

confounding them. The abbé says that there is a difference of form among the corpuscular effluvia of springs, minerals, bodies of thieves those of assassins, those of naughty women, those of landmarks, etc.; in other words he recognizes the existence of aqueous matter, larcenous matter, murderous matter, etc., and the last named variety was the only one which produced upon Aymar very painful impressions. This was due, according to his scientific expounder, to the vehemence of remorse which pervades the corpuscles of an assassin. The fact asserted by Aymar that he had detected and followed the trail of a murderer twenty-five years after the murder, and the fact that in almost every instance he necessarily began his researches a day or two after the crime—to say nothing of the cases in which he determined the locality of the landmarks which had been missing for an immemorial period, forced the abbé to a wild hypothesis of the extraordinary levity of the corpuscles, by virtue of which they remained a long time suspended in the air in spite of rain, wind and even other corpuscles of later origin.

Father Lebrun, in a pamphlet on *The Illusions of Philosophers Concerning the Divining-rod*, printed at Paris in 1693, seriously refuted the system of Vallemont. This pamphlet was republished in the third volume of Lebrun's *Critical History of Superstitious Practices* (Paris, 1702).

But Father Lebrun and a large proportion of those who took part in the discussion rejected the scientific theory altogether, and attributed the facts to Satan. It was asserted that not only wicked people might obtain the divining power by a league with the devil, but that such an alliance might be made unconsciously, and that the power might be conferred upon an unwilling subject, as a means of ruin to his soul. Several cases are described at length, in which persons in whose hands the divining-rod pointed out springs, etc., had been by prayer and fasting and the help of their spiritual advisers, delivered from this dangerous gift. The authorities of the church favored this view, at least so far as any moral uses of the divining-rod were concerned. In 1701 the Inquisition of Rome condemned the divining-rod and all writings in support of it.

(To be concluded.)

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ATOMIC WEIGHT OF CARBON.—C. Friedel (*Bulletin de la Société Chimique*, xli. 100) by burning diamond in oxygen found the atomic weight of carbon to be between 12,007 and 12,017, if the atomic weight of oxygen is assumed to be 16.—*Dingler's Journal*, April 9, 1884. C.