

FOOTFALLS  
ON THE  
BOUNDARY OF ANOTHER WORLD

WITH NARRATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY  
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[Excerpted to include only the final chapters on Apparitions, etc.]

"As it is the peculiar method of the Academy to interpose no personal judgment, but to admit those opinions which appear most probable, to compare arguments and to set forth all that may be reasonably stated in favor of each proposition, and so, without obtruding any authority of its own, to leave the judgment of the hearers free and unprejudiced, we will retain this custom which has been handed down from Socrates; and this method, dear brother Quintus, if you please, we will adopt as often as possible, in all our dialogues together."—Cicero I, *Divin. Lib.* ii. §72.

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## PREFACE.

IT may interest the reader, before perusing this volume, to know some of the circumstances which preceded and produced it.

The subjects of which it treats came originally under my notice in a land where, except to the privileged foreigner, such subjects are interdicted,—at Naples, in the autumn of 1855. Up to that period I had regarded the whole as a delusion which no prejudice, indeed, would have prevented my examining with care, but in which, lacking such examination, I had no faith whatever.

To an excellent friend and former colleague, the Viscount de St. Amaro, Brazilian Minister at Naples, I shall ever remain debtor for having first won my serious attention to phenomena of a magneto-psychological character and to the study of analogous subjects. It was in his apartments, on the 4th of March 1856, and in presence of himself and his lady, together with a member of the royal family of Naples, that I witnessed for the, first time, with mingled feelings of surprise and incredulity, certain physical movements apparently without material agency. Three weeks later, during an evening at the Russian Minister's, an incident occurred, as we say, fortuitously, which, after the strictest scrutiny, I found myself unable to explain without referring it to some intelligent agency foreign to the spectators present,—not one of whom, it may be added, knew or had practiced any thing, connected with what is called Spiritualism or mediumship. From that day I determined to test the matter thoroughly. My public duties left me, in winter, few leisure hours, but many during the summer and autumn months; and that leisure, throughout more than two years, I devoted to an investigation (conducted partly by personal observations

made in domestic privacy, partly by means of books) of the great question whether agencies from another phase of existence ever intervene here, and operate, for good or evil, on mankind.

For a time the observations I made were similar to those which during the last ten years so many thousands have instituted in our country and in Europe, and my reading was restricted to works for and against Animal Magnetism and for and against the modern spiritual theory. But, as the field opened before me, I found it expedient to enlarge my sphere of research,—to consult the best professional works on Physiology, especially in its connection with mental phenomena, on Psychology in general, on Sleep, on Hallucination, on Insanity, on the great Mental Epidemics of Europe and America, together with treatises on the Imponderables,—including Reichenbach's curious observations, and the records of interesting researches recently made in Prussia, in Italy, in England and elsewhere, on the subject of Human Electricity in connection with its influence on the nervous system and the muscular tissues.

I collected, too, the most noted old works containing narrative collections of apparitions, hauntings, presentiments, and the like, accompanied by dissertations on the Invisible World, and toiled through formidable piles of chaff to reach a few gleanings of sound grain.

Gradually I became convinced that what by many have been regarded as new and unexampled phenomena are but modern phases of what has ever existed. And I ultimately reached the conclusion that, in order to a proper understanding of much that has excited and perplexed the public mind under the name of Spiritual Manifestations, historical research should precede every other inquiry,—that we ought to look throughout the past for classes of phenomena, and seek to arrange these, each in its proper niche.

I was finally satisfied, also, that it behooved the student in this field (in the first instance, at least) to devote his attention to spontaneous phenomena, rather, than to those that are evoked,—to appearances and disturbances that present themselves occasionally only, it is true, but neither sought nor looked for; like the rainbow, or the Aurora Borealis, or the

wind that bloweth where it listeth, uncontrolled by the wishes or the agency of man. By restricting the inquiry to these, all suspicion of being misled by epidemic excitement or expectant attention is completely set aside.

A record of such phenomena, carefully selected and authenticated, constitutes the staple of the present volume. In putting it forth, I am not to be held, any more than is the naturalist or the astronomer, to the imputation of tampering with holy things. As regards the special purpose of this work, no charge of necromantic efforts or unlawful seeking need be met, since it cannot possibly apply. The accusation, if any be brought, will be of a different character. If suspicion I incur, it will be not of sorcery, but of superstition,—of an endeavor, perhaps, to revive popular delusions which the lights of modern science have long since dispelled, or of stooping to put forth as grave relations of fact what are no better than idle nursery-tales.

Accepting this issue, I am content to put myself on the country. I demand a fair trial before a jury who have not prejudged the cause. I ask for my witnesses a patient hearing, well assured that the final verdict, be it as it may, will be in accordance with reason and justice.

I aspire not to build up a theory. I doubt, as to this subject, whether any man living is yet prepared to do so. My less ambitious endeavor is to collect together solid, reliable building-stones which may serve some future architect. Already beyond middle age, it is not likely that I shall continue here long enough to see the edifice erected. But others may. The race endures, though the individual pass to another stage of existence.

If I did not esteem my subject one of vast importance, I should be unworthy to approach its treatment. Had I found other writers bestowing upon it the attention which that important merits, I should have remained silent. As it is, I have felt, with a modern author, that "the withholding of large truths from the world may be a betrayal of the greatest trust."

I am conscious, on the other hand, that one is ever apt to

*\*"Friends in Council," Art. Truth.*

overestimate the importance of one's own labors. Yet even effort such as this may suffice to give public opinion a true or a false direction. Great results are sometimes determined by humble agencies. "A ridge-tile of a cottage in Derbyshire," says Gisborne, "decides whether the rain which falls from heaven shall be directed to the German Ocean or the Atlantic."

Let the reader, before he enters on the inquiry whether ultramundane interference be a great reality or a portentous delusion, permit me one additional remark. He will find that, in treating that hypothesis, I have left many things obscure and uninterpreted. Where no theory was clearly indicated, I preferred to state the facts and waive all explanation, having reached that period of life when, if good use has been made of past years, one is not ashamed to say, "I do not know," in any case in which that is the simple truth. We do well, however, to bear in mind that a difficulty unsolved does not amount to an argument in opposition.\*

To the many friends whose kindness has aided my undertaking, these pages owe their chief value. To some therein named I am enabled here to tender my grateful acknowledgments. To others who have assisted in private I am not less deeply indebted.

I doubt not that if I were to delay the publication of this book for some years I should find much to modify, something to retract. But if, in this world, we postpone our work till we deem it perfect, death comes upon us in our hesitation, and we effect nothing, from bootless anxiety to effect too much. R. D. O.

(On page 511 will be found "Addenda to the Tenth Thousand.")

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\* "Where we cannot answer all objections, we are bound, in reason and in candor, to adopt the hypothesis which labors under the least."—*Elements of Logic*," by ARCHBISHOP WHATELY.

"That is accounted probable which has better argument producible for it than can be brought against it"—SOUTH.

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## BOOK IV.

### OF APPEARANCES COMMONLY CALLED APPARITIONS

#### CHAPTER I.

##### TOUCHING HALLUCINATION.

THE evidence for a future life derived from an occasional appearance of the dead, provided that appearance prove to be an objective phenomenon, and provided we do not misconceive its character, is of the highest grade. If it be important, then, to obtain a valuable contribution to the proofs of the soul's immortality, what more worthy of our attention than the subject of apparitions?

But in proportion to its importance and to its extraordinary character is the urgent propriety that it be scrupulously, even distrustfully, examined, and that its reality be tested with dispassionate care.

For its discussion involves the theory of hallucination; a branch of inquiry which has much engaged, as indeed it ought, the attention of modern physiologists.

That pure hallucinations occur, we cannot rationally doubt; but what are, and what are not, hallucinations, it may be more difficult to determine than superficial observers are wont to imagine.

Hallucination, according to the usual definition, consists of ideas and sensations conveying unreal impressions. It is an example of false testimony (not always credited) apparently given by the senses in a diseased or abnormal state of the human organization.

"It is evident," says Calmeil, "that if the same material combination which takes place in the brain of a man at the sight of a tree, of a dog, of a horse, is capable of being reproduced at a moment when these objects are no longer within sight, then that man will persist in believing that he still sees a horse, a dog, or a tree."\*

It is a curious question, not yet fully settled by medical writers on the subject, whether hallucinations of the sight cause an actual imago on the retina. Burdach, Muller,† Baillarger,‡ and others, who maintain the affirmative, remind us that patients who have recovered from an attack of hallucination always say, 'I saw; I heard;' thus speaking as of actual sensations. Dechambre§ and De Boismont, who assume the negative, adduce in support of their opinion the facts that a patient who has lost his leg will still complain of cold or pain in the toes of the amputated foot, and that men blind from amaurosis, where there is paralysis of the optic nerve, are still subject to visual hallucinations. The latter seems the better opinion. How can a mere mental conception (as Dechambre has argued) produce an image in the eye? And to what purpose? For, if the conception is already existing in the brain, what need of the eye to convey it thither? If it could be proved, in any given case, that a real image had been produced on the surface of the retina, it would, I think, go far to prove,

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\* *"De la Folie,"* vol. i. p. 113.

† I have not access to the German originals; but both Burdach and Muller have been translated into French by Jourdain; see Burdach's *"Traite de Physiologie,"* Paris, 1839, vol. v. p. 206, and Muller's *"Manuel de Physiologie,"* Paris, 1845, vol. ii. p. 686.

‡ Baillarger; *"Des Hallucinations, &c.,"* published in the *"Memoires de l'Academie Royale de Medecine,"* vol. xii. p. 369.

§ Dechambre's *"Analyse de l'Ouvrage du Docteur Szafkowski sur les Hallucinations,"* published in the *"Gazette Medicale"* for 1850, p. 274.

I am indebted to De Boismont for most of these references—See his work, *"Des Hallucinations,"* Paris, 1852, chap. 16.

also, that an objective reality must have been present to produce it. And so also of sonorous undulations actually received by the tympanum.

This will more clearly appear if we take instances of hallucination of other senses,—as of smell and touch Professor Bennett, of Scotland, in a pamphlet against Mesmerism,\* vouches for two examples adduced by him to prove the power of imagination. He relates the first as follows:—"A clergyman told me that, some time ago, suspicions were entertained in his parish of a woman who was supposed to have poisoned her newly-born infant. The coffin was exhumed, and the procurator-fiscal, who attended with the medical men to examine the body, declared that he already perceived the odor of decomposition, which made him feel faint; and, in consequence, he withdrew. But on opening the coffin it was found to be empty; and it was afterward ascertained that no child had been born, and, consequently, no murder committed." Are we to suppose that the olfactory nerve was acted upon by an odor when the odor was not there? But here is the other case, from the same pamphlet. "A butcher was brought into the shop of Mr. McFarlane, the druggist, from the market-place opposite, laboring under a terrible accident. The man, in trying to hook up a heavy piece of meat above his head, slipped, and the sharp hook penetrated his arm, so that he himself was suspended. On being examined, he was pale, almost pulseless, and expressed himself as suffering acute agony. The arm could not be moved without causing excessive pain, and in cutting off the sleeve he frequently cried out; yet when the arm was exposed it was found to be perfectly uninjured, the hook having only traversed the sleeve of his coat!" What acted, in this case, on the nerves of sensation? There

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\* *"The Mesmeric Mania of 1851,"* Edinburgh, 1851.

was not the lightest lesion to do this; yet the effect on the brain was exactly the same as if these nerves had been actually irritated, and that, too, in the most serious manner.

The senses which most frequently seem to delude us are sight and hearing. Dr. Carpenter mentions the case of a lady, a near relative of his, who, "having been frightened in childhood by a black cat which sprang up from beneath her pillow just as she was laying her head upon it, was accustomed for many years afterward, whenever she was at all indisposed, to see a black cat on the ground before her; and, although perfectly aware of the spectral character of the appearance, yet she could never avoid lifting her foot as if to step over the cat when it appeared to be lying in her path."\* Another lady, mentioned by Calmeil, continued, for upward of ten years, to imagine that a multitude of birds were constantly on the wing, flying close to her head; and she never sat down to dinner without setting aside crumbs of bread for her visionary attendants.†

So of auditory hallucinations, where the sense of hearing appears to play us false. Writers on the subject record the cases of patients who have been pursued for years, or through life, by unknown voices, sounds of bells, strains of music, hissing, barking, and the like. In many cases the sounds seemed, to the hallucinated, to proceed from tombs, from caverns, from beneath the ground; sometimes the voice was imagined to be internal, as from the breast or other portions of the body.‡

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\* "*Principles of Human Physiology*," 5th ed., London, 1855, p. 564.

† *Calmeil*, vol. i. p. 11. I do not cite more apocryphal cases, as when Pic, in his life of the noted Benedictine Savonarola, tells us that the Holy Ghost, on several occasions, lit on the shoulders of the pious monk, who was lost in admiration of its golden plumage; and that when the divine bird introduced its beak into his ear he heard a murmur of a most peculiar description.—J. F. Pic, in *Vita Savonaroloe*, p. 124.

‡ *Calmeil*, work cited, vol. i. p. 8.

Calmeil relates the example of an aged courtier who, imagining that he heard rivals continually defaming him in presence of his sovereign, used constantly to exclaim, "They he! you are deceived! I am calumniated, my prince."\* And he mentions the case of another monomaniac who could not, without a fit of rage, hear pronounced the name of a town which recalled to him painful recollections. Children at the breast, the bird of the air, bells from every clock-tower, repeated, to his diseased hearing, the detested name.

These all appear to be cases of simple hallucination; against which, it may be remarked, perfect soundness of mind is no guarantee. Hallucination is not insanity. It is found, sometimes, disconnected not only from insanity, but from monomania in its mildest type. I knew well a lady who, more than once, distinctly saw feet ascending the stairs before her. Yet neither her physician nor she herself ever regarded this apparent marvel in other light than as an optical vagary dependent on her state of health.

In each of the cases above cited, it will be remarked that one person only was misled by deception of sense. And this brings me to speak of an important distinction made by the best writers on this subject: the difference, namely, between hallucination and illusion: the former being held to mean a false perception of that which has no existence whatever; the latter, an incorrect perception of something which actually exists. The lady who raised her foot to step over a black cat, when, in point of fact, there was nothing there to step over, is deemed to be the victim of a hallucination. Nicolai, the Berlin bookseller, is usually cited as one of the most noted cases; and his memoir on the subject, addressed to the Royal Society of Berlin, of which he

\* *Calmeil*, work cited, vol. i. p. 7.

was a member, is given as a rare example of philosophical and careful analysis of what he himself regarded as a series of false sensations.\* He, imagined (so he relates) that his room was full of human figures, moving about; all the exact counterpart of living persons, except that they were somewhat paler; some known to him, some strangers, who occasionally spoke to each other and to him; so that at times he was in doubt whether or not some of his friends had come to visit him.

An illusion, unlike a hallucination, has a foundation in reality. We actually see or hear something, which we mistake for something else.† The mirage of the Desert, the Fata Morgana of the Mediterranean, are well-known examples. Many superstitions hence take their rise. Witness the Giant of the Brocken, aerial armies contending in the clouds, and the like.‡

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\* Nicolai read his memoir on the subject of the specters or phantoms which disturbed him, with psychological remarks thereon, to the Royal Society of Berlin, on the 28th of February, 1799. The translation of this paper is given in *Nicholson's Journal*, vol. vi. p. 161.

† in actual mania, hallucinations are commonly set down as much more frequent than illusions. De Boismont mentions that, out of one hundred and eighty-one cases of mania observed by Messrs. Aubanel and Thore, illusions showed themselves in sixteen instances, while hallucination supervened in fifty-four. The exact list was as follows: *Illusions* of sight, vine; of hearing, seven; *hallucinations* of hearing, twenty-three; of sight, twenty-one; of taste, five; of touch, two; of smell, one; internal, two. "*Des Hallucinations*," p. 168.

‡ In the "Philosophical Magazine" (vol. i. p. 232) will be found a record of the observations which finally explained to the scientific world the nature of the gigantic appearance which, from the summit of the Brocken, (one of the Hartz Mountains,) for long years excited the wondering credulity of the inhabitants and the astonishment of the passing traveler. A Mr. Haue devoted some time to this subject. One day, while he was contemplating the giant, a violent puff of wind was on the point of carrying off his hat. Suddenly clapping his hand upon it, the giant did the same. Mr. Haue bowed to him, and the salute was returned. He then called the proprietor of the neighboring inn and imparted to him his discovery. The experiments were renewed with the same effect. It became evident that the appearance was but an optical effect produced by a strongly

There are collective illusions; for it is evident that the same false appearance which deceives the senses of one man is not unlikely to deceive those of others also. Thus, an Italian historian relates that the inhabitants of the city of Florence were for several hours the dupes of a remarkable deception. There was seen, in the air, floating above the city, the colossal figure of an angel; and groups of spectators, gathered together in the principal streets, gazed in adoration, convinced that some miracle was about to take place. After a time it was discovered that this portentous appearance was but \* simple optical illusion, caused by the reflection, on \* cloud, of the figure of the gilded angel which surmounts the celebrated Duomo, brightly illuminated by the rays of the sun.

But I know of no well-authenticated instance of collective hallucinations. No two patients that I ever heard of imagined the presence of the same cat or dog at the same moment. None of Nicolai's friends perceived the figures which showed themselves to him. When Brutus's evil genius appeared to the Roman leader, no one but himself saw the colossal presence or heard the warning words, "We shall meet again at Philippi." It was Nero's eyes alone that were haunted with the specter of his murdered mother.\*

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illuminated body placed amid light clouds, reflected from a considerable distance, and magnified till it appeared five or six hundred feet in height.

In Westmoreland and other mountainous countries the peasants often imagine that they see in the clouds troops of cavalry and armies on the march,—when, in point of fact, it is but the reflection of horses pasturing on a hill-side, and peaceful travelers or laborers passing over the landscape.

\* There is no proof that the appearances which presented themselves to Nicolai, to Brutus, and to Nero were other than mere hallucinations; yet, if it should appear that apparitions, whether of the living or the dead, are sometimes of objective character, we are assuming too much when we receive it as certain that nothing appeared to either of these men.

This is a distinction of much practical importance if two persons perceive at the same time the same phenomenon, we may conclude that that phenomenon is an objective reality,—has, in some phase or other, actual existence.

The results of what have been usually called electrobiological experiments cannot with any propriety be adduced in confutation of this position. The biologized patient knowingly and voluntarily subjects himself to an artificial influence, of which the temporary effect is to produce false sensations; just as the eater of hasheesh, or the chewer of opium, conjures up the phantasmagoria of a partial insanity, or the confirmed drunkard exposes himself to the terrible delusions of delirium-tremens. But all these sufferers know, when the fit has passed, that there was nothing of reality in the imaginations that overcame them.

If we could be biologized without ostensible agency, in a seemingly normal and quiet state of mind and body, unconsciously to ourselves at the time, and without any subsequent conviction of our trance-like condition, then would Reason herself cease to be trustworthy, our very senses become blind guides, and men would but grope about in the mists of Pyrrhonism. Nothing in the economy of the universe, so far as we have explored it, allows us for a moment to entertain the idea that its Creator has permitted, or will ever permit, such a source of delusion.

We are justified in asserting, then, as a general rule, that what the senses of two or more persons perceive at the same time is not a hallucination in other words, that there is some foundation for it.

But it does not follow that the converse of the proposition is true. It is not logical to conclude that, in every instance in which some strange appearance can be perceived by one observer only among many, it is a

hallucination. In some cases where certain persons perceive phenomena which escape the senses of others, it is certain that the phenomena are, or may be, real. An every-day example of this is the fact that persons endowed with strong power of distant vision clearly distinguish objects which are invisible to the short-sighted. Again, Reichenbach reports that his sensitives saw, at the poles of the magnet, odic light, and felt, from the near contact of large free crystals, odic sensations, which by Reichenbach himself, and others as insensible to odic impressions as he, were utterly unperceived.\* It is true that before such experiments can rationally produce conviction they must be repeated again and again, by various observers and with numerous subjects, each subject unknowing the testimony of the preceding, and the result of these various experiments must be carefully collated and compared. But, these precautions scrupulously taken, there is nothing in the nature of the experiments themselves to cause them to be set aside as untrustworthy.

There is nothing, then, absurd or illogical in the supposition that some persons may have true perceptions of which we are unconscious. We may not be able to comprehend how they receive these; but our ignorance of the mode of action does not disprove the reality of the effect. I know an English gentleman who, if a cat had been secreted in a room where he was, invariably and infallibly detected her presence. Vow he perceived this, except by a general feeling of uneasiness, he could never explain; yet the fact was certain.

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\* Reichenbach, in his "*Sensitive Mensch*," (vol. i. p. 1,) estimates the number of sensitives, including all who have any perception whatever of odic sights and feelings, at nearly one-half the human race. Cases of high sensitiveness are, he says, most commonly found in the diseased; sometimes, however, in the healthy. In both he considers them comparatively rare.

If we were all born deaf and dumb, we could not imagine how a human being should be able to perceive that a person he did not see was in an adjoining room, or how he could possibly become conscious that a town-clock, a mile off and wholly out of sight, was half an hour faster than the watch in his pocket. If to a deaf-mute, congenitally such, we say, in explanation, that we know these things because we *hear* the sound of the person's voice and of the clock striking, the words are to him without significance. They explain to him nothing. He believes that there is a perception which those around him call hearing, because they all agree in informing him of this. He believes that, under particular circumstances, they do become conscious of the distant and the unseen. But, if his infirmity continue till death, he will pass to another world with no conviction of the reality of hearing save that belief alone, unsustained except by the evidence of testimony.

What presumption is there against the supposition that, as there are exceptional cases in which some of our fellow-creatures are inferior to us in the range of their perceptions, there may be exceptional cases also in which some of them are superior? And why may not we, like the life-long deaf-mute, have to await the enlightenment of death before we can receive as true, except by faith in others' words, the allegations touching these superior perceptions?

There is, it is true, between the case of the deaf-mute and ours this difference: he is in the minority, we in the majority: his witnesses, therefore, are much more numerous than ours. But the question remains, are our witnesses, occasional only though they be, sufficient in number and in credibility?

That question, so far as it regards what are commonly called apparitions, it is my object in the next chapter to discuss.

Before doing so, however, one or two remarks touching current objections may here be in place.

It has usually been taken for granted that, if medicine shall have removed a perception, it was unreal. This does not follow. An actual perception may, for aught we know, depend on a peculiar state of the nervous system, and may be possible during that state only; and that state may be changed or modified by drugs. Our senses frequently are, for a time, so influenced; the sense of sight, for example, by belladonna. I found in England several ladies, all in the most respectable class of society, who have had, to a greater or less extent, the perception of apparitions; though they do not speak of this faculty or delusion (let the reader select either term) beyond the circle of their immediate friends. One of these ladies, in whose case the perception has existed from early infancy, informed me that it was suspended by indisposition, even by a severe cold. In this case, any medicine which removed the disease restored the perception.

Some writers have attempted to show that hallucination is epidemical, like the plague or the small-pox. If this be true at all, it is to an extent so trifling and under circumstances so peculiar that it can only be regarded as a rare exception to a general rule.\* De Gasparin

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\* I find in De Boismont's elaborate work on Hallucinations but a single example detailed of what, may be regarded as a collective hallucination, and that given (p. 72) on the authority of Bovet, and taken from his "*Pandemonium, or The Devil's Cloyster*," published in 1684, (p. 202;) not the most conclusive evidence, certainly. It is, besides, but the case of two men alleged to have seen, at the same time, the same apparition of certain richly-dressed ladies. But one of these men was at the time in a stupor, apparently suffering from nightmare, and did not speak of the vision at all until it was suggested to him by the other. We know, however, that suggestions made to a sleeping man sometimes influence his dreams. (See Abercrombie's "*Intellectual Powers*," 15th ed., London, 1857, pp. 202, 203.) A case cited and vouched for by Dr. Wigan ("*Duality of the Mind*," London,

seeks to prove the contrary of this\* by reminding us that in Egypt, in the time of Justinian, all the world is said to have seen black men without heads sailing in brazen barks; that during an epidemic that once depopulated Constantinople the inhabitants saw demons passing along the streets from house to house, dealing death as they passed; that Thucydides speaks of a general invasion of specters which accompanied the great plague at Athens; that Pliny relates how, during the war of the Romans against the Cimbrians, the clash of arms and the sound of trumpets were heard, as if coming from the sky; that Pausanias writes that, long after the action at Marathon, there were heard each night on the field of battle the neighing of horses and the shock of armies; that at the battle of Plataea the heavens resounded with fearful cries, ascribed by the Athenians to the god Pan; and so on.

Of these appearances some were clearly illusions, not hallucinations; and as to the rest, M. de Gasparin is too sensible a writer not to admit that "many of these anecdotes are false and many are exaggerated."† For myself, it would be almost as easy to convince me, on the faith of a remote legend, that these marvelous sights and sounds had actually existed, as that large numbers of men concurred in the conviction that they

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1844, pp. 166 *et seq.*) does not prove that hallucination may be of a collective character, though sometimes adduced to prove it.

Writers who believe in second-sight (as Martin, in his "*Description of the Western Islands of Scotland*") allege that if two men, gifted with that faculty, be standing together, and one of them, perceiving a vision, designedly touch the other, he also will perceive it. But we have no better evidence for this than for the reality of the faculty in question. And if second sight be a real phenomenon, then such seers are not deceived by a hallucination.

\* "*Des Tables Tournantes, du Surnaturel en General, et des Esprit*," par le Comte Agenor de Gasparin, Paris, 1855, vol. i. pp. 537 *et seq.*

† De Gasparin's work already cited, vol. i. p. 538.

saw and heard them. The very details which accompany many of them suffice to discredit the idea they are adduced to prove. In the relation of Pausanias, for example, touching the nightly noises on the battle-field of Marathon, we read that those who were attracted to the spot by curiosity heard them not: it was to the chance traveler only, crossing the haunted spot without premeditation, that the phantom horses neighed and the din of arms resounded. Imagination or expectation, it would seem, had nothing to do with it. It was a local phenomenon. Can we believe it to have been a perversion of the sense of hearing? If we do, we admit that hallucination may be endemic as well as epidemic.

I would not be understood as denying that there have been times and seasons during which instances of hallucination have increased in frequency beyond the usual rate. That which violently excites the mind often reacts morbidly on the senses. But this does not prove the position I am combating. The reaction consequent upon the failure of the first French Revolution, together with the horrors of the reign of terror, so agitated and depressed the minds of many, that in France suicides became frequent beyond all previous example. Yet it would be a novel doctrine to assert that suicide is of a contagious or epidemical character.

De Boismont reminds us that considerable assemblages of men ("des reunions considerables") have been the dupes of the same illusions. "A cry," he says, "suffices to affright a multitude. An individual who thinks he sees something supernatural soon causes others, as little enlightened as he, to share his conviction."\* As to *illusions*, both optical and oral, this is undoubtedly true; more especially when these present themselves in times

\* "*Des Hallucinations*," p. 128.

of excitement,—as during a battle or a plague,—or when they are generated in twilight gloom, or midnight darkness. But that the contagion of example, or the belief of one individual under the actual influence of hallucination, suffices to produce, in others around, disease of the retina or of the optic or auditory nerve, or, in short, any abnormal condition of the senses, is a supposition which, so far as my reading extends, is unsupported by any reliable proof whatever.

The hypothesis of hallucination, then, is, in a general way, untenable in cases where two or more independent observers perceive the same or a similar appearance. But, since we know that hallucination does occur, that hypothesis may, in cases where there is but a single observer, be regarded as the more natural one, to be rebutted only by such attendant circumstances as are not explicable except by supposing the appearance real.

Bearing with us these considerations, let us now endeavor to separate, in this matter, the fanciful from the real. In so doing, we may find it difficult to preserve the just mean between too ready admission and too strenuous unbelief. If the reader be tempted to suspect in me easy credulity, let him beware on his part of arrogant prejudice. "Contempt before inquiry," says Paley, "is fatal." Discarding alike prejudice and superstition, adopting the inductive method, let us seek to determine whether, even if a large portion of the thousand legends of ghosts and apparitions that have won credence in every age be due to hallucination, there be not another portion—the records of genuine phenomena—observed by credible witnesses and attested by sufficient proof.

## CHAPTER II.

### APPARITIONS OF THE LIVING.

WHEN, in studying the subject of apparitions, I first met an alleged example of the appearance of a living person at a distance from where that person actually was, I gave to it little weight. And this the rather because the example itself was not 'sufficiently attested. It is related and believed by Jung Stilling as having occurred about the years 1750 to 1760, and is to this effect.

There lived at that time, near Philadelphia, in a lonely house and in a retired manner, a man of benevolent and pious character, but suspected to have some occult power of disclosing bidden events. It happened that a certain sea-captain having been long absent and no letter received from him, his wife, who lived near this man, and who had become alarmed and anxious, was advised to consult him. Having heard her story, he bade her wait a little and he would bring her an answer. Thereupon he went into another room, shutting the door; and there he stayed so long that, moved by curiosity, she looked through an aperture in the door to ascertain what he was about. Seeing him lying motionless on a sofa, she quickly returned to her place. Soon after, he came out, and told the woman that her husband was at that time in London, in a certain coffeehouse which he named, and that he would soon return. He also stated the reasons why his return had been delayed and why he had not written to her; and she went home somewhat reassured. When her husband did return, they found, on comparing notes, that every thing

she had been told was exactly true. But the strangest part of the story remains. When she took her husband to see the alleged seer, he started back in surprise, and afterward confessed to his wife that, on a certain day, (the same on which she had consulted the person in question,) he was in a coffee-house in London, (the same that had been named to her,) and that this very man had there accosted him, and had told him that his wife was in great anxiety about him; that then the sea-captain had replied informing the stranger why his return was delayed and why he had not written, whereupon the man turned away, and he lost sight of him in the crowd.\*

This story, however, came to Stilling through several hands, and is very loosely authenticated. It was brought from America by a German who had emigrated to the United States, and had been many years manager of some mills on the Delaware. He related it, on his return to Germany, to a friend of Stilling's, from whom Stilling had it. But no names nor exact dates are given; and it is not even stated whether the German emigrant obtained the incident directly either from the sea-captain or his wife.

It is evident that such a narrative, coming to us with no better vouchers than these, (though we may admit Stilling's entire good faith,) cannot rationally be accepted as authority.

Yet it is to be remarked that, in its incidents, the above story is but little more remarkable than the Joseph Wilkins dream or the case of Mary Goffe, both already given in the chapter on Dreams. If true, it evidently belongs to the same class, with this variation: that the phenomena in the two cases referred to occurred spontaneously, whereas, according to the Stilling narrative,

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\* *Theorie der Geisterkunde*," vol. iv. of Stilling's "*Sammtliche Werke*," pp. 501 to 503, I have somewhat abridged in translating it.

they were called up by the will of the subject and could be reproduced at pleasure.

The next narrative I am enabled to give as perfectly authentic.

#### APPARITION IN IRELAND.

There was living, in the summer of the year 1802, in the south of Ireland, a clergyman of the Established Church, the Rev. Mr. —, afterward Archdeacon of —, now deceased. His first wife, a woman of great beauty, sister of the Governor of —, was then alive. She had been recently confined, and her recovery was very slow. Their residence—an old-fashioned mansion, situated in a spacious garden—adjoined on one side the park of the Bishop of —. It was separated from it by a wall, in which there was a private door.

Mr. — had been invited by the bishop to dinner; and as his wife, though confined to bed, did not seem worse than usual, he had accepted the invitation. Returning from the bishop's palace about ten o'clock, he entered, by the private door already mentioned, his own, premises. It was bright moonlight. On issuing from a small belt of shrubbery into a garden walk, he perceived, as he thought, in another walk, parallel to that in which he was, and not more than ten or twelve feet from him, the figure of his wife, in her usual dress. Exceedingly astonished, he crossed over and confronted her. It was his wife. At least, he distinguished her features, in the clear moonlight, as plainly as he had ever done in his life. "What are you doing here?" he asked. She did not reply, but receded from him, turning to the right, toward a kitchen-garden that lay on one side of the house. In it there were several rows of peas, staked and well grown, so as to shelter any person passing behind them. The figure passed round one end of these. Mr. — followed quickly, in increased astonishment,

mingled with alarm; but when he reached the open space beyond the peas the figure was nowhere to be seen. As there was no spot where, in so short a time, it could have sought concealment, the husband concluded that it was an apparition, and not his wife, that he had seen. He returned to the front door, and, instead of availing himself of his pass-key as usual, he rung the bell. While on the steps, before the bell was answered, looking round, he saw the same figure at the corner of the house. When the servant opened the door, he asked him how his mistress was. "I am sorry to say, sir," answered the man, "she is not so well. Dr. Osborne has been sent for." Mr. ——— hurried up-stairs, found his wife in bed and much worse, attended by the nurse, who had not left her all the evening. From that time she gradually sank, and within twelve hours thereafter expired.

The above was communicated to me by Mr. ———, now of Canada, son of the archdeacon.\* He had so often heard his father narrate the incident that every particular was minutely imprinted on his memory. I inquired of him if his father had ever stated to him whether, during his absence at the bishop's, his wife had slept, or had been observed to be in a state of swoon or trance; but he could afford me no information on that subject. It is to be regretted that this had not been observed and recorded. The wife knew where her husband was and by what route he would return. We may imagine, but cannot prove, that this was a case similar to that of Mary Goffe,—the appearance of the wife, as of the mother, showing itself where her thoughts and affections were.

The following narrative I owe to the kindness of a

\* On the 1st of June, 1859.

friend, Mrs. D——, now of Washington, the daughter of a Western clergyman of well-known reputation, recently deceased.

TWO APPARITIONS OF LIVING PERSONS, IN THE SAME HOUSE, ON THE SAME DAY.

I resided for several years in a spacious old stone house, two stories high, agreeably situated, amid fruit trees and shrubbery, on the banks of the Ohio River, in Switzerland County, Indiana. Two verandas, above and below, with outside stairs leading up to them, ran the entire length of the house on the side next the river. These, especially the upper one with its charming prospect, were a common resort of the family.

"On the 15th of September, 1845, my younger sister, J——, was married, and came with her husband, Mr. H—— M——, to pass a portion of the honeymoon in our pleasant retreat.

"On the 18th of the same month, we all went, by invitation, to spend the day at a friend's house about a mile distant. As twilight came on, finding my two little ones growing restless, we decided to return home. After waiting some time for my sister's husband, who had gone off to pay a visit in a neighboring village, saying he would soon return, we set out without him. Arrived at home, my sister, who occupied an upper room, telling me she would go and change her walking-dress, proceeded up-stairs, while I remained below to see my drowsy babes safe in bed. The moon, I remember, was shining brightly at the time.

"Suddenly, after a minute or two, my sister burst into the room, Wringing her hands in despair, and weeping bitterly. 'Oh, sister, sister!' she exclaimed; 'I shall lose him! I know I shall! Hugh is going to die.' In the greatest astonishment, I inquired what was the

matter; and then, between sobs, she related to me the cause of her alarm, as follows :—

"As she ran up-stairs to their room she saw her husband seated at the extremity of the upper veranda, his hat on, a cigar in his mouth, and his feet on the railing, apparently enjoying the cool river-breeze. Supposing, of course, that he had returned before we did, she approached him, saying, 'Why, Hugh, when did you get here? Why did you not return and come home with us?' As he made no reply, she went up to him, and, bride-like, was about to put her arms round his neck, when, to her horror, the figure was gone and the chair empty. She had barely strength left (so great was the shock) to come down-stairs and relate to me what her excited fears construed into a certain presage of death.

"It was not till more than two hours afterward, when my brother-in-law actually returned, that she resumed her tranquillity. We rallied and laughed at her then, and, after a time, the incident passed from our minds."

"Previously to this, however,—namely, about an hour before Hugh's return,—while we were sitting in the parlor, on the lower floor, I saw a boy, some sixteen years of age, look in at the door of the room. It was a lad whom my husband employed to work in the garden and about the house, and who, in his leisure hours, used to take great delight in amusing my little Frank, of whom he was very fond. He was dressed, as was his wont, in a suit of blue summer-cloth, with an old palm-leaf hat without a band, and he advanced, in his usual bashful way, a step or two into the room, then stopped, and looked round, apparently in search of something. Supposing that he was looking for the children, I said to him, 'Frank is in bed, Silas, and asleep long ago.' He did not reply, but, turning

with a quiet smile that was common to him, left the room, and I noticed, from the window, that he lingered near the outside door, walking backward and forward before it once or twice. If I had afterward been required to depose, on oath, before a court of justice, that I had seen the boy enter and leave the room, and also that I had noticed him pass and repass before the parlor-window, I should have sworn to these circumstances without a moment's hesitation. Yet it would seem that such a deposition would have conveyed a false impression.

"For, shortly after, my husband, coming in, said, 'I wonder where Silas is?' (that was the boy's name.)

"'He must be somewhere about,' I replied: 'he was here a few minutes since, and I spoke to him.' Thereupon Mr. D—— went out and called him, but no one answered. He sought him all over the premises, then in his room, but in vain. No Silas was to be found; nor did he show himself that night; nor was he in the house the next morning when we arose.

"At breakfast he first made his appearance. 'Where have you been, Silas?' said Mr. D——

"The boy replied that he had been up to the island, fishing.

"'But,' I said, 'you were here last night.'

"'Oh, no,' he replied, with the simple accent of truth. Mr. D—— gave me leave to go fishing yesterday; and I understood I need not return till this morning: so I stayed away all night. I have not been near here since yesterday morning!

"I could not doubt the lad's word. He had no motive for deceiving us. The island of which he spoke was two miles distant from our house; and, under all the circumstances, I settled down to the conclusion that as, in my sister's case, her husband had appeared where he was not, so in the case of the boy also it

was the appearance only, not the real person, that I had seen that evening. It was remarkable enough that both the incidents should have occurred in the same house and on the same day.

"It is proper I should add that my sister's impression that the apparition of her husband foreboded death did not prove true, he outlived her; and no misfortune which they could in any way connect with the appearance happened in the family.

"Nor did Silas die; nor, so far as I know, did any thing unusual happen to him."

This case is, in some respects, a strong one. There was evidently no connection between the appearance to the one sister and that to the other. There was no excitement preceding the apparitions. In each case, the evidence, so far as one sense went, was as strong as if the real person had been present. The narrator expressly says she would unhesitatingly have sworn, in a court of justice, to the presence of the boy Silas. The sister addressed the appearance of her husband, unexpected as it was, without doubt or hesitation. The theory of hallucination *may* account for both cases; but, whether it does or not, the phenomenon is one which ought to challenge the attention of the jurist as well as of the psychologist. If appearances so exactly counterfeiting reality as these can, occasionally, cheat human sense, their possible occurrence ought not to be ignored in laying down rules of evidence. The presumption, Of course, is, in every case, very strongly against them. Yet cases *have* occurred in which an alibi, satisfactorily proved yet conflicting with seemingly unimpeachable evidence, has completely puzzled the courts. An example, related and vouched for by Mrs. Crowe, but with

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\* Communicated to me, in Washington, June 24, 1859.

out adducing her authority, and which I have not myself verified, is, in substance, as follows:

In the latter part of the last century, in the city of Glasgow, Scotland, a servant-girl, known to have had illicit connection with a certain surgeon's apprentice, suddenly disappeared. There being no circumstances leading to suspicion of foul play, no special inquiry was made about her.

In those days, in Scottish towns, no one was allowed to show himself in street or public ground during the hours of church-service; and this interdiction was enforced by the appointment of inspectors, authorized to take down the names of delinquents.

Two of these, making their rounds, came to a wall, the lower boundary of "The Green," as the chief public park of the city is called. There, lying on the grass, they saw a young man, whom they recognized as the surgeon's assistant. They asked him why he was not at church, and proceeded to register his name; but, instead of attempting an excuse, he merely rose, saying, "I am a miserable man; look in the water!" then crossed a style and struck into a path leading to the Rutherglen road. The inspectors, astonished, *did* proceed to the river, where they found the body of a young woman, which they caused to be conveyed to town. While they were accompanying it through the streets, they passed one of the principal churches, whence, at the moment, the congregation were issuing; and among them they perceived the apprentice. But this did not much surprise them, thinking he might have had time to go round and enter the church toward the close of the service.

The body proved to be that of the missing servant-girl. She was found pregnant, and had evidently been murdered by means of a surgeon's instrument, which had remained entangled in her clothes. The apprentice,

who proved to have been the last person seen in her company before she disappeared, was arrested, and would, on the evidence of the inspectors, have been found guilty, had he not, on his trial, established an incontrovertible alibi; showing, beyond possible doubt, that he had been in church during the entire service. The young man was acquitted. The greatest excitement prevailed in the public mind at the time; but all efforts to obtain a natural explanation failed.\*

If this story can be trusted, it is conclusive of the question. Both inspectors saw, or believed they saw, the same person; a person of whom they were not in search and whom they did not expect to find there. Both heard the same words, and these words directed them to the river, and were the cause of their finding the dead body; the body, too, of a girl with whom the apprentice had been on the most intimate and suspicious terms, whether he was her murderer or not. When did hallucination lead to such a discovery as that?

In the next case, if it be one of hallucination, two senses were deceived.

#### SIGHT AND SOUND.

During the winter of 1839-40, Dr. J—— E—— was residing, with his aunt Mrs. L——, in a house on Fourteenth Street, Dear New York Avenue, in the city of Washington.

Ascending one day from the basement of the house to the parlor, he saw his aunt descending the stairs. He stepped back to let her pass, which she did, close to him, but without speaking. He instantly ascended the stairs and entered the parlor, where he found his aunt sitting quietly by the side of the fire.

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\* "*Night Side of Nature*," by Catherine Crowe, 16th ad., London, 1854, pp. 183 to 186.

The distance from where he first saw the figure to the spot where his aunt wits actually sitting was between thirty and forty feet. The figure seemed dressed exactly as his aunt was; and he distinctly heard the rustle of her dress as she passed.

As the figure, when descending the stairs and passing Dr. E——, bore the very same appearance as a real person, and as the circumstance occurred in broad daylight, Dr. E—— long thought that, if not a mere hallucination, it might augur death; but nothing happened to justify his anticipations.\*

The next example is of a much more conclusive character than any of the foregoing, if we except the narrative of Mrs. Crowe.

#### APPARITION OF THE LIVING,

*Seen by Mother and Daughter.*

In the month of May and in the year 1840, Dr. D——, a noted physician of Washington, was residing with his wife and his daughter Sarah (now Mrs. B——) at their country-seat, near Piney Point, in Virginia, a fashionable pleasure-resort during the summer months.

One afternoon, about five o'clock, the two ladies were walking out in a copse-wood not far from their residence; when, at a distance on the road, coming toward them, they saw a gentleman. "Sally," said Mrs. D——, "there comes your father to meet us." "I think not," the daughter replied: "that cannot be papa: it is not so tall as he."

As he neared them, the daughter's opinion was confirmed. They perceived that it was not Dr. D——, but Mr. Thompson, a gentleman with whom they were well

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\* The above was related to me by Dr. E—— himself, in Washington, on the 5th of July, 1859; and the MS. was submitted to him for revision.

acquainted, and who was at that time, though they then knew it not, a patient of Dr. D——'s. They observed also, as he came nearer, that he was dressed in a blue frock-coat, black satin waistcoat, and black pantaloons and hat. Also, on comparing notes afterward, both ladies, it appeared, had noticed that his linen was particularly fine and that his whole apparel seemed to have been very carefully adjusted.

He came up so close that they were on the very point of addressing him; but at that moment he stepped aside, as if to let them pass; and then, *even while the eyes of both the ladies were upon him*, he suddenly and entirely disappeared.

The astonishment of Mrs. D—— and her daughter may be imagined. They could scarcely believe the evidence of their own eyes. They lingered, for a time, on the spot, as if expecting to see him reappear; then, with that strange feeling which comes over us when we have just witnessed something unexampled and incredible, they hastened home.

They afterward ascertained, through Dr. D——, that his patient Mr. Thompson, being seriously indisposed, was confined to his bed; and that *he had not quitted his room, nor indeed his bed, throughout the entire day*.

It may properly be added that, though Mr. Thompson was familiarly known to the ladies and much respected by them as an estimable man, there were no reasons existing why they should take anymore interest in him, or he in them, than in the case of any other friend or acquaintance. He died just six weeks from the day of this appearance.

The above narrative is of unquestionable authenticity. It was communicated in Washington, in June, 1859, by Mrs. D—— herself; and the manuscript, being submitted to her for revision, was assented to as accurate. It had been frequently related, both by mother and daughter,

to the lady—a friend of theirs—who first brought it to my notice.

What shall we say to it? What element of authenticity does it lack? The facts are of comparatively recent occurrence. They are reported directly by the observers of the phenomenon. The circumstances preclude even the hypothesis of suggestion. The mother's remark to the daughter was, "There comes your father." The daughter dissents, remarking that it was a shorter man. When the appearance approaches, both ladies distinguish the same person, and that so unmistakably that they advance to meet him and speak to him, without the least mistrust. It was evidently an appearance seen independently by both the observers.

It was seen, too, in broad daylight, and under no excitement whatever. The ladies were enjoying a quiet afternoon's walk. There was no terror to blind, no anxiety of affection to conjure up (as skepticism might imagine it can) the phantom of the absent. The incident is (as they suppose) of the most commonplace character. The gentleman whom they see advancing to meet them is an ordinary acquaintance,—ill at the time, it is true; but even that fact is unknown to them. They both continue to see, him until he is within speaking-distance. Both observe his dress, even the minute particulars of it; so that on the senses of both precisely the same series of impressions is produced. They ascertain this by a subsequent comparison of their sensations.

Nor do they lose sight of him in any doubtful way, or while their attention is distracted. He disappears before their eyes at the very moment they are about to address him.

How strong in this case is the presumptive evidence against hallucination! Even setting aside the received doctrine of the books, that there is no collective hallucination,

how can we imagine that there should be produced, at the very same moment, without suggestion, or expectation, or unusual excitement of any kind, on the brain of two different persons, a perception of the self-same image, minutely detailed, without any external object to produce it? Was that image imprinted on the retina in the case both of mother and daughter? How could this be if there was nothing existing in the outside world to imprint it? Or was there no image on the retina? Was it a purely subjective impression? that is, a false perception, due to disease? But among the millions of impressions which may be produced, if imagination only is the creative agent, how infinite the probabilities against the contingency that, out of these millions, this one especial object should present itself in two independent cases!—not only a particular person, dressed in a particular manner, but that person advancing along a road, approaching within a few steps of the observers, and then disappearing! Yet even this is not the limit of the adverse chances. There is not only identity of object, but exact coincidence of time. The two perceive the very same thing at the very same moment; and this coincidence continues throughout several minutes.

What is the natural and \*necessary conclusion? That there was an image produced on the retina, and that there was an objective reality there to produce it.

It may seem marvelous, it may appear hard to believe, that the appearance of a human being, in his usual dress, should present itself where that human being is not. It would be a thing a thousand times more marvelous, ten thousand times harder to believe, that the fortuitous action of disease, freely ranging throughout the infinite variety of contingent possibilities, should produce, by mere chance, a mass of coincidences such as make up, in this case, the concurrent and contemporaneous sensations of mother and daughter

I might here adduce an example which several writers have noticed; that, namely, of the apparition to Dr nonne, in Paris, of his wife, with her hair hanging loose and a dead child in her arms, on the very day and at the very hour that she was delivered of a still-born child at Drewry House, the residence of Dr. Donne's patron, Sir Robert Drewry, then ambassador at the French Court. It is related and vouched for by "honest Izaak," as his friends used to call the author of "The Compleat Angler;"\* but it is two hundred and fifty years old. Therefore I prefer to pass on to the following, of modern date and direct authentication.

#### APPARITION AT SEA.

During the autumn of 1857, Mr. Daniel M——, a young American gentleman, after having traveled throughout Germany, was returning to the United States in a Bremen packet.

One tempestuous evening his mother, Mrs. A—— residing near New York, knowing that her son was probably then at sea, became much alarmed for his safety, and put up in secret an earnest prayer that he might be preserved to her.

There was residing in the same house with her, at that time, one of her nieces, named Louisa, who was in the habit of receiving impressions of what might be called a clairvoyant character. This niece had heard the expression of her aunt's fears, but, like the rest of the family, she was ignorant that these fears had found expression in prayer for her cousin's safety. The day after the tempest, she had an impression so vivid and distinct that she was induced to record it in writing. It was to the effect that her aunt had no cause to fear, seeing that the object of her anxiety was in safety, and that at the

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\* "*The Lives of Dr. John nonne, Sir Henry Wotton, &c.*" By Isaac Walton, Oxford edition, 1824, pp. 18 to 19

very hour of the previous evening when the mother had so earnestly put up a secret prayer for him, *her son, being at the time in his state-room, had been conscious of his mother's presence.*

This she read to her aunt the same day, thinking it might tend to comfort her.

And then she waited with great anxiety for her cousin's return, when she might have her doubts resolved as to the truth or falsehood of the mysterious impression regarding him.

He arrived three weeks afterward, safe and well; but during the afternoon and evening that succeeded his arrival, no allusion whatever was made by any one to the above circumstances. When the rest of the family retired, Louisa remained, proposing to question him on the subject. He had stepped out; but after a few minutes he returned to the parlor, came up to the opposite side of the table at which she was sitting, looking agitated, and, before she herself could proffer a word, he said, with much emotion, "Cousin, I must tell you a most remarkable thing that happened to me." And with that, to her astonishment, he burst into tears.

She felt that the solution of her doubts was at hand; and so it proved. He told her that one night during the voyage, soon after he had lain down, he saw, on the side of the state-room opposite his berth, the appearance of his mother. It was so startlingly like a real person that he rose and approached it. He did not, however, attempt to touch it, being ultimately satisfied that it was an apparition only. But on his return to his berth he still saw it, for some minutes, as before.

On comparing notes, it was ascertained that the evening on which the young man thus saw the appearance of his mother at Bea was the same on which she had so earnestly prayed for his safety,—the very same, too, which his cousin Louisa had designated in writing, three weeks

before, as the time when he had seen the apparition in question. And, as nearly as they could make it out, the hour also corresponded.

The above narrative was communicated to me\* by the two ladies concerned, the mother and her niece, both being together when I obtained it. They are highly intellectual and cultivated. I am well acquainted with them, and I know that entire reliance may be placed on their statement.

In this case, as in that in which the apparition of Mr. Thompson showed itself to mother and daughter, there are two persons having coincident sensations; Louisa impressed that her cousin was conscious of his mother's presence, and the cousin impressed with that very consciousness. Unlike the Thompson case, the cousins were many hundred miles distant from each other at the time. Suggestion was impossible; equally so was any mistake by after-thought. Louisa committed her impression to writing at the time, and read it to her aunt. The writing remained, real and definite, in proof of that impression. And she made no inquiry of her cousin, put no leading question, to draw out a confirmation or refutation of her perceptions regarding him. The young man volunteered his story; and his tears of emotion attested the impression which the apparition had made.

Chance coincidence, as every one must see, was out of the question. Some other explanation must be sought.

The following narrative, drawn from nautical life, exhibits coincidences as unmistakably produced by some agency other than chance.

#### THE RESCUE.

Mr. Robert Bruce, originally descended from some branch of the Scottish family of that name, was born,

\* On the 8th of August, 1859.

in humble circumstances, about the close of the last century, at Torbay, in the south of ED gland, and there bred up to a seafaring life.

When about thirty years of age, to wit, in the year 1828, he was first mate on a bark trading between Liverpool and St. John's, New Brunswick.

On one of her voyages bound westward, being then some five or six weeks out and having neared the easterly portion of the Banks of Newfoundland, the captain and mate had been on deck at noon, taking an observation of the sun; after which they both descended to calculate their day's work.

The cabin, a small one, was immediately at the stern of the vessel, and the short stairway descending to it ran athwart-ships. Immediately opposite to this stairway, just beyond a small square landing, was the mate's state-room; and from that landing there were two doors, close to each other, the one opening aft into the cabin, the other, fronting the stairway, into the stateroom. The desk in the state-room was in the forward part of it, close to the door; so that any one sitting at it and looking over his shoulder could see into the cabin.

The mate, absorbed in his calculation, which did not result as he expected, varying considerably from the dead-reckoning, had not noticed the captain's motions. When he had completed his calculations, he called out, without looking round, "I make our latitude and longitude so and so. Can that be right? How is yours?"

Receiving no reply, he repeated his question, glancing over his shoulder and perceiving, as he thought, the captain busy writing on his slate. Still no answer. Thereupon he rose; and, as he fronted the cabin-door, the figure he had mistaken for the captain raised its head and disclosed to the astonished mate the features of an entire stranger.

Bruce was no coward; but, as he met that fixed gaze

looking directly at him in grave silence, and became assured that it was no one whom he had ever seen before, it was too much for him; and, instead of stopping to question the seeming intruder, he rushed upon deck in such evident alarm that it instantly attracted the captain's attention. "Why, Mr. Bruce," said the latter, "what in the world is the matter with you

"The matter, sir? Who is that at your desk

"No one that I know of."

"But there is, sir: there's a stranger there."

"A stranger! Why, man, you must be dreaming. You must have seen the steward there, or the second mate. Who else would venture down without orders?"

"But, sir, he was sitting in your arm-chair, fronting the door, writing on your slate. Then he looked up full in my face; and, if ever I saw a man plainly and distinctly in this world, I saw him."

"Him! Whom?"

"God knows, sir: I don't. I saw a man, and a man I had never seen in my life before."

"You must be going crazy, Mr. Bruce. A stranger, and we nearly six weeks out!"

"I know, sir; but then I saw him."

"Go down and see who it is."

Bruce hesitated. "I never was a believer in ghosts," he said; "but, if the truth must be told, sir, I'd rather not face it alone."

"Come, come, man. Go down at once, and don't make a fool of yourself before the crew."

"I hope you've always found me willing to do what's reasonable," Bruce replied, changing color; "but if it's all the same to you, sir, I'd rather we should both go down together."

The captain descended the stairs, and the mate followed him. Nobody in the cabin! They examined the state-rooms. Not a soul to be found!

"Well, Mr. Bruce," said the captain, "did not I tell you you had been dreaming?"

"It's all very well to say so, sir; but if I didn't see that man writing on your slate, may I never see my home and family again!"

"Ah! writing on the slate! Then it should be there still." And the captain took it up.

"By God," he exclaimed, "here's something, sure enough! Is that your writing, Mr. Bruce?"

The mate took the slate; and there, in plain, legible characters, stood the words, "STEER TO THE NORTHWEST."

"Have you been trifling with me, Sir?" added the captain, in a stern manner.

"On my word as a man and as a sailor, Sir," replied Bruce, "I know no more of this matter than you do. I have told you the exact truth."

The captain sat down at his desk, the slate before him, in deep thought. At last, turning the slate over and pushing it toward Bruce, he said, "Write down, Steer to the nor'west."

The mate complied; And the captain, after narrowly comparing the two handwritings, said, "Mr. Bruce, go and tell the second mate to come down here."

He came; and, at the captain's request, he also wrote the same words. So did the steward. So, in succession, did every man of the crew who could write at all. But not one of the various hands resembled, in any degree, the mysterious writing.

When the crew retired, the captain sat deep in thought. "Could any one have been stowed away?" at last he said. "The ship must be searched; and if I don't find the fellow he must be a good hand at hide-and-seek. Order up all hands."

Every nook and corner of the vessel, from stem to stern, was thoroughly searched, and that with all the eagerness of excited curiosity,—for the report had gone

out that a stranger had shown himself on board; but not a living soul beyond the crew and the officers was found.

Returning to the cabin after their fruitless search, "Mr. Bruce," said the captain, "what the devil do you make of all this?"

"Can't tell, Sir. I saw the man write; you see the writing. There must be something in it."

"Well, it would seem so. We have the wind free, and I have a great mind to keep her away and see what will come of it."

"I surely would, Sir, if I were in your place. It's only a few hours lost, at the worst."

"Well, we'll see. Go on deck and give the course nor'west. And, Mr. Bruce," he added, as the mate rose to go, "have a look-out aloft, and let it be a hand you can depend on."

His orders were obeyed. About three o'clock the look-out reported an iceberg nearly ahead, and, shortly after, what he thought was a vessel of some kind close to it.

As they approached, the captain's glass disclosed the fact that it was a dismantled ship, apparently frozen to the ice, and with a good many human beings on it. Shortly after, they hove to, and sent out the boats to the relief of the sufferers.

It proved to be a vessel from Quebec, bound to Liverpool, with passengers on board. She had got entangled in the ice, and finally frozen fast, and had passed several weeks in a most critical situation. She was stove, her decks swept,—in fact, a mere wreck; all her provisions and almost all her water gone. Her crew and passengers had lost all hopes of being saved, and their gratitude for the unexpected rescue was proportionately great.

As one of the men who had been brought away in

the third boat that had reached the wreck was ascending the ship's side, the mate catching a glimpse of his face, started back in consternation. It was the very face he had seen, three or four hours before, looking up at him from the captain's desk.

At first he tried to persuade himself it might be fancy; but the more he examined the man the more sure he became that he was right. Not only the face, but the person and the dress, exactly corresponded.

As soon as the exhausted crew and famished passengers were cared for, and the bark on her course again, the mate called the captain aside. "It seems that was not a ghost I saw to-day, sir: the man's alive."

"What do you mean? Who's alive?"

"Why, sir, one of the passengers we have just saved is the same man I saw writing on your slate at noon. I would swear to it in a court of justice."

"Upon my word, Mr. Bruce," replied the captain, "this gets more and more singular. Let us go and see this man."

They found him in conversation with the captain of the rescued ship. They both came forward, and expressed, in the warmest terms, their gratitude for deliverance from a horrible fate,—slow-coming death by exposure and starvation.

The captain replied that he had but done what he was certain they would have done for him under the same circumstances, and asked them both to step down into the cabin. Then, turning to the passenger, he said, "I hope, sir, you will not think I am trifling with you; but I would be much obliged to you if you would write a few words on this slate." And he handed him the slate, with that side up on which the mysterious writing was not. "I will do any thing you ask," replied the passenger; "but what shall I write?"

"A few words are all I want. Suppose you write, 'Steer to the nor'west.'"

The passenger, evidently puzzled to make out the motive for such a request, complied, however, with a smile. The captain took up the slate and examined it closely; then, stepping aside so as to conceal the slate from the passenger, he turned it over, and gave it to him again with the other side up.

"You say that is your handwriting?" said he.

"I need not say so," rejoined the other, looking at it, for you saw me write it."

"And this?" said the captain, turning the state over.

The man looked first at one writing, then at the other, quite confounded. At last, "What is the meaning of this?" said he. "I only wrote one of these. Who wrote the other?"

"That's more than I can tell you, Sir. My mate here says you wrote it, sitting at this desk, at noon to-day."

The captain of the wreck and the passenger looked at each other, exchanging glances of intelligence and surprise; and the former asked the latter, "Did you dream that you wrote on this slate?"

"No, sir, not that I remember."

"You speak of dreaming," said the captain of the bark. "What was this gentleman about at noon today?"

"Captain," rejoined the other, "the whole thing is most mysterious and extraordinary; and I had intended to speak to you about it as soon as we got a little quiet. This gentleman," (pointing to the passenger,) "being much exhausted, fell into a heavy sleep, or what seemed such, some time before noon. After an hour or more, he awoke, and said to me, 'Captain, we shall be relieved this very day.' When I asked him what reason he had for saying so, he replied that he had dreamed that he was on board a bark, and that she was coming

to our rescue. He described her appearance and rig; and, to our utter astonishment, when your Vessel hove in sight she corresponded exactly to his description of her. We had not put much faith in what he said; yet still we hoped there might be something in it, for drowning men, you know, will catch at straws. As it has turned out, I cannot doubt that it was all arranged, in some incomprehensible way, by an overruling Providence, so that we might be saved. To Him be all thanks for His goodness to us."

"There is not a doubt," rejoined the other captain, that the writing on the slate, let it have come there as it may, saved all your lives. I was steering at the time considerably south of west, and I altered my course to nor'west, and had a look-out aloft, to see what would come of it. But you say," he added, turning to the passenger, "that you did not dream of writing on a slate?"

"No, sir. I have no recollection whatever of doing so. I got the impression that the bark I saw in my dream was coming to rescue us; but how that impression came I cannot tell. There is another very strange thing about it," he added. "Every thing here on board seems to me quite familiar; yet I am very sure I never was in your vessel before. It is all a puzzle to me. What did your mate see?"

Thereupon Mr. Bruce related to them all the circumstances above detailed. The conclusion they finally arrived at was, that it was a special interposition of Providence to save them from what seemed a hopeless fate.

The above narrative was communicated to me by Capt. J. S. Clarke, of the schooner Julia Hallock,\* who

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\* In July, 1859. The Julia Hallock was then lying at the foot of Rutgers Slip, New York. She trades between New York and St. Jago, in the island of Cuba. The captain allowed me to use his name, and to refer to him as evidence for the truth of what is here set down.

had it directly from Mr. Bruce himself. They sailed together for seventeen months, in the years 1836 and '37; so that Captain Clarke had the story from the mate about eight years after the occurrence. He has since lost sight of him, and does not know whether he is yet alive. All he has heard of him since they were shipmates is, that he continued to trade to New Brunswick, that he became the master of the brig Comet, and that she was lost.

I asked Captain Clarke if he knew Bruce well, and what sort of man he was.

"As truthful and straightforward a man," he replied, "as ever I met in all my life. We were as intimate as brothers; and two men can't be together, shut up for seventeen months in the same ship, without getting to know whether they can trust one another's word or not. He always spoke of the circumstance in terms of reverence, as of an incident that seemed to bring him nearer to God and to another world. I'd stake my life upon it that he told me no he."

This story, it will be observed, I had at second hand only, and related after an interval of more than twenty years from the time it was told to Captain Clarke. I had no opportunity of cross-examining the main witness. Inaccuracies, therefore, may, with the best intentions on the part of all concerned, have crept into it. Yet the evidence, with the drawback above stated, is direct enough. And Captain Clark furnishes the best proof of his sincerity when he permits me to use his name as reference in support of what I have here related.

Evidence at second hand, how reliable soever it appear, might properly be deemed inconclusive if the story stood alone. But if we find others, as we have, directly authenticated, of the same class, furnishing proof of phenomena strictly analogous to those which he at the bottom of this narrative, there seems no sufficient reason why we should regard it as apocryphal, or, setting it down as some idle forecastle yarn, should refuse to admit it as a valid item of evidence.

It is not, for example, characterized by phenomena more marvelous than those presented in the following story, of much later date, and directly authenticated by the chief witness.

#### THE DYING MOTHER AND TIER BABB:

In November of the year 1843, Miss H——, a young lady then between thirteen and fourteen years of age, was on a visit to a family of her acquaintance (Mr. and Mrs. E——) residing at their country-seat in Cambridgeshire, England. Mrs. E—— was taken ill; and, her disease assuming a serious form, she was recommended to go to London for medical advice. She did so; her husband accompanied her; and they left their guest and their two children, the youngest only ten weeks old, at home.

The journey, however, proved unavailing: the disease increased, and that so rapidly that, after a brief sojourn in the metropolis, the patient could not bear removal.

In the mean time the youngest child, little Fannie, sickened, and, after a brief illness, died. They wrote immediately to the father, then attending on what he felt to be the death-bed of his wife; and he posted down at Once. It was on a Monday that the infant died; on Tuesday Mr. E—— arrived, made arrangements for the funeral, and left on Wednesday to return to his wife,

from whom, however, he concealed the death of her infant.

On Thursday, Miss H—— received from him a letter, in which he begged her to go into his study and take from his desk there certain papers which were pressingly wanted. It was in this study that the body of the infant lay in its coffin; and, as the young lady proceeded thither to execute the commission, one of the servants said to her, "Oh, miss, are you not afraid?" She replied that there was nothing to be afraid of, and entered the study, where she found the papers required. As she turned, before leaving the room, to look at the babe, she saw, reclining on a sofa near to it, the figure of a lady whom she recognized as the mother. Having from infancy been accustomed to the occasional sight of apparitions, she was not alarmed, but approached the sofa to satisfy herself that, it was the appearance of her friend. Standing within three or four feet of the figure for several minutes, she assured herself of its identity. It did not speak, but, raising one arm, it first pointed to the body of the infant, and then signed upward. Soon afterward, and before it disappeared, the young lady left the room.

This was a few minutes after four o'clock in the afternoon. Miss H—— particularly noticed the time, as she heard the clock strike the hour a little before she entered the study.

The next day she received from Mr. E—— a letter, informing her that his wife had died the preceding day (Thursday) at half-past four. And when, a few days later, that gentleman himself arrived, he stated that Mrs. E——'s mind had evidently wandered before her death; for, but a little time previous to that event, seeming to revive as from a swoon, she had asked her husband "why he had not told her that her baby was in heaven." When he replied evasively, still wishing to conceal from her the

fact of her child's death, lest the shock might hasten her own, she said to him, "It is useless to deny it, Samuel; *for I have just been home, and have seen her in her little coffin.* Except for your sake, I am glad she is gone to a better world; for I shall soon be there to meet her myself." Very shortly after this she expired.

This narrative was related to me in January, 1859, by the lady who saw the apparition. She is now the wife of a learned professor, and the active and respected mother of a family, with as little, apparently, of the idle enthusiast or dreamy visionary about her as possible. She resides near London.\*

It will be observed that, as the young lady entered the study a few Minutes after four, and as the mother spoke of her alleged visit very shortly before her death, which occurred at half-past four, the coincidence as to time is, as nearly as may be, exact.

In the preceding narrative, as in most of those which reach us touching apparitions of the living, the subject of the phenomenon was insensible during its occurrence. But this does not seem to be a necessary condition. Examples may be found in which not only the person of whom the double appears is not asleep nor in a trance, but is present at the moment of that appearance, and himself witnesses it. Such an example I have been

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\* This story was submitted by me, in manuscript, to the lady in question, and its accuracy assented to by her.

In exemplification of the manner in which such phenomena are often kept hushed up, I may state that Miss H——, though with an instinctive feeling of how it would be received, ventured, soon after she left the study, to say to a lady then residing in the house, that *she thought* she had just seen Mrs. E——, and hoped there would be no bad news from London the next day. For this she was so sharply chidden, and so peremptorily bid not to nurse such ridiculous fancies, that, even when the confirmatory news arrived and Mr. E—— returned home, she was deterred from stating the circumstance to him. To this day he does not know it.

fortunate enough to obtain, directly authenticated by two of the witnesses present. Here it is:—\*

#### THE TWO SISTERS.

In the month of October, 1833, Mr. C——, a gentleman, several members of whose family have since become well and favorably known in the literary world, was residing in a country-house, in Hamilton County, Ohio. He had just completed a new residence, about seventy or eighty yards from that in which he was then living, intending to move into it in a few days. The new house was in plain sight of the old, no tree or shrub intervening; but they were separated, about halfway, by a small, somewhat abrupt ravine. A garden stretched from the old house to the hither edge of this ravine, and the farther extremity of this garden was about forty yards from the newly-erected building. Both buildings fronted west, toward a public road, the south side of the old dwelling being directly opposite to the north side of the new. Attached to the rear of the new dwelling was a spacious kitchen, of which a door opened to the north.

In the first editions of this work, another narrative, bearing upon the habitual appearance of a living person, was here given. It is now replaced by that of the "Two Sisters," for the following reasons. A friend of one of the parties concerned, having made inquiries regarding the story, kindly furnished me with the result; and the evidence thus adduced tended to invalidate essential portions of it. A recent visit to Europe enabled me to make further inquiries into the matter; and though, in some respects, these were confirmatory, yet I learned that a considerable portion of the narrative in question, which had been represented to me as directly attested, was in reality sustained only by second-hand evidence. This circumstance, taken in connection with the conflicting statements above referred to, places the story outside the rule of authentication to which, in these pages, I have endeavored scrupulously to conform; and I therefore omit it altogether.

It is very gratifying to find that, after the test of six months' publicity, the authenticity of but a single narrative, out of the seventy or eighty that are embraced in this volume, has been called in question.—Note to tenth thousand, September, 1860.

The family, at that time, consisted of father, mother, uncle, and nine children. One of the elder daughters, then between fifteen and sixteen years old, was named Rhoda; and another, the youngest but one, Lucy, was between three and four years of age.

One afternoon in that month of October, after a heavy rain, the weather had cleared up; and between four and five o'clock the sun shone out. About five o'clock, Mrs. C—— stepped out into a yard on the south side of the dwelling they were occupying, whence, in the evening sun, the new house, including the kitchen already referred to, was distinctly visible. Suddenly she called a daughter, A——, saying to her, "What can Rhoda possibly be doing there, with the child in her arms? She ought to know better, this damp weather." A——, looking in the direction in which her mother pointed, saw, plainly and unmistakably, seated in a rocking-chair just within the kitchen-door of the new residence, Rhoda, with Lucy in her arms. "What a strange thing!" she exclaimed: "it is but a few minutes since I left them up-stairs." And, with that, going in search of them, she found both in one of the upper rooms, and brought them down. Mr. C—— and other members of the family soon joined them. Their amazement——that of Rhoda especially——maybe imagined. The figures seated at the hall-door, and the two children now actually in their midst, were absolutely identical in appearance, even to each minute particular of dress.

Five minutes more elapsed, in breathless expectation, and there still sat the figures; that of Rhoda appearing to rock with the motion of the chair on which it seemed seated. All the family congregated, and every member of it——therefore twelve persons in all——saw the figures, noticed the rocking motion, and became convinced, past all possible doubt, that it was the appearance of Rhoda and Lucy.

Then the father, Mr. C——, resolved to cross over and endeavor to obtain some solution of the mystery; but, having lost sight of the figures in descending the ravine, when he ascended the opposite bank they were gone.

Meanwhile the daughter A—— had walked down to the lower end of the garden, so as to get a closer view; and the rest remained gazing from the spot whence they had first witnessed this unaccountable phenomenon.

Soon after Mr. C—— had left the house, they all saw the appearance of Rhoda rise from the chair with the child in its arms, then he down across the threshold of the kitchen-door; and, after it had remained in that recumbent position for a minute or two, still embracing the child, the figures were seen gradually to sink down, out of sight.

When Mr. C—— reached the entrance there was not a trace nor appearance of a human being. The rocking-chair, which had been conveyed across to the kitchen some time before, still stood there, just inside the door, but it was empty. He searched the house carefully, from garret to cellar; but nothing whatever was to be seen. He inspected the clay, soft from the rain, at the rear exit of the kitchen, and all around the house, but not a footstep could he discover. There was not a tree or bush anywhere near behind which any one could secrete himself, the dwelling being erected on a bare hill-side.

The father returned from his fruitless search, to learn, with a shudder, what the family, meanwhile, had witnessed. The circumstance, as may be supposed, made upon them a profound impression; stamping itself, in indelible characters, on the minds of all. But any mention of it was usually avoided, as something too serious to form the topic of ordinary conversation.

I received it directly from two of the witnesses,\* Miss A——, and her sister, Miss P—— They both stated to me that their recollections of it were as vivid as if it had occurred but a few weeks since.

No clew or explanation of any kind was ever obtained; unless we are to accept as such the fact that Rhoda, a very beautiful and cultivated girl, at the time in blooming health, died very unexpectedly on the 11th of November of the year following, and that Lucy, then also perfectly well, followed her sister on the 10th of December, the same year: both deaths occurring, it will be observed, within a little more than a year of that day on which the family saw the apparition of the sisters.

There is a sequel to this story, less conclusive, but which may be worth relating.

The new house was, after a time, tenanted by a son of Mr. C——; and, even from the time it was first occupied, it began to acquire the reputation of being occasionally, and to a slight extent, what is called haunted. The most remarkable incident occurred in this wise:

A son of Mr. C——'s brother, seven years old, Alexander by name, was playing one day, in the year 1858, in an upper room, when, all at once, he noticed a little girl, seemingly about four years old, with a bright red dress. Though he had never seen her before, he approached her, hoping to find a playmate, when she suddenly vanished before his eyes, or, as the child afterward expressed it, she "went right out." Though a bold, fearless boy, he was very much frightened by this sudden disappearance, and came running down-stairs to relate it in accents of terror to his mother.

It was afterward recollected that, during little Lucy's

In New York, on February 22, 1860. On February 27, I submitted to these ladies the manuscript of the narrative, and they assented to its accuracy.

last illness, they had been preparing for her a red dress, which greatly pleased the child's fancy. She was very anxious that it should be completed.

One day she had said to a sister, "You will finish my dress, even if I am ill: will you not?" To which her sister had replied, "Certainly, my dear, we shall finish it, of course." "Oh, not of course," said the child: "finish it of fine." This expression, at which they laughed at the time, served to perpetuate in the family the remembrance of the anxiety constantly evinced by the little sufferer about her new red dress; which, however, she never lived to wear.

It need hardly be added, that the little Alexander had never heard of his aunt Lucy, dying as she did in infancy twenty-five years before. The impression produced by this incident on the boy's mind, bold as was his natural character, was so deep and lasting that, for months afterward, nothing could induce him to enter the room again.

Perhaps we ought not to pass by unheedingly a hint even so slightly indicated as that suggested by this last incident. The "ruling passion strong in death" has become a proverbial expression; and, to a four-years infant, the longing after a bright new dress might take the place of maturer yearnings,—of love, in the youth; of ambition, in the man of riper years. Why a childish fancy cherished up to the last moment of earth-life should so operate in another phase of being as to modify a spirit-appearance, is not clear; perhaps it is unlikely that it should do so; it may not have been Lucy who appeared; the coincidence may have been purely fortuitous. Yet I do not feel sure, that it was so, or that no connection exists between the death-bed longing and the form selected (if it was selected) by the child-aunt when she appeared (if she did really appear) to her startled nephew.

In the above example, as in that already given of Mr. Thompson appearing to mother and daughter, it is evident that the apparition of the two sisters, whatever its exact character, must have been, in some sense, objective; in other words, it must have produced an image on the retina; for upon the senses of twelve witnesses precisely the same impression was made. Each one recognised, in the figures seated at the open door, at seventy or eighty yards' distance, the sisters Rhoda and Lucy. All witnessed the motion of the rocking-chair. All, with the exception of Mr. C——, saw the appearance of Rhoda rise from that chair, lie down across the threshold of the door, and then disappear, as if sinking into the earth. Of the persons thus present, Miss A——, one of the two ladies whose personal deposition to me attests this narrative, witnessed the apparent rising from the chair and sinking into the ground from the lower end of the garden, a distance of forty yards only. Finally, the actual presence of Rhoda and Lucy, in bodily form, among the spectators, precluded the possibility of trick or optical deception.

This presence of the two sisters, in their normal condition, suggests also a wholesome lesson. We must not generalize too hastily from a few facts. In most of the preceding examples, the person appearing was asleep or in a trance; and the theory which the most readily suggests itself is that, while the "brother of death" held sway, the spiritual body, partially detached, might assume, at distance from the natural body, the form of its earthly associate. But in the present case that theory seems inapplicable. The counterpart of the two sisters, seen by themselves as well as others, appears to be a phenomenon of a different character,—more in the nature of a picture, or representation, perhaps; by what agency or for what object presented we shall, it may be, inquire in vain.

Indeed, it is altogether illogical, in each particular instance of apparition, or other rare and unexplained phenomenon, to deny its reality until we can explain the purpose of its appearance; to reject, in fact, every extraordinary occurrence until it shall have been clearly explained to us for what great object God ordains or permits it. In the present example we discover no sufficient reason Why two deaths not to occur for more than a year should be thus obscurely foreshadowed, if indeed, foreshadowed they were. The only effect we may imagine to have been produced would be a vague apprehension of evil, without certain cause or definite indication. But what then? The phenomenon is one of a class, governed, doubtless, by general laws. There is good reason, we may justly infer, for the existence of that class; but we ought not to be called upon to show the particular end to be effected by each example. As a general proposition, we believe in the utility of thunderstorms, as tending to purify the atmosphere; but who has a right to require that we disclose the designs of Providence, if, during the elemental war, Amelia be stricken down a corpse from the arms of Celadon?

Space fails me, and it might little avail, to multiply examples attesting apparitions of the living. I close the series, therefore, by placing before the reader a narrative wherein, perhaps, he may find some traces, vague if they be, indicating the character of so many of the preceding examples as relate to appearances which show themselves during sleep or trance, and hinting to us, if even slightly, how these may occur. I am enabled to furnish it at first hand.

#### THE VISIONARY EXCURSION.

In June of the year 1857, a lady whom I shall designate as Mrs. A—— (now Lady ——) was residing with

her husband, a colonel in the British army, and their infant child, on Woolwich Common, near London.

One night in the early part of that month, suddenly awaking to consciousness, she felt herself as if standing by the bedside and looking upon her own body, which lay there by the side of her sleeping husband. Her first impression was that she had died suddenly; and the idea was confirmed by the pale and lifeless look of the body, the face void of expression, and the, whole appearance showing no sign of vitality. She gazed at it with curiosity for some time, comparing its dead look with that of the fresh countenances of her husband and of her slumbering infant in a cradle hard by. For a moment she experienced a feeling of relief that she had escaped the pangs of death; but the next she reflected what a grief her death would be to the survivors, and then came a wish that she could have broken the news to them gradually. While engaged in these thoughts, she felt herself carried to the wall of the room, with a feeling that it must arrest her farther progress. But no: she seemed to pass through it into the open air. Outside the house was a tree; and this also she appeared to traverse, as if it interposed no obstacle. All this occurred without any desire on her part. Equally without having wished or expected it, she found herself, after a time, on the opposite side of the Common, at Woolwich, close to the entrance of what is called the Repository.\* She saw there, as is usual, a sentry, and narrowly observed his uniform and appearance. From his careless manner, she felt sure that, though she seemed to herself to be standing near him, he did not perceive her. Then, first passing to the arsenal, where she saw another sentinel, she returned to the barracks, and there heard the clock strike three. Immediately after this she found herself in the bedchamber of an intimate friend,

\* A storehouse of arms and ammunition.

Miss L—— M——, then residing at Greenwich. With her she seemed to commence a conversation, but its purport she did not afterward distinctly recollect; for soon after it began she was conscious of seeing and hearing nothing more.

Her first words on awaking next morning were, "So I am not dead, after all?" When her husband questioned her as to the meaning of so strange an exclamation, she related to him the vision (if vision it was) of the night.

The above occurred during a Wednesday night; and they expected Miss L—— M—— on a visit on the next Friday. The husband exacted from his wife a promise that she would not write to, or in any way communicate with, this young lady in the mean time; and she gave him her word of honor to that effect.

So far there appeared to be nothing beyond an ordinary phenomenon, such as constantly occurs during sleep. It is not, indeed, customary to dream of seeing oneself; but who shall set limits to the vagaries of the sleeping fancy?

The sequel, however, contains the puzzle, and, some may think, one of those explanatory hints that are worth noting and reflecting on.

Colonel A—— was in company with his wife when, on the next Friday, she met her friend, Miss L—— It ought to be stated that this lady has from her childhood habitually seen apparitions. No allusion whatever was made to the subject uppermost in their thoughts; and after a while they all three walked out into the garden. There the two ladies began conversing about a new bonnet; and Mrs. A—— said, "My last was trimmed with violet; and I like the color so much I think I shall select it again." "Yes," her friend replied, "I know that is your color." "How so?" Mrs. A—— asked. "Because when you came to me the other

night—let me see: when was it?—ah, I remember, the night before last—it was robed in violet that you appeared to me." "I appeared to you the other night?" "Yes, about three o'clock; and we had quite a conversation together. Have you no recollection of it?"

This was deemed conclusive, both by husband and wife, in proof that something beyond the usual hypothesis of dreaming fancy was necessary to explain the visionary excursion to Woolwich.

This is the only time that any similar occurrence has happened to Mrs. Colonel A——. Her husband is now in India, a brigadier-general; and she has often earnestly longed that her spirit might be permitted, during the watches of the night, to visit him there. For a time, encouraged by what had already happened, she expected this. But longing and expectation have proved alike unavailing. Unthought of, unwished for, the phenomenon came; earnestly desired, fondly expected, it failed to appear. Expectant attention, then, is evidently not the explanation in this case.

It was related to me in February, 1859, by the one lady, the nightly visitant, and confirmed to me, a few days afterward, by the other, the receiver of the visit.

Resembling in its general character the Wilkins dream, the above differs from it chiefly in this, that the narrator appears to have observed more minutely the succession of her sensations; thus suggesting to us the idea that the apparently lifeless body which seemed to her to remain behind might, for the time, have parted with what we may call a spiritual portion of itself;\* which

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\* Dr. Kerner relates that on the 28th of May, 1827, about three o'clock in the afternoon, being with Madame Hauffe, who was ill in bed at the time, that lady suddenly perceived the appearance of herself, seated in a chair, wearing a white dress; not that which she then wore, but another belonging to her. She endeavored to cry out, but could neither speak nor move. Her

portion, moving off without the usual means of locomotion, might make itself perceptible, at a certain distance, to another person.

Let him who may pronounce this a fantastical hypothesis, absurd on its face, suggest some other sufficient to explain the phenomenon we are here examining.

This phenomenon, whatever its exact character, is evidently the same as that which, under the name of wraith, has for centuries formed one of the chief items in what are usually considered the superstitions of Scotland. In that country it is popularly regarded as a forewarning of death.\* This, doubtless, is a superstition; and by the aid of the preceding examples one may rationally conjecture how it originated.

The indications are:

That during a dream or a trance, partial or complete, the counterpart of a living person may show itself, at a greater or less distance from where that person actually is.

And that, as a general rule, with probable exceptions, this counterpart appears where the thoughts or the affections, strongly excited, may be supposed to be.†

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eyes remained wide open and fixed; but she saw nothing except the appearance and the chair on which it sat. After a time she saw the figure rise and approach her. Then, as it came quite close to her, she experienced what seemed an electric shock, the effect of which was perceptible to Dr. Kerner; and, with a sudden cry, she regained the power of speech, and related what she had seen and felt. Dr. Kerner saw nothing.—Seherin von Prevorst, pp. 138, 139.

\* "Barbara MacPherson, Relict of the deceast Mr. Alexander MacLeod, late Minister of St. Kilda, informed me the Natives of that Island have a particular kind of Second Sight, which is always a Forerunner of their approaching End. Some Months before they sicken, they are haunted with an Apparition resembling themselves in all Respects, as to their Person, Features, or Cloathing."—*Treatise on Second Sight, Dreams, and Apparitions*, Edinburgh, 1763, by THEOPHILUS INSULANUS, \*\*scRelation X.

† "Examples have come to my knowledge in which sick persons, over

In the case of Mary Goffe\* the type is very distinct. Hers was that uncontrollable yearning which a mother only knows. "If I cannot sit, I will lie all along upon the horse; for I *must* go to see my poor babes." So when the thoughts of Mrs. E——, dying in London, reverted to her infant, then lying in its coffin in Cambridgeshire. So, again, when the Irish clergyman went to dine with his bishop, leaving his wife sick at home, and she seemed to come forth to meet the returning absentee. To the apprentice, the probable murderer, we cannot ascribe what merits the name of affection. But we can imagine with what terrible vividness his feelings and apprehensions may have dwelt, throughout the protracted Scottish church-service, on the spot where lay the body of his victim and of his unborn child.

Less distinctly marked are some of the other cases, as that of Joseph Wilkins, not specially anxious about his mother; the Indiana bridegroom, Hugh, separated but an hour or two from his bride; the servant-boy, Silas, gone a-fishing; finally, Mrs. A——, with no prompting motive more than the ordinary wish to visit a friend. In some of these cases, it will be observed, death speedily followed; in others it did not. Joseph Wilkins lived forty-five years after his dream. Hugh survived, his wife. Silas is alive, a prosperous tradesman. Mrs. A—— still lives, in excellent health. It is evident that a speedy death does not *necessarily* follow such an apparition.

The reasons why it is in many cases the precursor of death probably are, that during a fatal illness the patient frequently falls into a state of trance, favorable, in all probability, to such a phenomenon; then, again, that, in

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come with an unspeakable longing to see some absent friend, have fallen into a swoon, and during that swoon have appeared to the distant object of their affection."—JUNG STILLING: *Theorie der Geisterkunde*, § 100.

\* Chapter on Dreams.

anticipation of death, the thoughts recur with peculiar liveliness to absent objects of affection; and, finally, perhaps, that the spiritual principle, soon to be wholly freed from its fleshly incumbrance, may, as it approaches the moment of entire release, the more readily be able to stray off for a time, determined in its course by the guiding influence of sympathy.

But it is evident that the vicinity of death is not needed to confer this power, and that anxiety, arising from other cause than the anticipation of approaching dissolution, may induce it. A tempest aroused the fears of the mother for her son on the Bremen packet. She appeared to him in his cabin. Yet both mother and son are alive at this day.

In this, as in a hundred other cases, the dispassionate examination of an actual phenomenon, and of its probable cause, is the most effectual cure for superstitious excitement and vulgar fears.

### CHAPTER III.

#### APPARITIONS OF THE DEAD.

—"Dare I say

No spirit ever brake the band  
That stays him from the native land  
Where first he walked when clasped in clay?

"No visual shade of some one lost,  
But he, the spirit himself, may come,  
Where all the nerve of sense is dumb,  
Spirit to spirit, ghost to ghost."—TENNYSON.

IF, as St. Paul teaches and Swedenborgians believe, there go to make up the personality of man a natural body and a spiritual body;\* if these co-exist, while earthly life endures, in each one of us; if, as the apostle further intimates† and the preceding chapter seems to prove, the spiritual body—a counterpart, it would seem, to human sight, of the natural body—may, during life, occasionally detach itself, to some extent or other and for a time, from the material flesh and blood which for a few years it pervades in intimate association; and if death be but the issuing forth of the spiritual body from its temporary associate; then, at the moment of its exit, it is that spiritual body which through life may have been occasionally and partially detached from the natural body, and which at last is thus entirely and forever

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\* 1 Corinthians xv. 44. The phrase is not, "a natural body and a *spirit*;" it is expressly said, "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual *body*."

† 2 Corinthians xii. 2.

divorced from it, that passes into another state of existence.

But if that spiritual body, while still connected with its earthly associate, could, under certain circumstances, appear, distinct and distant from the natural body, and perceptible to human vision, if not to human touch, what strong presumption is there against the supposition that after its final emancipation the same spiritual body may still at times show itself to man

If there be no such adverse presumption, then we ought to approach the subject, not as embodying some wild vagary barely worth noticing, just within the verge of possibility, but as a respectable and eminently serious question, worthy of our gravest attention, and as to which, let us decide as we will, there is much to be said on both sides before reaching a decision.

Nor is an apparition of the dead a phenomenon (or alleged phenomenon) of which the reality can be settled, affirmatively or negatively, by speculation in the closet.

A hundred theorists, thus speculating, may decide, to their own satisfaction, that it ought not to be, or that it cannot be. But if sufficient observation show that it is, it only follows that these closet theorists had no correct conception of the proper or the possible.

The Rev. George Strahan, D.D., in his preface to his collection of the *"Prayers and Meditations"* of his friend Dr. Samuel Johnson, (London, 1785,) has the following passage:

"The improbability arising from rarity of occurrence or singularity of nature amounts to no disproof: it is a presumptive reason of doubt too feeble to withstand the conviction induced by positive credible testimony, such as that which has been borne to shadowy reappearances of the dead."

"One true report that a spirit has been seen may give occasion and birth to many false reports of similar incidents; but universal and unconcerted testimony to a supernatural casualty cannot always be untrue. An appearing spirit is a prodigy too singular in its nature to become a subject of general invention."... "To a mind not influenced by popular prejudice, it will be scarcely possible to believe that apparitions would have been vouched for in all countries had they never been seen in any."

It was in the field, not in the closet, that the question was decided whether aerolites occasionally fall upon our earth. Chladni and Howard might have theorized over their desks for a lifetime: they would have left the question open still. But they went out into the world. They themselves saw no aerolite fall. But they inspected meteoric masses said to have fallen. They made out lists of these. They examined witnesses; they collected evidence. And finally they convinced the world of scientific skeptics that the legends in regard to falling stones which have been current in all ages, ever since the days of Socrates, were something more than fabulous tales.

I propose, in prosecuting a more important inquiry, to follow the example of Chladni and Howard, with what success time and the event must determine.

Innumerable examples may be met with of persons who allege that they have seen apparitions,—among these, men eminent for intelligence and uprightness. A noted example is that of Oberlin, the well-known Alsatian philanthropist, the benevolent pastor of Bande-la-Roche.

He was visited, two years before his death,—namely, in 1824,—by a Mr. Smithson, who published an account of his visit.\* Thence are gleaned the following particulars.

#### OBERLIN.

The valley of Ban-de-la-Roche, or Steinthal, in Alsace, the scene for more than fifty years of Oberlin's labors of love, surrounded by lofty mountains, is for more than half the year cutoff from the rest of the world by snows obstructing the passes.

\* "Intellectual Repository" for April, 1840, pp. 151 to 162.

There Oberlin found the peasantry with very peculiar opinions. He said to Mr. Smithson that when he first came to reside among the inhabitants of Steinthal they had what he then considered "many superstitious notions respecting the proximity of the spiritual world, and of the appearance of various objects and phenomena in that world, which from time to time were seen by some of the people belonging to his flock. For instance, it was not unusual for a person who had died to appear to some individual in the valley." ... "The report of every new occurrence of this kind was brought to Oberlin, who at length became so much annoyed that he was resolved to put down this species of superstition, as he called it, from the pulpit, and exerted himself for a considerable time to this end, but with little or no desirable effect. Cases became more numerous, and the circumstances so striking as even to stagger the skepticism of Oberlin himself." (p. 157.)

Ultimately the pastor came over to the opinions of his parishioners in this matter. And when Mr. Smithson asked him what had worked such conviction, he replied "that he himself had had ocular and demonstrative experience respecting these important subjects." He added that "he had a large pile of papers which he had written on this kind of spiritual phenomena, containing the facts, with his own reflections upon them." (p. 158.)

He stated further to Mr. Smithson that such apparitions were particularly frequent after that well-known and terrible accident which buried several villages, (the fall of the Rossberg, in 1806.) Soon after, as Oberlin expressed it, a considerable number of the inhabitants of the valley "had their spiritual eyesight opened" (p. 159) and perceived the apparitions of many of the sufferers.

Stober, the pupil and biographer of Oberlin, and throughout his life the intimate friend of the family, states that the good pastor was fully persuaded of the

actual presence of his wife for several years after her decease. His unswerving conviction was that, like an attendant angel, she watched over him, held communion with him, and was visible to his sight; that she instructed him respecting the other world and guarded him from danger in this; that, when he contemplated any new plan of utility, in regard to the results of which he was uncertain, she either encouraged his efforts or checked him in his project. He considered his interviews with her not as a thing to be doubted, but as obvious and certain,—as certain as any event that is witnessed with the bodily eyes. When asked how he distinguished her appearance and her communications from dreams, he replied, "How do you distinguish one color from another?"\*

I myself met, when in Paris, during the month of May, 1859, Monsieur Matter, a French gentleman holding an important official position in the Department of Public Instruction, who had visited Oberlin some time before his death, and to whom the worthy pastor submitted the "large pile of papers" referred to by Mr. Smithson.† He found it to contain, among other things, a narrative of a series of apparitions of his deceased wife, and of his *interviews* with her.‡

Monsieur Matter, who kindly furnished me with notes, in writing, on this matter, adds, "Oberlin was convinced that the inhabitants of the invisible world can appear to us, and we to them, when God wills; and that we are apparitions to them, as they to us."§

Neither the intelligence nor the good faith of Oberlin

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\* "*Vie de J. F. Oberlin*," par Stober, p. 223.

† The manuscript was entitled "*Journal deg Apparitions et Instructionspar Reves*."

‡ *Entretiens* was the word employed.

§ This appears to have been the Opinion of Jung Stilling, with whom Oberlin was well acquainted. See "*Theorie der Geisterkunde*," § 3.

can be called in question. But it will be said that intelligence and honesty are no security against hallucination, and that the pastor, in his secluded valley, after the loss of a wife whom he tenderly loved, might gradually have become infected with the superstitions of his parishioners. Although the opinions of such a man as Oberlin must ever count for something, yet it is to be admitted that we have not the means of disproving such surmises as these.

We need some circumstantial link, connecting the alleged apparition with the material world. Can we obtain such?

The following is from a respectable source:

#### LORENZO THE MAGNIFICENT AND THE IMPROVISATORE.

"Condivi relates an extraordinary story respecting Piero de' Medici, (son of Lorenzo the Magnificent,) communicated to him by Michael Angelo, who had, it seems, formed an intimacy with one Cardiere, an improvisatore that frequented the house of Lorenzo and amused his evenings with singing to the lute. Soon after the death of Lorenzo, Cardiere informed Michael Angelo that Lorenzo had appeared to him, habited only in a black and ragged mantle thrown over his naked limbs, and had ordered him to acquaint Piero de' Medici that he would in a short time be banished from Florence. Cardiere, who seems judiciously to have feared the resentment of the living more than of the dead, declined the office; but soon afterward Lorenzo, entering his chamber at midnight, awoke him, and, reproaching him with his inattention, gave him a violent blow on the cheek. Having communicated this second visit to his friend, who advised him no longer to delay his errand, he set out for Careggi, where Piero then resided; but, meeting him with his attendants

about midway between that place and Florence, he there delivered his message, to the great amusement of Piero and his followers, one of whom—Bernardo Divizio, afterward Cardinal da Bibbiena—sarcastically asked him 'whether, if Lorenzo had been desirous of giving information to his son, it was likely he would have preferred such a messenger to a personal communication.' The biographer adds, 'La vision del Cardiere, o delusion diabolica, o predizion divina, o forte immaginazione, ch'ella si fosse, si verifico.'"\*

Here is an alleged prediction and its fulfillment. But the course of policy pursued by Piero was such that it needed not prophetic instinct to discern the probability that he might one day lose his position in Florence. On the other hand, those who know Italian society will feel assured that a dependant like Cardiere was not likely to venture on such a liberty, unless driven to it by what *he* thought an actual injunction.

As to the cardinal's objection, it is a common one, often flippantly expressed. "It is somewhat remarkable," says Mr. Grose, "that ghosts do not go about their business like persons of this world. In cases of murder, a ghost, instead of going to the next justice of the peace and laying its information, or to the nearest relation of the person murdered, appears to some poor laborer who knows none of the parties, draws the curtains of some decrepit nurse or almswoman, or hovers about the place where his body is deposited."†

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\* "The vision of Cardiere, be it diabolical delusion, or divine forewarning, or vivid imagination, was verified." The anecdote is extracted from "*The Life of Lorenzo de' Medici*," by William Roscoe, chap. 10.

† "*Provincial Glossary and Popular Superstition*," by Francis Grose, Esq., F.A.S., 2d ad., London, 1790, p. 10.

If the cardinal or the antiquary merit a serious answer, it is this: If the appearance of apparitions be an actual phenomenon, it is without doubt, regulated by some general law. And, to judge from the examples on record, it would seem that, under that law, it is only rarely, under certain conditions and to certain persons, that such appearance is possible.

Somewhat more remarkable is the coincidence in the following case:

#### ANNA MARIA PORTER'S VISITOR.

When the celebrated Miss Anna Maria Porter was residing at Esher, in Surrey, an aged gentleman of her acquaintance, who lived in the same village, was in the habit of frequenting her house, usually making his appearance every evening, reading the newspaper, and taking his cup of tea.

One evening Miss Porter saw him enter as usual and seat himself at the table, but without speaking. She addressed some remark to him, to which he made no reply; and, after a few seconds, she saw him rise and leave the room without uttering a word.

Astonished, and fearing that he might have been suddenly taken ill, she instantly sent her servant to his house to make inquiries. The reply was, that the old gentleman had died suddenly about an hour before.

This was related by Miss Porter herself to Colonel H——, of the Second Life Guards, and by Colonel H——'s widow repeated to me, in London, during the month of February, 1859.

Unless we imagine, in this case, an escape from the nurse's care resembling that of the member of the Plymouth Club in the example already cited from Sir Walter Scott,\* it is difficult to avoid the conclusion

\* See chapter on Dreams.

that this was an apparition of the dead. Miss porter herself believed it such; and it appears that she had sent *immediately*, and that the old gentleman had died *an hour before*.

It will be admitted that the following is quite as difficult to explain away.

#### THE DEAD BODY AND THE BOAT-CLOAK.

We shall not find, in any other class of society, so sensitive an aversion to be taxed with any thing that may be construed into superstition as in the fashionable man of the world. For that reason the following, from the private diary of such a one, who passed his life in the most aristocratic circles of London and Paris, the intimate of nobles and princes of the blood, is the rather entitled to credit. The reserve with which such narratives are communicated, when the subjects belong to what is called good society, is evinced by the substitution of initials for the full names. The narrative is communicated in the most direct manner by one who had the best opportunities of knowing the exact facts of the case.

"*Wednesday, December 26, 1832.*—Captain —— recounted a curious anecdote that had happened in his own family. He told it in the following words:

"It is now about fifteen months ago that Miss M——, a connection of my family, went with a party of friends to a concert at the Argyle rooms. She appeared there to be suddenly seized with indisposition, and, though she persisted for some time to struggle against what seemed a violent nervous affection, it became at last so oppressive that they were obliged to send for their carriage and conduct her home. She was for a long time unwilling to say what was the cause of her indisposition; but, on being more earnestly questioned, she

at length confessed that she had, immediately on arriving in the concert-room, been terrified by a horrible vision, which unceasingly presented itself to her sight. It seemed to her as though a naked corpse was lying on the floor at her feet; the features of the face were partly covered by a cloth mantle, but enough was apparent to convince her that the body was that of Sir J—— Y——. Every effort was made by her friends at the time to tranquilize her mind by representing the folly of allowing such delusions to prey upon her spirits, and she thus retired to bed; but on the following day the family received the tidings of Sir J—— Y—— having been drowned in Southampton River that very night by the oversetting of his boat; and the body was afterwards found entangled in a *boat-cloak*. Here is an authenticated case of second-sight, and of very recent date."

For the following I am indebted to the kindness of my friend Dr. Ashburner, of London.

## APPARITION IN INDIA.

"In the year 1814 I became acquainted with Colonel Nathan Wilson, a man of strong intellectual powers, who had served many years in India under Sir Arthur Wellesley, afterward Duke of Wellington. I was introduced to him by Sir Charles Forbes, at a shooting-lodge at Strathdon, and there we had an opportunity of becoming intimate. I had, from his own lips, the narrative I am about to relate to you, and which I may preface by a few words touching the opinions of the narrator.

"Colonel Wilson made no secret of his atheism. In India especially, as I have myself observed, the tendency

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\* "A Portion of the Journal kept by Thomas Raikes, Esq., from 1831 to 1847," 2d ed., London, 1856, vol. i. p. 131.

of many minds, influenced by considering the great diversities of religious belief around them, is toward skepticism. Colonel Wilson, fortified by the perusal of Volney, D'Holbach, Helvetius, Voltaire, and others of similar stamp, rejected, as untenable, the doctrine of a future state of existence, and even received with some impatience any arguments on a subject as to which, he seemed to think, no one could any further enlighten him.

"In the year 1811, being then in command of the 19th regiment of dragoons,\* stationed at Tellicherry, and delighting in French literature, he formed an intimacy with Monsieur Dubois, a Roman Catholic missionary priest, an ardent and zealous propagandist and an accomplished man. Notwithstanding the great difference in their creeds, so earnest and yet liberal-minded was the Frenchman, so varied his store of information, and so agreeable and winning his manner, that the missionary and the soldier associated much together, and finally formed a strong attachment to each other. The former did not fail to avail himself of this intimacy by endeavoring to bring about the conversion of his friend. They conversed often and freely on religious subjects; but Colonel Wilson's skepticism remained unshaken.

"In July, 1811, the priest fell ill, much to the regret of the little circle at Tellicherry, where he was greatly beloved. At the same time, a mutiny having broken out at Vellore, Colonel Wilson was summoned thither, and, proceeding by forced marches, encamped on an extensive plain before the town.

"The night was sultry; and Colonel Wilson, arrayed as is common in that climate, in shirt and long light calico drawers with feet, sought repose on a couch within his tent; but in vain. Unable to sleep, his

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\* Or possibly the 17th dragoons; for he had commanded both.

attention was suddenly attracted to the entrance, of his tent: he saw the purdah raised and the priest Dubois present himself. The pale face and earnest demeanor of his friend, who stood silent and motionless, riveted his attention. He called him by name, but without reply: the purdah fell, and the figure had disappeared.

"The colonel sprang up, and, hastily donning his slippers, rushed from the tent. The appearance was still in sight, gliding through the camp, and making for the plain beyond. Colonel Wilson hastened after it, and at so rapid a pace that when his brother officers, roused by the sentries, went in pursuit of him, it was with difficulty he was overtaken. The apparition having been seen by Captain Wilson only, his comrades concluded that it was the effect of slight delirium produced by fatigue. But when the surgeon of the regiment felt the colonel's pulse, he declared that it beat steadily, without acceleration.

"Colonel Wilson felt assured that he had received an intimation of the death of his friend the missionary, who had repeatedly promised, in case he died first, to appear to him as a spirit. He requested his brother officers to note the time. They did so; and when subsequent letters from Tellicherry announced the decease of Dubois, it was found that he had died at the very hour when his likeness appeared to his friend.

"Desirous to ascertain what effect this apparition had produced on Colonel Wilson's opinions touching a future state, I put the question directly to him. 'I think it a very curious phenomenon,' he replied, 'not to be accounted for in the present state of our knowledge, and requiring investigation. But it is not sufficient to alter my convictions. Some energetic projection from Dubois's brain, at the moment of approaching annihilation,

might perhaps suffice to account for the appearance which I undoubtedly witnessed.' "\*

We can scarcely find a stronger proof of the vivid reality, to the observer, of this appearance than the shift to which he is reduced to explain it. He "undoubtedly witnessed it," he tells us; but, he argues, "it might, perhaps, be a projection from Dubois's brain at the moment of dissolution." What a *perhaps* is this! A projection from the brain of a dying man is to appear miles away from his dying bed, and, having assumed human form, is to imitate human locomotion! What sort of projection? Not a soul or a spiritual body, for an atheist admits no such entities,—nothing that inhabits, or is to inhabit, a future world of which an atheist denies the existence. What then? A portion of the physical substance of the brain, detached from it, and shot off, like some military projectile, from Tellicherry to Vellore? Concede the monstrous assumption. What directs it precisely to the friend to whom the owner of the brain had promised, in the event of death, to appear as a spirit? But suppose it to have arrived at Colonel Wilson's tent: what gave a detached portion of a brain the power to clothe itself in the complete form of a man, with a head and recognizable countenance, with arms, legs, a body?—the power, too, to glide away from a person pursuing it?

But it is sheer waste of time to track to its source a hypothesis so preposterous as this. In what a maze of absurdity may a man, reputed intelligent, involve himself when governed by a settled predetermination to ignore the possibility of a future world, where our

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\* Extracted from a letter in my possession, addressed to me by Dr. Ashburner, dated No. 7, Hyde Park Place, London, March 12, 1859.

spirits may hereafter exist, and whence they may occasionally return!

Narratives of apparitions at or about the moment of death are perhaps the most frequent of any. For a striking and directly authenticated example of this class I am indebted to my friend William Howitt, whose name is almost as familiar on this side of the Atlantic as in his own country. I give it in his own words.

#### THE BROTHER'S APPEARANCE TO THE SISTER.

"The circumstance you desire to obtain from me is one which I have many times heard related by my mother. It was an event familiar to our family and the neighborhood, and is connected with my earliest memories; having occurred, about the time of my birth, at my father's house at Heanor, in Derbyshire, where I myself was born.

"My mother's family name, Tantum, is an uncommon one, which I do not recollect to have met with except in a story of Miss Leslie's. My mother had two brothers, Francis and Richard. The younger, Richard, I knew well, for he lived to an old age. The elder, Francis, was, at the time of the occurrence I am about to report, a gay young man, about twenty, unmarried; handsome, frank, affectionate, and extremely beloved by all classes throughout that part of the country. He is described, in that age of powder and pigtails, as wearing his auburn hair flowing in ringlets on his shoulders, like another Absalom, and was much admired, as well for his personal grace as for the life and gayety of his manners.

"One fine calm afternoon, my mother, shortly after a confinement, but perfectly convalescent, was lying in bed, enjoying, from her window, the sense of summer beauty and repose; a bright sky above, and the quiet

village before her in this state she was gladdened by hearing footsteps which she took to be those of her brother Frank, as he was familiarly called, approaching the chamber-door. The visitor knocked and entered. The foot of the bed was toward the door, and the curtains at the foot, notwithstanding the season, were drawn, to prevent any draught. Her brother parted them, and looked in upon her. His gaze was earnest, and destitute of its usual cheerfulness, and he spoke not a word. 'My dear Frank,' said my mother, 'how glad I am to see you! Come round to the bedside: I wish to have some talk with you.'

"He closed the curtains, as complying; but, instead of doing so, my mother, to her astonishment, heard him leave the room, close the door behind him, and begin to descend the stairs. Greatly amazed, she hastily rang, and when her maid appeared she bade her call her brother back. The girl replied that she had not seen him enter the house. But my mother insisted, saying, 'He was here but this instant. Run! quick! Call him back! I must see him.'

"The girl hurried away, but, after a time, returned, saying that she could learn nothing of him anywhere; nor had any one in or about the house seen him either enter or depart.

"Now, my father's house stood at the bottom of the village, and close to the highroad, which was quite straight; so that any one passing along it must have been seen for a much longer period than had elapsed. The girl said she had looked up and down the road, then searched the garden,—a large, old-fashioned one, with shady walks. But neither in the garden nor on the road was he to be seen. She had inquired at the nearest cottages in the village; but no one had noticed him pass.

My mother, though a very pious woman, was far from superstitious; yet the strangeness of this circumstance

struck her forcibly. While she lay pondering upon it, there was heard a sudden running and excited talking in the village street. My mother listened: it increased, though up to that time the village had been profoundly still; and she became convinced that something very unusual had occurred. Again she rang the bell, to inquire the cause of the disturbance. This time it was the monthly nurse who answered it. She sought to tranquilize my mother, as a nurse usually does a patient. 'Oh, it is nothing particular, ma'am,' she said, 'some trifling affair,'—which she pretended to relate, passing lightly over the particulars. But her ill-suppressed agitation did not escape my mother's eye. 'Tell me the truth,' she said, 'at once. I am certain something very sad has happened.' The woman still equivocated, greatly fearing the effect upon my mother in her then situation. And at first the family joined in the attempt at concealment. Finally, however, my mother's alarm and earnest entreaties drew from them the terrible truth that her brother had just been stabbed at the top of the village, and killed on the spot.

"The melancholy event had thus occurred. My uncle, Francis Tantum, had been dining at Shipley Hall, with Mr. Edward Miller Mundy, member of Parliament for the county. Shipley Hall lay off to the left of the village as you looked up the main street from my father's house, and about a mile distant from it; while Heanor Fall, my uncle's residence, was situated to the right; the road from the one country-seat to the other crossing, nearly at right angles, the upper portion of the village street, at a point where stood one of the two village inns, the Admiral Rodney, respectably kept by the widow H——ks. I remember her well,—a tall, fine-looking woman, who must have been handsome in her youth, and who retained, even past middle age, an air superior to her condition. She had one only child, a son,

then scarcely twenty. He was a good-looking, brisk young fellow, and bore a very fair character. He must, however, as the event showed, have been of a very hasty temper.

"Francis Tantum, riding home from Shipley Hall after the early country dinner of that day, somewhat elate, it may be, with wine, stopped at the widow's inn and bade the son bring him a glass of ale. As the latter turned to obey, my uncle, giving the youth a smart switch across the back with his riding-whip, cried out, in his lively, joking way, 'Now be quick, Dick; be quick!'

"The young man, instead of receiving the playful stroke as a jest, took it as an insult. He rushed into the house, snatched up a carving-knife, and, darting back into the street, stabbed my uncle to the heart, as he sat on his horse, so that he fell dead, on the instant, in the road.

"The sensation throughout the quiet village maybe imagined. The inhabitants, who idolized the murdered man, were prevented from taking summary vengeance on the homicide only by the constables carrying him off to the office of the nearest magistrate.

"Young H——ks was tried at the next Derby assizes; but (justly, no doubt, taking into view the sudden irritation caused by the blow) he was convicted of manslaughter only, and, after a few months' imprisonment, returned to the village; where, notwithstanding the strong popular feeling against him, he continued to keep the inn, even after his mother's death. He is still present to my recollection, a quiet, retiring man, never guilty of any other irregularity of conduct, and seeming to bear about with him the constant memory of his rash deed,—a silent blight upon his life.

"So great was the respect entertained for my uncle, and such the deep impression of his tragic end, that so long as that generation, lived the church-bells of the

village were regularly tolled on the anniversary of his death.

"On comparing the circumstances and the exact time at which each occurred, the fact was substantiated that the apparition presented itself to my mother almost instantly after her brother had received the fatal Stroke."

Almost the only desirable condition left unfulfilled in the preceding narrative is that more than one person, and each influenced independently, should have witnessed the apparition. This additional voucher is supplied in the following.

#### THE NOBLEMAN AND HIS SERVANT.

The late Lord M——, having gone to the Highlands about the end of the last century, left his wife perfectly well in London. The night of his arrival at his Highland home, he was awakened by seeing a bright light in his room. The curtains of his bed opened, and he saw the appearance of Lady M—— standing there. He rang for his servant, and inquired of him what he saw; upon which the man exclaimed, in terror, "It's my lady!" Lady M—— had died suddenly in London that night. The story made a great noise at the time; and George the Third, sending for Lord M—— and ascertaining from him the truth of it, desired him to write out the circumstances as they happened; and the servant countersigned the statement.

About a year afterward, a child five years old, the youngest daughter of Lord M——, rushed breathlessly into the nursery, exclaiming, "I have seen mamma standing at the top of the stair and beckoning to me." That night the child, little Annabella M——, was taken ill, and died.

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\* Extracted from a letter addressed to me by Mr. Howitt, dated Highgate, March 28, 1859.

I can vouch, in an unqualified manner, for the authenticity of both the above circumstances; having received the account, in writing, from a member of Lord M——'s family.

In the following example the testimony of two witnesses to the same apparition is obtained under circumstances quite as conclusive. It was related to me in Naples, January 2, 1857, by one of these witnesses, (an intelligent English lady, of highly respectable family, who had spent many years in Russia,) as follows.

#### LOUISE.

In the early part of the year 1856, Mrs. F—— resided for some months in the family of Prince ——, a noble man who had occupied a high official position under the Emperor Nicholas.

One evening, between eleven and twelve, Mrs. F—— was in a small cabinet adjoining the bedroom of the Princess —— and separated from it by hangings Only, when she heard the door of the bedchamber open, and the princess (as she supposed) enter the room, set down her candle, and walk about. Expecting her to come into the cabinet, as was her wont, she waited; but in vain. Then she heard her again open the door and descend the stairs. Some twenty minutes afterward, steps reascended the stairs, and the princess herself entered and spoke to her. Mrs. F—— ascertained, to her surprise, that the princess had not been in her room before; yet the latter testified no astonishment when Mrs. F—— mentioned what she had heard.

Learning, next morning, that the lady's maid had not entered the room, and that no one else had access to it, Mrs. F—— again adverted to the extraordinary occurrence; and the princess told her frankly, what Mrs. F—— then learned for the first time, that they were accustomed

to such mysterious visits; that they commonly portended some unusual occurrence in the family; and that her husband had disposed of a palace they formerly owned in another street, for no other reason than to endeavor to escape the repeated noises and other disturbances by which they had been there tormented. One of these was the frequent sounding of heavy steps, during the dead of night, along a certain corridor. The prince had repeatedly, during the occurrence of these sounds, caused every egress from the corridor in question to be closed and guarded; but in vain. No solution of the mystery was ever obtained.

The princess added that to their new palace, in which they then were, and the windows of which looked out on the beautiful Neva, the noises had followed them, occurring at intervals. One of her daughters, previous to her marriage, had constantly experienced the sensation as of some one approaching her side, preceded by the tread of steps and what seemed the rustling of a silk dress, and sometimes accompanied by the sound as of water poured on the table.

At this time there was in the house a *femme-de-chambre* named Louise, a young German girl of respectable family, cultivated much beyond the station she then occupied, and which she had been induced to accept in consequence of a disappointment in love produced by the obstinate opposition of the young man's relatives to the proposed match. In consequence of her obliging, cheerful disposition, and her intelligence, she was a great favorite in the household, particularly with Mrs. F——, whom she had nursed during an illness.

When, subsequently, she herself fell ill, much interest was felt for her by all the family, and Mrs. F—— was frequently at her bedside.

One evening the family physician, after visiting Louise, reported that she was doing very well, and would doubt.

less recover; so that Mrs. F—— retired to rest without any anxiety on her account.

About two o'clock that night she was disturbed by the feeling as of something touching her; and, thinking it to be a rat, she became thoroughly awake with the fright. Then she felt, most distinctly, the touch as it were of a human hand pressing gently on different parts of her body and limbs. The sensation was so positive and unmistakable that she became convinced there was some one in the room. But she could see or hear nothing; and after a time it ceased. The next morning the servant awoke her with the intelligence that Louise had died suddenly about two o'clock the preceding night.

The girl's effects, including her clothes and letters, (some of them from her lover, who still cherished affection for her,) together with her lover's portrait, were collected together and placed, until they should be claimed by her family, not in the room in which she died, but in another, which became the bedroom of the *femme-de-chambre* who succeeded her.

As the family had frequently lost their servants through terror of the mysterious disturbances, they took measures to prevent the report of these from reaching this woman's ears. She heard, however, at various times, disturbing noises at night, and declared that on several occasions she had distinctly seen move silently across the floor a form, her description of which tallied exactly with the usual appearance of poor Louise, whom in life she had never seen. This apparition caused her to ask if it was not I the room in which her predecessor had died. But being reassured on that point, and having boasted, when the noises first occurred, that no ghost could inspire her with any fear, she was ashamed of yielding to her wish to sleep with one of the servant girls, and continued to occupy her own bedroom.

Some five weeks after the death of Louise, and a few

minutes after midnight, Mrs. F—— had ascended the stairs with a candle; and, as she reached the landing, a dim form flitted suddenly past from left to right,—not so rapidly, however, but that she could distinguish that it was transparent; for she distinctly perceived through it the opposite window. As she passed her hands over her eyes,—the thought flashing across her mind that this might be a hallucination only,—she was startled by a violent scream as of agony from the bedroom of the *femme-de-chambre*, situated on the left of the stair-landing. The scream was so loud that it aroused the household, and Princess —— and others hastened with Mrs. F—— to ascertain its cause. They found the maid in violent convulsions; and when, after some time, they recovered her, she declared, in accents of extreme terror, that the figure she had already several times seen had appeared to her in the most distinct form, approached the bed and bent over her, so that she seemed to feel its very breath and touch, upon which she lost consciousness and knew not what happened further. She could not be persuaded again to sleep in that room; and the disturbances continued there after she left it.

But, after a time, the young man who had been engaged to Louise wrote for her effects, requesting that they might be sent home, overland, at his expense. The new *femme-de-chambre* assisted in packing them. In taking up one of Louise's dresses, she dropped it in sudden terror, declaring that in exactly such a dress had the figure been clothed that bent over her when she swooned away.

From the day these effects were taken from the room where they had been placed, and sent off, all noises and disturbances therein entirely ceased.\*

I read over the above narrative to Mrs. F——, made a few corrections at her suggestion, and then she assented to its accuracy in every particular

We are gradually reaching a point in this series of narratives at which it becomes very difficult to explain away the phenomena they embrace, or to account for these on any other than the spiritual hypothesis. In the preceding example, for instance, what can possibly explain the coincident visions of Louise's successor and Mrs. F——, except the supposition of an objective reality?

We find narratives as conclusive as the above current throughout society,—usually discredited by superficial commentators,—sometimes justly, for many of them are apocryphal enough; sometimes, as I believe, unjustly.

I select, as a specimen of this latter class, from among what are called modern ghost-stories, one which, on account of the rank and character of the two seers, (Sir John Sherbroke and General Wynyard,) has been so much talked of throughout England as perhaps any other. It was published in the newspapers of the day; and the narrative, in a somewhat diffuse form, has been preserved in at least one modern publication.\* It is alluded to, but the initials only given, in Archdeacon Wrangham's edition of Plutarch, in a note, thus:—"A very, singular story, however, could be told on this head by Generals S—— and W——, both men of indisputable honor and spirit, and honorably distinguished by their exertions in their country's service." It is related, in a succinct manner, by Dr. Mayo in his work on Popular Superstitions; and he accompanies it with the following voucher:—"I have had opportunities of inquiring of two near relations of General Wynyard upon what evidence the above story rests. They told me they had each heard it from his own mouth. More recently a gentleman whose accuracy of information exceeds that of most people told me that he had heard the late Sir

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*"Signs before Death,"* collected by Horace Welby, London, 1825, pp 77 to 82.

John Sherbroke, the other party in the ghost-story, tell it, much in the same way, at a dinner-table."\* Here it is:

## THE WYNYARD APPARITION.

In the year 1785, Sir John Sherbroke and General Wynyard, then young men, were officers in the same regiment, stationed at that time in the island of Cape Breton, off Nova Scotia.

On the 15th of October of that year, between eight and nine o'clock P.M., these two young officers were seated before the fire, at coffee, in Wynyard's parlor. It was a room in the new barracks, with two doors, the one opening on an outer passage, the other into that officer's bedroom, from which bedroom there was no exit except by returning through the parlor.

Sherbroke, happening to look up from his book, saw beside the door which opened on the passage the figure of a tall youth, apparently about twenty years of age, but pale and much emaciated. Astonished at the presence of a stranger, Sherbroke called the attention of his brother officer, sitting near him, to the visitor. "I have heard," he said, in afterward relating the incident, "of a man's being as pale as death; but I never saw a living face assume the appearance of a corpse except Wynyard's at that moment." Both remained silently gazing on the figure as it passed slowly through the room and entered the bed-chamber, casting on young Wynyard, as it passed, a look, as his friend thought, of melancholy affection. The oppression of its presence was no sooner removed than Wynyard, grasping his friend's arm, exclaimed,

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\* *"On the Truths contained in Popular Superstitions,"* by Herbert Mayo, M.D., Professor of Anatomy and Physiology in King's College, &c. &c., 3d ed., Edinburgh and London, 1851, pp. 63, 64.

in scarcely articulate tones, "Great God! my brother!"

"Your brother! What can you mean?" replied Sherbroke: "there must be some deception in this." And with that he instantly proceeded into the bedroom, followed by Wynyard. No one to be seen there! They searched in every part, and convinced themselves that it was entirely untenanted. Wynyard persisted in declaring that he *had* seen his brother's spirit; but Sherbroke inclined to the belief that they might have been, in some way or other, deluded, possibly by a trick of a brother officer.

Nevertheless, both waited with great anxiety for letters from England; and this anxiety at last became so apparent on Wynyard's part that his brother officers, in spite of his resolution to the contrary, finally won from him the confession of what he had seen. The story was soon bruited abroad, and produced great excitement throughout the regiment. When the expected vessel with letters arrived, there were none for Wynyard, but one for Sherbroke. As soon as that officer had opened it, he beckoned Wynyard from the room. Expectation was at its climax, especially as the two friends remained closeted for an hour. On Sherbroke's return the mystery was solved. It was a letter from a brother officer, begging Sherbroke to break to his friend Wynyard the news of the death of his favorite brother, who had expired on the 15th of October, and at the same hour at which the friends saw the apparition in the block-house.

It remains to be stated that, some years afterward, Sir John Sherbroke, then returned to England, was walking in Piccadilly, London, when, on the opposite side of the street, he saw a gentleman whom he instantly recognized as the counterpart of the mysterious visitor. Crossing over, he accosted him, apologizing

for his intrusion, and learned that he was a brother (not the *twin* brother, as some accounts have it) of Wynyard.

Such is the story; for the truth of which I have been fortunate enough to obtain vouchers additional to those already given.

Captain Henry Scott, R.N., residing at Blackheath, near London, and with whom I have the pleasure of being acquainted, was, about thirty years ago, when Sir John Sherbroke was Governor of Nova Scotia, under his command as Assistant Surveyor-General of that province; and dining, one day, with Sir John, a guest remarked that an English newspaper, just received, had a most extraordinary ghost-story, in which his (Sir John's) name appeared. Thereupon Sherbroke, with much emotion, quickly replied, "I beg that the subject may not again be mentioned." The impression on the minds of all present was, that he considered the matter too serious to be talked of

But we are not left to mere inference, suggested by this indirect testimony. I communicated to Captain Scott, in manuscript, the above narrative; and, in returning it, that gentleman wrote to me, with permission to use his name, as follows:

"About six years ago, dining alone with my dear friend—now gone to his account—General Paul Anderson, C.B., I related to him the story of the Wynyard apparition, in substance exactly as you have it. When I had finished, 'It is extraordinary enough,' said he, 'that you have related that story almost *verbatim* as I had it from Sir John Sherbroke's own lips a short time before his death.'\* I asked the general

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\* His death is noticed in Blackwood's Magazine for June, 1830.

whether Sir John had expressed any opinion about the incident.

"'Yes,' he replied: 'he assured me, in the most solemn manner, that he believed the appearance to have been a ghost or spirit; and added that this belief was shared by his friend Wynyard.'

"General Anderson was a distinguished Peninsular War officer, a major under Sir John Moore, and one of those who assisted to bury that gallant general."\*

It will not, I think, be questioned that this evidence is as direct and satisfactory as can well be, short of a record left in writing by one or other of the seers, which it does not appear is to be found. Sir John Sherbroke, when forty years had passed by, repeats to a brother officer his unaltered conviction that it was the spirit of his friend's brother† that appeared to them in the Canadian block-house, and that that friend was as fully convinced of the fact as himself.

Strongly corroborative, also, is the fact that so deeply imprinted in Sherbroke's memory were the features of the apparition that the recollection called up, after the lapse of years, by the appearance of a stranger casually met in the streets of London, caused him to accost that stranger, who proved to be a brother of the deceased.

In the following we find an example of three persons seeing the same apparition, though at different times:

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\* Extracted from letter of Captain Henry Scott to me, dated January 26, 1859.

† The brother's name was John Otway Wynyard; and he was at the time of his death on the 15th of October, 1785, Lieutenant in the 3d Regiment of Life-Guards.

## APPARITION OF A STRANGER.

In March of the, year 1854, the Baron de Guldenstubbe was residing alone in apartments, at Number 23 Rue St. Lazare, Paris.

On the 16th of that month, returning thither from an evening-party, after midnight, he retired to rest; but, finding himself unable to sleep, he lit a candle and began to read. Very soon his attention was drawn from the book by experiencing first one electric shock, then another, until the sensation was eight or ten times repeated. This greatly surprised him and effectually precluded all disposition to sleep: he rose, donned a warm dressing-gown, and lit a fire in the adjoining saloon.

Returning a few minutes afterward, without a candle, in search of a pocket-handkerchief, to the bedroom, he observed, by light coming through the open door of the saloon, just before the chimney, (which was situated in a corner of the room, at the opposite diagonal from the entrance-door,) what seemed like a dim column of grayish vapor, slightly luminous. It attracted his notice for a moment; but, deeming it merely some effect of reflected light from the lamps in the courtyard, he thought no more of it, and re-entered the parlor.

After a time, as the fire burned badly, he returned to the bedchamber, to procure a fagot. This time the appearance in front of the fireplace arrested his attention. It reached nearly to the ceiling of the apartment, which was fully twelve feet high. Its color had changed from gray to blue,—that shade of blue which shows itself when spirits of wine are burned. It was also more distinctly marked, and somewhat more luminous, than at first. As the baron gazed at it, in some surprise, there gradually grew into sight, within

it, the figure of a man. The outlines at first were vague, and the color blue, like the column, only of a darker shade. The baron looked upon it as a hallucination, but continued to examine it steadily from a distance of some thirteen or fourteen feet.

Gradually the outlines of the figure became marked, the features began to assume exact form, and the whole to I take the colors of the human flesh and dress. Finally there stood within the column, and reaching about half way to the top, the figure of a tall, portly old man, with a fresh color, blue eyes, snow-white hair, thin white whiskers, but without heard or moustache; and dressed with some care. He seemed to wear a white cravat and long white waistcoat, high stiff shirt-collar, and a long black frock-coat, thrown back from his chest, as is the wont of corpulent people like him in hot weather. He appeared to lean on a heavy white cane.

After a few minutes, the figure detached itself from the column and advanced, seeming to float slowly through the room, till within about three feet of its wondering occupant. There it stopped, put up its hand, as in form of salutation, and slightly bowed.

The baron's impulse when it first approached had been to ring the bell. So perfectly distinct was the vision, so absolutely material seemed the figure before him, that he could scarcely resist the impression that some stranger (for the features were wholly unknown to him) had invaded his apartment. But the age and friendly demeanor of the intruder arrested his hand. Whether from this world or the other, there seemed nothing hostile or formidable in the appearance that presented itself moved toward the bed, which was to the right of the entrance-door and immediately opposite the fireplace, then, turning to the left, returned to the spot before the fireplace, where it had first appeared, then advanced a second time toward the baron

And this round it continued to make (stopping, however, at intervals) as often as eight or ten times. The baron heard no sound, either of voice or footstep.

The last time it returned to the fireplace, after facing the baron, it remained stationary there. By slow degrees the outlines lost their distinctness; and, as the figure faded, the blue column gradually reformed itself, inclosing it as before. This time, however, it was much more luminous,—the light being sufficient to enable the baron to distinguish small print, as he ascertained by picking up a Bible that lay on his dressing-table and reading from it a verse or two. He showed me the copy: it was in minion type. Very gradually the light faded, seeming to flicker up at intervals, like a lamp dying out.

From the time the figure appeared until it began to fade, mingling with the column, there elapsed about ten minutes: so that the witness of this remarkable apparition had the amplest opportunity fully to examine it. When it turned toward the fireplace, he distinctly saw its back. He experienced little or no alarm, being chiefly occupied during the period of its stay in seeking to ascertain whether it was a mere hallucination or an objective reality. On one or two previous occasions during his life he had seen somewhat similar apparitions,—less distinct, however, and passing away more rapidly; and, as they were of persons whom in life he had known, he had regarded them as subjective only; the offspring, probably, of his imagination, during an abnormal state of the nervous system.

Pondering over this matter, he went to bed, and, after a time, to sleep. In a dream, the same figure he had just seen again appeared to him, dressed exactly as before. It seemed to sit down on the side of the bed; and, as if in reply to the reflections that had been occupying the baron's mind before he retired to

rest, he thought he heard it say to him, in substance, "Hitherto you have not believed in the reality of apparitions, considering them only the recallings of memory: now, since you have seen a stranger, you cannot consider it the reproduction of former ideas." The baron assented, in dream, to this reasoning; but the phantom gave him no clue as to what its name or condition in life had been.

The next morning, meeting the wife of the concierge, Madame Matthieu, who had been in the habit of attending to his rooms, he inquired of her who had been their former occupant, adding that his reason for making the inquiry was, that the night before he had seen in his bedroom an apparition. At first the woman seemed much frightened and little disposed to be communicative; but, when pressed on the subject, she admitted that the last person who had resided in the apartments now occupied by the baron was the father of the lady who was the proprietor of the house,—a certain Monsieur Caron, who had formerly filled the office of mayor in the province of Champagne. He had died about two years before, and the rooms had remained vacant from that time until taken by the baron.

Her description of him, not only as to personal appearance, but in each particular of dress, corresponded in the minutest manner to what the baron had seen. A white waistcoat coming down very low, a white cravat, a long black frock-coat: these he habitually wore. His stature was above the middle height; and he was corpulent, his eyes blue, his hair and whiskers white; and he wore neither beard nor moustache. His age was between sixty and seventy. Even the smaller peculiarities were exact, down to the high standing shirt-collar, the habit of throwing back his coat from his chest, and the thick white cane, his constant companion when he went out.

Madame Matthieu further confessed to the baron that he was not the only one to whom the apparition of M. Caron had shown itself. On one occasion a maid-servant had seen it on the stairs. To herself it had appeared several times,—once just in front of the entrance to the saloon, again in a dim-lighted passage that led past the bedroom to the kitchen beyond, and more than once in the bedroom itself. M. Caron had dropped down in the passage referred to, in an apoplectic fit, had been carried thence into the bedroom, and had died in the bed now occupied by the baron.

She said to him, further, that, as he might have remarked, she almost always took the opportunity when he was in the saloon to arrange his bedchamber, and that she had several times intended to apologize to him for this, but had refrained, not knowing what excuse to make. The true reason was that she feared again to meet the apparition of the old gentleman.

The matter finally came to the ears of the daughter, the owner of the house. She caused masses to be said for the soul of her father; and it is alleged—how truly I know not—that the apparition has not been seen in any of the apartments since.

This narrative I had from the Baron de Guldenstubbe himself.\* That gentleman stated to me that, up to the time when he saw the apparition, he had never heard of M. Caron, and of course had not the slightest idea of his personal appearance or dress; nor, as may be supposed, had it ever been intimated to him that any one had died, two years before, in the room in which he slept.

The story derives much of its value from the calm and dispassionate manner in which the witness appears to have observed the succession of phenomena, and the

\* In Paris, on the 11th of May, 1859.

exact details which, in consequence, he has been enabled to furnish. It is remarkable, also, as well for the electrical influences which preceded the appearance, as on account of the correspondence between the apparition to the baron in his waking state and that subsequently seen in dream; the first cognizable by one sense only, that of sight,—the second appealing (though in vision of the night only) to the hearing also.

The coincidences as to personal peculiarities and details of dress are too numerous and minutely exact to be fortuitous, let us adopt what theory, in explanation, we may.

This series of narratives would be incomplete without some examples of those stories of a tragic cast, seeming to intimate that the foul deeds committed in this world may call back the criminal, or the victim, from another.

A very extraordinary sample of such stories is given in the memoirs of Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, a man of some distinction in his day, and from 1780 to 1794 a member of the British Parliament. It was related to Sir Nathaniel, when on a visit to Dresden, by the Count de Felkesheim. Of him Wraxall says, "He was a Livonian gentleman, settled in Saxony; of a very improved understanding, equally superior to credulity is to superstition." The conversation occurred in October, 1778.

After alluding to the celebrated exhibition, by Schrepfer, of the apparition of the Chevalier de Saxe, and expressing his opinion that "though he could not pretend to explain by what process or machinery that business was conducted, yet he had always considered Schrepfer as an artful impostor," the count proceeded to say that he was not so decidedly skeptical as to the possibility of apparitions as to treat them with ridicule or set them down as unphilosophical. Educated in the University

of Königsberg, he had attended the lectures on ethics and moral philosophy of a certain professor there, a very superior man, but who, although an ecclesiastic, was suspected of peculiar opinions on religious subjects. In effect, when, during his course, the professor touched on the doctrine of a future state, his language betrayed so visible an embarrassment that the count, his curiosity excited, ventured privately to broach the subject to his teacher, entreating him to say whether he had held back any thing that dwelt on his mind.

The reply of the professor was embodied in the following strange story.

### THE IRON STOVE.

"The hesitation which you noticed," said he, "resulted from the conflict which takes place within me when I am attempting to convey my ideas on a subject where my understanding is at variance with the testimony of my senses. I am, equally from reason and reflection, disposed to consider with incredulity and contempt the existence of apparitions. But an appearance which I have witnessed with my own eyes, as far as they or any of the perceptions can be confided in, and which has even received a sort of subsequent confirmation from other circumstances connected with the original facts, leaves me in that state of skepticism and suspense which pervaded my discourse. I will communicate to you its cause.

"Having been brought up to the profession of the Church, I was presented by Frederick William the First, late King of Prussia, to a small benefice, situated in the interior of the country, at a considerable distance south of Königsberg. I repaired thither in order to take possession of my living, and found a neat parsonage-house, where I passed the night in a bed-chamber which had been occupied by my predecessor.

"It was in the longest days of summer; and on the following morning, which was Sunday, while lying awake, the curtains of the bed being undrawn, and it being broad daylight, I beheld the figure of a man, habited in a loose gown, standing at a, sort of reading-desk, on which lay a large book, the leaves of which he seemed to turn over at intervals. On each side of him stood a little boy, in whose face he looked earnestly from time to time; and, as he looked, he seemed always to heave a deep sigh. His countenance, pale and disconsolate, indicated some distress of mind. I had the most perfect view of these objects; but, being impressed with too much terror and apprehension to rise or to address myself to the appearances before me, I remained for some minutes a breathless and silent spectator, without uttering a word or altering my position. At length the man closed the book, and then, taking the two children, one in each hand, he led them slowly across the room. My eyes eagerly followed him till the three figures gradually disappeared, or were lost, behind an iron stove which stood at the farthest corner of the apartment.

"However deeply and awfully I was affected by the sight which I had witnessed, and however incapable I was of explaining it to my own satisfaction, yet I recovered sufficiently the possession of my mind to get up; and, having hastily dressed myself, I left the house. The sun was long risen; and, directing my steps to the church, I found that it was open, though the sexton had quitted it. On entering the chancel, my mind and imagination were so strongly impressed by the scene which had recently passed, that I endeavored to dissipate the recollection by considering the objects around me. In almost all Lutheran churches of the Prussian dominions, it is the custom to bang up against the walls, or some part of the building, the portraits of the successive pastors

or clergymen who have held the living. A number of these paintings, rudely performed, were suspended in one of the aisles. But I had no sooner fixed my eyes on the last in the range, which was the portrait of my immediate predecessor, than they became riveted on the object; for I instantly recognized the same face which I had beheld in my bed-chamber, though not clouded by the same deep impression of melancholy and distress.

"The sexton entered as I was still contemplating this interesting head, and I immediately began a conversation with him on the subject of the persons who had preceded me in the living. He remembered several incumbents, concerning whom, respectively, I made various inquiries, till I concluded by the last, relative to whose history I was particularly inquisitive. 'We considered him,' said the sexton, 'as one of the most learned and amiable men who have ever resided among us. His character and benevolence endeared him to all his parishioners, who will long lament his loss. But he was carried off in the middle of his days by a lingering illness, the cause of which has given rise to many unpleasant reports among us, and which still form matter of conjecture. It is, however, commonly believed that he died of a broken heart.'

"My curiosity being still more warmly excited by the mention of this circumstance, I eagerly pressed him to disclose to me all he knew, or had heard, on the subject. 'Nothing respecting it,' answered he, 'is absolutely known; but scandal has propagated a story of his having formed a criminal connection with a young woman of the neighborhood, by whom, it was even asserted, he had two sons. As confirmation of the report, I know that there certainly were two children who have been seen at the parsonage,—boys, of about four or five years old; but they suddenly disappeared some time before the decease of their supposed father;

though to what place they were sent, or what is become of them, we are wholly ignorant. It is equally certain that the surmises and unfavorable Opinions formed respecting this mysterious business, which must necessarily have reached him, precipitated, if they did not produce, the disorder of which our late pastor died: but he is gone to his account, and we are bound to think charitably of the departed.'

"It is unnecessary to say with what emotion I listened to this relation, which recalled to my imagination, and seemed to give proof of the existence of, all that I had seen. Yet, unwilling to suffer my mind to become enslaved by phantoms which might have been the effect of error or deception, I neither communicated to the sexton the circumstances which I had witnessed, nor even permitted myself to quit the chamber where it had taken place. I continued to lodge there, without ever witnessing any similar appearance; and the recollection itself began to wear away as the autumn advanced.

"When the approach of winter made it necessary to light fires throughout the house, I ordered the iron stove which stood in the room, and behind which the figure which I had beheld, together with the two boys, seemed to disappear, to be heated, for the purpose of warming the apartment. Some difficulty was experienced in making the attempt, the stove not only smoking intolerably, but emitting an offensive smell.

"Having, therefore, sent for a blacksmith to inspect and repair it, he discovered, in the inside, at the farthest extremity, the bones of two small human bodies, corresponding in size with the description given me by the sexton of the two boys who had been seen at the parsonage.

"This last circumstance completed my astonishment, and appeared to confer a sort of reality on an appearance which might otherwise have been considered

as a delusion of the senses. I resigned the living, quitted the place, and retired to Konigsberg; but it has produced on my mind the deepest impression, and has, in its effect, given rise to that uncertainty and contra diction of sentiment which you remarked in my late discourse."\*

Wraxall adds, "Such was Count Felkesheim's story, which, from its singularity, appeared to me deserving of commemoration, in whatever contempt we may hold similar anecdotes."

If this narrative, and the intimations it conveys, may be trusted to, what a glimpse do these display of a species of future punishment speedy and inevitable!—inevitable so long as wickedness inheres in wicked deeds, unless conscience dies with the body. But conscience is an attribute of the immortal spirit, not of the perishable frame. And if, in very truth, from the world beyond it drags down the evil-doer to the earthly scene of his misdeeds, how false is our phrase, when, in speaking of a murderer who has eluded justice, we say he has escaped punishment! His deed dies not. Even if no vengeful arm of an offended Deity requite the wrong, the wrong may requite itself. Even in the case of some hardened criminal, when the soul, dulled to dogged carelessness during its connection with an obtuse and degraded physical organization, remains impervious, while life lasts, to the stings of conscience, death, removing the hard shell, may expose to sensitiveness and to suffering the disengaged spirit.

There are intimations, however, somewhat similar in general character to the above, which seem to teach us that even in the next world repentance, by its regenerating

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\* "Historical Memoirs of my Own Time," by Sir N. William Wraxall, Bart. London, 1815, pp. 218 to 226.

rating influence, may gradually change the character and the condition of the criminal; and I shall not be deterred from bringing forward an example, in illustration, by the fear of being charged with Roman Catholic leanings. Eclecticism is true philosophy.

The example to which I refer is one adduced and vouched for by Dr. Kerner, and to which, in part, he could testify from personal observation. It is the history of the same apparition, already briefly alluded to,\* as one, the appearance of which to Madame Hauffe was uniformly heralded by knockings, or rappings, audible to all. I entitle it

#### THE CHILD'S BONES FOUND.

The apparition first presented itself to Madame Hauffe during the winter of 1824-25, one morning at nine o'clock, while she was at her devotions. It was that of a swarthy man, of small stature, his head somewhat drooping, his countenance wrinkled as with age, clad in a dark monk's frock. He looked hard at her, in silence. She experienced a shuddering sensation as she returned his gaze, and hastily left the room.

The next day, and almost daily during an entire year, the figure returned, usually appearing at seven o'clock in the evening, which was Madame Hauffe's wonted hour of prayer. On his second appearance he spoke to her, saying he had come to her for comfort and instruction. "Treat me as a child," he said, "and teach me religion." With especial entreaty, he begged of her that she would pray with him. Subsequently he confessed to her that he had the burden of a murder and of other grievous sins on his soul; that he had wandered

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\* See Book III. chap. 2. "The Seeress of Prevorst." The circumstances, as already stated, occurred near Lowenstein, in the kingdom of Wurtemberg. Dr. Kerner and the seeress and her family were Protestants.

restlessly for long years, and had never yet been able to address himself to prayer.

She complied with his request; and from time to time throughout the long period that he continued to appear to her she instructed him in religious matters, and he joined with her in her devotions.

One evening, at the usual hour, there appeared with him the figure of a woman, tall and meager, hearing in her arms a child that seemed to have just died. She kneeled down with him, and prayed also. This female figure had once before appeared to the seeress; and her coming was usually preceded by sounds similar to those obtained from a steel triangle.

Sometimes she saw the man's figure during her walks abroad. It seemed to glide before her. On one occasion she had been on a visit to Gronau with her parents and her brothers and sisters; and ere she reached home the clock struck seven. Of a sudden she began to run; and when they hastened after her to inquire the cause, she exclaimed, "The spirit is gliding before and entreating my prayers." As they passed hastily along, the family distinctly heard a clapping, as of hands, seeming to come from the air before them; sometimes it was a knocking as on the walls of the houses which they happened to pass. When they reached home, a clapping of hands sounded before them as they ascended the stairs. The seeress hastened to her chamber; and there, as if on bended knees, the spirit prayed with her as usual.

The longer she conversed with him, and the oftener he came for prayer, the lighter and more cheerful and friendly did his countenance become. When their devotions were over, he was wont to say, "Now the sun rises!" or, "Now I feel the sun shining within me!"

One day she asked him whether he could hear other persons speak as well as herself "I can hear them

through you was his reply. "How so?" she inquired. And he answered, "Because when you hear others speak you think of what you hear; and I can read your thoughts."

It was observed that, as often as this spirit appeared, a black terrier that was kept in the house seemed to be sensible of its presence; for no sooner was the figure perceptible to the seeress than the dog ran, as if for protection, to some one present, often howling loudly; and after his first sight of it he would never remain alone of nights.

One night this apparition presented itself to Madame Hauffe and said, "I shall not come to you for a week; for your guardian spirit is occupied elsewhere. Something important is about to happen in your family: you will hear of it next Wednesday."

This was repeated by Madame Hauffe to her family the next morning. Wednesday came, and with it a letter informing them that the seeress's grandfather, of whose illness they had not even been previously informed, was dead. The apparition did not show itself again till the end of the week.

The "guardian spirit" spoken of by the apparition frequently appeared to the seeress, in the form of her grandmother, the deceased wife of him who had just died, and alleged that it was her grandmother's spirit, and that it constantly watched over her. When the spirit of the self-confessed murderer reappeared, after the intermission of a week, she asked him why her guardian spirit had deserted her in these last days. To which he replied, "Because she was occupied by the dying-bed of the recently deceased." He added, "I have advanced so far that I saw the spirit of your relative soon after his death enter a beautiful valley. I shall soon be allowed to enter it myself"

Madame Hauffe's mother never saw the apparition,

nor did her sister. But both, at the times when the spirit appeared to the seeress, frequently felt the sensation as of a breeze blowing upon them.

A friend of the family, a certain forest-ranger, named Boheim, would not believe in the apparition, and wished present with Madame Hauffe at the usual hour to be when it came. He and she were alone in the room. When a few minutes had elapsed, they heard the customary rappings, and, shortly after, the sound as of a body falling. They entered, and found Boheim in a swoon on the floor. When he recovered, he told them that, soon after the rappings commenced, there formed itself, in the corner against the wall, a gray cloud; that this cloud gradually approached the seeress and himself; and when it came quite near it assumed human form. It was between him and the door, so as, apparently, to bar egress. He had returned to consciousness when aid arrived, and he was astonished to see persons pass through the figure without seeming to notice it.

At the expiration of about a year from the time of its first appearance,—namely, on the evening of the 5th of January, 1826,—the spirit said to the seeress, "I shall soon leave you altogether." And he thanked her for all the aid and instruction she had given him, and for her prayers. The next day (January 6, the day her child was christened) he appeared to her for the last time. A servant-girl who was with the seeress at the moment saw and heard (to her astonishment) the door open and close; but it was the seeress alone who saw the apparition enter; and she said nothing to the girl about it.

Afterward, at the christening, Madame Hauffe's father distinctly perceived the same figure, looking bright and pleasant. And going presently into an ante-chamber, he also saw the apparition of the tall, thin, melancholy woman, with the child on her arm. After this day neither of the figures ever appeared to the seeress.

But the fact most strikingly corroborative of all remains to be told. At the instigation of the seeress they dug, at a spot designated by her, in the yard back of the house, Dear the kitchen, and there, at a considerable depth, *they found the skeleton and other remains of a small child.*\*

A single narrative is insufficient proof of a novel theory; and by many the theory will be deemed novel which assumes that the hope of improvement dies not with the body, that beyond the tomb, as on this side of it, progress is the great ruling principle, and that not only may we occasionally receive communications from the denizens of another world, but, under certain circumstances, may sometimes impart to them comfort and instruction in return.

I do not find, however, either from analogy, in Scripture, or elsewhere, any presumptive evidence going to disprove such a hypothesis.† The narrative, so far as it goes, sustains it. All that can be said is, that other coinciding proofs are needed before it can be rationally alleged that

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\* "*Die Seherin von Prevorst*," by Justinus Kerner, 4th edition, Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1846, pp. 367 to 374.

† In a subsequent chapter (on the Change at Death) I shall have occasion to speak of the doctrine—vaguely conceived by the ancients, adopted in somewhat more definite form by the Jews, and universally received by early Christians—of what is commonly called a mediate state after death,—a state where instruction may still be received, where repentance may still do its work, and where the errors of the present life may be corrected in a life to come.

Several of the early Christian Fathers held to the opinion that the gospel was preached, both by Christ and his apostles, to the dead as well as to the living: among them, Origen and Clement of Alexandria. The latter exclaims, "What! do not the Scriptures manifest that the Lord preached the gospel to those who perished in the deluge, or rather to such as had been bound, and to those in prison and in custody? It has been shown to me that the apostles, in imitation of the Lord, preached the gospel to those in Hades."—*Quoted by Sears, "Foregleams of Immortality,"* p. 264.

we have obtained such an aggregation of evidence as may be pronounced conclusive.

It is none the less to be conceded that Kerner's story bears strong marks of authenticity. The good faith of the author has scarcely been questioned even by his opponents. His opportunities for observation were almost without precedent. I visited Madame Hauffe, as physician," he tells us, probably three thousand times. I frequently remained by her sick-bed hours at a time; I knew her surroundings better than she did herself; and I took unspeakable pains to follow up every rumor or suggestion of trickery, without ever detecting the slightest trace of any deception."

It is to be remarked, also, that in this example there are many strongly corroborative circumstances, beyond the perceptions of the seeress,—the knockings and clappings, heard by all; the cool breeze felt by her mother and sister; the terror of the dog; the fulfillment of the prophecy, communicated beforehand to her family, in connection with the grandfather's death. Add to this that the same apparition was seen, at different times, by three persons,—by Madame Hauffe, by her father, and by Herr Boheim. Names, dates, places, every minute incident is given. The narrative was published, on the spot, at the time. Sixteen years afterward, on the issuing of the fourth edition of his work, Dr. Kerner reiterates in the most solemn manner his conviction of its truth.

It is in vain to assert that we ought to pass lightly by such testimony as this.

In the two preceding narratives, the incidents of which seem to indicate the return of the evil-doer's

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\* "*Seherin van Prevorst*," p. 324. The entire work will well repay a careful perusal.

spirit to the scene of his evil deed, the deed was one of the greatest of earthly crimes,—murder. But we may find examples where the prompting motive of return appears to be a mere short-coming of the most trivial character. Such a one is given by Dr. Binns, in his "Anatomy of Sleep." It was communicated by the Rev. Charles McKay, a Catholic priest, then resident in Scot, land, in a letter addressed by him to the Countess of Shrewsbury, dated Perth, October 21, 1842. This letter was communicated by the earl to Dr. Binns, who publishes it entire,' adding that "perhaps there is not a better-authenticated case on record." I extract it from the letter, as follows.

#### THE DEBT OF THREE-AND-TENPENCE.

In July, 1838, I left Edinburgh, to take charge of the Perthshire missions. On my arrival in Perth, the principal station, I was called upon by a Presbyterian woman, (Anne Simpson by name,) who for more than a week had been in the utmost anxiety to see a priest. On asking her what she wanted with me, she answered, 'Oh, sir, I have been terribly troubled for several nights by a person appearing to me during the night.' 'Are you a Catholic, my good woman.?' 'No, sir: I am a Presbyterian.' 'Why, then, do you come to me? I am a Catholic priest.' 'But, sir, *she* (meaning the person that had appeared to her) desired me to go to the priest, and I have been inquiring for a priest during the last week.' 'Why did she wish you to go to the priest?' 'She said she owed a sum of money, and the priest would pay it.' 'What was the sum of money she owed?' 'Three-and-tenpence, Sir.' 'To whom did she owe it?' 'I do not know, Sir.' 'Are you sure you have not been dreaming?' 'Oh, God forgive you! for she appears to me every night. I can get no rest.' 'Did you know the

woman you say appears to you?' 'I was poorly lodged, Sir, near the barracks, and I often saw and spoke to her as she went in and out to the barracks; and she called herself Maloy.'

"I made inquiry, and found that a woman of that name had died who had acted as washerwoman and followed the regiment. Following up the inquiry, I found a grocer with whom she had dealt, and, on asking him if a person, a female, named Maloy owed him any thing, he turned up his books, and told me she did owe him *three-and-tenpence*. I paid the sum. The grocer knew nothing of her death, nor, indeed, of her character, but that she was attached to the barracks. Subsequently the Presbyterian woman came to me, saying that she was no more troubled."

It is not a plausible supposition, in this case, that for so paltry a sum a tradesman should concert with an old woman (she was past seventy years of age) to trump up a story of an apparition and impose on the good nature and credulity of a priest. Had it been such a trick, too, it is scarcely supposable that the woman should not have mentioned the grocer's name, but should have left the reverend gentleman to grope after the creditor as he best might.

If the whole was related in good faith, the indication seems to be that human character may be but little altered by the death-change,—sometimes preserving in another state of existence not only trifling recollections, but trivial cares.

Some narratives appear to favor the supposition that not the criminal only, but the victim of his crime, may, at times, be attracted in spirit to the earthly scene of suffering. The Hydesville story may have been an ex

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\* "*Anatomy of Sleep*," by Edward Binns, M.D., pp. 462, 463.

ample of this. While in Paris, in the spring of 1859, I obtained what appears to be another. The narrative was communicated to me by a clergyman of the Church of England, the Rev. Dr. —, Chaplain to the British Legation at — Having heard from a brother clergyman something of the story, I asked, by letter, to be favored with it; stating, in general terms, the purpose of my work. The request was kindly complied with, and produced an interesting contribution to this branch of the subject.

#### THE STAINS OF BLOOD.

In the year 185- I was staying, with my wife and children, at the favorite watering-place — In order to attend to some affairs of my own, I determined to leave my family there for three or four days. Accordingly, on the —th of August, I took the railway, and arrived that evening, an unexpected guest, at Hall, the residence of a gentleman whose acquaintance I had recently made, and with whom my sister was then staying.

"I arrived late, soon afterward went to bed, and before long fell asleep. Awaking after three or four hours, I was not surprised to find I could sleep no more; for I never rest well in a strange bed. After trying, therefore, in vain again to induce sleep, I began to arrange my plans for the day.

"I had been engaged some little time in this way, when I became suddenly sensible that there was a light in the room. Turning round, I distinctly perceived a female figure; and what attracted my special attention was, *that the light by which I saw it emanated from itself*. I watched the figure attentively. The features were not perceptible. After moving a little distance, it disappeared as suddenly as it had appeared.

"My first thoughts were that there was some trick.

I immediately got out of bed, struck a light, and found my bedroom door still locked. I then carefully examined the walls, to ascertain if there were any other concealed means of entrance or exit; but none could I find. I drew the curtains and opened the shutters; but till outside was silent and dark, there being no moonlight.

"After examining the room well in every part, I betook myself to bed and thought calmly over the whole matter. The final impression on my mind was, that I had seen something supernatural, and, if supernatural, that it was in some way connected with my wife. What was the appearance? What did it mean? Would it have appeared to me if I had been asleep instead of awake? These were questions very easy to ask and very difficult to answer.

"Even if my room door had been unlocked, or if there had been a concealed entrance to the room, a practical joke was out of the question. For, in the first place, I was not on such intimate terms with my host as to warrant such a liberty; and, secondly, even if he had been inclined to sanction so questionable a proceeding, he was too unwell at the time to permit me for a moment to entertain such a supposition.

"In doubt and uncertainty I passed the rest of the night; and in the morning, descending early, I immediately told my sister what had occurred, describing to her accurately every thing connected with the appearance I had witnessed. She seemed much struck with what I told her, and replied, 'It is *very* odd; for you have heard, I dare say, that a lady was, some years ago, murdered in this house; but it was not in the room you slept in.' I answered, that I had never heard any thing of the kind, and was beginning to make further inquiries about the murder, when I was

interrupted by the entrance of our host and hostess, and afterward by breakfast.

"After breakfast I left, without having had any opportunity of renewing the conversation. But the whole affair had made upon me an impression which I sought in vain to shake off. The female figure was ever before my mind's eye, and I became fidgety and anxious about my wife. 'Could it in any way be connected with her?' was my constantly recurring thought. So much did this weigh on my mind that, instead of attending to the business for the express purpose of transacting which I had left my family, I returned to them by the first train; and it was only when I saw my wife and children in good health, and every thing safe and well in my household, that I felt satisfied that, whatever the nature of the appearance might have been, it was not connected with any evil to them.

"On the Wednesday following, I received a letter from my sister, in which she informed me that, Since I left, she had ascertained that the murder *was* committed in the very room in which I had slept. She added that she purposed visiting us next day, and that she would like me to write out an account of what I had seen, together with a plan of the room, and that on that plan she wished me to mark the place of the appearance, and of the disappearance, of the figure.

"This I immediately did; and the next day, when my sister arrived, she asked me if I had complied with her request. I replied, pointing to the drawing-room table, 'Yes: there is the account and the plan.' As she rose to examine it, I prevented her, saying, 'do not look at it until you have told me all you have to say, because you might unintentionally color your story by what you may read there.'

"Thereupon she informed me that she had had the carpet taken up in the room I had occupied, and that the marks of blood from the murdered person were there, plainly visible, on a particular part of the floor. At my request she also then drew a plan of the room, and marked upon it the spots which still bore traces of blood.

"The two plans—my sister's and mine were then compared, and we verified the most remarkable fact *that the places she had marked as the beginning and ending of the traces of blood coincided exactly with the spots marked on my plan as those on which the female figure had appeared and disappeared.*

"I am unable to add any thing to this plain statement of facts. I cannot account, in any way, for what I saw. I am convinced no human being entered my chamber that night; yet I know that, being wide awake and in good health, I *did* distinctly see a female figure in my room. But if, as I must believe, it was a supernatural appearance, then I am unable to suggest any reason why it should have appeared to me. I cannot tell whether, if I had not been in the room, or had been asleep at the time, that figure would equally have been there. As it was, it seemed connected with no warning nor presage. No misfortune of any kind happened then, or since, to me or mine. It is true that the host, at whose house I was staying when this incident occurred, and also one of his children, died a few months afterward; but I cannot pretend to make out any connection between either of these deaths and the appearance I witnessed. The '*cui bono*,' [for whose benefit is it?] therefore, I do not attempt to explain. But what I distinctly saw, that, and that only, I describe."

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\* Communicated to me, under date April 25, 1859, in a letter from the Rev. Dr. —, who informs me that the relation is in the very words, so

In this case, the narrative bears testimony to accuracy and dispassionate coolness in the observer. It is one of those examples, also, which give support to the opinion that such phenomena sometimes present themselves without any special purpose so far as we can discover. Moreover, it is evident that sufficient precautions were taken to prevent the possibility of suggestion becoming the cause of the coincidence between the two plans of the room,—that executed by the brother and that afterward drawn by the sister. They were, clearly, made out quite independently of each other. And if so, to what can we ascribe the coincidence they exhibited? Evidently, not to chance.

In the preceding cases, the attraction to earth seems to have been of a painful nature. But a more frequent and influential motive seems to be that great principle of human love, which even in this world, cold though it be, is the most powerful incentive to virtue, and which in another will doubtless assert far more supremely its genial sway. It may be the affection of remote kindred, apparently evinced by some ancestor, or the stronger love of brother to sister, of parent to child, of husband to wife. Of the last an example will be found in the following narrative, for which I am indebted to the kindness of London friends; and though, in accordance with the wishes of the family, some of the names are initialized only, they are all known to myself. Of the good faith of the narrators there cannot be a doubt.

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far as his memory serves, in which the narrator, his brother, repeated it to him. Though not at liberty to print the reverend gentleman's name, he has permitted me to furnish it privately in any case in which it might serve the cause to advance which these pages have been written.

## THE FOURTEENTH OF NOVEMBER.

In the month of September, 1857, Captain G—— W——, of the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons went out to India to join his regiment.

His wife remained in England, residing at Cambridge. On the night between the 14th and 15th of November, 1857, toward morning, she dreamed that she saw her husband, looking anxious and ill,—upon which she immediately awoke, much agitated. It was bright moonlight; and, looking up, she perceived the same figure standing by her bedside. He appeared in his uniform, the hands pressed across the breast, the hair disheveled, the face very pale. His large dark eyes were fixed full upon her; their expression was that of great excitement, and there was a peculiar contraction of the mouth, habitual to him when agitated. She saw him, even to each minute particular of his dress, as distinctly as she had ever done in her life; and she remembers to have noticed between his hands the white of the shirt-bosom, unstained, however, with blood. The figure seemed to bend forward, as if in pain, and to make an effort to speak; but there was no sound. It remained visible, the wife thinks, as long as a minute, and then disappeared.

Her first idea was to ascertain if she was actually awake. She rubbed her eyes with the sheet, and felt that the touch was real. Her little nephew was in bed with her: she bent over the sleeping child and listened Wits breathing; the sound was distinct; and she became convinced that what she had seen was no dream. It need hardly be added that she did not again go to sleep that night.

Next morning she related all this to her mother, expressing her conviction, though she had noticed no marks of blood on his dress, that Captain W—— was either killed or grievously wounded. So fully impressed

was she with the reality of that apparition that she thenceforth refused all invitations. A young friend urged her, soon afterward, to go with her to a fashionable concert, reminding her that she had received from Malta, sent by her husband, a handsome dress-cloak, which she had never yet worn. But she positively declined, declaring that, uncertain as she was whether she was not already a widow, she would never enter a place of amusement until she had letters from her husband (if, indeed, he still lived) of later date than the 14th of November.

It was on a Tuesday in the month of December, 1857, that the telegram regarding the actual fate of Captain W—— was published in London. It was to the effect that he was killed before Lucknow on the *fifteenth* of November.

This Dews, given in the morning paper, attracted the attention of Mr. Wilkinson, a London solicitor, who had in charge Captain W——'s affairs. When at a later period this gentleman met the widow, she informed him that she had been quite prepared for the melancholy news, but that she felt sure her husband could not have been killed on the 15th of November, inasmuch as it was during the night between the 14th and 15th that he appeared to herself

The certificate from the War Office, however, which it became Mr. Wilkinson's duty to obtain, confirmed the date given in the telegram; its tenor being as follows:

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\* The difference of longitude between London and Lucknow being about five hours, three or four o'clock A.M. in London would be eight or nine o'clock A.M. at Lucknow. But it was in the *afternoon*, not in the morning, as will be seen in the sequel, that Captain W—— was killed. Had he fallen on the 15th, therefore, the apparition to his wife would have appeared several hours before the engagement in which he fell, and while he was yet &live and well.

## WAR OFFICE,

No. 9579/1

30th January, 1858.

"These are to certify that it appears, by the records in this office, that Captain G—— W——, of the 6th Dragoon Guards, was killed in action on the 15th November, 1857.\*

(Signed) B. HAWES."

While Mr. Wilkinson's mind remained in uncertainty as to the exact date, a remarkable incident occurred, which seemed to cast further suspicion on the accuracy of the telegram and of the certificate. That gentleman was visiting a friend, whose lady has all her life had perception of apparitions, while her husband is what is usually called an impressible medium; facts which are known, however, only to their intimate friends. Though personally acquainted with them, I am not at liberty to give their names. Let us call them. Mr. and Mrs. N——.

Mr. Wilkinson related to them, as a wonderful circumstance, the vision of the captain's widow in connection with his death, and described the figure as it had appeared to her. Mrs. N——, turning to her husband, instantly said, "That must be the very person I saw, the evening we were talking of India, and you drew an elephant, with a howdah on his back. Mr. Wilkinson has described his exact position and appearance; the uniform of a British officer, his hands pressed across his breast, his form bent forward as if in pain. The figure," she added to Mr. W——, "appeared just behind my husband, and seemed looking over his left shoulder."

"Did you attempt to obtain any communication from him?" Mr. Wilkinson asked.

"Yes: we procured one through the medium of my husband."

"no you remember its purport?"

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\* Into this certificate, of which I possess the original, an error has crept, Captain G—— W—— was of the 6th (Inniskilling) Dragoons, not of the 6th Dragoon Guards.

"It was to the effect that he had been killed in India that afternoon, by a wound in the breast; and adding, as I distinctly remember, 'That thing I used to go about in is not buried yet.' I particularly marked the expression."

"When did this happen?"

"About nine o'clock in the evening, several weeks ago; but I do not recollect the exact date."

"Can you not call to mind something that might enable you to fix the precise day?"

Mrs. N—— reflected. "I remember nothing," she said, at last, "except that while my husband was drawing, and I was talking to a lady friend who had called to see us, we were interrupted by a servant bringing in a bill for some German vinegar, and that, as I recommended it as being superior to English, we had a bottle brought in for inspection."

"Did you pay the bill at the time?"

"Yes: I sent out the money by the servant."

"Was the bill receipted?"

"I think so; but I have it up-stairs, and can soon ascertain."

Mrs. N—— produced the bill. Its receipt bore date the *fourteenth* of November!

This confirmation of the widow's conviction as to the day of her husband's death produced so much impression on Mr. Wilkinson, that he called at the office of Messrs. Cox & Greenwood, the army agents, to ascertain if there was no mistake in the certificate. But nothing there appeared to confirm any surmise of inaccuracy. Captain W——'s death was mentioned in two separate dispatches of Sir Colin Campbell and in both the date corresponded with that given in the telegram.

So matters rested, until, in the month of March, 1858, the family of Captain W—— received from Captain G—— C——, then of the Military Train, a letter dated Dear Lucknow, on the 19th December, 1857. This letter

informed them that Captain W—— had been killed before Lucknow, while gallantly leading on the squadron, not on the 15th of November, as reported in Sir Colin Campbell's dispatches, but on the *fourteenth, in the afternoon*. Captain C—— was riding close by his side at the time he saw him fall. He was struck by a fragment of shell in the breast, and never spoke after he was hit. He was buried at the Dilkoosha; and on a wooden cross erected by his friend, Lieutenant R—— of the 9th Lancers, at the head of his grave, are cut the initials G. W. and the date of his death, the 14th of November, 1857.\*

The War Office finally made the correction as to the date of death, but not until more than a year after the event occurred. Mr. Wilkinson, having occasion to apply for an additional copy of the certificate in April, 1859, found it in exactly the same words as that which I have given, only that the 14th of November had, been substituted for the 15th.†

This extraordinary narrative was obtained by me directly from the parties themselves. The widow of Captain W—— kindly consented to examine and correct the manuscript, and allowed me to inspect a copy of Captain C——'s letter, giving the particulars of her husband's death. To Mr. Wilkinson, also, the manuscript was submitted, and he assented to its accuracy so far as he is concerned. That portion which relates to Mrs. N—— I had from that lady herself. I have neglected

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\* It was not in his own regiment, which was then at Meerut, that Captain W—— was serving at the time of his death. Immediately on arriving from England at Cawnpore, he had offered his services to Colonel Wilson, of the 64th. They were at first declined, but finally accepted; and he joined the Military Train, then starting for Lucknow. It was in their ranks that he fell.

† The originals of both these certificates are in my possession: the first bearing date 30th January, 1858, and certifying, as already shown, to the 15th; the second dated 5th April, 1859, and testifying to the 14th.

no precaution, therefore, to obtain for it the warrant of authenticity

It is, perhaps, the only example on record where the appearance of what is usually termed a ghost proved the means of correcting an erroneous date in the dispatches of a commander-in-chief, and of detecting an inaccuracy in the certificate of a War Office.

It is especially valuable, too, as furnishing an example of a double apparition. Nor can it be alleged (even if the allegation had weight) that the recital of one lady caused the apparition of the same figure to the other. Mrs. W—— was at the time in Cambridge, and Mrs. N—— in London; and it was not till weeks after the occurrence that either knew what the other had seen.

Those who would explain the whole on the principle of chance coincidence have a treble event to take into account: the apparition to Mrs. N——, that to Mrs. W——, and the actual time of Captain W——'s death; each tallying exactly with the other.

Examples of apparitions at the moment of death might be multiplied without number. Many persons—especially in Germany—who believe in no other species of apparition admit this. *Anzeigen* is the German term employed to designate such an intimation from the newly dead.

Compelled by lack of space, I shall here close the list of narratives connected with alleged apparitions of the dead, by giving one—certainly not the least remarkable—a portion of the corroborative proofs of which were sought out and obtained by myself.

#### THE OLD KENT MANOR-HOUSE.

In October, 1857, and for several months afterward, Mrs. R——  
,\* wife of a field-officer of high rank in the British

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\* The initials of the two names here given are not the actual ones; but I have the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with both these ladies.

army, was residing in Ramhurst Manor-House, near Leigh, in Kent, England. From the time of her first occupying this ancient residence, every inmate of the house had been more or less disturbed at night—not usually during the day—by knockings and sounds as of footsteps, but more especially by voices which could not be accounted for. These last were usually heard in some unoccupied adjoining room; sometimes as if talking in a loud tone, sometimes as if reading aloud, occasionally as if screaming. The servants were much alarmed. They never saw any thing; but the cook told Mrs. R—— that on one occasion, in broad daylight, hearing the rustle of a silk dress close behind her, and which seemed to touch her, she turned suddenly round, supposing it to be her mistress, but, to her great surprise and terror, could see nobody. Mrs. R——'s brother, a bold, light-hearted young officer, fond of field-sports, and without the slightest faith in the reality of visitations from another world, was much disturbed and annoyed by these voices, which he declared must be those of his sister and of a lady friend of hers, sitting Up together to chat all night. On two occasions, when a voice which he thought to resemble his sister's rose to a scream, as if imploring aid, he rushed from his room, at two or three o'clock in the morning, gun in hand, into his sister's bedroom, there to find her quietly asleep.

On the second Saturday in the above month of October, Mrs. R—— drove over to the railway-station at Tunbridge, to meet her friend Miss S——, whom she had invited to spend some weeks with her. This young lady had been in the habit of seeing apparitions, at times, from early childhood.

When, on their return, at about four o'clock in the afternoon, they drove up to the entrance of the manor-house, Miss S—— perceived on the threshold the appearance of two figures, apparently an elderly couple,

habited in the costume of a former age. They appeared as if standing on the ground. She did not hear any voice; and, not wishing to render her friend uneasy, she made at that time no remark to her in connection with this apparition.

She saw the appearance of the same figures, in the same dress, several times within the next ten days, sometimes in one of the rooms of the house, sometimes in one of the passages,—always by daylight. They appeared to her surrounded by an atmosphere nearly of the color usually called neutral tint. On the third occasion they spoke to her, and stated that they had been husband and wife, that in former days they had possessed and occupied that manor-house, and that their name was *Children*. They appeared sad and downcast; and, when Miss S—— inquired the cause of their melancholy, they replied that they had idolized this property of theirs; that their pride and pleasure had centered in its possession; that its improvement had engrossed their thoughts; and that it troubled them to know that it had passed away from their family and to see it now in the hands of careless strangers.

I asked Miss S—— how they spoke. She replied that the voice was audible to her as that of a human being's; and that she believed it was heard also by others in an adjoining room. This she inferred from the fact that she was afterward asked with whom she had been conversing.\*

After a week or two, Mrs. R——, beginning to suspect that something unusual, connected with the constant disturbances in the house, had occurred to her friend,

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\* Yet this is not conclusive. It might have been Miss S——'s voice only that was heard, not any reply—though heard by her—made by the apparitions. Visible to her, they were invisible to others. Audible to her, they may to others have been inaudible also.

Yet it is certain that the voices at night were heard equally by all.

questioned her closely on the subject; and then Miss S—— related to her what she had seen and heard, describing the appearance and relating the conversation of the figures calling themselves Mr. and Mrs. Children.

Up to that time, Mrs. R——, though her rest had been frequently broken by the noises in the house, and though she too has the occasional perception of apparitions, had seen nothing; nor did any thing appear to her for a month afterward. One day, however, about the end of that time, when she had ceased to expect any apparition to herself, she was hurriedly dressing for a late dinner,—her brother, who had just returned from a day's shooting, having called to her in impatient tones that dinner was served and that he was quite famished. At the moment of completing her toilet, and as she hastily turned to leave her bed-chamber, not dreaming of any thing spiritual, there in the doorway stood the same female figure—Miss S—— had described,—identical in appearance and in costume, even to the old point-lace on her brocaded silk dress,—while beside her, on the left, but less distinctly visible, was the figure of her husband. They uttered no sound; but above the figure of the lady, as if written in phosphoric light in the dusk atmosphere that surrounded her, were the words "*Dame Children*," together with some other words, intimating that, having never aspired beyond the joys and sorrows of this World, she had remained "earth-bound." These last, however, Mrs. R—— scarcely paused to decipher; for a renewed appeal from her brother, as to whether they were to have any dinner that day, urged her forward. The figure, filling up the doorway, remained stationary. There was no time for hesitation: she closed her eyes, rushed through the apparition and into the dining-room, throwing up her hands and exclaiming to Miss S——, "Oh, my dear, I've walked through Mrs. Children!"

This was the only time during her residence in the old manor-house that Mrs. R—— witnessed the apparition of these figures.

And it is to be remarked that her bed-chamber, at the time, was lighted, not only by candles, but by a cheerful fire, and that there was a lighted lamp in the corridor which communicated thence to the dining-room.

This repetition of the word "Children" caused the ladies to make inquiries among the servants and in the neighborhood whether any family bearing that name had ever occupied the manor-house. Among those whom they thought likely to know something about it was a Mrs. Sophy O——, a nurse in the family, who had spent her life in that vicinity. But all inquiries were fruitless; every one to whom they put the question, the nurse included, declaring that they had never heard of such a name. So they gave up all hopes of being able to unravel the mystery.

It so happened, however, that, about four months afterward, this nurse, going home for a holiday to her family at Riverhead, about a mile from Seven Oaks, and recollecting that one of her sisters-in-law, who lived near her, an old woman of seventy, had fifty years before been housemaid in a family then residing at Ramhurst, inquired of her if she had ever heard any thing of a family named Children. The sister-in-law replied that no such family occupied the manor-house when she was there; but she recollected to have then seen an old man who told her that in his boyhood he had assisted to keep the hounds of the Children family, who were then residing at Ramhurst. This information the nurse communicated to Mrs. R—— on her return; and thus it was that that lady was first informed that a family named Children really had once occupied the manor-house.

All these particulars I received in December, 1858,

directly from the ladies themselves, both being together at the time.

Even up to this point the case, as it presented itself, was certainly a very remarkable one. But I resolved, if possible, to obtain further confirmation in the matter.

I inquired of Miss S—— whether the apparitions had communicated to her any additional particulars connected with the family. She replied that she recollected one which she had then received from them, namely, that the husband's name was *Richard*. At a subsequent period, likewise, she had obtained the date of Richard Children's death, which, as communicated to her, was 1753. She remembered also that on one occasion a third spirit appeared with them, which they stated was their son; but she did not get his name. To my further inquiries as to the costumes in which the (alleged) spirits appeared, Miss S—— replied "that they were of the period of Queen Anne or one of the early Georges, she could not be sure which, as the fashions in both were similar." These were her exact words. Neither she nor Mrs. R——, however, had obtained any information tending either to verify or to refute these particulars.

Having an invitation from some friends residing near Seven Oaks, in Kent, to spend with them the Christmas week of 1858, I had a good opportunity of prosecuting my inquiries in the way of verification.

I called, with a friend, Mr. F——, on the nurse, Mrs. Sophy O—— without alluding to the disturbances, I simply asked her if she knew any thing of an old family of the name of Children. She said she knew very little except what she had heard from her sister-in-law, namely, that they used in former days to live at a manor-house called Ramhurst. I asked her if she had ever been there. "Yes," she said, "about a year ago, as nurse to Mrs. R——." "Did Mrs. R——," I asked her, "know any thing about the Children family?" She

replied that her mistress had once made inquiries of her about them, wishing to know if they had ever occupied the manor-house, but at that time she (Mrs. Sophy) had never heard of such a family so she could give the lady no satisfaction.

"How did it happen," I asked, "that Mrs. R—— supposed such a family might once have occupied the house?"

"Well, sir," she replied, "that is more than I can tell you,— unless, indeed, [and here she hesitated and lowered her voice,] it was through a young lady that was staying with mistress. Did you ever hear, sir," she added, looking around her in a mysterious way, "of what they call *spirit-rappers*?"

I intimated that I had heard the name.

"I'm not afraid of such things," she pursued: "I never thought they would harm me; and I'm not one of your believers in ghosts. But then, to be sure, we *did* have such a time in that old house!"

"Ah! what sort of a time?"

"With knockings, sir, and the noise of footsteps, and people talking of nights. Many a time I've heard the voices when I was going along the passage at two or three o'clock in the morning, carrying the baby to my mistress. I don't believe in ghosts; but you may be sure, sir, it was something serious when mistress's brother got up in the middle of the night and came to his sister's room with his loaded gun in his hand. And then there was another brother: he got out of his bed one night and declared there were robbers in the house."

"Did you see any thing?"

"No, sir, never."

"Nor any of the other servants?"

"I think not, sir; but cook was so frightened!"

"What happened to her?"

"Well, sir, no harm happened to her, exactly: only

she was kneeling down making her fire one morning when up she started with a cry like. I heard her, and came in to see what was the matter. 'Oh,' says she, 'nurse, if I didn't hear the rustling of a silk dress all across the kitchen!' 'Well, cook,' says I, 'you know it couldn't be me, being I never wear silk.' 'No,' says she,—and she sort of laughed,—'no, I knew it wasn't you, for I've heard the same three or four times already; and whenever I look round there's nothing there.'"

I thanked the good woman, and then went to see the sister-in-law, who fully confirmed her part of the story.

But as all this afforded no clew dither to the Christian name, or the date of occupation, or the year of Mr. Children's death, I visited, in search of these, the church and graveyard at Leigh, the nearest to the Ramhurst property, and the old church at Tunbridge; making inquiries in both places on the subject. But to no purpose. All I could learn was, that a certain George Children left, in the year 1718, a weekly gift of bread to the poor, and that a descendant of the family also named George, dying some forty years ago, and not residing at Ramhurst, had a marble tablet, in the Tunbridge church, erected to his memory.

Sextons and tombstones having failed me, a friend suggested that I might possibly obtain the information I sought by visiting a neighboring clergyman. I did so, and with the most fortunate result. Simply stating to him that I had taken the liberty to call in search of some particulars touching the early history of a Kentish family of the name of Children, he replied that, singularly enough, he was in possession of a document, coming to him through a private source, and containing, he thought likely, the very details of which I was in search. He kindly intrusted it to me; and I found in it, among numerous particulars regarding another member of the family, not many years since deceased, certain extracts

from the "Hasted Papers," preserved in the British Museum; these being contained in a letter addressed by one of the members of the Children family to Mr. Hasted. Of this document, which may be consulted in the Museum library, I here transcribe a portion, as follows:

"The family of Children were settled for a great many generations at a house called, from their own name, Childrens, situated at a place called Nether Street, otherwise Lower Street, in Hildenborough, in the parish of Tunbridge. George Children of Lower Street, who was High-Sheriff of Kent in 1698, died without issue in 1718, and by will devised the bulk of his estate to *Richard Children*, eldest son of his late uncle, William Children of Hedcorn, and his heirs. This Richard Children, *who settled himself at Ramhurst*, in the parish of Leigh, married Anne, daughter of John Saxby, in the parish of Leeds, by whom he had issue four sons and two daughters," &c.

Thus I ascertained that the first of the Children family who occupied Ramhurst as a residence was named Richard, and that he settled there in the early part of the reign of George I. The year of his death, however, was not given.

This last particular I did not ascertain till several months afterward; when a friend versed in antiquarian lore, to whom I mentioned my desire to obtain it, suggested that the same Hasted, an extract from whose papers I have given, had published, in 1778, a history of Kent, and that, in that work, I might possibly obtain the information I sought. In effect, after considerable search, I there found the following paragraph:

"In the eastern part of the Parish of Lyghe, (now Leigh,) near the river Medway, stands an ancient mansion called Ramhurst, once reputed a Manor and held of the honor of Gloucester."..."It continued in the Culpepper family for several generations "It passed by sale into that of Saxby, and Mr. William Saxby conveyed

it, by sale, to Children. Richard Children, Esq., resided here, *and died possessed of it in 1753*, aged eighty-three years. He was succeeded in it by his eldest son, John Children, of Tunbridge, Esq., whose son, George Children, of Tunbridge, Esq., is the present possessor."\*

Thus I verified the last remaining particular, the date of Richard Children's death. It appears from the above, also, that Richard Children was the only representative of the family who lived and died at Ramhurst; his son John being designated not as of Ramhurst, but as of Tunbridge. From the private memoir above referred to I had previously ascertained that the family seat after Richard's time was Ferox Hall, near Tunbridge.

It remains to be added that in 1816, in consequence of events reflecting no discredit on the family, they lost all their property, and were compelled to sell Ramhurst, which has since been occupied, though a somewhat spacious mansion, not as a family residence, but as a farmhouse. I visited it; and the occupant assured me that nothing worse than rats or mice disturbs it now.

I am not sure that I have found on record, among what are usually termed ghost-stories, any narrative better authenticated than the foregoing. It involves, indeed, no startling or romantic particulars, no warning of death, no disclosure of murder, no circumstances of terror or danger; but it is all the more reliable on that account; since those passions which are wont to excite and mislead the imaginations of men were not called into play.

It was communicated to me, about fourteen months only after the events occurred, by both the chief witnesses, and incidentally confirmed, shortly afterward, by a third.

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\* That is, in 1778, when the work was published. See, for the above quotation, Hasted's History of Kent, vol. i. pp. 422 and 423.

The social position and personal character of the two ladies to whom the figures appeared preclude, at the outset, all idea whatever of willful misstatement or deception. The sights and sounds to which they testify *did* present themselves to their senses. Whether their senses played them false is another question. The theory of hallucination remains to be dealt with. Let us inquire whether it be applicable in the present case.

Miss S—— first saw the figures, not in the obscurity of night, not between sleeping and waking, not in some old chamber reputed to be haunted, but in the open air, and as she was descending from a carriage, in broad daylight. Subsequently she not only saw them, but heard them speak; and that always in daylight. There are, however, cases on record in which the senses of hearing and sight are alleged to have been both hallucinated; that of Tasso, for example.\* And if the case rested here, such is the interpretation which the physician would put upon it.

But some weeks afterward another lady sees the appearance of the selfsame figures. This complicates the case. For, as elsewhere shown,† it is generally admitted, by medical writers on the subject, that, while cases of collective illusion are common, it is doubtful whether there be on record a single authentic case of collective hallucination: the inference being that if two persons see the same appearance, it is not mere imagination; there is some objective foundation for it.

It is true, and should be taken into account, that Miss S—— had described the apparition to her friend, and that for a time the latter had some expectation of witnessing it. And this will suggest to the skeptic, as

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\* "*Essay towards a Theory of Apparitions*," by John Ferriar, M.D., London, 1813, p. 75.

† See Book IV. chap. 1.

explanation, the theory of expectant attention. But, in the first place, it has never been proved\* that mere expectant attention could produce the appearance of a figure with every detail of costume, to say nothing of the phosphorescent letters appearing above it, which Mrs. R—— certainly did not expect; and, secondly, Mrs. R—— expressly stated to me that, as four weeks had elapsed and she had seen nothing, she had ceased to expect it at all. Still less can we imagine that her thoughts would be occupied with the matter at the moment when, hurried by a hungry and impatient brother, she was hastily completing, in a cheerfully-lighted room, her dinner-toilet. It would be difficult to select a moment out of the twenty-four hours when the imagination was less likely to be busy with spiritual fancies, or could be supposed excited to the point necessary to reproduce (if it can ever reproduce) the image of a described apparition.

But conceding these extreme improbabilities, what are we to make of the name Children, communicated to the one lady through the sense of hearing and to the other through that of sight?

The name is a very uncommon one; and both the ladies assured me that they had never even heard it before, to say nothing of their being wholly ignorant whether any family bearing that name had formerly occupied the old house. This latter point they seek to clear up; but neither servants nor neighbors can tell them any thing about it. They remain for four months without any explanation. At the end of that time, one of the servants, going home, accidentally ascertains that about a hundred years ago, or more, a family named Children *did* occupy that very house.

What could imagination or expectation have to do

\* The contrary appears. See page 354.

with this? The images of the figures may be set down, in the cage of both the ladies, as hallucination; but the name remains, a stubborn link, connecting these with the actual world.

If even we were to argue—what no one will believe—that this agreement of family name was but a chance coincidence, there remain yet other coincidences to account for before the whole difficulty is settled. There is the alleged Christian as well as family name,—Richard Children; there is the date indicated by the costume, "the reign of Queen Anne or one of the early Georges;" and, finally, there is the year of Richard Children's death.

These the ladies stated to me, not knowing, when they did so, what the actual facts were. These facts I myself subsequently disinterred; obtaining the evidence of a document preserved in the British Museum, in proof that Richard Children *did* inherit the Ramhurst property in the fourth year of the reign of George I., and *did* make the Ramhurst mansion-house his family residence. And he is the only representative of the family who lived and died there. His son John may have resided there for a time; but previous to his decease he had left the place for another seat, near Tunbridge.

Then there is the circumstance that misfortunes compelled the descendants of Richard Children to sell the Ramhurst property, and that their ancestor's family mansion, passing into the hands of strangers, was degraded (as that ancestor would doubtless have considered it) to an ordinary farm-house; all this still tallying with the communications made.

It is perfectly idle, under the circumstances, to talk of fancy or fortuitous coincidence. Something other than imagination or accident, be it what it may, determined the minute specifications obtained from the apparitions in the Old Kent Manor-House.

The lesson taught by this story—if we admit the figures which presented themselves to the two ladies to have been, in verity, the apparitions of the Children family—is, that crime is not necessary to attract the spirits of the departed back to earth; that a frame of mind of an exclusively worldly cast—a character that never bestowed a thought upon any thing beyond this earth, and was troubled only by the cares of possession and the thoughts of gain—may equally draw down the spirit, though freed from the body, to gather cumber and sorrow amid the scenes of its former care. If this be so, how strong the motive not to suffer the present and the temporal, necessary and proper in their places as they are, so completely to engross us as to usurp the place, and wholly to exclude the thoughts, of the future and the spiritual!

I presume not to anticipate the judgment which the reader may pass on the evidence here submitted to him. If his decision be, that there is not, in any of the preceding examples, proof that an objective reality, be its nature what it may, was presented to the senses of the observers, then he would do well to consider whether the rule of evidence according to which he may have reached that decision, if applied to history, sacred and profane, would not sweep off nine-tenths, and more, of all we have been accustomed to trust to as foundation for historical deduction and religious belief.

If, on the other hand, adopting in this investigation the same rules in scanning testimony by which we are governed, day by day, in ordinary life, the reader should decide that something other than hallucination must be conceded, and that the senses of some of these observers *did* receive actual impressions produced by an external reality, the question remains, of what precise character that reality is.

Daniel De Foe has an elaborate work on this subject, illustrated by many examples; of which some, it must be confessed, exhibit more of that inimitable talent which makes Robinson Crusoe one of the most vivid realities of childhood, than of that more prosaic precision which scorns not names and dates and authenticating vouchers.

De Foe's opinion is, "The inquiry is not, as I take it, whether the inhabitants of the invisible spaces do really come hither or no, but who they are who do come?"\*

From the "meanness of some of the occasions on which some of these things happen," he argues that it cannot be angels, properly so called, such as appeared to Gideon or to David. "Here," says he, "you have an old woman dead, that has hid a little money in the orchard or garden; and an apparition, it is supposed, comes and discovers it, by leading the person it appears to, to the place, and making some signal that he should dig there for somewhat. Or, a man is dead, and, having left a legacy to such or such, the executor does not pay it, and an apparition comes and haunts this executor till he does justice. Is it likely an angel should be sent from heaven to find out the old woman's earthen dish with thirty or forty shillings in it, or that an angel should be sent to harass this man for a legacy of five or ten pounds? And as to the devil, will any one charge Satan with being solicitous to see justice done? They that know him at all must know him better than to think so hardly of him." (p. 34.)

Nor can it, he argues, be the soul or ghost of the departed person; "for if the soul is happy, is it reasonable

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\* "*Universal History of Apparitions*," by Andrew Moreton, Esq., 3d ed., London, 1738, p. 2. De Foe's biographers acknowledge for him the authorship of this work. The first edition appeared in 1727.

to believe that the felicity of heaven can be interrupted by so trivial a matter and on so slight an occasion? if the soul be unhappy, remember the great gulf fixed: there is no reason to believe these unhappy souls have leisure or liberty to come back upon earth on errands of such a nature."

The idea of Hades, or a mediate state, evidently did not enter into De Foe's mind; and thus he found himself in a dilemma. "There is nothing," says he, "but difficulty in it on every side. Apparitions there are: we see no room to doubt the reality of that part; but what, who, or from whence, is a difficulty which I see no way to extricate ourselves from but by granting that there may be an appointed, deputed sort of stationary Spirits in the invisible world, who come upon these occasions and appear among us; which inhabitants or spirits, (you may call them angels, if you please,—bodies they are not and cannot be, neither had they been ever embodied,) but such as they are, they have a power of conversing among us, and can, by dreams, impulses, and strong aversions, move our thoughts, and give hope, raise doubts, sink our souls to-day, elevate them to-morrow, and in many ways operate on our passions and affections."\*

Again he says, "The spirits I speak of must be heaven-born: they do Heaven's work, and are honored by his special commission; they are employed in his immediate business: namely, the common good of his creature, man."†

If there be no mediate state which the spirit enters at death, and whence it may occasionally return, then De Foe's hypothesis may be as good as any other. But if we admit a Sheol or Hades, and thus do away with all difficulty about disturbing the ecstatic felicity of

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\* "*Universal History of Apparitions*," p. 35.

† Work cited, p. 52.

heaven or escaping across the gulf from the fast-binding chains of hell, why should we turn aside from a plain path, and seek to evade a straightforward inference, that, if God really does permit apparitions, these may be what they allege they are? Why should we gratuitously create, for the nonce, a nondescript species of spirits, not men, though a little lower than the angels; protectors, who simulate; guardians who he; ministering spirits commissioned by God, who cheat men by assuming false forms,—to one appearing as an aunt, to another as a grandmother, now personating a murderer and imploring prayer, now playing the part of the murdered and soliciting pity? Is this God's work? Are these fitting credentials of heavenly birth, plausible evidences of Divine commission?

The question remains as to the existence of a mediate state, whence human spirits that have suffered the Great Change may be supposed to have the occasional power of returning. Before touching upon it, I pause, to add a few examples of what seem visiting from that unknown sphere; interferences, of which some assume the aspect of retribution, some of guardianship, all being of a peculiarly personal character.

## BOOK V.

### INDICATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERFERENCES.

#### CHAPTER I.

#### RETRIBUTION.

EVER since the days of Orestes, the idea of a spiritual agency, retributive and inevitable, has prevailed, in some shape, throughout the world. If we do not now believe in serpent-haired furies, the ministers of Divine vengeance, pursuing, with their whips of scorpions, the doomed criminal, we speak currently of the judgments of God, as evinced in some swift and sudden punishment overtaking, as if by the direct mandate of Heaven, the impenitent guilty.

On the other hand, Christianity sanctions, in a general way, the idea of spiritual care exerted to guide human steps and preserve from unforeseen danger. Protestantism does not, indeed, admit as sound the doctrine of patron saints, to whom prayers may properly be addressed and from whom aid may reasonably be expected. Yet we must deny not only the authority of St. Paul, but, it would seem, that of his Master also, if we reject the theory of spirits, protective and guardian, guiding the inexperience of infancy and ministering at least to a favored portion of mankind.\*

Among modern records of alleged ultramundane influences we come upon indications which favor, to a certain

\* Matthew xviii. 10; Hebrews i. 14.

extent, both ideas; that of requital for evil done, and that of guardian care exerted for the good of man. The latter is more frequent and more distinctly marked than the former. There is nothing giving color to the idea of permission to inflict serious injury, still less to the notion of implacable vengeance.\* The power against the evil-doer seems to be of a very limited nature, reaching no further than annoyance, of petty effect unless conscience give sting to the infliction. On the other hand, the power to guide and protect appears to be not only more common, but more influential; with its limits, however, such as a wise parent might set to the free agency of a child. If warnings are given, it is rather in the form of dim hints or vague reminders than of distinct prophecy. If rules of action are suggested, they are of a general character, not relieving the spiritual ward from the duty of forethought and the task of self-decision, nor yet releasing him from the employment of that reason without the constant exercise of which he would speedily be degraded from his present position at the head of animal nature.

The modern examples to which I have referred are more or less definite in their character.

Among the narratives, for instance, appearing to involve retributive agency, Dr. Binns vouches for one admitting of various interpretation. He records it as "a remarkable instance of retributive justice which occurred very recently in Jamaica." The story is as follows:

"A young and beautiful quadroon girl, named Duncan, was found murdered in a retired spot, a few paces from the main road. From the evidence given on the coroner's

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\* The Grecians themselves do not represent the Furies as implacable. These were held to be open—as their name of Eumenides implies—to benevolent and merciful impulses, and might, by proper means, be propitiated.

inquest, it was satisfactorily established that she had been violated previous to the murder. A large reward was offered for any information that might lead to the apprehension of the murderer; but nearly a year elapsed without any clew whatever being obtained. It happened that, about this period from the discovery of the murder, two black men, named Pendril and Chitty, were confined for separate petty offenses; one in the Kingston penitentiary, on the south, the other in Falmouth gaol, on the north, side of the island. Their imprisonment was unknown to each other, and the distance between their places of incarceration was eighty miles. Each of these men became restless and talkative in his sleep, repeatedly expostulating as if in the presence of the murdered girl, and entreating her to leave him. This happened so frequently that it led to inquiries, which terminated in the conviction of the two men."\*

This case may be regarded either as an example of accidentally synchronous dreams, or else of an apparition presenting itself simultaneously, or nearly so, to the sleeping senses of two men at a distance from each other.

The former is a supposable explanation. Conscience may be conceived likely to dog the thoughts of men guilty of such an infamy. But that to both, distant and disconnected from each other, and after a year had passed; its retributive reminders should assume the selfsame shape at the very same time, by more chance, is a contingency possible, indeed, but of very improbable occurrence.

And why should it be considered unlikely that some agency other than chance was here at work? We know that warnings have been given in dreams: why should dreams not embody requitals also?

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\* *"Anatomy of Sleep,"* by Edward Binns, M.D., 2d ed., London, 1845, p. 152.

But, since the above case presents two possible phases, let us pass to another, of less equivocal character.

#### WHAT A FRENCH ACTRESS SUFFERED.

Mademoiselle Claire-Josephe Clairon was the great French tragedian of the last century. She Occupied, in her day, a position similar to that which Rachel has recently filled. Marmontel was one of her warmest eulogists; and her talents were celebrated in the verses of Voltaire.

Her beauty, her grace, and her genius won for her many enthusiastic admirers; some professing friendship, others offering love. Among the latter, in the year 1743, was a young man, Monsieur de S——, son of a merchant of Brittany, whose attachment appears to have been of the most devoted kind.

The circumstances connected with this young man's death, and the events which succeeded it, are of an extraordinary character; but they come to us from first hand, and remarkably well authenticated, being detailed by Mademoiselle Clairon herself, in her autobiography, from which I translate the essential part of the narrative, as follows.

"The language and manners of Monsieur de S—— gave evidence of an excellent education and of the habit of good society. His reserve, his timidity, which deterred all advances except by little attentions and by the language of the eyes, caused me to distinguish him from others. After having met him frequently in society, I at last permitted him to visit me at my own house, and did not conceal from him the friendship with which he inspired me. Seeing me at liberty, and well inclined toward him, he was content to be patient; hoping that time might create in me a warmer sentiment. I could not tell—who can?—how it would result. But, when he came to reply candidly to the questions which my

reason and curiosity prompted, he himself destroyed the chance he might have had. Ashamed of being a commoner only, he had converted his property into ready funds, and had come to Paris to spend his money, aping a rank above his own. This displeased me. He who blushes for himself causes others to despise him. Besides this, his temperament was melancholy and misanthropic: he knew mankind too well, he said, not to condemn and to avoid them. His project was to see no one but myself, and to carry me off where I should see only him. That, as may be supposed, did not suit me at all. I was willing to be guided by a flowery hand, but not to be fettered with chains. From that moment, I saw the necessity of destroying entirely the hopes he nourished, and of changing his assiduities of every day to occasional visits, few and far between. This caused him a severe illness, during which I nursed him with every possible care. But my constant refusals aggravated the case; and, unfortunately for the poor fellow, his brother-in-law, to whom he had intrusted the care of his funds, failed to make remittances, so that he was fain to accept the scanty supply of spare cash I had, to furnish him with food and medical assistance."... "Finally he recovered his property, but not his health; and, desiring for his own sake to keep him at a distance and his visits from me, I steadily refused both his letters and his visits.

"Two years and a half elapsed between the time of our first acquaintance and his death. He sent, in his last moments, to beg that I would grant him the happiness of seeing me once more; but my friends hindered me from doing so. He died, having no one near him but his servants and an old lady, who for some time had been his only society. His apartments were then on the Rempart, near the Chaussee d'Antin; mine, in the Rue de Bassy, near the monastery of Saint-Germain.

"That evening my mother and several other friends

were supping with me,—among them, the Intendant of the Menus-Plaisirs, whose professional aid I constantly required, that excellent fellow Pipelet, and Rosely, a comrade of mine and a young man of good family, witty and talented. The supper was gay. I had just been singing to them, and they applauding me, when, as eleven o'clock struck, a piercing cry was heard. Its heart-rending tone and the length of time it continued struck every one with astonishment. I fainted, and remained for a quarter of an hour totally unconscious."..."When I recovered, I begged them to remain with me part of the night. We reasoned much in regard to this strange cry; and it was agreed to have spies set in the street, so that, in case of its repetition, we might detect its cause and its author.

"Every succeeding night, always at the same hour, the same cry was repeated, sounding immediately beneath my windows, and appearing to issue from the vacant air. My people, my guests, my neighbors, the police, all heard it alike. I could not doubt that it was intended for me. I seldom supped from home, but when I did, nothing was heard there; and several times, when I returned later than eleven, and inquired of my mother, or the servants, if any thing had been heard of it, suddenly it burst forth in the midst of us.

"One evening the President de B——, with whom I had been supping, escorted me home, and, at the moment he bade me good-night at the door of my apartment, the cry exploded between him and myself. He was quite familiar with the story, for all Paris knew it; yet he was carried to his carriage more dead than alive.

"Another day, I begged my comrade, Rosely, to accompany me, first to the Rue Saint-Honore, to make some purchases, afterward to visit my friend Mademoiselle de Saint-P——, who resided near the Porto Saint-Denis. Our sole topic of conversation all the way

was my ghost, as I used to call it. The young man, witty and unbelieving, begged me to evoke the phantom, promising to believe in it if it replied. Whether from weakness or audacity, I acceded to his request. Thrice, on the instant, the cry sounded, rapid and terrible in its repetition. When we arrived at my friend's house, Rosely and I had to be carried in. We were both found lying senseless in the carriage.

"After this scene, I remained several months without hearing any thing more; and I began to hope that the disturbance had ceased. I was mistaken.

"The theater had been ordered to Versailles, on occasion of the marriage of the Dauphin. We were to remain there three days. We were insufficiently provided with apartments. Madame Grandval had none. We waited half the night in hopes that one would be assigned to her. At three o'clock in the morning I offered her one of the two beds in my room, which was in the Avenue de Saint-Cloud. She accepted it. I occupied the other bed; and as my maid was undressing, to sleep beside me, I said to her, 'Here we are at the end of the world, and with such frightful weather! I think it would puzzle the ghost to find us out here.' The same cry, on the instant! Madame Grandval thought that hell itself was let loose in the room. In her night-dress she rushed down-stairs, from the top to the bottom. Not a soul in the house slept another wink that night. This was, however, the last time I ever heard it.

"Seven or eight days afterward, while chatting with my ordinary circle of friends, the stroke of eleven o'clock was followed by a musket-shot, as if fired at one of my windows. Every one of us heard the report; every one of us saw the flash; but the window had received no injury. We concluded that it was an attempt on my life, that for this time it had failed, but that precautions must be taken for the future. The Intendant hastened

to M. de Marville, then Lieutenant of Police, and a personal friend of his. Officers were instantly sent to examine the houses opposite mine. Throughout the following days they were guarded from top to bottom. My own house, also, was thoroughly examined. The street was filled with spies. But, in spite of all these precautions, for three entire months, every evening, at the same hour, the same musket-shot, directed against the same pane of glass, was heard to explode, was seen; and yet no one was ever able to discover whence it proceeded. This fact is attested by its official record on the registers of the police.

"I gradually became in a measure accustomed to my ghost, whom I began to consider a good sort of fellow, since he was content with tricks that produced no serious injury; and, one warm evening, not noticing the hour, the Intendant and myself, having opened the haunted window, were leaning over the balcony. Eleven o'clock struck; the detonation instantly succeeded; and it threw both of us, half-dead, into the middle of the room. When we recovered, and found that neither of us was hurt, we began to compare notes; and each admitted to the other the having received, he on the left cheek and I on the right, a box on the ear, right sharply laid on. We both burst out laughing.

"Next day nothing happened. The day after, having received an invitation from Mademoiselle Dumesnil to attend a nocturnal fete at her house, near the Barriere Blanche, I got into a hackney-coach, with my maid, at eleven o'clock. It was bright moonlight; and our road was along the Boulevards, which were then beginning to be built up. We were looking out at the houses they were building, when my maid said to me, 'Was it not somewhere near here that Monsieur de S—— died?' 'From what they told me,' I replied, 'it must have been in one of these two houses in front of us,'—pointing to them

at the same time. At that moment the same musketshot that had been pursuing me was fired from one of the houses, and passed through our carriage.\* The coachman set off at full gallop, thinking he was attacked by robbers; and we, when we arrived at our destination, had scarcely recovered our senses. For my own part, I confess to a degree of terror which it was long before I could shake off. But this exploit was the last of its kind. I never again heard any discharge of firearms.

"To these shots succeeded a clapping of hands, given in measured time and repeated at intervals. These sounds, to which the favor of the public had accustomed me, gave me but trifling annoyance, and I took little trouble to trace their origin. My friends did, however. 'We have watched in the most careful manner,' they would say to me: 'It is under your very door that the sounds occur. We hear them; but we see nobody. It is another phase of the same annoyances that have followed you so long.' As these noises had nothing alarming in them, I did not preserve a record of the period of their continuance.

"Nor did I take special note of the melodious sounds by which, after a time, they were succeeded. It seemed as if a celestial voice warbled the prelude to some noble air which it was about to execute. Once the voice commenced at the Carrefour de Bussy, and continued all the way until I reached my own door. In this case, as in all the preceding, my friends watched, followed the sounds, heard them as I did, but could never see any thing.

"Finally all the sounds ceased, after having continued,

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\* Whether a *ball* passed through the carriage does not clearly appear. The expression is, "D'une des maisons partit ce meme coup do fusil qui ne poursuivait; il traversa notre voiture."

with intermissions, a little more than two years and a half."

Whether the sequel may be regarded as supplying a sufficient explanation or not, it is proper to give it, as furnished by Mademoiselle Clairon.

That lady desiring to change her residence, and the apartments she occupied being advertised to rent, several persons called to see them. Among the rest there was announced a lady advanced in years. She exhibited much emotion, which communicated itself to Mademoiselle Clairon. At last she confessed that it was not to look at the apartments she came, but to converse with their occupant. She had thought of writing, she said, but had feared that her motives might be misinterpreted. Mademoiselle Clairon begged for an explanation; and the conversation which ensued is thus reported by herself.

"I was, mademoiselle," said the lady, "the best friend of Monsieur de S——; indeed, the only one he was willing to see during the last year of his life. The hours, the days, of that year were spent by us in talking of you, sometimes setting you down as an angel, sometimes as a devil. As for me, I urged him constantly to endeavor to forget you, while he protested that he would continue to love you even beyond the tomb. You weep," she continued, after a pause; "and perhaps you will allow me to ask you why you made him, so unhappy, and why, with your upright and affectionate character, you refused him, in his last moments, the consolation of seeing you once more."

"Our affections," I replied, "are not within our own control. Monsieur de S—— had many meritorious and estimable qualities; but his character was somber, misanthropic, despotic, so that he caused me to fear alike his society, his friendship, and his love. To make him happy, I should have had to renounce all human intercourse,

even the talent I exercise. I was poor and proud. It has been my wish and my hope to accept no favor,—to owe every thing to my own exertions. The friendship I entertained for him caused me to try every means to bring him back to sentiments more calm and reasonable. Failing in this, and convinced that his obstinate resolve was due less to the extremity of his passion than to the violence of his character, I adopted, and adhered to, the resolution to separate from him forever. I refused to see him on his death-bed, because the sight of his distress would have made me miserable, to no good end. Besides, I might have been placed in the dilemma of refusing what he might ask me, with seeming barbarity, or acceding to it with certain prospect of future unhappiness. These, madame, were the motives which actuated me. I trust you will not consider them deserving of censure.'

"'It would be unjust,' she replied, 'to condemn you.' We can be reasonably called upon to make sacrifices only to fulfill our promises or in discharge of our duty to relatives or to benefactors. I know that you owed him no gratitude; he himself felt that all obligation was on his part; but the state of his mind and the passion which ruled him were beyond his control; and your refusal to see him hastened his last moments. He counted the minutes until half-past ten, when his servant returned with the message that most certainly you would not come. After a moment of silence, he took my hand, and, in a state of despair which terrified me, he exclaimed, "*Barbarous creature! But she shall gain nothing by it. I will pursue her as long after my death as she has pursued me during my life.*" I tried to calm him. He was already a corpse.'"\*

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\*"*Memoires de Mademoiselle Clairon, Actrice du Theatre Francais, ecrits par elle-meme,*" 2d ed., Paris, 1822, pp. 78 to 96. The editors state that

This is the story as Mademoiselle Clairon herself relates it. She adds, "I need not say what effect these last words produced on me. The coincidence between them and the disturbances that had haunted me filled me with terror.... I do not know what chance really is; but I am very sure that what we are in the habit of calling so has a vast influence upon human affairs."

In the Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Abrantes, written by herself, and containing so many interesting particulars of the French Revolution and the stirring events which succeeded it, she states that, during the Consulate, when Mademoiselle Clairon was upward of seventy years of age, she (the duchess) made her acquaintance, and heard from her own lips the above story, of which she gives a brief and not very accurate compendium. In regard to the impression which Mademoiselle Clairon's mode of relating it produced on the duchess, that lady remarks:

"I know not whether in all this there was a little exaggeration; but she who usually spoke in a tone savoring of exaltation, when she came to relate this incident, though she spoke with dignity, laid aside all affectation and every thing which could be construed into speaking for effect. Albert, who believed in magnetism, wished, after having heard Mademoiselle Clairon, to persuade me that the thing was possible. I laughed at him then. Alas! since that time I have myself learned a terrible lesson in credulity."\*

I know not according to what sound principles of evidence we can refuse credit to a narrative so well authenticated as this. The phenomena were observed,

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these Memoirs are published "without the change of a single word from the original manuscript."

\* *Memoires de Madame la Duchesse d'Abrantes, ecrits par ede-meme,* 2d ed., Paris, 1835, vol. ii. p. 39.

not by Mademoiselle Clairon only, but by numerous other witnesses, including the most sharp-eyed and suspicious of beings,—the police-officers of Paris. The record of them is still to be found in the archives of that police. They were not witnessed once, twice, fifty times only. They were observed throughout more than two entire years. The shot against a certain pane of her window was fired, so Mademoiselle Clairon expressly tells us, every night, at the same hour, for three months,—therefore ninety times in succession. What theory, what explanation, will account for a trick of such a character that could for so long a space of time escape the argus eyes of the French police'? Then the cry at the moment when, at Rosely's suggestion, the phantom was evoked; the shot against the carriage from the house where Monsieur de S—— had resided: what imaginable trickery could be at the bottom of these?

The incidents occurred in Mademoiselle Clairon's youth; commencing when she was twenty-two years and a half old and terminating when she was twenty-five. Nearly fifty years afterward, toward the close of her life, in that period of calm reflection which comes with old age, she still preserved that deep conviction of the reality of these marvels which imparted to the tone and manner of her narrative the attesting simplicity of truth.

Finally, the coincidence to which Mademoiselle Clairon alludes is a double one; first as to the incidents themselves, then as to the period of their continuance. Monsieur de S——, with his dying breath, declared that he would haunt her; and this she knew not till the persecution, commencing within half an hour after his decease, was ended. He said, further, that she should be followed by his spirit for as long a period as she had held him enthralled. But from the period of his acquaintance with her till his death was two years and a

half, while from this latter event till the close of the disturbances there elapsed, as the sufferer tells us, two years and a half more.

Yet even if we admit in this case the reality of ultramundane agency, I do not presume to assert, as a corollary positively proved, that it *was* the spirit of Monsieur de S—— which fulfilled the threat he had made. That is certainly the most natural explanation which suggests itself. And if it be not the true one, chance, at least, is insufficient to account for the exact manner in which the declaration of the dying man tallies with the sufferings of her who was the object of his unfortunate and unavailing love.

If we accept this narrative, it bears with it an additional lesson. Supposing the agency of the disturbances to be spiritual, we cannot regard it as commissioned from God, any more than we do the annoyances which a neighbor, taking unjust offense, may inflict, in this world, on his offending neighbor in retaliation. Mademoiselle Clairon's conduct seems to have been justifiable and prudent; certainly not meriting persecution or punishment.

Why, then, were these annoyances permitted? When we can tell why *earthly* annoyances are often allowed to overtake the innocent, it will be time enough to insist upon an answer to the spiritual question.

Natural phenomena occur under general laws, not by special dispensation. But the disturbances above recorded were doubtless natural phenomena.

We may imagine that every thing in the next world is governed by principles totally different from those which we see in operation here. But why should we imagine this? Does not the same Providence preside on the further as on the hither side of the Dark River?

An example somewhat more closely resembling punishment

really merited and expressly sent is the following, —a narrative which I owe to the kindness of Mrs. S. C. Hall, the author, and to the truth of which, as will be seen, she bears personal testimony. But even in this case can we rationally assert more than that the agency was permitted, not commissioned?

I give the story in Mrs. Hall's own words. The circumstances occurred in London.

#### WHAT AN ENGLISH OFFICER SUFFERED.

"All young girls have friendships one with another; and when I was seventeen my friend, above all others, was Kate L——. She was a young Irish lady, my senior by three years,—a gentle, affectionate, pretty creature, much devoted to her old mother, and exercising constant forbearance toward a disagreeable brother who would persist in playing the flute, though he played both out of time and time. This brother was my *bete noire*; and whenever I complained of his bad playing, Kate would say, 'Ah, wait till Robert comes home; he plays and sings like an angel, and is so handsome!'

"This 'Robert' had been with his regiment for some years in Canada; and his coming home was to be the happiness of mother and daughter. For three months before his return nothing else was talked of. If I had had any talent for falling in love, I should have done so, in anticipation, with Robert L——.; but *that* was not my weakness; and I was much amused with my friend's speculations as to whether Robert would fall in love with me, or I with him, *first*.

"When we met, there was, happily, no danger to either. He told Kate that her friend was always laughing; and I thought I had never looked on a face so beautiful in outline and yet so haggard and painful. His large blue eyes were deeply set, but always seemed looking for something they could not find. To look at him made

me uncomfortable. But this was not so strange as the change which, after a time, was evident in Kate. She had become, in less than a week, cold and constrained. I was to have spent a day with her; but she made some apology, and, in doing so, burst into tears. Something was evidently wrong, which I felt satisfied time must disclose.

"In about a week more she came to see me by myself, looking ten years older. She closed the door of my room, and then said she desired to tell me something which she felt. I could hardly believe, but that, if I was not afraid, I might come and judge for myself.

"After Robert's return, she said, for a week or so they had been delightfully happy. But very soon she thought about the tenth day, or rather night—they were alarmed by loud raps and knocks in Robert's room. It was the back room on the same floor on which Mrs. L—— and her daughter slept together in a large front bed-chamber. They heard him swearing at the noise, as if it had been at his servant; but the man did not sleep in the house. At last he threw his boots at it; and the more violent he became, the more violent seemed to grow the disturbance.

"At last his mother ventured to knock at his door and ask what was the matter. He told her to come in. She brought a lighted candle and set it on the table. As she entered, tier son's favorite pointer rushed out of the room. 'So,' he said, the dog's gone! I have not been able to keep a dog in my room at night for years; but under your roof, mother, I fancied, I hoped, I might escape a persecution that I see now pursues me even here. I am sorry for Kate's canary-bird that hung behind the curtain. I heard it fluttering after the first round. Of course it is dead!"

"The old lady got up, all trembling, to look at poor

Kate's bird. It was dead, at the bottom of the cage, all its feathers ruffled.

"Is there no Bible in the room?" she inquired, 'Yes,'—he drew one from under his pillow: 'that, I think, protects me from blows.' He looked so dreadfully exhausted that his mother wished to leave the room, to get him some wine. 'No: stay here: do not leave me!' he entreated. Hardly had he ceased speaking, when some huge, heavy substance seemed rolling down the chimney and flopped on the hearth; but Mrs. L—— saw nothing. The next moment, as from a strong wind, the light was extinguished, while knocks and raps and a rushing sound passed round the apartment. Robert L—— alternately prayed and swore; and the old lady, usually remarkable for her self-possession, had great difficulty in preventing herself from fainting. The noise continued, sometimes seeming like violent *thumps*, sometimes the sounds appearing to *trickle* around the room.

"At last tier other son, roused by the disturbance, came in, and found his mother on her knees, praying.

"That night she slept in her son's room, or rather attempted to do so; for sleep was impossible, though her bed was not touched or shaken. Kate remained outside the open door. It was impossible to see, because, immediately after the first plunge down the chimney, the lights were extinguished.

"The next morning, Robert told his family that for more than ten years he had been the victim of this Spirit persecution. If he lay in his tent, it was there, disturbing his brother officers, who gradually shunned the society of 'the haunted man,' as they called him,—one who must have done something to draw down such punishment.' When on leave of absence, he was generally free from the visitation for three or four nights; then it found him out again. He never was suffered to remain

in a lodging; being regularly 'warned out' by the householders, who would not endure the noise.

"After breakfast, the next-door neighbors sent in to complain of the noises of the preceding night. On the succeeding nights, several friends (two or three of whom I knew) sat up with Mrs. L——, and sought to investigate, according to human means, the cause. In vain! They verified the fact; the cause remained hidden in mystery.

"Kate wished me to hear for myself; but I had not courage to do so, nor would my dear mother have permitted it.

"No inducement could prevail on the pointer to return to his master's room, by day or night. He was a recent purchase, and, until the first noise in London came, had appreciated Robert's kindness. After that, he evidently disliked his master. 'It is the old story over again,' said Robert. 'I could never keep a dog. I thought I would try again; but I shall never have any thing to love, and nothing will ever be permitted to love me.' The animal soon after got out; and they supposed it ran away, or was stolen.

"The young man, seeing his mother and sister fading away under anxiety and want of rest, told them he could bear his affliction better by himself, and would therefore go to Ireland, his native country, and reside in some detached country cottage, where he could fish and shoot.

"He went. Before his departure I once heard the poor fellow say, 'It is hard to be so punished; but perhaps I have deserved it.'

"I learned, afterward, that there was more than a suspicion that he had abandoned an unfortunate girl who

'Loved not wisely, but too well;'

and that she died in America. Be this as it may, in Ireland, as elsewhere, the visitation followed him unceasingly.

"This spirit never spoke, never answered questions and the mode of communicating now so general was not then known. If it had been, there might have been a different result.

"As it was, Robert L——'s mode of life in his native country gave his mother great anxiety. I had no clew, however, to his ultimate fate; for his sister would not tell me where in Ireland he had made his miserable home.

"My friend Kate married immediately after her brother left. She was a bride, a mother, and a corpse within a year; and her death really broke her mother's heart: so that in two years the family seemed to have vanished, as if I had never known them. I have sometimes thought, however, that if the dear old lady had not received such a shock from her son's spiritual visitor, she would not have been crushed by the loss of her daughter; but she told me she had nothing left to bind her to this world.

"I have often regretted that I had not watched with my young friend one night; but the facts I have thrown together were known to certainly twenty persons in London."

One rarely finds a narrative better authenticated, or more strongly indicating the reality of an ultramundane agency, than this. It is attested by the Dame of a lady well and favorably known to the literary world. It is true that, deterred by her fears, she did not personally witness the disturbances. But if she had, would it have added materially to the weight of her testimony as it stands? Could she doubt the reality of these appalling

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\* Extracted from Mrs. Hall's letter to me, dated London, March 31, 1859

demonstrations? Can we doubt it? The testimony of the sister and the mother, whose lives this fearful visitation darkened if it did not shorten, to say nothing of the corroborative evidence furnished by friends who sat up with them expressly to seek out some explanation,—can we refuse credit to all this? The haggard and careworn looks of the sufferer, his blighted life, could these have been simulated? The confession to his family, wrung from him by the recurrence, in his mother's house, of the torment he could no longer conceal,—could that be a lie? Dumb animals attested the contrary. The death of the canary-bird, the terror of the dog, could fancy cause the one or create the other? Or shall we resort to the hypothesis of human agency? Ten years had the avenging sounds pursued the unfortunate man. In tent or tavern, in country or city, go where he would, the terrible Intrusion still dogged his steps. The maternal home was no city of refuge from the pursuer. To the wilds of Ireland it followed the culprit in his retreat. Even if such human vengeance were conceivable, would not human ingenuity be powerless to carry it out?

But, if we concede the reality and the spiritual character of the demonstration, are we to admit also the explanation hypothetically suggested by the narrator? Was Robert L—— really thus punished, through life, for one of the worst, because one of the most selfish and heartless and misery-bringing, in the list of human sins? He himself seemed to be of that opinion: "Perhaps I have deserved it" was the verdict of his conscience. It may be rash, with our present limited knowledge of ultramundane laws, to assert any thing in the premises; knowing as we do that tons of thousands of such offenders pass through life unwhipped of justice.\*

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\* It does not by any means follow, however, that because many similar offenders escape unpunished, there was nothing retributive in the incidents,

yet, if we reject that hypothesis, what other, more plausible, remains?

Even if we accept that explanation, however, it is not to be assumed, as of course, that it was the spirit of his poor victim that thus ceaselessly followed her deserter, the betrayer of her trust. Love may be changed, for a time, into vehement dislike: it is difficult to believe that, after the earthly tenement is gone, it should harden into hate eternal and unrelenting. And we can conceive that some other departed spirit, of evil nature, obtaining power over the wretched man by the aid of an impressible temperament wrought upon by a conscience haunted by remorse, might have been permitted (who can tell under what law or for what purpose?) to visit, with such retribution, the evil deed.

But here we enter the regions of conjecture. These events happened long before Spiritualism had become a distinctive name. No attempt was made to communicate with the sounds. No explanation, therefore, trustworthy or apocryphal, was reached. There was no chance, then, given to conciliate; no opportunity afforded for propitiation.

It has been alleged that, in many modern instances of what had assumed the character of spiritual interference, the disturbance ceased when communication, by knockings, was sought and obtained. So it might have been, as Mrs. Hall suggests, in the case of Robert L——. And, if so, the spirit-rap, lightly esteemed by many as it is, might have brought to repentance and saved from hopeless suffering—possibly premature death—a young man with heavy guilt, indeed, upon his soul, yet not a sinner above all men that dwelt in London.

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here related. In this mysteriously-governed world some criminals escape, while others, less guilty perhaps, are overtaken. "Those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?"—Luke xiii. 4.

## CHAPTER II.

### GUARDIANSHIP.

A PLEASANTER task remains; to speak, namely, of the indications that reach us of ultramundane aid and spiritual protection.

Three stories have come to my knowledge, in each of which the subject of the narrative is alleged to have been saved from death by an apparition seeming to be the counterpart of himself: one related of an English clergyman, traveling, late at night, in a lonely lane, by whose side the figure suddenly appeared, and thus (as the clergyman afterward ascertained) deterred two men, bent on murder and robbery, from attacking him; and both the others—the one occurring to a student in Edinburgh, the other to a fashionable young man in Berlin—being examples in which the seer is said to have been warned from occupying his usual chamber, which had he occupied, he would have perished by the falling in of a portion of the house.

But these anecdotes, though for each there is plausible evidence, do not come within the rule I have laid down to myself of sufficient authentication.

A somewhat similar story is related and vouched for by Jung Stilling, of a certain Professor Bohm, of Marburg, in whose case, however, the warning came by an urgent presentiment only, not by an actual apparition.\*

Such a case of presentiment, though the danger was to another, not to the subject of it, came to me, through the kindness of a lady, at first hand, as follows:

*\* Theorie der Geisterkunde."*

## HOW SENATOR LINN'S LIFE WAS SAVED.

Those who were familiar with the political history of our country twenty years ago remember well Dr. Linn, of Missouri. Distinguished for talents and professional ability, but yet more for the excellence of his heart, he received, by a distinction as rare as it was honorable, the unanimous vote of the Legislature for the office of Senator of the United States.

In discharge of his Congressional duties, he was residing with his family in Washington, during the spring and summer of 1840, the last year of Mr. Van Buren's administration.

One day during the month of May of that year, Dr. and Mrs. Linn received an invitation to a large and formal dinner-party, given by a public functionary, and to which the most prominent members of the Administration party, including the President himself and our present Chief Magistrate, Mr. Buchanan, were invited guests. Dr. Linn was very anxious to be present; but, when the day came, finding himself suffering from an attack of indigestion, he begged his wife to bear his apology in person, and make one of the dinner-party, leaving him at home. To this she somewhat reluctantly consented. She was accompanied to the door of their host by a friend, General Jones, who promised to return and remain with Dr. Linn during the evening.

At table Mrs. Linn sat next to General Macomb, who had conducted her to dinner; and immediately opposite to her sat Silas Wright, Senator from New York, the most intimate friend of her husband, and a man by whose death, shortly after, the country sustained an irreparable loss.

Even during the early part of the dinner, Mrs. Linn felt very uneasy about her husband. She tried to reason herself out of this, as she knew that his indisposition

was not at all serious; but in vain. She mentioned her uneasiness to General Macomb; but he reminded her of what she herself had previously told him,—that General Jones had promised to remain with Dr. Linn, and that, in the very unlikely contingency of any sudden illness, he would be sure to apprise her of it. Notwithstanding these representations, as dinner drew toward a close this unaccountable uneasiness increased to such an uncontrollable impulse to return home, that, as she expressed it to me, she felt that she could not sit there a moment longer. Her sudden pallor was noticed by Senator Wright, and excited his alarm. "I am sure you are ill, Mrs. Linn," he said: 'what is the matter?' She replied that she was quite well, but that she must return to her husband. Mr. Wright sought, as General Macomb had done, to calm her fears; but she replied to him, "If you wish to do me a favor for which I shall be grateful while I live, make some excuse to our host, so that we can leave the table." Seeing her so greatly excited, he complied with her request, though they were then but serving the dessert; and he and Mrs. Wright accompanied Mrs. Linn home.

As they were taking leave of her at the door of her lodgings, Senator Wright said, "I shall call to-morrow morning, and have a good laugh with the doctor and yourself over your panic apprehensions."

As Mrs. Linn passed hastily up-stairs, she met the landlady. "How is Dr. Linn?" she anxiously asked. "Very well, I believe," was the reply: "he took a bath more than an hour ago, and I dare say is sound asleep by this time. General Jones said he was doing extremely well."

"The general is with him, is he not?"

"I believe not. I think I saw him pass out about half an hour ago."

In a measure reassured, Mrs. Linn hastened to her

husband's bed-chamber, the door of which was closed. As she opened it, a dense smoke burst upon her, in such stifling quantity that she staggered and fell on the threshold. Recovering herself after a few seconds, she rushed into the room. The bolster was on fire, and the feathers burned with a bright glow and a suffocating odor. She threw herself upon the bed; but the fire, half smothered till that moment, was fanned by the draught from the opened door, and, kindling into sudden flame, caught her light dress, which was in a blaze on the instant. At the same moment her eye fell on the large bath-tub that had been used by her husband. She sprang into it, extinguishing her burning dress; then, returning to the bed, she caught up the pillow and a sheet that was on fire, scorching her arms in so doing, and plunged both into the water. Finally, exerting her utmost strength, she drew from the bed her insensible husband. It was then only that she called to the people of the house for aid.

Dr. Sewell was instantly summoned. But it was full half an hour before the sufferer gave any signs whatever of returning animation. He did not leave his bed for nearly a week; and it was three months before he entirely recovered from the effects of this accident.

"How fortunate it was," said Dr. Sewell to Mrs. Linn, "that you arrived at the very moment you did! Five minutes more,—nay, three minutes,—and, in all human probability, you would have never seen your husband alive again."

Mr. Wright called, as he promised, the next morning. "Well, Mrs. Linn," said he, smiling, "you have found out by this time how foolish that strange presentiment of yours was."

"Come up-stairs," she replied. And she led him to his friend, scarcely yet able to speak; and then she

showed him the remains of the half-consumed bolster and partially-burned bed-linen.

Whether the sight changed his opinion on the subject of presentiments I cannot tell; but he turned pale as a corpse, (Mrs. Linn said,) and did not utter a word.

I had all the above particulars from Mrs. Linn herself,\* together with the permission to publish them in illustration of the subject I am treating, attested by date and names.

There is one point in connection with the above narrative, which is worthy of special examination. In case we admit that Mrs. Linn's irresistible impulse to leave the dinner-table was a spiritual impression, the question remains, was it a warning of evil then existing, or was it a presentiment of evil that was still to arise? In other words, was it in its character only clairvoyant, or was it in its nature clearly prophetic?

The impression was distinctly produced on Mrs. Linn's mind, as that lady told me, at least half an hour before it became so urgent as to compel her to leave the entertainment. When she did leave, as the carriages were not ordered till eleven o'clock, and no hackney-coach was at hand, she and Mr. and Mrs. Wright, as she further stated to me, returned on foot. The distance being a mile and a half, they were fully half an hour in walking it. It follows that Mrs. Linn was impressed to return more than an hour before she opened the door of the bedroom.

Now, it is highly improbable that the fire should have caught, or that any thing should have happened likely to lead to it, in the bedroom as much as an hour, or even half an hour, before Mrs. Linn's arrival. But if not,—if, at the moment Mrs. Linn was first impressed, no condition of things existed which, to human perceptions,

\* In Washington, on the 4th of July, 1859.

could indicate danger,—then, unless we refer the whole to chance coincidence, the case is one involving not only a warning presentiment, but a prophetic instinct.

More distinct still, as an example of what seems protective agency, is the following from a recent work by the Rev. Dr. Bushnell.

#### HELP AMID THE SNOW-DRIFTS.

"As I sat by the fire, one stormy November night, in a hotel-parlor, in the Napa Valley of California, there came in a most venerable and benignant-looking person, with his wife, taking their seats in the circle. The stranger, as I afterward learned, was Captain Yount, a man who came over into California, as a trapper, more than forty years ago. Here he has lived, apart from the great world and its questions, acquiring an immense landed estate, and becoming a kind of acknowledged patriarch in the country. His tall, manly person, and his gracious, paternal look, as totally unsophisticated in the expression as if he had never heard of a philosophic doubt or question in his life, marked him as the true patriarch. The conversation turned, I know not how, on spiritism and the modern necromancy; and he discovered a degree of inclination to believe in the reported mysteries. His wife, a much younger and apparently Christian person, intimated that probably he was predisposed to this kind of faith by a very peculiar experience of his own, and evidently desired that he might be drawn out by some intelligent discussion of his queries.

"At my request, he gave me his story. About six or seven years previous, in a mid-winter's night, he had a dream in which he saw what appeared to be a company of emigrants arrested by the snows of the mountains and perishing rapidly by cold and hunger. He noted

the very cast of the scenery, marked by a huge perpendicular front of white rock cliff; he saw the men cutting off what appeared to be tree-tops rising out of deep gulfs of snow; he distinguished the very features of the persons and the look of their particular distress. He woke profoundly impressed with the distinctness and apparent reality of his dream. At length he fell asleep and dreamed exactly the same dream again. In the morning he could not expel it from his mind. Falling in, shortly, with an old hunter comrade, he told him the story, and was only the more deeply impressed by his recognizing, without hesitation, the scenery of the dream. This comrade had come over the Sierra by the Carson Valley Pass, and declared that a spot in the pass answered exactly to his description. By this the unsophisticated patriarch was decided. He immediately collected a company of men with mules and blankets and all necessary provisions. The neighbors were laughing, meantime, at his credulity. 'No matter,' said he: 'I am able to do this, and I will; for I verily believe that the fact is according to my dream.' The men were sent into the mountains, one hundred and fifty miles distant, directly to the Carson Valley Pass. And there they found the company in exactly the condition of the dream, and brought in the remnant alive."\*

Dr. Bushnell adds, that a gentleman present said to him, "You need have no doubt of this; for we Californians all know the facts and the names of the families brought in, who now look upon our venerable friend as a kind of Savior." These names he gave, together with the residences of each; and Dr. Bushnell avers that he found the Californians everywhere ready to second the old man's testimony. "Nothing could be more natural,"

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\* *"Nature and the Supernatural,"* by Horace Bushnell, New York, 1858, pp. 416. 476. George C. Yount was the trapper's name.

continues the doctor, "than for the good-hearted patriarch himself to add that the brightest thing in his life, and that which gave him the greatest joy, was his simple faith in that dream."

Here is a fact known and acknowledged by a whole community. That it actually occurred is beyond cavil. But how could it occur by chance? In the illimitable wintry wilderness, with its hundred passes and its thousand emigrants, how can a purely accidental fancy be supposed, without ultramundane interference, to shape into the semblance of reality a scene actually existing a hundred and fifty miles off, though wholly unknown to the dreamer,—not the landscape only, with its white cliffs and its snow-buried trees, but the starving travelers cutting the tree-tops in a vain effort to avert cold and famine? He who credits this believes a marvel far greater than the hypothesis of spiritual guardianship.

In support of that hypothesis, however, there are well-attested narratives, indicating, more directly than this story of the Californian trapper, loving care on the part of the departed. One of these will be found in a work on the supernatural by the Rev. Dr. Edwards. He communicates it in the shape of an "extract of a letter from an enlightened and learned divine in the north of Germany." The incident occurred, he tells us, at Levin, a village belonging to the Duchy of Mecklenburg, not far from Demmin, in Prussian Pomerania, on the Sunday before Michaelmas, in the year 1759. The extract referred to (the title only added by me) is as follows:—

#### UNEXPECTED CONSOLATION.

"I will now, in conclusion, mention to you a very edifying story of an apparition, for the truth of which I can vouch, with all that is dear to me. My late mother, a pattern of true piety, and a woman who

was regular in prayer, lost, quite unexpectedly after a short illness, arising from a sore throat, my younger sister, a girl of about fourteen years of age. Now, as during her illness she had not spoken much with her on spiritual subjects, by no means supposing her end so near, (although my father had done so,) she reproached and grieved herself most profoundly, not only on this account, but also for not having sufficiently nursed and attended upon her, or for having neglected something that might have brought on her death. This feeling took so much hold of her, that she not only altered much in her appearance, from loss of appetite, but became so monosyllabic in speaking that she never expressed herself except on being interrogated. She still, however, continued to pray diligently in her chamber. Being already grown up at the time, I spoke with my father respecting her, and asked him what was to be done, and how my good mother might be comforted. He shrugged his shoulders, and gave me to understand that, unless God interposed, he feared the worst.

Now, it happened, some days after, when we were all, one Sunday morning, at church, with the exception of my mother, who remained at home, that on rising up from prayer, in her closet, she heard a noise as though some one was with her in the room. On looking about to ascertain whence the noise proceeded, something took hold of her invisibly and pressed her firmly to it, as if she had been embraced by some one, and the same moment she heard,—without seeing any thing whatever, very distinctly, the voice of her departed daughter, saying quite plainly to her, 'Mamma! mamma! I am so happy! I am so happy!' Immediately after these words, the pressure subsided, and my mother felt and heard nothing more. But what a wished-for change did we all perceive in our dear mother on coming home! She had regained her speech and former cheerfulness;

she ate and drank, and rejoiced with us at the mercy which the Lord had bestowed upon her; nor during her whole life did she even notice again, with grief, the great loss which she had suffered by the decease of this excellent daughter."

That this was a case of hallucination of two senses, hearing and feeling, can be considered probable only if no unequivocal examples of similar agency can be found. And if, to some persons, speech by an inhabitant of another world, audible upon earth, seem an impossible phenomenon, let them read the following, communicated to me by a gentleman to whose lady, as our readers have seen, I am already indebted for one of the most striking narratives in connection with personal interferences.

#### GASPAR.

"At Worcester, a few weeks since, I accidentally met, at the house of a banker in that city, a lady whom I had not previously known; and from her lips I heard a story of a character so extraordinary that no commonplace voucher for the veracity of the narrator would suffice, in the eyes of most people, to establish its authenticity.

"Nor was it an ordinary testimonial which, on applying to our host, he furnished to me. He had known the lady, he said, for more than thirty years. 'So great is her truth,' he added, 'so easily proved is her uprightness, that I cannot entertain a doubt that she herself believes whatever she says.' Blameless in her walk and conversation, he regarded it as an incredibility that she should *seek* to deceive. Of strong mind, and intelligent upon all subjects, it seemed almost as difficult for him to

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\* "*The noctrine of the Supernatural Established*," by Henry Edwards, D.D., LL.D., F.A.S., F.G.S., &c., London, 1845, pp. 226 to 228.

imagine that in the narrative he had himself frequently heard from her lips—clear and circumstantial as it was—she should have been a self-deceiver. And thus he was in a dilemma. For the facts were of a character which he was extremely reluctant to admit; while the evidence was of a stamp which it seemed impossible to question.

"My own observation of the lady, stranger as she was to me, confirmed every thing which her friend the banker had told me in her favor. There was in her face and manner, even in the tones of her voice, that nameless something, rarely deceptive, which carries conviction of truth. As she repeated the story, I could not choose but trust to her sincerity; and this the rather because she spoke with evident reluctance. 'It was rarely,' the banker said, 'that she could be prevailed on to relate the circumstances,—her hearers being usually skeptics, more disposed to laugh than to sympathize with her.'

"Add to this, that neither the lady nor the banker were believers in Spiritualism,—having heard, as they told me, 'next to nothing' on the subject.

"I commit no breach of confidence in the following communication. 'If you speak of this matter,' said the lady to me, 'I will ask you to suppress the name of the place in France where the occurrences took place.' This I have accordingly done. I may add that the incidents here related had been the frequent subject of conversation and comment between the lady and her friends.

"Thus premising, I proceed to give the narrative as nearly as I can in the lady's words.

"'About the year 1820,' she said, 'we were residing at the seaport town of ——, in France, having removed thither from our residence in Suffolk. Our family consisted of my father, mother, sister, a young brother about the age of twelve, and myself, together with an English servant. Our house was in a lonely spot, on

the outskirts of the town, with a broad, open beach around it, and with no other dwelling, nor any outbuildings, in its vicinity.

"One evening my father saw, seated on a fragment of rock only a few yards from his own door, a figure enveloped in a large cloak. Approaching him, my father bid him "good-evening;" but, receiving no reply, he turned to enter the house. Before doing so, however, he looked back, and, to his very great surprise, could see no one. His astonishment reached its height when, on returning to the rock where the figure had seemed seated, and searching all round it, he could discover no trace whatever of the appearance, although there was not the slightest shelter near where any one could have sought concealment.

"On entering the sitting-room, he said, "Children, I have seen a ghost!"—at which, as may be supposed, we all heartily laughed.

That night, however, and for several succeeding nights, we heard strange noises in various parts of the house,—sometimes resembling moans underneath our window, sometimes sounding like scratches against the window-frames, while at other times it seemed as if a number of persons were scrambling over the roof. We opened our window again and again, calling out to know if any one were there, but received no answer.

"After some days, the noises made their way into our bedroom, where my sister and myself (she twenty and I eighteen years of age) slept together. We alarmed the house, but received only reproaches, our parents believing that we were affected by silly fancies. The noises in our room were usually knocks,—sometimes repeated twenty or thirty times in a minute, sometimes with the space perhaps of a minute between each.

"At length our parents also heard both the knockings in our room and the noises outside, and were fain

to admit that it was no imagination. Then the incident of the ghost was revived. But none of us were seriously alarmed. We became accustomed to the disturbances.

"One night, during the usual knockings, it occurred to me to say, aloud, "If you are a spirit, knock six times." Immediately I heard six knocks, very distinctly given, and no more.

"As time passed on, the noises became so familiar as to lose all terrifying, even all disagreeable, effect; and so matters passed for several weeks.

"But the most remarkable part of my story remains to be told. I should hesitate to repeat it to you, were not all the members of my family witnesses of its truth. My brother—then, it is true, a boy only, now a man in years, and high in his profession—will confirm every particular.

"Besides the knockings in our bedroom, we began to hear—usually in the parlor—what seemed a human voice. The first time this startling phenomenon occurred, the voice was heard to join in one of the domestic songs of the family while my sister was at the piano. You may imagine our astonishment. But we were not long left in doubt as to whether, in this instance, our imaginations had deceived us. After a time, the voice began to speak to us clearly and intelligibly, joining from time to time in the conversation. The tones were low, slow, and solemn, but quite distinct: the language was uniformly French.

"The spirit—for such we called it—gave his name as GASPAR, but remained silent whenever we made inquiry touching his history and condition in life. Nor did he ever assign any motive for his communications with us. We received the impression that he was a Spaniard; but I cannot recall any certain reason, even, for such belief. He always called the family by their Christian names. Occasionally he would repeat to us lines of

poetry. He never spoke on subjects of a religious nature or tendency, but constantly inculcated Christian morality, seeming desirous to impress upon us the wisdom of virtue and the beauty of harmony at home. Once, when my sister and myself had some slight dispute, we heard the voice saying, "M—— is wrong; S—— is right." From the time he first declared himself he was continually giving us advice, *and* always for good.\*

"On one occasion my father was extremely desirous to recover some valuable papers which he feared might have been lost. Gaspar told him exactly where they were, in our old house in Suffolk; and there, sure enough, in the very place he designated, they were found.

"The matter went on in this manner for *more than three years*. Every member of the family, including the servants, had heard the voice. The presence of the spirit—for we could not help regarding him as present—was always a pleasure to us all. We came to regard him as our companion and protector. One day he said, "I shall not be with you again for some months." And, accordingly for several months his visits intermitted. When, one evening at the end of that time, we again heard the well-known voice, "I am with you again!" we hailed his return with joy.

"At the times the voice was heard, we never saw any appearance; but one evening my brother said, "Gaspar, I should like to see you;" to which the voice replied, "You shall see me. I will meet you if you go to the farthest side of the square." He went, and returned presently, saying, "I have seen Gaspar. He was in a large cloak, with a broad-brimmed hat. I looked under the hat, and he smiled upon me." "Yes," said the voice, joining in, "that was I."

"But the manner of his final departure was more

\* The italics are in the original manuscript.

touching, even, than his kindness while he stayed. We returned to Suffolk; and there, as in France, for several weeks after our arrival, Gaspar continued to converse with us, as usual. One day, however, he said, "I am about to leave you altogether. Harm would come to you if I were to be with you here in this country, where your communications with me would be misunderstood and misinterpreted."

"From that time," concluded the lady, in that tone of sadness with which one speaks of a dear friend removed by death,—"from that time to this, we never heard the voice of Gaspar again!"

"These are the facts as I had them. They made me think; and they may make your readers think. Explanation or opinion I pretend not to add, further than this: that of the perfect good faith of the narrator I entertain no doubt whatever. In attestation of the story as she related it, I affix my name.

S. C. HALL.

"LONDON, June 25, 1859."

What are we to think of a narrative coming to us so directly from the original source, and told in so straightforward a manner, as this? What hypothesis, be it of trickery, self-delusion, or hallucination, will serve us to set it aside? One, two, a dozen, incidents, running through a week or two, might, at utmost need, be explained away, as the result, perhaps, of some mystification,—possibly of some mistake of the senses. But a series of phenomena extending throughout three years, witnessed, long before the era of Spiritualism, in the quiet of domestic privacy, by every member of an enlightened family, observed, too, without the slightest terror to mislead, or excitement to disqualify as witness, making, day after day, on all the witnesses, the same impression,—upon what rational plea, short of suspicion

of willful deception, can we set aside, as untrustworthy, such observations as these?

I seek in vain any middle ground. Either an oral communication, apparently from an ultramundane source, is possible; or else a cultivated and intelligent family, of high standing and unimpeached honor, combined to palm upon their friends a stark lie. Not the narrator alone: her father, mother, brother, sister, must all have been parties to a gross and motiveless falsehood, persisted in through a lifetime; nay, a falsehood not motiveless only, but of certain and evident injury in a worldly sense. For such a story, as every one knows, cannot, in the present prejudiced state of public opinion, be told (let the narrator be ever so highly respected) without risk of painful comment and injurious surmise.

On the other hand, that a disembodied spirit should speak to mortal ears, is one of those ultramundane phenomena, alleged in several of the preceding narratives, which the reader may have found it the most difficult to credit or conceive.

But my task as a compiler draws near its termination. I must set a limit to the number of my narrative-proofs, or else depart from the rule I have laid down to myself; to study brevity, and to place these proofs, so far as I may, within the reach of all, by restricting this treatise to the limits of a single duodecimo volume. With one additional narrative, therefore, out of a multitude that remain on my hands, I here, for the present, close the list.

#### THE REJECTED SUITOR.

In a beautiful country residence, at no great distance from London, in one of the prettiest portions of England, live a gentleman and his wife, whom I shall designate as Mr. and Mrs. W—. They have been married sixteen years, but have no children.

Four or five years ago, there came to reside with them a lend of the family, an aged gentleman who had already passed his eightieth year, and whose declining strength and increasing infirmities gradually demanded more and more constant care. Mrs. W—— tended him with the anxious affection of a daughter; and when, after some four years, he died, she mourned him as if she had indeed lost a father. Her sorrow for his loss was the deeper because of that beautiful characteristic of her sex, which causes a true-hearted woman to lament most the feeble child, or the aged sufferer, whose helplessness has seemed to cast them upon her as a constant burden, but whom that very dependence has so endeared to her, that, when death takes from her the object of her care, she feels rather a blank in her existence than a release from daily toil or nightly watch.

In such a frame of mind as this, and feeling more than usually depressed, Mrs. W—— went one morning, not long after her old friend's death, into her garden, in search of some distraction from the grief that oppressed her. She had been there but a few minutes, when she felt a strong impulse to return to the house and write.

It ought here to be stated that Mrs. W—— is not, nor ever has been, what, in modern phrase, is called a Spiritualist. Indeed, what she had heard of Spiritualism years before had caused her to regard it as a mischievous delusion; and though, later, she had begun somewhat to doubt how far she might have been unjustly prejudiced, she had never sat at a table, nor otherwise evoked Spiritual phenomena; it cannot be regarded as such that on one or two occasions she had sat down, out of curiosity, to see if her hand would write automatically; a few unintelligible figures or unimportant words having been the only result.

On the present occasion, however, the impulse to write, gradually increasing, and attended with a nervous

and uneasy sensation in the right arm, became so strong that she yielded to it; and, returning to the house and picking up a sheet of note-paper and a small portfolio, she sat down on the steps of the front door, put the portfolio on her knee, with the sheet of note-paper across it, and placed her hand, with a pencil, at the upper left-hand corner, as one usually begins to write. After a time the hand was gradually drawn to the lower right-hand corner, and began to write *backward*; completing the first line near the left-hand edge of the sheet, then commencing a second line, and finally a third, both on the right, and completing the writing near to where she had first put down her pencil. Not only was the last letter in the sentence written first, and so on until the commencing letter was written last, but each separate letter was written backward, or inversely; the pencil going over the lines which composed each letter from right to left.

Mrs. W—— stated to me that (as may well be conceived) she had not the slightest perception of what her hand was writing; no idea passing through her mind at the time. When her hand stopped, she read the sentence as she would have read what any other person had written for her. The handwriting was cramped and awkward, but, as the fac-simile will show,\* legible enough. The sentence read thus:

*"Ye are sorrowing as one without hope. Cast thy burden upon God, and he will help thee."*

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\* See Plate I. It would seem that it ought to have read, "Thou are sorrowing," &c. If I am asked whence this error in the grammatical construction of the sentence, I reply that I can no more account for it than I can for the writing itself. No one could write more correctly or grammatically than does Mrs. W——. It was not through her, therefore, as in the case of an illiterate scribe we might have imagined it, that the error occurred. Its occurrence is additional proof that her mind had no agency in the matter; though it would probably be stretching conjecture too far to imagine that it was so intended.

Mrs. W—— afterward said to me that if an angel from heaven had suddenly appeared to her and pronounced these words, her astonishment could scarcely have exceeded that with which she first read them. She felt awe-stricken, as if in the presence of some superior power. She sat long in silent contemplation. Then she perused, again and again, the sentence before her, half doubting, the while, the evidence of her own senses. After a time she again took pencil in hand, and tried to write something backward. But the simplest word, of three or four letters, was too much for her. She puzzled over it without being able to trace it backward, so as to be legible when done.

Then the question arose in her mind, "Whence is this? Who caused me to write that sentence?"

Her thoughts involuntarily reverted to the aged friend whom she had just lost. Could his spirit, from its home in another world, have dictated those words of consolation? Could he have been permitted to guide her hand so that she might thus receive assurance that he sympathized with her sorrow and took thought how he might relieve it?

That was the conclusion to which she finally inclined. Yet, desiring further assurance, she silently prayed that the spirit which had written this sentence through her hand might also be allowed, through the same medium, to subscribe its name. And then she placed her pencil at the foot of the paper, confidently expecting that the name of the friend whom she had lost would be written there.

The event, however, wholly belied her expectation. The pencil, again drawn nearly to the right-hand edge of the paper, wrote, backward as before, not the expected name, but the initials R. G. D.

Mrs. W——, as she read them, felt herself shudder and turn pale. The grave seemed giving forth its dead.

The initials were those of a Young man who, eighteen years before, had sought her in marriage, but whom, though she had long known and highly esteemed him, she had rejected,—not experiencing for him any sentiment warmer than friendship, and perhaps having other preferences. He had received her refusal without complaint or expostulation. "You never gave me reason to expect," he said, gently, "that I should be accepted. But I was resolved to know my fate; for I could endure suspense no longer. I thank you for having dealt so candidly with me. I see now that you can never be my wife; but no one else ever shall be. So much, at least, is within my power."

And with that he had left her. Twelve years afterward he died, a bachelor. When Mrs. W—— had first heard of his death, she had felt a, momentary pang, as the thought arose that she perhaps, in crossing his life's path, had darkened and made solitary his existence. But, as she had nothing with which to reproach herself in the matter, and as she had never felt for him more than for any other deserving friend, she soon ceased to think of him; and she solemnly assured me that she could not call to mind that his name, even, had recurred to her remembrance, for several years, until the moment when it was thus suddenly and unexpectedly called up.

This occurred on the afternoon of Tuesday, March 1, 1859. A little more than a month afterward, to wit, on Monday, April 4, about four o'clock in the afternoon, while Mrs. W—— was sitting in her parlor, reading, she suddenly heard, apparently coming from a small sidetable near her, three distinct raps. She listened; and again there came the same sounds. Still uncertain whether it might not be some accidental knocking, she said, "If it be a spirit who announces himself, will he repeat the sound?" Whereupon the sounds were instantly and still more distinctly repeated; and Mrs.

W—— became assured that they proceeded from the side-table.

She then said, "If I take pencil and paper, can I be informed who it is?" Immediately there were three raps, as of assent; and when she sat down to write, her hand, writing backward, formed the same initials as before,—R. G. D.

Then she questioned, "For what purpose were these sounds?" To which the reply, again written backward, was, "*To show you that we are thinking and working for you.*"

Nor was this all. Ten days after the last incident, namely, on Thursday afternoon, April 14, Mrs. W——, happening to call to mind that R. G. D. had once presented to her a beautiful black Newfoundland dog, thought within herself, "How much I should like to have just such an animal now!" And, one of her servants happening to be near at the time, she said to her, "I wish I had a fine large Newfoundland for a walking companion."

The next morning, after breakfast, a gentleman was announced. He proved to be an entire stranger, whom Mrs. W—— did not remember to have ever seen before. He was a surveyor, from a neighboring town, and led with him a noble black Newfoundland, as high as the table. After apologizing for his intrusion, he said he had taken the liberty to call, in order to ask Mrs. W——'s acceptance of the dog he had brought with him. "You could not have offered me a more acceptable gift said Mrs. W——.; "but will you allow me to ask what induced you to think of bringing him to me?" "I brought him," he said, "because I do not intend, for the future, to keep dogs, and because I felt assured that in you he would find a kind mistress."

Mrs. W—— informed me that she had ascertained, to

\* For fac-simile, see Plate 11.

an absolute certainty, that the girl to whom she had spoken on the matter had not mentioned to any one her wish to have a dog, and, indeed, that the casual remark had passed from the girl's mind and she had never thought of it again. A few hours only, it will be observed, intervened between the expression of the wish and the offer of the animal.

Those who are as well acquainted with Mrs. W—— as I am know that uprightness and conscientiousness are marked traits in her character, and that the above incidents may be confidently relied on as the exact truth. I had them direct from Mrs. W—— herself, a few days after they occurred; and that lady kindly ceded to me the original manuscript of the two communications.

The circumstances, taken in connection, are, of their kind, among the most extraordinary with which I am acquainted. And to the candid reader it will not be matter of surprise to learn that Mrs. W——, until then a skeptic in the reality of any direct agencies from another world, should have confessed to me that her doubts were removed, that she felt comforted and tranquilized, and that she accepted the indications thus vouchsafed to her, unsought, unlooked for, as sufficient assurance that she was, in a measure, under spiritual protection,—thought of, cared for, even from beyond the tomb.

Before we decide that a faith so consolatory is unfounded, we shall do well to review the facts of this case.

Whence the sudden impulse in the garden? People are not in the habit of imagining that they desire to write, unless they have something to say. Mrs. W—— was not a Spiritualist, nor residing among Spiritualists: so that no epidemic agency can be urged in explanation, even if such a suggestion have weight. The phenomenon which presented itself was strictly spontaneous.

Whence again, the, writing backward? In that the will had no agency. As little had expectation. Mrs. W——, in her normal state, had not the power so to write. By diligent practice she might, doubtless, have acquired it. But she *had* no such practice. She had not acquired it. And, not having acquired it, it was as much a physical impossibility for her, of herself, so to write, as for a man, picking up a violin for the first time, to execute thereon, at sight, some elaborate passage from Handel or Beethoven.

Again, whence the intention to write after so unexampled and impracticable a manner? Where there is an intention there must be an intelligence. It was not Mrs. W—— who intended; for the result struck her with awe,—almost with consternation. It was not her intelligence, therefore, that acted. What intelligence was it?

Nor can we reasonably doubt what the intention was. Had Mrs. W——'s hand written forward, she would, in all probability, have remained in uncertainty whether, half unconsciously perhaps, the words were not of her own dictation. The expedient of the backward writing precluded any such supposition; for she could not of herself do unconsciously a thing which she could not do at all. And this expedient seems to have been ingeniously devised to cut off any supposition of the kind. Then here we have the invention of an expedient, the display of ingenuity. But who is the inventor? Who displays the ingenuity? I confess my inability to answer these questions.

The incident of the dog, if it stood alone, would be less remarkable. A thing may happen when there are ten thousand chances to one against it. A lady might to-day express a wish for a Newfoundland dog, and a perfect stranger, who knew nothing of that wish, might to-morrow offer her one. And all this might occur, as we usually say, by chance. But in the case before us

there are the attendant circumstances to be taken into account. R. G. D. had, in former days, given Mrs. W—— just such a dog. She had been thinking of him and of his gift. She had been told, ten days before, through some agency which she had found it impossible to interpret as mundane, that he was thinking and working for her. Was she superstitious when she said to me, as she did, that "nothing could convince her that a spirit did not influence the owner of the dog to bring it to her"?

I think her conclusion, under the circumstances, was a natural one. I believe that few having the same personal experience as had Mrs. W—— would have resisted it. Was it reasonable, as well as natural? It is difficult to say why it was not, unless we assume it beyond question as a thing impossible that a departed spirit should communicate with a living person, should read a living person's thoughts, should influence a living person's actions.

But it is clearly a waste of time to examine a question at all which we have resolved in advance to decide in the negative.

And, if we have not so resolved, shall we not do well fairly to meet the questions which this and the preceding narratives suggest? If outside of this material existence there be occasionally exercised a guardian thought for the welfare of men; if, sometimes, comfort may reach us, and agencies may work for us, coming over from that world to which we are all fast hastening; if there be an earthly love that is stronger than death; are these influences, if actual influences they be, so undesirable in themselves, fraught with so little of consolation, so incapable of cheering a drooping soul, so powerless to sustain a sinking spirit, so impotent to vivify the faith in a Hereafter, that we may properly repulse them, at the threshold, as graceless aberrations, or put them aside, unscrutinized, as unholy or incredible?

## BOOK VI.

### THE SUGGESTED RESULTS.

#### CHAPTER I.

#### THE CHANGE AT DEATH.

"Natura non fecit sal tum."—LINNAEUS.

IT suffices not that a theory be supported by a strong array of proofs. To merit grave notice or challenge rational belief, it must not involve results in themselves absurd.

But how stands the case in regard to the theory for which, in the preceding pages, I have been adducing evidence?—the hypothesis, namely, that when the spirit of man, disengaged from the body, passes to another state of existence, its thoughts and affections may still revert to earth; and that, in point of fact, it does occasionally make itself perceptible to the living, whether in dream or in the light of day,—sometimes to the sense of sight, sometimes to that of hearing or of touch, sometimes by an impression which we detect in its effect but cannot trace to its origin; these various spiritual agencies wearing in this instance a frivolous, in that a solemn, aspect, now assuming the form of petty annoyance, now of grave retribution, but more frequently brightening into indications of gentle ministry and loving guardianship.

If these things cannot be admitted without giving entrance in their train to inferences clearly absurd, it

avails little how great a weight of evidence may have been brought to bear in their favor: the decision must be against them at last.

So thought De Foe.\* A disciple of Luther, and sharing his aversions, he rejected, with that sturdy reformer, not only the Purgatory of Romish theology, but the idea of any future state mediate between heaven and hell. Therefore, he argued, the dead cannot return. From heaven they cannot: who can imagine the beatitude of the eternally blessed rudely violated for purpose so trivial? And for the damned in hell, how shall we suppose for them leisure or permission to leave, on earthly errand, a prison-house of which the gates are closed on them forever?

The premises conceded, these conclusions fairly follow. The dead cannot reasonably be imagined to return either from heaven or from hell. Then, if there be no mediate state after death, the theory of spiritual appearance or agency upon earth, by those who have gone before us, is inadmissible.

This must be conceded the rather because the occasions of alleged return are sometimes of very slight moment. A servant-girl is attracted to earth by the letters and the portrait of her lover. The proprietors of an old house return to lament over its decay and grieve for its change of ownership. A father appears to his son to prevent him from unnecessarily disbursing a few pounds. A poor-camp follower, at death has left unsatisfied a debt scanty reaching a dollar, and to effect the repayment of that pittance her spirit forsakes, night after night, its eternal abode!

Here we come upon another necessary inference. If these stories be true, the recently-departed spirit must retain, for a longer or shorter period, not only

\* See page 428.

its general habits of thought and motives of action, but even its petty peculiarities and favorite predilections. There must be no sudden change of individuality at the moment of death, either for the better or for the worse. Men will awake in another life, the body indeed left behind, and, with it, its corporeal instincts, its physical infirmities; yet each will awake the same individual, morally, socially, intellectually, as when on his earthly death-bed he lay down to rest.

In all this there is nothing tending to affect, either affirmatively or negatively, the doctrine of a final Day of Judgment. My argument but regards the state of the soul at the time of its emancipation by death, and for a certain period thereafter.

But so far it evidently does go. It is idle to deny it. The theory that departed friends may revisit us, and watch over us here, clearly involves two postulates:

*First*, that, when death prostrates the body, the spirit remains not, slumbering in the grave, beside moldering flesh and bone, but enters at once upon a new and active phase of life; not a state of ineffable bliss, nor yet of hopeless misery, but a condition in which cares may affect, and duties may engage, and sympathies may enlist, its feelings and its thoughts.

*Secondly*, that the death-change reaches the body only, not the heart or the mind; discarding the one, not transforming the others.

In other words, Death destroys not, in any sense, either the life or the identity of man. Nor does it permit the spirit, an angel suddenly become immaculate, to aspire at once to heaven. Far less does it condemn that spirit, a demon instantly debased, to sink incontinently to hell.

All this may sound heterodox. The more important inquiry is, whether it be irrational. Nor was it heterodox, but most strictly canonical, until many centuries

had intervened between the teachings of Christ and the creeds of his followers. If we adopt it now, we may be running counter to the preponderating sentiment of modern Protestantism, but we are returning to the faith, universally confessed, of primitive Christianity.\* I do not state this as an argument for its truth, but only as a reminder of its lineage.

Luther was a man to be praised and admired,—courageous, free-thoughted, iron-willed,—a man for his time and his task. But Luther, like other men, had his sins and his errors to answer for. Every thing about him was strong, his prejudices included. When his will reacted against deep-rooted opposition, the power of its stubborn spring sometimes carried him beyond truth and reason. He always plied his reforming besom with gigantic effect, not always with deliberate consideration. He found Purgatory an abuse; and, to make radical work, he swept out Hades along with it. †

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\* "Thus the matter stands historically. In the last quarter of the second century, when the Christian churches emerge clearly into the light, we find them universally in possession of the idea of a mediate place of souls,—one which was neither heaven nor hell, but preliminary to either. It was not an idea broached by heretics here and there. It was the belief of the Church universal, which nobody called in question."—"Foregleams of Immortality," by Edward H. Sears, 4th edition, Boston, published by the American Unitarian Association, 1858, p. 263.

Unable, for lack of space, to enter on the historical evidences for the above, I refer the reader to Mr. Sears's work, where he will find these succinctly set forth. Also to "*The Belief of the First Three Centuries concerning Christ's Mission to the Under-World*," by Frederick Huidekoper, where he may read the following passage, with numerous quotations from the Fathers in attestation :—"It can scarcely be that, at the opening of the second century, or the close of the first, the doctrine of Christ's under-world mission, so far, at least, as regards the preaching to, and liberation of, the departed, was not a widely-spread and deeply-seated opinion among Christians."..."On the essential features of this doctrine the Catholics and heretics were of one mind. It was a point too settled to admit dispute."—p. 138, quoted by Sears, p. 262.

† A more scrupulous man would have been arrested by the consideration

It is a question of infinite importance whether, in out-rooting the faith of preceding ages,\* he committed not only a grave error in fact, but also a grievous mischief in practice.

When the great Reformer denied a mediate state after death, the denial involved a hypothesis of an extraordinary

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that Peter, who must have known his Master's views on the subject, speaks of the gospel being communicated to the dead, and of Christ himself preaching even to the spirits of those who perished in the Deluge. (1 Peter iii, 19, 20, and iv. 6.) But where, except in Hades, could this have happened?

If it be objected that the word *Hades* does not even occur in the New Testament, the reply is, that Luther—whom our English translators followed—unceremoniously shut it out. He caused the two words *Gehenna* and *Hades* to be equally rendered *Hell*. "Yet," (I quote from Sears,) "as Dr. Campbell has shown conclusively in his admirable and luminous essay, those two words have not the same meaning; and only the former answers to the modern and Christian idea of hell. The word Hades, occurring eleven times in the New Testament, *never answers to that idea, and never ought to have been so rendered.*"— Work cited, p. 277.

If it be further argued that, at least, there is in Scripture no deliberate expanding of this doctrine of Hades, the reply is, that an item of faith universally admitted as beyond question by Jew as well as Christian was not likely to be unnecessarily elaborated, but only incidentally adverted to.

\* The Greeks had their Hades; though, with a Chinese reverence for the rites of sepulture, they conceived it to be filled chiefly by the restless and wandering shades of those whose bones lay exposed, neglected and forgotten; and if at last funeral honors were paid to appease the soul, its reward was not heaven, but eternal rest. Nor do they appear to have had the idea of spiritual guardianship, except as exerted by the gods. The Trojan hero does not anticipate any return from Pluto's realm to watch over the spouse he loved, but rather an eternal separation

Thy Hector, wrapped in everlasting sleep,  
Shall neither hear thee sigh  
nor see thee weep."

The Sheol of the Jews—at least, according to the later Rabbins—had three regions: an upper sphere, of comparative happiness, where were the patriarchs, prophets, and others worthy to be their associates; a second, lower region, dull and dark, the temporary abode of the wicked; and, lowest of all, Gehenna, untenanted now, and to remain empty until the Day of Judgment shall have sent the condemned to occupy it.

character. Since without Hades there can be neither hope nor reform nor preparation beyond the grave, we are compelled to suppose, in the case of man, what Linnaeus says is not to be found in the entire economy of Nature,—a sudden leap, as it were, across a great chasm,—a transforming change as instantaneous as it is complete. We are compelled to imagine that this change is preceded by no gradual progress nor effected by any human exertion.

According to the varying notions of the believers in this abrupt metamorphosis, it may occur at the moment of dissolution, or else at some epoch indefinitely distant. A portion of Luther's followers, embarrassed to dispose of the human soul in the interval between its separation from the body and its summons at some remote period by the last trump, partially adopt, in their difficulty, the Grecian doctrine of peaceful rest. According to them, the soul, overcome by Death, like any mortal thing, steeped in unconsciousness, suffers a virtual sepulture, a suspension of sentient existence, a species of temporary annihilation, to endure. He alone knows how long who has fixed the Day of Judgment. Other Lutherans, however, shocked at this approach to the dictum of revolutionary philosophy promulgated in France's Days of Terror,—"Death is an eternal sleep,"—seek to evade the dilemma by supposing that there is no great, universal, far-off Day of Judgment at all, but that the day of death is to each one of us the day of retribution also; that the soul, at the moment of emancipation, ascends to the tribunal of God, there instantly to be preferred to heaven or consigned to hell.

Under either hypothesis, the conception of a sudden revolution of all thought and feeling is clearly involved. Man, bright though his virtues be, and dark his sins, is, while he remains here, neither seraph nor demon. Among all our associates, be they valued friends or

mere distant acquaintances, how many, even of the very best, are suited to enter heaven? How many, even of the very worst, are fit Only for hell? What an over whelming majority are far too imperfect for the one, yet, with some redeeming virtue, much too good for the other! With exceptions, if any, altogether too rare to invalidate the general rule, man (toes not attain, upon earth, either the perfection of virtue or the extremity (if degradation.

But what future may we reasonably expect for a being so constituted, at the hands of a God throughout whose works no principle shines out more luminously than that of universal adaptation? A final doom, or a further novitiate?—which?

The latter, evidently, unless we assume that the adaptation is to be precipitated, as by unexampled miracle; unless, in the twinkling of an eye, the comparatively good man is to be relieved, without effort of his, of all frailty that were unworthy of celestial membership, while the comparatively wicked man is to be shorn, equally by an agency which he controls not, of every, latent spark or lingering scruple that rates, if ever so little, above the infernal.

Let us say nothing of the injustice apparently involved in such a theory. But where do we find, in a single page of that Great Book which has been spread open since the creation of the world to all God's rational creatures, one indication, even the most trifling, that sustains by the probabilities of analogy the theory itself?

We find every portion of God's handiwork instinct with the principle of progression. The seed, the plant, the blossom, the fruit,—these are the types of Nature's gradual workings. All change is a harmonious, connected succession.

Gradual, above all, are the influences through which,

under God's visible economy, man's character is formed. The constant dropping of circumstance, the slow hardening of habit, the unfolding, by imperceptible swell, of the affections, the enlistment, one by one, of governing motives, the tardy expansion, stretching from infancy to ripe manhood, of the intellectual powers, these are the means at work, acting so silently, modifying by degrees so microscopically minute, that, like the motion of the hour-hand over the dial of a small watch, the advance escapes our perception. We detect, when months or years have elapsed, a certain space passed over. We know that the unbroken chain of influences has stretched on, though its links are invisible to mortal eyes.

Such is the mode, so strictly gradual, so constantly operating through the intervention of slow-working agencies, under which alone, here upon earth, man's character is influenced. And this could not have been otherwise unless man had been created, not the progressive free agent he is, but some creature essentially different.

Nor in the development of the human being, such as he is, do we find that God ever permits Himself (if one may so speak) to depart from the law inherent in the organization and attributes of the creature He has made. Progressively and mediately, by the intervention of motive presented, by the agency of will, by the influence of surroundings physical and social,—thus, and not otherwise, does God suffer man gradually to become what circumstance, daily acting on a constitution like his, determines that he shall be. Thus, and not otherwise, so far as we can follow him, is man taught and guided.

At last this progressive being reaches a point at which the body, that during its earlier vigor seconded in a measure the promptings of its immortal associate,

faints and fails. It has served its Purpose, like an aged, decaying tree. That which was erewhile felt as a comfort and an aid becomes a burden and an incumbrance. The Immortal has outgrown its perishable envelope. The larva drops off. The unmasked spirit is gone, beyond our ken.

In following—as in thought we may—its invisible progress, since the ablest theologians differ in their interpretation of authority, what earthly guide can we follow more trustworthy than analogy? Where but in the rule of the Past can we find reliable indication touching the probable rule in the Future?

The conclusion is evident. He who conducts the soul to the brink of the Dark River deserts it not on the hither side. Nor is that river, the boundary of His realm. His laws operate beyond. But these laws, so far as we know them, exhibit no variableness nor shadow of turning. And I see neither reason nor likelihood in the supposition that in any portion of creation they are suspended or reversed. I see neither reason nor likelihood in the theory that, in any portion of creation, progress and exertion will fail to precede improvement, or that man will ever be degraded by agency other than his own.

I find nothing absurd or irrational, therefore, in the postulates which the theory of spiritual interference involves. On the contrary, it seems to me probable enough that the attention of men may have been especially called, in our modern day, to this very theory, in order to correct an important error, and thus to put an end to the mischief which that error may have occasioned.

If it be true that Hades exists, the truth is an important one. But in proportion to the importance of a truth denied are the evil consequences likely to result from the denial.

Does this apply in the instance under consideration? no grave and serious evils result from rejecting the doctrine of a mediate state after death?

Man is so constituted that remote inducements act upon him with feeble force. Experience proves that the power of reward, as an incentive, is in the inverse ratio of the distance at which it is set. And no maxim in jurisprudence is better established than this: that punishment, to be effectual, should tread close on the heels of the offense.

If, then, we assume—as mental philosophers are wont to do—that a belief in future rewards and punishments is a chief incentive to truth and virtue, it is essential that their effect should not be enfeebled by remoteness.

But this is precisely what Luther did in his eager desire to be rid of Purgatory. He postponed to a Day of Judgment, that may not arrive for untold ages, the reward and the Punishment of earthly deeds. It avails little to add that the interval was to be passed in unconscious slumber, and to be told, as we sometimes are, that a thousand years of dreamless sleep are to the sleeper but as a moment of time: so subtle a distinction does not reach the feelings nor convince the common mind.

What wonder, then, that the murderer is deterred by the fear of earthly punishment, uncertain as it is, in a thousand cases in which the dread of a Day of Judgment, scarcely discerned in the illimitable distance, exerts an influence too feeble to arrest his arm?

What wonder that the self-indulgent man of the world, like a spoiled child whom one vainly seeks to tempt from some injurious pleasure of to-day by the promise of a greater pleasure laid up for to-morrow, recklessly snatches at every sensual enjoyment now,

undeterred by the risk of losing celestial happiness commencing he knows not when?

What wonder that the pulpit ceaselessly declaims against man's blindness and folly in preferring the fleeting joys of a moment to the bliss of life everlasting, and that the declamation so often falls on dull ears and closed hearts?

When the philosopher places a magnet beyond the sphere of its usual action, he wonders not that he can no longer detect its manifestations. The theologian, less reasonable, removes to a distance, rendered endless by the dilating effect of uncertainty, all that attracts of future reward, all that repels of future punishment, and still expects that the magnetic agency of a Hereafter will retain its force and win over its converts.

My argument, it may be objected, does not apply to those who believe that God sits in perpetual judgment, and that each moment, as it surrenders its victim, witnesses also his doom.

To a limited extent the objection is valid, but to a limited extent only. A separation may be effected by other means almost as completely as by distance. In the parable, the gulf between Dives and Lazarus is not represented as of vast width: sight across it is possible, question is put and answer received; yet it is spoken of as impassable.

But have we not, in breaking down the old doctrine of Hades,—the spiritual bridge connecting the Here with the Hereafter,—left open a great gulf, if not impassable, yet hard for mortal conceptions to pass? To human feelings, have we not separated, almost as effectually as if limitless time intervened, the existence of man on earth from his future life in heaven?

The question of identity—that theme of ancient sophists—is a difficult one. In a physical sense, a man

is not, strictly speaking, the identical individual to-day that he was yesterday or that he will be to-morrow. Nevertheless, the change from one day to another is usually so imperceptible that we instinctively conceive of the individual as the same.

But if the changes now running through twenty years were condensed into a single night; if an infant, such as he appears to us when twelve months only have elapsed since his birth, put to sleep to-night, were to awake to-morrow morning exactly the same, in mind and body, as he will be when he shall have attained his majority, he would be for us not the same individual, but another. The case, in modified form, actually occurs. We part with an infant two or three years old, to see him again a man of twenty-five. Theoretically, we regard him as the same person; practically, he is a new acquaintance, whom we never met before.

There is this difference, however, between the two cases. In the latter, the absent individual has retained, in his own feelings, his identity, though we have lost all perception of it. In the former, in which we have supposed the transformation effected in a night, the identity would be lost as surely to the person transformed as to us, the witnesses of the transformation.

But we cannot suppose that the change from infancy to manhood, great as it is, can for a moment be compared in its thoroughness to that radical transformation which alone could fit the best of us to join the seraphic hosts, or make an erring brother or a frail sister the proper associate of the devils in Luther's hell.

Still less can we imagine that the God of a world like this, disclosing, at every step we take in it, adaptations infinite in number and in character marvelous beyond *all* human conception, should consign any one of his creatures to an abode for which he was not strictly adapted.

But if the change instantly succeeding the momentary sleep of death be far greater than that we have imagined in a creature lying down at night an infant and awaking next morning a full-grown man, and if, in this latter case, identity would be lost, how much more in the former!

The body is gone: what continuous links of identity remain? The mind, the feelings. Transform these, and *every* link is severed connecting, FOR US, a Here with a Hereafter.

It is not WE, in any practical sense, who survive, but others. A human being dies on earth; a seraph, or a demon, appears in heaven or in hell.\*

It is idle to say that this is a fine-drawn theoretical distinction, the mere sophism of a logician. It is precisely because of its practical character that I am induced here to put it forward.

I do not affirm that men confess to themselves their unbelief that they, the same individuals who now think and feel, Will exist in a future state. That is not the form which the evil assumes.

Professing Christians are wont to declare that they will live again, as glorified angels, in heaven. And, in a certain theoretical sense, they believe it. They would be shocked if one were to suggest that they have not faith in an after-life for themselves. So far as a human

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\*A similar idea has been elsewhere expressed:—"An instantaneous change, either from good to evil or from evil to good, if effected in a sovereign manner by a foreign power, and effected irrespectively of an economy of motives, would rather be the annihilation of one being and the creation of another, than the changing of the character of the same being; for it is of the very nature of a change of character that there be an internal process, a concurrence of the will, and yielding of the rational faculties to rational inducements, and also the giving way of one species of desires and one class of habits to another...*Physical Theory of Another Life*," London, 1839, chap. xiii. p. 181.

being can identify himself with another creature essentially different, they do believe that they, now living, and the glorified angels, hereafter to live, are the selfsame persons.

But the very expressions they currently employ betray the imperfect character of this belief. "We shall live again," they say. The expression implies a hiatus. And they actually feel as they express themselves. Their faith does not call up the idea of continuous life. Death, for them, is not a herald, but a destroyer,—the fell exterminator, not the welcome deliverer.\* The drooping willow, the dark cypress, are his emblems; not the myrtle and the laurel.

Their conception is that of two lives, with a dreary gulf between. The descent to that gulf is fitly accompanied, they think, by lamentation. The mourners go about the streets. It is not a worthless, obscuring incumbrance, thrown off and left behind in its kindred earth, while a freed spirit rejoices in its emancipation: it is WE who go down to the gloomy tomb, Where there is neither work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom; nay, where hope itself is extinct.

"In the cold grave, to which we haste,  
There are no acts of pardon post;  
But fixed the doom of all remains,  
And everlasting silence reigns."

Can such conceptions as these obtain among us, yet interpose between man and his celestial home no distorting medium, no obscuring veil?

If I had the superintendence of a picturesque cemetery, the lines over its entrance-gate should be from Mrs. Hemans:—

"Why should not he whose touch dissolves our chain  
Put on his robes of beauty, when he comes  
As a deliverer?"

But there is another important view to be taken of this matter.

Veneration is one of the most influential sentiments of our nature,—universal, or nearly so, in its prevalence and no legislator, with a just knowledge of human kind, ignores or overlooks its influence. But when veneration engrosses the human character, — when, as in the case of ancient anchorite or ascetic monk, human life is wholly spent in adoration and in rapt contemplation of God and celestial things, not only is the character dwarfed and injured, but the feelings become morbid and sound judgment disappears. Here upon earth, no one sentiment can be suffered exclusively to occupy a man, without producing an abnormal condition of mind, greatly prejudicial alike to his improvement and to his usefulness.

If the sudden transformation of character which Luther's system presupposes does actually take place immediately after death, or immediately before a Day of Judgment, then all this may be changed; then man, being no longer the creature we find him here, may at once become adapted to a state of being in which prayer and praise are the sole and everlasting avocations. In the mean time, however, on this side the grave, man is not so changed. While human beings remain here upon earth, therefore, they are not, nor ever can be, prepared for heaven, in the common acceptance of that word.

But, according to another law of our nature, we sympathize little with that for which we are not prepared. If we set about endeavoring to imagine how we should feel if we were entirely different from what we are, the result is a dull and chill perception, that never reaches the feelings or warms the heart. Can the bold, active, unlettered youth, whose enjoyment centers in the sports of the field, realize, by any mental effort, the happiness

of the artist, haunted by visions of beauty, or the deep satisfaction of the student, surrounded by his books and reveling in the vast realms of thought which these disclose? He hears of such delights, perhaps, and denies not their existence; but the cold assent he gives never attains the grade of a governing motive, nor suffices to influence his life.

To human beings, therefore, such as they are Upon earth, the eternal life of the "rapt seraph who adores and burns" has no living charm. Men may reason themselves, and sometimes they do, into an artificial rapture of enthusiasm, pending the influence of which they experience an actual longing to join the angelic hosts and share in their changeless occupation. But unless they have become, more or less, secluded from the duties of active life, or have abandoned themselves, in some closed retreat, to a constant routine of exclusively devotional and contemplative exercises, it is, for the most part, the reason that frigidly argues, not the genial impulse of the feelings that adopts and assents. In Protestant Christendom the heart of the millions is not reached by the prospect commonly presented to them of eternal life.

Here is no assertion that heaven, as it has been depicted to us, will not, at some future epoch, be a state adapted to the human race. We know not whither ultramundane progress may lead. We cannot tell what man may become when, in another stage of existence, he has run another career of improvement. It will be time enough to speculate upon this when that future career shall have commenced. But we do know what manner of creature man now is; and we do know that, while here, he must be governed by the laws of his being. He must appreciate before he is fitted to enjoy. And if that which he is not fitted to enjoy be promised to him on certain conditions, the anticipation of it will,

as a general rule, call forth no strenuous exertion, because it will awaken no vivid desire.

Nor let it be said that it is to the man of low desires or groveling instincts alone that heaven, shorn of a preliminary Hades, is too distant in time, or too remote in feeling, to be appreciated or longed for. How numerous and distinct are the virtuous emotions that now move the heart of man! The promptings to acts of benevolence and deeds of mercy, the stirrings of magnanimity, the efforts of self-denial; fortitude, courage, energy, perseverance, resignation; the devotion of love, and the yearnings of compassion:—what a varied list is here! And in that man who confesses the practical shortcomings of his life, who feels how far better was his nature than have been its manifestations, who knows how often in this world, noble impulse has been repressed, how many generous aspirings have bore scarcely been called into action,—in the heart of such a man must not the hope be strong, that the life which now is may have a sequel and a complement in that which is to come? He who has labored long and patiently to control and discipline a wayward nature, he who has striven in this world, with earnest and patient effort, after self-culture, moral and intellectual, may he not properly desire and rationally expect that he will be allowed to prosecute the task, here so imperfectly commenced, there, where there is no flesh to be weak if the spirit be willing? Shall the philanthropist, whose life has been one long series of benefactions to his race, be blamed if he cannot surrender at death, without regret, the godlike impulse that bids him succor the afflicted and heal the broken heart? Even he whose days have been spent in exploring the secrets of nature, can he be expected, unmoved, to relinquish with his earthly body the pursuit of that science to which his

heart was wedded?\*" But, far more, shall a loving and compassionate nature anticipate with complacency the period when the soul, all consecrated to worship or filled with its own supreme felicity, shall no longer select, among its fellow-creatures, its objects either of pity or of love?

In a word, is it the depraved only who are likely to look with coldness on a prospective state that offers scarce any theater for the exercise of the qualities we have been wont to admire, and of the sympathies that have hitherto-bound us to our kind? Is it the vicious alone who may find little to attract in a future where one universal sentiment, how holy soever, is to replace all others?—where one virtue, one duty, is instantly to supersede, in the character and the career of man, the varied virtues, the thousand duties, which, here below, his Creator has required at his hands?

Men may take their fellows to task for the indifference with which so many regard a heaven which as yet they are neither prepared to appreciate nor fitted to enjoy; God, who has made man's heart the multiform and richly-dowered thing it is, never will.

I anticipate the objection which may here be made Our conceptions may not rise to the height of that transcendent heaven which has been described to us;

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\* If it be doubted whether such regrets ever haunt the death-bed of a scientific man, let the following vouch for the fact:—"Berzelius then became aware that his last hour had come, and that he must bid adieu to that science he had loved so well. Summoning to his bedside one of his devoted friends, who approached him weeping, Berzelius also burst into tears; and then, when the first emotion was over, he exclaimed, 'no not wonder that I weep. You will not believe me a weak man, nor think I am alarmed by what the doctor has to announce to me. I am prepared for all. But I have to bid farewell to science; and you ought not to wonder that it, costs me dear.'..."This was Berzelius's leave-taking of science; in truth, a touching farewell."—"*Siljestrom's Minnesfest ofver Berzelius*," Stockholm, 1849, pp. 79, 80.

our feelings may not warm under the description of it; but, if we know nothing of a mediate state of existence except that it is,—if we have scarcely a glimpse disclosing its character, or indicating its privileges, or revealing its enjoyments,—how much better or happier shall we be for a belief so vague and shapeless? Rather a Heaven whose beatific glories dazzle without attracting, than a Paradise of which the very outlines are indistinguishable. How can we vividly desire an unknown life, or be comforted or influenced by anticipation of a state so dim and shadowy?

If those who put forth this objection assumed only facts that must be admitted, the objection would be fatal. What they do assume is, that we can know nothing of a Hades in the future. Are they right in this?

Beyond the scanty and (be it admitted) insufficient indications to be gleaned from Scripture, I perceive but two sources whence such knowledge can be derived: first, analogy; and, secondly, such revealings as may come to us through narratives similar in character to those I have brought together in this volume, or otherwise from ultramundane source.

We study our instincts too little. We listen to their lessons too carelessly. Instincts are from God.

None of the instincts which we observe among animal races other than our own are useless, or ill-adapted, or incomplete. The impulse induces an action strictly corresponding to future contingencies which actually arise. In one sense, these instincts are of a prophetic character. When the bee, before a flower has been rifled of its sweets, prepares the waxen cells, when a bird, in advance of incubation, constructs its downy nest, the adaptation is as perfect as if every coining incident had been expressly foretold.

Man has reason *and* instincts. Sometimes he forgets this. It is his right and duty, in the exercise of his

reason, to judge his instincts; yet reverently, as that in which there may be a hidden wisdom. Men, sometimes from a religious error, more frequently from a worldly one, are wont to fall into the thought that it is expedient to discard or to repress them.

There is a strange mystery pervading human society. It is the apparent anomaly presented by man's character taken in connection with his position here.

Let us speak of the better portion of mankind,—the true and worthy type of the race. What, in a word, is the history of their lives? A bright vision and a disenchantment. A struggle between two influences: one, native, inherent; the other, foreign, extraneous, earthly; a warring between the man's nature and his situation.

Not that the world he enters can be said to be unadapted to receive him. For in it there is knowledge to impart, experience to bestow, effort to make, progress to attain; there are trials to test courage and firmness; there are fellow-creatures to love; there are helpless creatures to aid; there are suffering creatures to pity. There is much to interest, and not a little to improve. The present is, doubtless, an appropriate and necessary stage in the journey of life. None the less is it a world the influences of which never fully develop the character of its noblest inhabitant. It is a world of which the most fortunate combinations, the highest enjoyments, leave disappointed and unsatisfied some of the most elevated instincts of man. All religions, more or less distinctly, admit this.

We speak of our *better* nature, as though there were two. There is but one,—one and the same in childhood, in youth, in manhood, till death.

The same, for the Immortal perishes not; never obliterated, but how often, in the course of this earth-life, dulled, dimmed, obscured! How the fleshly envelope weighs upon it! And what a training, as it runs the

gauntlet of society, it has! Warm, impulsive, it meets with cold calculation; generous, it encounters maxims of selfishness; guileless, it is schooled to deceit; believing, it is overwhelmed with doubts, it is cheated with lies. And for the images of its worship,—how are they broken and despoiled! It had set them up on earthly pedestal, and had clothed them, all unworthy, in the robes of its own rich conception. Its creative promptings had assumed, perhaps, their highest and holiest phase,—the phase of love; and then it had embodied, in a material existence, that which was but an ethereal portion of itself; investing—alas, how often!—some leaden idol with the trappings of a hero or the vestments of a god. Bitter the awakening! Dearly rued the self-deception! Yet the garment was of heaven, though the shattered idol was of earth.

Thus, for one encouragement to its holier aspirations, it receives twenty sordid lessons from the children of this world, grown wise in their generation; so wise that, in their conceit, they despise and take to task a child of light. They deride his disinterestedness; they mock at his enthusiasm. Assuming the tone of mentors, they read him prudent warnings against the folly of philanthropy and the imbecility of romance.\*

And thus, in ten thousand instances, God's instincts fall, like seed by the wayside, on hard and stony ground. They thrive not. Their growth is stunted. Happy if the divine germ penetrate the crusted surface at all!

Either this is an example of a failure in adaptation, or we are looking at a portion only of a great whole.

Shall we suppose it a failure? Shall we imagine that He who, in the lower, cared for it that the innate impulse should exactly correspond to the future occasion, failed to exert similar care in the higher?—that the instincts

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\* A word of excellent etymology, if of indifferent reputation,—derived from the Welsh *rhamanta*, to rise over, to soar, to reach to a distance.

.of the bee and the bird are to find theaters of action perfectly suited to their exercise, while those of a creature far above them are to be dwarfed in development and disappointed in fruition?

We outrage all analogy in adopting such a hypothesis. We must accept this anomaly, if we accept it at all, as an exception—the only one known to us throughout the entire economy of God—to a rule co-extensive with the universe.

But if, unable to credit the existence of so striking an anomaly, — we fall back on the remaining hypothesis, —that here we are but looking on a fraction of human life,—then from that fraction we may obtain some idea of the remainder. Then we may predicate in a general way, and with strong probabilities, something of the character and occupations of Hades.

There are favored moments,—at least, in every good man's life,—moments when the hard and the selfish and the worldly are held in abeyance,—moments when the soul springs forth, like a durance-freed bird, equal to every effort, capable of every sacrifice; when nothing seems too high to reach, nothing too distant to compass, —moments in which the exultant spirit recognizes its like welling up in some other heart's holy confession, or flashing out through true poetry like this:

"Past the high clouds floating round,  
Where the eagle is not found,  
Past the million-starry choir,  
Through the midst of foul opinions,  
Flaming passions, sensual mire,  
To the Mind's serene dominions,  
I aspire!"\*

These are the moments when the still, small voice the Immortal one—asserts its supremacy. These are the

\* The lines are Barry Cornwall's.

moments when man feels that if life were but made up of such, he would need no other heaven.

And these are the moments when the spirit of man, Sibyl-like, may be questioned of the future; for the divine rage is upon her, and her foreboding instincts are the earnest of what is to be.

This argument from analogy, it will occur to the reader, is similar to that which has so often been made in proof of the soul's immortality. A universal desire must have an ultimate correspondence. But, if we look closely at it, the argument will be seen to prove much more than continued existence. The desire has a certain definiteness. In its purest type, it is not a vague, coward, dread of annihilation; it is not a mere selfish longing to be. The instinct is of far nobler aim and wider scope than this: it is the voice of the IDEAL in man; and it teaches not one lesson, but many. It calls up before him a thousand varied images of the Grand, and the Good, and the Beautiful, and tells him, "These are for thee." It appeals to the divinity within him, and declares, "This thou mayest be." But as it is to man, so it is of man, that it speaks,—of man's capabilities, of man's career, of the excellence that *he* may attain, he, the human creature, and not another. The desires it awakens are of corresponding character.

But, if we are to take a present desire for proof of a future condition, let us make clear to ourselves what that desire demands. Does it crave, at this stage of its progress, another nature or sublimer dreams? No; but only that this nature might maintain the elevation which its aspirations have sometimes reached,—only that its dream glimpses of moments might have reality and endurance in a purer atmosphere and under a brighter sky.

It is a stage for the unchecked exercise of *earthly*

virtues, toward which, as yet, the heart's magnet points. The good which we would, yet did not, that we would still do. The human virtues which we have loved more than practiced, these we would still cherish and exemplify. The human affections which have suffered shipwreck and pined for some quiet haven, they, too, still hope for exercise, still yearn for satisfaction. Our devotional impulses, also, are rife and aspirant, imploring better knowledge and a clearer light. Yet they constitute but one emotion out of many. They interest deeply, they elevate; but they do not engross.

The prophetic voice, them,—the divine foreboding, speaks not of one life completed and another to commence. It indicates not, as the next phase of existence, a Day of Judgment on which hope must die, and then (but for the blessed alone) a heaven too immaculate for progress, too holy for human avocation or human endeavor. Its presentiments are of a better world, but of a world still,—the abode of emancipated spirits, but of *human* spirits,—a world where there is work to do, a race to run, a goal to reach,—a world where we shall find, transplanted from earth to a more genial land, energy, courage, perseverance, high resolves, benevolent actions Hope to encourage, Mercy to plead, and Love—the earth-clog shaken off that dimmed her purity—still selecting her chosen ones, but to be separated from them no more.

Such are the utterings of the presaging voice. A state, then, suddenly reached, in which one class only of our emotional impulses should find scope for development or opportunity for action, would leave man's instinct, except in a single phase, unanswered and unsatisfied. There would be an initiative, and no correspondence; a promise, and no fulfillment; a preparation, and no result. Our earth-life would, indeed, be succeeded by

another; yet in itself it would forever remain fragmentary and incomplete.

If, then, we have accepted man's universal desire for immortality as proof that his spirit is immortal, let us accept also the trendings of that desire as foreshadowings of the Paradise to which that spirit is bound.

Thus, by the light of analogy alone, we find every probability in favor of the conclusion that, in the next phase of his existence, man does not cease to be the human creature he is, and that the virtues, the occupations, and the enjoyments that await him in Hades are as many and various as those which surround him here, —better, indeed, brighter, of nobler type and more extended range, but still supplemental only, as appertaining to a second stage of progression,—to a theater fairer than this, yet not wholly disconnected from it,—to a land not yet divine, but in which may be realized the holiest aspirations of earth.

A step beyond this it is still, perhaps, permitted to go. If there be footfalls on the boundary of another world, let us listen to their echoes and take note of the indications these may afford.

I do not pretend that there is to be found in the examples adduced in this volume sufficient to mark fully and distinctly the character of our next phase of life; and I will not at the present go beyond these. Yet, few in number as are the indications, they touch on master-influences.

Eminent among these is one clearly to be derived from many of the preceding narratives,\*—an earnest of social progress in the future, which we may hail with joy and

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\* As in the case of Mary Goffe, and of Mrs. E——, (see "*The Dying Mother and her Babe*;" ) also in that of Mr. Wynyard, of Captain G——, (see "*The Fourteenth of November*," ) and, indeed, in all cases in which the spirit is alleged to have appeared soon after death to some beloved survivor.

should accept with gratitude. If any reliance can be placed on some of the best-authenticated incidents recorded in the foregoing pages, they not only prove (what, indeed, we might rationally assume) that it is the body only which imposes the shackles of distance, but they afford evidence also that the released spirit instinctively seeks its selected ones, and attains in a moment the spot where cluster its affections.

But if, beyond a sound body, a clear conscience, and an absence of the fear of want, we look around us, in this world, in search of that one circumstance which above all others stamps our lot in life as fortunate or the reverse, where shall we find it? When we picture to ourselves some happy prospect in the future, some tranquil retreat whence care shall be excluded and where contentment will dwell, what is the essential to that earthly paradise? Who that deserves such blessing but has the answer on his lips?

In the deepest regrets of the Past, how legibly is that answer written! We meet, among our fellow-creatures, with some, as to whom we feel how mighty for good, upon our minds and hearts, is their power; we have glimpses of others, whose very atmosphere sheds over us a glow of happiness. The stream sweeps us apart, and we find the same influence on earth no more.

But if, hereafter, the principle of insulation that prevails throughout this earthly pilgrimage is to give place to the spirit of communion unchecked by space; if, in another phase of life, desire is to correspond to locomotion; if, there, to long for association is to obtain it, if to love is to mingle in the society of the loved; what an element, not of passive feeling but of active organization, is sympathy destined to become! And how much that would render this world too blessed to leave is in store for us in another!

If we sit down, in our calmest and most dispassionate

moments, to consider how much of our highest and least selfish pleasures, moral, social, intellectual, has been due to a daily interchange of thought and feeling between kindred minds and hearts, and if we reflect that all the other losses and crosses of life have been as nothing when compared with those which, by distance and by death, our severed sympathies and affections have suffered, we may be led to conclude that the single change above indicated as appertaining to our next phase of life will suffice there to assure a happy existence to pure minds and genial hearts; to those who in this world, erring and frail as they may have been, have not wholly quenched the spirit of light; with whom the voice within has still been more potent than the din without; who have cherished, if often in silence and secret, God's holy instincts, the flowers that are still to bloom; and who may hope in that Hereafter, where like will attract its like, to find a home where never shall enter the Summoning Angel to announce the separation of its inmates,—a home of unsundered affections among the just and good.

I might proceed to touch on other indications scarcely less important or less encouraging than the preceding, but which, in the examples furnished in this work,\* are less palpably marked; as that when, at death, the earth-mask drops, the mind and the heart are unvailed, and thoughts are discerned without the intervention of words; so that, in the spirit-land, we "shall know even as we are known." It will, then, be a land of TRUTH, where deceit will find no lurking-place, and where the

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\* The prayer-offered by Mrs. W. (see narrative entitled "*The Rejected Suitor*") was a silent one; and those who have obtained similar communications know well that a mental question usually suffices to procure a pertinent answer. This phenomenon of thought-reading I have myself verified again and again.

word "falsehood" will designate no possible sin. Can we imagine an influence more salutary, more nobly regenerating, more satisfying to the heart, than this?

But I pause, and check the impulse to amplify the picture. Hereafter, it may be, in possession of more copious materials, I may be enabled better to carry out such a task.

Meanwhile, in pursuit of my immediate object, there needs not, perhaps, further elaboration. I may have adduced sufficient argument in proof that the hypothesis of spirit-visitation involves no absurd postulate. I may also, perhaps, have proved to the satisfaction of a portion of my readers, that the common conceptions of death are false,—that death is not, as Plato argued and as millions believe, the opposite of life, but only the agency whereby life changes its phase.

Yet I know how fast-rooted are long-cherished opinions. Even while I have been writing, I have occasionally been fain to tolerate current phrases of faulty import. Although in the preceding pages, for the sake of being intelligible, I have employed the expressions "on this side the grave," "beyond the tomb," and the like, these, as applied to human beings, are, strictly speaking, inaccurate. WE have nothing to do with the grave. WE do not descend to the tomb. It is a cast-off garment, encoffined, to which are paid the rites of sepulture.

## CHAPTER II.

### CONCLUSION.

"In completing this design, I am ignorant neither of the greatness of the work, nor of my own incapacity. My hope, however, is, that if the love of my subject carry me too far, I may, at least, obtain the excuse of affection. It is not granted to man to love and be wise."—BACON.

BEFORE I part from the reader, he may desire to ask me whether I conceive the reality of occasional spiritual interference to be here conclusively made out.

I prefer that he should take the answer from his own deliberate judgment. In one respect, he is, probably, better qualified to judge than I. It is not in human nature to ponder long and deeply any theory,—to spend years in search of its proofs and in examination of its probabilities,—yet maintain that nice equanimity which accepts or rejects without one extraneous bias. He who simply inspects may discriminate more justly than he whose feelings have been enlisted in collecting and collating.

Yet I will not withhold the admission that, after putting the strictest guard on the favoritism of parentage, I am unable to explain much of what my reason tells me I must here receive as true, on any other hypothesis than the ultramundane.

Where there are clear, palpable evidences of thought, of intention, of foresight, I see not how one can do otherwise than refer these to a thinker, an intender, a foreseer. Such reference appears to me not rational only, but necessary. If I refuse to accept such manifestations of intelligence as indicating the workings of a

rational mind,—if I begin to doubt whether some mechanical or chemical combination of physical elements may not put on the semblance of reason and counterfeit the expression of thought,—then I no longer perceive the basis of my own right to assume that the human forms which surround me have minds to think or hearts to feel.

If our perceptions of the forest, and the ocean, and the plain, are to be accepted as proofs that there really is a material world around us, shall we refuse to receive our perceptions of thoughts and feelings other than our own, as evidence that some being, other than ourselves, exists, whence these emanate?\*

And if that being belong not to the visible world, are we not justified in concluding that it has existence in the invisible?

That the rational being of which we thus detect the agency is invisible, invalidates not at all the evidence we receive. It is but a child's logic which infers that, where nothing is seen, nothing exists.

As to the mode and place of existence of these invisible beings, Taylor's conjecture may be the correct one, when he supposes:

"That within the field occupied by the visible and ponderable universe, and on all sides of us, there is existing and moving another element, fraught with another

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\* Thus argues an elegant and logical mind:—"On the table before us a needle, nicely balanced, trembles, and turns, as with the constancy of love, towards a certain spot in the arctic regions; but a mass of iron, placed near it, disturbs this tendency and gives it a new direction. We assume, then, the presence of an element universally diffused, of which we have no direct perception whatever. Now, let it be imagined that the sheets of a manuscript, scattered confusedly over the table and the floor, are seen to be slowly adjusting themselves according to the order of the pages, and that at last every leaf and every loose fragment has come into its due place and is ready for the compositor. In such a case we should, without any scruple, assume the presence of an invisible rational agent, just as in the case of the oscillations of the needle we had assumed the presence of an invisible elementary power."—TAYLOR'S *Physical Theory of Another Life*," London, 1839, p. 244.

species of life, corporeal, indeed, and various in its orders, but not open to the cognizance of those who are confined to the conditions of animal organization,—not to be seen, not to be heard, not to be felt, by man.\* We here," he continues, "assume the abstract probability that our five modes of perception are partial, not universal, means of knowing what may be around us, and that, as the physical sciences furnish evidence of the presence and agency of certain powers which entirely elude the senses, except in some of their remote effects, so are we denied the right of concluding that we are conscious of all real existences within our sphere."† Or, as he elsewhere expresses it, "Within any given boundary there may be corporeally present the human crowd and the extra-human crowd, and the latter as naturally and simply present as the former."‡

To these beings, usually invisible and inaudible to us, we also may be usually invisible and inaudible.§ It would seem that there are certain conditions, occasionally existing, which cause exceptions on both sides to this general rule. Whether human beings ought simply to await these conditions, or to seek to create them, is an inquiry which does not enter into the plan of this work.

As to the proofs of the agency upon earth of these Invisibles, I rest them not on any one class of observations set forth in this volume, not specially on the phenomena of dreaming, or of unexplained disturbances, or of apparitions whether of the living or the dead, or

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\* Not usually open, not usually to be seen, &c., would here have been the correct expression.

† "*Physical Theory of Another Life*," pp. 232, 233.

‡ Work cited, p. 274.

§ See Oberlin's opinion on this subject, at page 364; see, also, a curious Intimation suggested by an alleged observation of Madame Hauffe, at pages 399,400.

of what seem examples of ultramundane retribution or indications of spiritual guardianship, but upon the aggregate and concurrent evidence of all these. It is strong confirmation of any theory that proofs converging from many and varying classes of phenomena unite in establishing it.

These proofs are spread all over society. The attention of the civilized public has been attracted to them in our day as it has not been for centuries, at least, before. If the narrative illustrations here published, scanty and imperfect as they are, obtain, as perhaps they may, a wide circulation, they will provoke further inquiry; they will call forth, in support or in denial, additional facts; and, in any event, truth must be the gainer at last.

If it should finally prove that through the phenomena referred to we may reach some knowledge of our next phase of life, it will be impossible longer to deny the practical importance of studying, them. Yet perhaps, as the result of that study, we ought to expect rather outlines, discerned as through a glass darkly, than any distinct filling up of the picture of our future home. We may reasonably imagine that it would injuriously interfere in the affairs of this world if too much or too certain information came to us from another. The duties of the present might be neglected in the rapt contemplation of the future. The feeling within us that to die is gain might assume, the ascendancy, might disgust us with this checkered earth-life, and even tempt us rashly to anticipate the appointed summons; thus, perhaps, prematurely cutting short the years of a novitiate, of which God, not man, can designate the appropriate term.

Yet enough may be disclosed to produce, on human conduct, a most salutary influence, and to cheer the darkest days of our pilgrimage here by the confident assurance that not an aspiration after good that fades,

nor a dream of the beautiful that vanishes, during the earth-phase of life, but will find noble field and fair realization when the pilgrim has cast off his burden and reached his journey's end.

Meanwhile, what motive to exertion in self-culture can be proposed to man more powerful than the assurance, that not an effort to train our hearts or store our minds made here, in time, but has its result and its reward, hereafter, in eternity? We are the architects of our own destiny: we inflict our own punishments; we select our own rewards. Our righteousness is a meed to be patiently earned, not miraculously bestowed or mysteriously imputed. Our wickedness, too, and the inherent doom it entails, are self imposed. We choose: and our Choice assumes place as inexorable judge. It ascends the tribunal, and passes sentence upon us; and its jurisdiction is not limited to earth. The operation of its decrees, whether penal or beneficent, extends as surely to another phase of existence as to this. When death calls, he neither deprives us of the virtues, nor relieves us of the vices, of which he finds us possessed. Both must go with us. Those qualities, moral, social, intellectual, which may have distinguished us in this world will be ours also in another, there constituting our identity and determining our position. And as the good, so the evil. That dark vestment of sin with which, in a man's progress through life, he may have become gradually endued, will cling to him, close as the tunic of Nessus through the death-change. He, too, still remains the being he was. He retains his evil identity and decides his degraded rank. He awakes amid the torment of the same base thoughts and brutal passions that controlled him here, and that will attract to him, in the associates of his new life, thoughts as base and passions as brutal. Is there in the anticipation of a material Hell, begirt with flames, stronger influence to deter from

vice, than in the terrible looming up of an inevitable fate like that?

Inevitable, but not eternal. While there is life, there is hope; and there is life beyond the veil.

But I should be commencing another volume, instead of terminating the present, were I to enlarge on the benefits that may accrue from spiritual agency. The task I set to myself was to treat of an antecedent inquiry; an inquiry into the reality, not into the advantages, of ultramundane intervention. With a single additional observation, then, touching the bearings of that inquiry on the credence of the Christian world, I here close my task.

It is not possible to rise from the perusal of the Scriptures, Old or New, without feeling that the verity of communication with the Invisible World is the groundwork of all we have read. This is not a matter left to inference or construction,—nothing like a case of chronological or narrational variance, which commentators may reconcile or philologists may explain away. It is a question essential, inherent, fundamental. Admit much to be allegory, make allowance for the phraseology of Oriental tongues, for the language of parable and the license of poetry, there yet remains, vast, calm, and not to be mistaken, the firm faith of that Old World in the reality, and the occasional influence directly exerted, of the world of spirits. That faith undermined, the foundations are sapped of the entire Biblical superstructure.

I speak of a great fact declared, not of minute details supplied. The pneumatology of the Bible is general, not specific, in its character. It enters not upon the mode, or the conditions, under which the denizens of another sphere may become agents to modify the character or influence the destiny of mankind. It leaves man to find his way along that interesting path by the

light of analogy,—perhaps by the aid of such disclosures as this work records. The light may be imperfect, the disclosures insufficient to appease an eager curiosity. In the dimness of the present, our longings for enlightenment may never attain satisfaction. We may be destined to wait. That which human wit and industry cannot compass in this twilight world, may be a discovery postponed only till we are admitted, beyond the boundary, into the morning sunshine of another.