at first believed to be a mere scratch. This strengthened an opinion which was then gradually gaining ground, that Caspar was an impostor; for it was firmly believed by some that he had inflicted this wound upon himself, as well as the one received in 1829, in order to quicken the somewhat languishing interest taken in him. Nor did they give up this opinion when the wound was found to be fatal. They then boldly asserted that he had wounded himself more severely than he had intended. And not content with simply maintaining this absurd opinion, they taunted him with it on his death-bed, so that he was not even allowed to die in peace. Nothing was wanting to fill his bitter cup. How terrible must have been the mental torture to wring from so resigned a soul the exclamation, "O God! O God! to die thus with contumely and disgrace!" The German is still more expressive, — "*Ach, Gott! ach, Gott! so abkratzen müssen mit Schimpf und Schande!*"

Such was the life of Caspar Hauser. For nearly seventeen years the inmate of a dreary prison, shut out from the light, without a single companion in his misery, drugged when it was necessary to change his linen, with no food but bread, — for seventeen years did he thus exist, — his mind a perfect blank. Suddenly cast upon the world, amid strange beings whom he could not understand and by whom he was not understood, he long knew scarcely a sensation save that of pain. And when at last he did become accustomed to civilized life, and the darkness which enshrouded him disappeared

before the rays of light that found entrance into his intellect, it was only to awake to a knowledge of the utter misery of his position. He then saw himself a helpless orphan, the inferior of all with whom he came in contact, and a dependant upon the charity of others for his support. He awoke to find that he had lost seventeen years of this beautiful life, seventeen years which he never could recall, — that he never could take his stand amongst men as their equal, but would always be regarded as an unhappy being meriting their pity, — much like that felt for the pains of some suffering brute. Nor was this all. During the few years that were granted him in our world, persecuted by some unknown person, against whom he was helpless, — knowing that his life was aimed at by some one, but unable to protect himself, and at last falling a victim to the threatened blow, — and, worst of all, charged on his death-bed with being an impostor, — such was the life of Caspar Hauser!

Among the different opinions which have existed in regard to his origin, the most noticeable are those advanced by Stanhope and Merker, and by Daumer, Eschricht, and Feuerbach. The Earl of Stanhope's connection with Caspar Hauser was a rather peculiar one. He made his appearance in Nuremberg at the time the first attempt was made upon Caspar's life, but took no particular notice of him, and left without having shown any interest in him. On a second visit, about seven months later, he suddenly became passionately attached to Caspar, showed most unusual marks of fondness for him, and finally adopted him. He then removed him to Anspach, and remained his protector until his death in December, 1833. The day after his burial, Stanhope appeared in Anspach, and took particular pains to proclaim then, and subsequently at a judicial investigation in Munich, and in several tracts, his belief that Caspar was an impostor. This had already been maintained by Merker, the Prussian Counsellor of Police. The theory which Stanhope now advanced was, that Caspar

was a journeyman tailor or glover, from some small village on the Austrian side of the river Salzach. The reasons which he assigns for his belief in the imposture are all derived from Caspar's supposed want of integrity and veracity. They impeach the character of Caspar living, and not of Caspar dead. Why, then, did Stanhope wait for his death before he proclaimed the imposture? Why did he remain his protector, and thus make himself a party to the fraud? His conduct is not easily explained. On the other hand, there is little ground for Daumer's conclusions. These are given at length in his "Disclosures concerning Caspar Hauser," published in 1859, a book called forth by attacks made upon him by Eschricht. Considering Stanhope's conduct, and his endeavor after Caspar's death to induce Daumer to support his views as to the imposture, and, upon his indignant refusal, making him twice the object of a personal attack, Daumer thinks that there is reason to believe Stanhope personally interested. He thinks that Caspar was the legitimate heir to some great English estate and title, that he was removed in order to make way for some one else, and that his murder was intrusted to some person who had not the courage or the wickedness to perpetrate it, but removed him first to Hungary and afterwards to Germany, and supported him in the manner indicated, hoping that he would not long survive. When, however, he grew up, his support became irksome and he was cast upon the world. There he attracted so much attention, that the instigator of the crime, dreading a disclosure, sought his life again. When this proved unsuccessful, he was removed to Anspach; Feuerbach, who had shown the greatest determination to sound the mystery, was removed from the world, and at last the tragedy was made complete in Caspar's own death. All this points to Stanhope. And yet Daumer has not taken the trouble to inquire whether it agrees with the family history. It is possible that he may be right; but his story carries with it so

much the air of improbability, that we cannot give it credit without further proof.

In the seventh volume of Hitzig's "Annals of Criminal Jurisprudence," there is a communication from Lieutenant von Pirch, disclosing Caspar's acquaintance with certain Hungarian words. A little while before this announcement was made, a story had gone the rounds of the papers of Germany, that a governess residing in Pesth had fainted away, when the account of Caspar Hauser's appearance was related to her. All this naturally attracted attention to Hungary as the probable place of his birth; and it is for these reasons, that Feuerbach, Daumer, and others, suppose that he spent some part of his childhood in that country. After his death, Stanhope sent Lieutenant Hickel to Hungary to investigate the matter, but no traces were discovered, — a proof, as Stanhope has it, that these conclusions were groundless, and, according to Daumer, another proof of Stanhope's complicity. He believes that the very superficial search made by the order of Stanhope was intended to lull suspicion and prevent a more strict search being made.

To return to the opinion advanced by Merker, and subsequently adopted by Stanhope, — the thing is simply impossible. In the first place, it would have been impossible for an impostor to elude discovery. To trace him would have been the easiest thing in the world. With a vigilant police, in a thickly settled country, how could a man leave his place of abode, and travel, were it for ever so short a distance, without being known? But this is the least consideration. Caspar's whole life, his intellect, his body, the feats which he accomplished, when submitted to the most searching tests, were a refutation of the charge. But when it is added that he wounded himself in order to do away with suspicion, the accusation becomes so absurd as scarcely to merit refutation. It is answered by the fact, that it was proved, from the nature of the wounds, in both cases, that self-infliction was impossible. Nor is it con-

ceivable that any one should have been able so long to deceive people who were constantly with him and always on the alert. And it is remarkable that they who saw most of Caspar, and knew him best, were most firmly convinced of his integrity,—whilst his traducers were, almost without an exception, men who had never known him intimately. Feuerbach, Daumer, Binder, Meier, Fuhrmann, and many others, maintain his honesty in the strongest terms.

On the other hand, it is said, that it is equally impossible for a person to have been kept in any community in the manner in which it is asserted that he was kept; discovery was inevitable. But it must be remembered that this instance does not stand alone. If search were made, many cases of the same kind might be collected. It is by no means so rare an occurrence for persons to be kept secluded in such a manner as to conceal their existence from the world. Daumer mentions two similar cases which happened about the same time. The very year that Caspar Hauser appeared, the son of a lawyer, named Fleischmann, just deceased, was discovered in a retired chamber of the house. He was thirty-eight years old, and had been confined there since his twelfth year. The other case, also mentioned by Feuerbach, was still more distressing. Dr. Horn saw, in the infirmary at Salzburg, a girl, twenty-two years of age, who had been brought up in a pig-sty. One of her legs was quite crooked, from her having sat with them crossed; she grunted like a hog; and her actions were "brutishly unseemly in human dress." Daumer also relates a third case, which was made the subject of a romantic story published in a Nuremberg paper, but which, he says, lacks confirmation. It was the discovery, in a secret place, of the grown-up son of a clergyman by his housekeeper. Whether this be true or not, both Feuerbach and Daumer believe that many similar instances do exist, which never come to light. It is not impossible, therefore, that Caspar Hauser was confined in

a cellar to which none but his keeper sought entrance. Who would suspect the existence of a human being, taught to be perfectly submissive and quiet and to have no wants, in such a place, when even the existence of the subterranean prison itself was probably unknown? The cases mentioned above were certainly more singular in this respect.

But Eschricht's opinion is the most peculiar of all. In his "*Unverstand und schlechte Erziehung*," he maintains that Caspar was an idiot until he was brought to Nuremberg, that his mind was then strengthened and developed, and that he was then transformed from an idiot into an impostor. This is still more impossible than Stanhope's theory; for in this case Daumer, Feuerbach, Hiltel the jailer, Binder the mayor, and indeed all Caspar's earliest friends, instead of being victims of an imposture, are made partakers in the fraud. No one acquainted with the irreproachable character of these men could entertain the idea for a minute; and when we remember that it was not one, but many, who must have been parties to it, it becomes doubly impossible.

We come now to consider the opinion of Feuerbach; and we shall do it the more carefully, because in it, we feel confident, lies the true solution of the question. He was at the time President of the Court of Appeal of the Circle of Rezat. He had risen to this honorable position gradually, and it was the reward of his distinguished merit alone. His works on criminal jurisprudence, and the penal code which he drew up for the kingdom of Bavaria, and which was adopted by other states, had placed him in the first rank of criminal lawyers. It was he who conducted the first judicial investigations concerning Caspar Hauser. He was, therefore, intimately acquainted with all the circumstances of the case, and had ample opportunity to form a deliberate opinion. How the idea originated, that Caspar Hauser belonged to the House of Baden, it is difficult to say. Feuerbach never published



it to the world. In his book on Caspar Hauser he makes no mention of it; but in 1832 he addressed a paper to Queen Caroline of Bavaria, headed, "Who might Caspar Hauser be?" in which he endeavors to show that he was the son of the Grand-Duchess Stephanie. This paper was, we believe, first published in 1852, in his "Life and Works," by his son.\* The first part of it treats of Caspar's rank and position in general, and he comes to the following conclusions. Caspar was a legitimate child. Had he been illegitimate, less dangerous and far easier means would have been resorted to for concealing his existence and suppressing a knowledge of his parentage. And here we may add, that the supposition has never prevailed that he was the offspring of a criminal connection, and that these means were taken for suppressing the mother's disgrace. A note which Caspar brought with him, when he appeared at Nuremberg, indicated that such was the case, but it was so evidently a piece of deception that it never obtained much credit. The second conclusion at which Feuerbach arrives is, that people were implicated who had command of great and unusual means,—means which could prompt an attempt at murder in a crowded city and in the open day, and which could over-bribe all rewards offered for a disclosure. Third, Caspar was a person on whose life or death great interests depended, else there would not have been such care to conceal his existence. Interest, and not revenge or hate, was the motive. He must have been a person of high rank. To prove this, Feuerbach refers to dreams of Caspar's. On one occasion, particularly, he dreamt that he was conducted through a large castle, the appearance of which he imagined that he recognized, and afterwards minutely described. This Feuerbach thinks was only the awakening of

past recollections. It would be interesting to know whether any palace corresponding to the description given exists. In the absence of such knowledge, this point of Feuerbach's argument appears a rather weak one. From the above propositions he concludes that Caspar was the legitimate child of princely parents, who was removed in order to open the succession to others, in whose way he stood.

The second division of the paper relates to the imprisonment, and here he takes a ground entirely opposed to the opinions of others. He believes that he was thus kept as a protection against some greater evil. His wants were supplied, he was well taken care of, and his keeper is therefore to be looked upon as his protector. Daumer sees in the keeper nothing but a hired murderer, whose courage or whose wickedness failed him. It is certainly difficult to imagine a kind friend immuring one in a dark subterranean vault, feeding one on bread, excluding light, fellowship, amusement, thoughts,—never saying a word, but studiously allowing one's mind to become a dreary waste. It is a friendship to which most of us would prefer death. We are therefore inclined to think that Daumer is here in the right. But whatever the nature of his imprisonment, the principal argument does not lose its force.

In the third place, Feuerbach speaks of the family to which Caspar must have belonged. Just about the time of Caspar's birth, the eldest son of the Grand-Duchess of Baden died an infant. His death was followed in a few years by that of his only brother, leaving several sisters, who could not inherit the duchy. By these deaths the old House of the Zähringer became extinct, and the offspring of amorganatic marriage became the heirs to the throne. It was, therefore, for their interest that the other branch should die out. In addition to this, the mother of the new house was a woman of unbounded ambition and determined character, and had a bitter hatred for the Grand-Duchess. Without laying too much

\* ANSELM RITTER VON FEUERBACH'S *Leben und Wirken, aus seinen ausgedruckten Briefen, Tagebüchern, Vorträgen und Denkschriften, veröffentlicht von seinem Sohne, LUDWIG FEUERBACH.* Leipzig, 1852.

stress, then, upon the nearness in date of the elder child's death and Caspar's birth, as given in the letter, there is reason to suppose that they were the same person. There was every feeling of interest to prompt the deed, there was the opportunity of sickness to accomplish it in, and there was an unscrupulous woman to take advantage of it. Is it, then, impossible that she, having command of the household, should have been able to substitute a dead for the living child? Accept the proposition, and the mystery is solved; reject it, and we are still groping in the dark. Nevertheless, there are circumstances which, even then, are incapable of explanation; but it is the most satisfactory theory, and certainly has less objections than the others. Feuerbach came to this conclusion early; for his paper addressed to Queen Caroline of Bavaria was written in 1832, the year before Caspar's death. Delicacy forbade the open discussion of the question; but, even at the time, this theory found many supporters. Some even went so far as to say that Feuerbach's sudden death the same year was owing to the indefatigable zeal with which he was ferreting out the mystery.

Of all the different explanations, then, which have been given, that of Feuerbach seems to be the most satisfactory. At the same time, like the rest, it is founded on conjecture. Its truth may never be proved. They whose interest it was to suppress the matter thirty years ago, and who resorted to such extreme measures in doing so, no doubt took ample precaution that every trace should be erased. It is barely possible that some confession or the discovery of some paper may cast light upon the subject; but the length of time which has elapsed renders it exceedingly improbable, and the mystery of Caspar Hauser, like the mysteries of the Iron Mask and Junius, will always remain a fruitful source of conjecture only.

It may not be uninteresting to close this sketch with the consideration of a point of law raised by Feuerbach in connection with the subject. It will be rec-

ollected that he calls his book "Caspar Hauser. An Example of a Crime against the Life of Man's Soul." The crime committed against Caspar Hauser was, according to the Bavarian code, twofold. There was the crime of *illegal imprisonment*, and the crime of *exposure*. And here Feuerbach advances the doctrine, that it was not only the actual confinement which amounted to illegal imprisonment, but that "we must incontestably, and, indeed, principally, regard as such the cruel withholding from him of the most ordinary gifts which Nature with a liberal hand extends even to the most indigent,—the depriving him of all the means of mental development and culture,—the unnatural detention of a human soul in a state of irrational animality." "An attempt," he says, "by artificial contrivances, to seclude a man from Nature and from all intercourse with rational beings, to change the course of his human destiny, and to withdraw from him all the nourishment afforded by those spiritual substances which Nature has appointed for food to the human mind, that it may grow and flourish, and be instructed and developed and formed,—such an attempt must, even quite independently of its actual consequences, be considered as, in itself, a highly criminal invasion of man's most sacred and most peculiar property,—of the freedom and the destiny of his soul. . . . Inasmuch as the whole earlier part of his life was thus taken from him, he may be said to have been the subject of a partial soul-murder." This crime, if recognized, would, according to Feuerbach, far outweigh the mere crime of illegal imprisonment, and the latter would be merged in it.

Tittmann, in his "Hand-Book of Penal Law," also speaks of crimes against the intellect, and particularly mentions the separation of a person from all human society, if practised upon a child before it has learned to speak and until the intellect has become sealed up, as well as the intentional rearing of a person to ignorance, as reducible to this head. This was written

before Caspar's case had occurred. He says, also, that they are similar to cases of homicide; because the latter are punished for destroying the rational being, and not the physical man. Murder and the destruction of the intellect are, therefore, equally punishable. The one merits the punishment of death as well as the other. Nor are we to take the possibility of a cure into consideration, any more than we do the possibility of extinguishing a fire. But where the law does not prescribe the punishment of death irrespectively of the possibility of recovery, the punishment would rarely exceed ten years in the House of Correction. We must understand Tittmann's remarks, however, to refer entirely to the law of Saxony,—that being the government under which he lived, and the only one in whose criminal code this crime is recognized.

Feuerbach wished to have this murder of the soul inserted in the criminal code of Bavaria as a punishable crime; but he was unsuccessful, and the whole doctrine has subsequently been condemned. Mittermaier, in a note to his edition of Feuerbach's "Text-Book of German Criminal Law," denies that there is any foundation for the distinction taken by him and Tittmann. He says, that, in the first place, it has not such an actual existence as is capable of proof; and, secondly, all crimes under it can easily be reached by some other law. The last objection does not, however, seem to be a very serious

one. If, as Feuerbach says, the crime against the soul is more heinous than that against the body, it certainly deserves the first attention, even if the one is not merged in the other. The crime being greater, the punishment would be greater; and the demands of justice would no more be satisfied by the milder punishment than if a murderer were prosecuted as a nuisance. The fact, therefore, that the crime is reducible to some different head, is not an objection. We meet with the most serious difficulty when we consider the possibility of proof. Taking it for granted that the crime does exist in the abstract, the only question is, whether it is of such a nature that it would be expedient for government to take cognizance of it. The soul being in its nature so far beyond the reach of man, and the difficulty of ever proving the effect of human actions upon it, would seem to indicate that it were better to allow a few exceptional cases to pass unnoticed than to involve the criminal courts in endless and fruitless inquiry. Upon the ground of expediency only should the crime go unnoticed, and not because it can be reached in some other way. For proof that it does exist, we can point to nothing more convincing than the life of Caspar Hauser itself. No one can doubt that his soul was the victim of a crime, for which the perpetrator, untouched by human laws, stands accused before the throne of God.

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## PAMPENEA.

### AN IDYL.

LYING by the summer sea,  
I had a dream of Italy.

Chalky cliffs and miles of sand,  
Ragged reefs and salty caves,  
And the sparkling emerald waves  
Faded; and I seemed to stand,