

ON LIFE AFTER DEATH

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On Life After Death by Gustav Theodor Fechner & Dr. Hugo Wernekke

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GUSTAV THEODOR FECHNER & DR. HUGO WERNEKKE

ON LIFE AFTER DEATH

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ON
LIFE AFTER DEATH

FROM THE GERMAN
OF
GUSTAV THEODOR FECHNER

BY
DR. HUGO WERNEKKE
Head Master of Weimar Realgymnasium

A New Edition Revised and Enlarged

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TO
THE MEMORY OF
THE REVERED AUTHOR,
WHO ON HIS EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY KINDLY
ACCEPTED THE FIRST ENGLISH VERSION OF
THE PRESENT LITTLE BOOK
ON LIFE AFTER DEATH
FROM
The Translator.

378073

. . . El nacer
Y el morir son parecidos.”
La vida es sueño: I. 678.

TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

FECHNER'S famous essay, *Das Büchlein vom Leben nach dem Tode*, which in this present shape¹ hopes to be made welcome to the English-reading public, came out originally in 1835. But in the age of romanticism, strange to say, it seems to have met with little more favor than in the ensuing period of materialism, when Büchner and Moleschott proclaimed a creed attainable without much mental effort. A second edition, therefore, slightly altered,² was not undertaken till 1866. A

¹ It is a revision of our first edition, published in 1882 by Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, London. While this new edition was in preparation, another translation came out in the United States, by Maria C. Wadsworth (Boston 1905).

² The alterations, throughout in the shape of omissions, are slight in extent, but characteristic of the author's mental development. He thought it advisable to suppress certain passages, in which his philo-

third edition, in 1887, bore witness, on the one hand, that the new generation had begun to appreciate the booklet, and on the other hand, that its author, with his mind constantly fixed on the highest problems of moral and natural philosophy, still upheld the views set forth in one of his earliest publications. A fourth and a fifth reprint came out, after his death, in 1900 and 1903.

It was a long and laborious life, though outwardly uneventful, which closed on November 18th, 1887. Gustav Theodor Fechner was born, on April 19th, 1801, at Gross-Särchen, a small village in the Oberlausitz, which at present belongs to the Prussian province of Silesia, whereas in the beginning of the last century it was under the Elector of Saxony. Hence it was at the ancient Saxon university, in Leipzig, that Fechner went through his course of studies, and where in 1834 he was appointed pro-

sophic imagination might be considered to have taken too daring a flight. They will be found, with a reference to their original place in his deductions, at the end of this translation.