

light. The biographer may gather the opinions of others and so illustrate the points.

On the other hand, an autobiography reveals many things that only the work of the man himself can reveal. The work is his alone, and all through it he seems to be vitally alive. Unconsciously he has allowed all the essentials of his nature to peep out. He could not hide them if he wished. The whole work reflects the man, and in this way, may be of more use than the biographies. Sometimes, however, the autobiographer may have felt that he was becoming too egotistical and has tried to restrain himself, with the result that his work will appear stilted and unnatural.

Autobiographies and biographies are probably more valuable than anything else in the way in which they not only reveal the character and life of one particular man, but also give natural and living pictures of different periods. These are invaluable. For the memory of man is short, and his ideas change from day to day. When fifty years have passed he recollects very little of a period, and without written pictures, he would have no means of recalling past life in a natural way.

—M. DEACON.

A VISION INTO THE PAST.

When we consider the centuries which have passed from the time when man began his struggle against nature until the present day, it is perfectly evident that strange changes have taken place, of which we have no idea. During the centuries, what was once land has now become sea, and what once lay beneath the water has risen to form dry land. The secrets of the past have been hidden by such changes, never to be regained.

What is known of the past, is known only through legends which have come to us only by word of the mouth, through the ages. Let us consider one curious tale which is told among the native tribes of Africa.

Somewhere off the west coast of Africa there once was a mysterious island inhabited by a strange white race. Among these people of the past, there slowly grew up a high civilisation. They learned to cultivate the soil, to extract the precious metals from the earth, and to write a strange hieroglyphic writing.

Gold mines were opened up, and the gold was used for ornaments. After some time they learned to build ships and sail on the waters around their shores, but they never ventured far. From their own coast they could see in the distance the mainland of Africa, and at last curiosity overcame the temerity of the sailors, and a few men, bent on adventure, crossed to those unknown shores.

The few that returned from these daring ventures, brought back with them tales of wonder and mystery. One man, who had explored further inland than his fellows, told the king of a wonder-