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### HAVE WE LIVED BEFORE?

How often, to employ the language of Sir Bulwer Lytton, have we "appealed to the calm majesty of the unsympathising stars" to breathe a response to this inquiry! It is a question that must come home to every reader's heart; it startled first upon *ours*, like the dread stirrings of some inborn knowledge. Our locks—now grizzled over a sombre grey, like the flakes of wood-ash on a fire half extinguished—were then as golden and as sunny as our aspirations. It was a summer evening, on the margin of a little stream in Worcestershire; the "green blood" circulated in the stalks of the field flowers and the meadow grass, and made them feel crisp and sinewy beneath our foot-prints; the dews were beginning to steal down inaudibly upon the dry herbage, and an occasional throstle in the hedges poured out its last cadence to the dying twilight—when palpably and almost bodily from its vividness the awful thought first started, self-existent, into life within us, and conjured up a thousand weird imaginings, that merged themselves into that one inquiry, *Have we lived before?* Since this period Shelley has broached the doctrine, and, with the trumpet-blast of his eloquence, strewn it about the world. Almost everybody is acquainted with an anecdote related of the young poet—that on one occasion he stopped a nurserymaid on a bridge in Oxford, and asked the little infant she carried in her arms for the solution of some abstract principle in ethics, "since," he observed, "the child was the inhabitant of another sphere, fresh from the lore of etherial wisdom." Many other illustrious men have entertained this notion of a pre-existence, and regarded the evanescent life of this world as the mere segment of a circle—a phase in that grand cycle of eternity which is peculiar to each individual.

But let the reader take the simple thought, and strip it naked of all the meretricious awe which invariably envelops so abstruse a subject; let him look the proposition boldly in the face, and test its probability by his own experience. Has he not frequently encountered people whom geographical and other obstacles may have rendered it impossible he could have ever seen before—in the flesh; yet whose voices have sounded on his ears with mysterious familiarity—whose every look has been fraught with vivid remembrances of *a far off past?* Has he not beheld scenery where his actual feet have never strayed, but whose appearance has recalled some landscape well treasured up in *a remote*

memory? Has he not experienced sensations of astonishment at some strain of music hitherto unknown to his mortal ears, recalling a melody—the same—in the dim bygone? Have not occurrences of familiar life reminded him of something precisely similar that has happened before, though he knows not where, or why, or when, or how such circumstances *could* previously have come to pass, and yet he feels no less assured they have? The fulfilment of all these and many other like coincidences, in his own particular instance, the writer of this article can personally avouch. Moreover, like those of his fellow-creatures, his dreams have partaken of the filmy and impalpable characters of a vision, save in one instance, when a DREAM was composed of incidents as tangible and actually material as those which a man witnesses with his waking senses; indeed, he cannot *strictly designate it as a dream*, and he might, with a great self-assurance of accuracy, call it a *reality*. It was simply as follows:—

We were standing in a pavilion—on a globe essentially different in every respect to the one which we inhabit; the atmosphere was of a hue like the colour of the deepest amethyst, gilded towards the horizon with brilliant coruscations that resembled heat-lightning; the stars, considerably larger than those visible from our planet, beamed upon the night landscape with a subdued and benign radiance. Our heart swelled high with admiration. But, while gazing on the heavens, from opposite quarters of the blue dome, two comets suddenly appeared, looming towards each other with hideous velocity. . . . A vast multitude had collected to witness the celestial phenomenon with a mute horror that made the flesh creep and shudder; while the two meteors, suspended in the zenith above, discharged volcanic flames and missiles against each other with a roar and tumult utterly indescribable. After this had continued for some time, the great earth upon which we stood swayed, and rocked, and cracked from its gigantic hinges, and finally reeled down into the eternal gulph of space beneath, amidst the yells of a despairing world.

—Possibly a similar remembrance caused Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, to realise the appalling fact in a strain of wonderful sublimity, as these words of his will testify:—

“ . . . . . Down amain,  
Into the void, the outcast world descended,  
Wheeling and thundering on: its troubled seas  
Were churned into a spray, and whizzing, flurried  
Around it like a dew.”

On starting from our slumber, we *felt* it had been no idle nightmare; the echo of that grand cry of anguish still reverberated in our ears; the occurrences had been as plainly and clearly visible as those which greeted us in the garish and unvisionary daylight. Had our spirit, our *ears*, our immaterial existence, just witnessed that wild catastrophe in some distant region of the illimitable universe?—or was it the *recollection* of a world whose ruin we had partaken of in some previous nature? Who shall answer us? Again the problem resolves itself into that one ominous and inexplicable question—*Have we lived before?*

BELIEF.—Were we to believe nothing but what we could perfectly comprehend, not only our stock of knowledge in all the branches of learning would be shrunk up to nothing, but even the affairs of common life could not be carried on.—*Thacker.*

## THE GHOST-HAUNTED.

(Concluded from our last.)



NE Two!" as usual, that glorious fellow H——, with his jokes, and his anecdotes, and his subtlety of argument, has kept me out of bed till morning. Well! no matter; "early to bed," say all physicians, and as it is *very* early yet, I'll take another glass just to quench the excitement of my friend's conviviality, and dispel the wakefulness his vivacity has occasioned. Excellent spirits, certainly, but almost too inspiring; another Havana-~~ment~~ just ~~soothe~~ my brain, and then to essay the somnolent qualifications of "Tired nature's soft restorer." I have had no cause yet to believe that my spiritual friend has returned. Indeed I almost begin to doubt whether the whole affair was not "the very essence of the brain, the bodiless creation ecstasy is cunning in." Besides, what in the name of all that is reasonable, can these things want with me? If there is any stolen property to be recovered, why do they not seek an interview with Mr. Jardine, at Bow-street? or if there is some secret treason to be unfolded, an investigation would answer much better at the Home-office than elsewhere. Pshaw! I must have been dreaming—and eh! confound it—an *empty glass*! Now, which of my friends can it be who has finished this brandy and water?

"One, two, THREE"—so spoke the iron tongue of St. Bride's, in that solemn tone which in the dead silence of a London midnight speaks so thrillingly to the heart, of the departed dead. The sepulchral vaults beneath seem to echo back the sound, and mingle with the hilarious tones of some straggling bacchanal, like harsh strains that grate upon the ear. Midnight and the feverish pulse of the great city is nearly stilled, the wealthy have resigned themselves to peaceful slumber on their couch of down, and the poor creatures whose poverty shuts out even the very semblance of a home, cover under some sheltering gateway, and sleep till aroused ever and anon by the stealthy tread of some intrusive policeman.

St. Paul's Cathedral boomed the first quarter, and the air grew somewhat chilly. "I'll just take a warm, and go to bed," muttered I, so I drew my chair nearer to the fire, and placed my feet on the fender, at the same time that I did so, casting an involuntary parting glance at the picturesque display of social enjoyment which the table before me presented. In the centre stood a plate of oranges, a pack of cards, and a cribbage-board, and behind these stood my Sinumbra, shedding its soft rays upon two coloured glass decanters, the contents of which, being spirituous, had long since become considerably diminished by a gradual process of evaporation consequent upon a preliminary course of dilution. A jug of water, a sugar-basin, a small jar of C'naster, two or three tumblers, a box of cigars, and some clean pipes, completed this very bachelor-like display, whilst the gloves of H——, in proof of his habitual forgetfulness, caressed one another at the edge of the table, near the chair he had occupied.

"Careless dog!" exclaimed I, "this is the sixth time he has left his gloves here during the last month—a new pair too!—the very best four-and-sixpenny kid;" and whilst uttering to myself these disjointed observations I was in the act of taking up the gloves to examine their make and quality, when, lo! I beheld the right-hand glove elude my grasp, rise slowly from the table, and take a position immediately opposite to me. Suddenly it appeared to be poised in air; the thumb became slowly bent back, and the digits, being widely extended, were violently agitated as if the glove had become spontaneously seized with an inclination to play on an ideal flute. On first beholding this extraordinary *æstic* display of my friend's glove I was overcome by astonishment and alarm, but presently, surmising the real cause of this manual phenomenon, I burst into a hearty laugh. Ghosts, however, do not like to be laughed at—a fact, which in this instance, was proved by the fingers of the glove being suddenly knitted up into the form of a fist, which was shaken at me as if in anger. I now became grave, considering wisely, as I thought, that a pugilistic contest with an invisible opponent would be by no means in accordance with the fair-play principle of the prize-ring, as there would be no knowing where to put in the hits. I therefore

assumed an air of the most profound respect, and bowed, upon which the clenched fist relaxed into the more friendly indication of an open hand, and the glove fell down by the side of its fellow, on the table. At that moment a creaking noise proceeded from H——'s apparently vacant chair opposite, and soon after I saw, it, by a seemingly innate motive power, draw nearer the fire, tilting itself up at the back, as if somebody was cosily warming his hands. Now, I cogitated within myself, there can be no doubt that the chair is occupied by some invisible visitor, and a very jovial frolicsome fellow he seems to be too; surely there can be no harm in seeking to prolong the interview, or, considering that I was the only person visible, the *monovisuality* would be the better word. Perhaps, thought I, he would not object to a glass of brandy and water, and a cigar, and as the probable acceptance of such a thing rose in ideal form before me, I could not help giving way to a risible emotion, which was, however, immediately checked by seeing the invisible's chair drawn back, and almost at the same time I fancied that I could trace the ghostly outline of a melancholy countenance turned towards me in astonishment. "Well!" I continued in mental colloquy with myself, "my unseen friend appears to be rather tetchy, so I must make an effort to get him into something like good humour."

The reader may probably recollect the libertine Don Juan's terror at finding the stony Ghost of Don Guzman accepting the invitation to sup with him, and his subsequent familiar hobnobbing when that spectral guest challenged the pantomimic hero to take wine—but even that could scarcely exceed the surprise I evinced when the event occurred which I am now about to relate. Selecting a choice cigar from the box, I presented it towards the invisible, accompanied by a piece of lighted paper, but the latter was instantaneously blown out, and the former was snatched out of my hand and thrown behind the fire. "Then you are no smoker?" I remarked, with feelings akin to disappointment. The answer to this was a vehement clattering amongst the half-dozen clean pipes that were lying on the table, and one of them withdrew itself from the rest, and took up its place on the edge of the table near the invisible's chair. I saw how it was; my visitor escheved cigars, and patronised pipes, so I handed him the jar of C'naster and placed it on the table before him. Ycs! he *did* prefer a pipe to a cigar, and lost no time in letting me know it either, for presently I beheld the pipe being filled, the bowl resting on the edge of the tobacco-jar, and the weed appearing to creep into the pipe as if influenced by some mysterious power of attraction. I handed my visitor another light, which was gently abstracted from my hand, and I then beheld the pipe rise from the table, assume a smokeable position, and emit a thick cloud from the *waxed-end*, whilst the tobacco in the bowl sent out a flickering glow, a clear red light, as it does when the air is drawn through it strongly. "Well!" said I "you have not forgotten how to smoke it seems." The pipe vibrated with a tremulous kind of movement, as if the hand that held it was that of some one who was chuckling with laughter. Yes! it was now evident, the invisible was actually laughing at me, yet, strange to say, the discovery of this, so far from exciting any uneasiness, afforded me great encouragement. I ventured a laugh, lit a pipe myself, and commenced smoking; then, thinking it as well to continue my hospitable attentions, I asked the invisible if he would like a glass of brandy and water. This was answered by three knocks, which first of all startled me, and then set me seriously thinking what they meant.

"Three," thought I—"three what?" and then I fancied it might be three letters, perhaps—Y—E—S,—so I instantly mixed a glass of rather strong warm-*with*—placed it before my guest, beheld it lifted up, then put down again, and perceived that the invisible had, for an invisible, taken two or three good sips. This was a feat of such an extraordinary nature, that I could scarcely refrain from laughing outright.

"Is it strong enough?" I enquired.

The three knocks on the table were repeated in reply.

After this I saw the invisible's chair advance nearer to the fire, and the poker, rising from the fender, insert itself between the bars of the grate, stirring the coals until they sent forth a glorious blaze, and finally take its station in the corner of the fire-place by the side of the tongs. This made me laugh still more, but I was checked by a startling blow on the table, which was evidently intended to call me to order, and to intimate that I was behaving

with impropriety in laughing at my guest. To make some amends for my rudeness, I filled a bumper and drank to the invisible's future happiness. Was it fancy? I thought my benediction was answered by a sigh! Anxious now to know who the invisible was, I summoned my utmost confidence, and courteously enquired whether he was the once *living individuality* (I was too puzzled to know what to call him) who had been my sub-editor on the—; a question which he answered by two knocks on the table, and which I understood to signify—N—o. "Have you honoured me with a visit before?" continued I. The reply was in the affirmative.

"It was very unkind of you to frighten me as you did by pulling off the bed clothes," said I; and scarcely had I made the remark, before I beheld the invisible's pipe describe several circles in the air, as though he were waving it in exultation at the remembrance of his frolic. "It was very facetious certainly," continued I "but I much prefer your company when I am not in bed asleep. With that restriction, I shall beg leave to fill a bumper and drink to our better acquaintance; come, your glass is empty." I filled the invisible's glass, and again suggested that I should like to know with which of my deceased friends I was drinking.

Upon this, I beheld the invisible's tobacco-pipe glide slowly towards the grate, when the bowl gave itself sundry knocks against the bars, until the pipe had become empty; then gliding back, it seemed to be poised lengthways in the air, now making a sort of see-saw movement, appearing as if about to fall at one end, and then suddenly regaining its equilibrium. I fell back in my chair convulsed with laughter—the invisible was evidently amusing himself by balancing the pipe on the ghost of his nose. Who can he be? thought I, and while endeavouring to recollect whether any of my former acquaintances had a *penchant* for performing this feat (strange accomplishments being sometimes picked up at college), I beheld the tobacco-pipe assume a recumbent position on the table, and then three oranges suddenly glided from among others which were in a plate on the table, and began taking most extraordinary aerial leaps, one after the other, without either falling to the ground, or pausing in their wild career even for a single instant. There they were, flying up and down together as if in chase of each other, like a juggler's golden balls. I laughed still more heartily at this feat, but was stopped by one of the oranges suddenly flying playfully at me, and hitting me a blow on the head; the other two at the same moment, gliding back into the fruit-plate. "Confound it!" cried I, "I do not recollect ever having had a friend who was a mountebank or a juggler, though, now I think of it, Ned B—— was rather a genius at sleight-of-hand, but you surely don't mean to tell me that you are that individual?"

Three blows on the table—the *y-e-s* of our visionary vocabulary—intimated the affirmative answer to this question.

"If you really do mean to say that you are my old friend B——," exclaimed I, rather warmly, "prove your identity, and I shall be delighted to recognise you."

The pack of cards on my table jumped up at the moment I spoke, and smacking themselves compactly together, as when under the influence of a conjurer's experienced fingers, proceeded to open themselves fan-like before my eyes, as if for the purpose of one card being selected. Determined to humour the freaks of my spiritualised companion, I withdrew one from the rest, looked at it, and returned it to the pack. The cards, now shuffed themselves violently together, were placed before me to cut, and after a knock had been given upon the table, to secure my attention, the identical ten of spades I had chosen appeared at the top.

"Now," I cried, "I am convinced, but proceed with your reminiscences."

My violin case, which was lying on a side table to the left of the invisible's chair, I now perceived fly open, and out walked the violin and bow. It was highly amusing to behold how the instrument assumed the usual professional position, as though an experienced player were resting it on his shoulder; and still more amusing was it to notice the manner in which the bow commenced a sort of caressing dalliance with the violin, now gently rubbing itself against one of the strings, and then bending over to another and another, as if endeavouring to coax them all into tune. I was here called to order by the tapping of the bow against the table, in the same manner as the leader in an orchestra strikes his music stand, to let the band know he is ready to begin.—*Crash!*

No ! it was not a crash that I now heard, but the first three bars of that plaintive Hibernian melody to which have been since adapted the words of a once popular ditty, entitled "All round my hat."

"Ah !" cried I, almost in ecstasy, "Now I know you!—my old friend B—. I have not forgotten the new version of that song which we wrote together, or that other lyrical composition of our muse, beginning,———" I was about to repeat the words when the invisible interrupted me by playing the air to which those words had been written—Moore's beautiful melody, "The girls we left behind us."

"Huzza !" cried I, "I now am perfectly certain of your identity, and as you really *are* here, my dear fellow, pray oblige me with the dance you composed for the convivial scene in that burletta I wrote for Webster. On the instant, the violin began playing the jovial tune I had asked for. I was so delighted that I sprung from my chair, glass in hand, and, while humming the air, involuntarily began dancing. The invisible did the same. I saw the violin lay itself on the table, while the invisible's glass suddenly sprang up high into the air, and appeared, like my own, to be most incontinently excited, performing such undulations as a glass necessarily would do when held by the hand of a lively dancer. My excitement increased as our dance went on, and I sang the tune more quickly. Round and round the room we glided—faster and faster still, when—*crash!*—all was darkness; the giddy whirl had ended, and I lay senseless on the floor.

## THE ASTROLOGER'S STUDY

*Being Predictions of the Chief Events from Week to Week.*



Now does the turbulent Mars enter the ruling sign of Capricorn, which afflicts Greece and all countries beneath its influence. The demon of war again stalks through the rugged clime of India, and the sons of the East mingle in sanguinary strife at Lahore. Clerical disturbances prevail, and difficulty occurs in matters of finance. Let shareholders in railways beware. A fatal case of *poison* agitates the public mind, and an explosion takes place in the North. A lady of literary celebrity obtains unpleasant notoriety. There is activity now in the shipping interest, and the naval department receives some accession of strength. A bright ornament to the Legislature bends beneath the frown of fate, and a curious legal case excites attention. Those who voyage to distant countries may take heed, for danger, death, and deprivation will occur upon the broad waters.

## THE ASTROLOGER'S CALENDAR.

*A Diary of Auspicious and Inauspicious Days, with Weekly Indications of the Weather, deduced from Planetary Influences.*

**SUNDAY, March 9th.**—Mild and fair, with blue sky. Beware of quarrels. The fair will frown.

**MONDAY, March 10th.**—Cloudy, with light westerly breeze. Transact business with elderly persons.

**TUESDAY, March 11th.**—Fair, but change at night. Good for marriage, love, and pleasure.

**WEDNESDAY, March 12th.**—Showery and cloudy. Write for, but do not personally ask, favours.

**THURSDAY, March 13th.**—Fair and windy. Evil preponderates, but commercial enterprises succeed.

**FRIDAY, March 14th.**—Fair, frosty nights. Avoid business with ladies and lawyers. Travel not.

**SATURDAY, March 15th.**—Cold and hazy weather. Sign no documents, but begin new works.

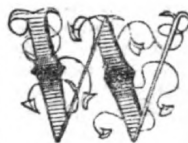
## THE MYSTERIES OF NIGHT.

BY "HECATE."

"Then stirs the feeling infinite, so felt  
In solitude, where we are *least* alone,  
A truth which through our being then doth melt,  
And purifies from self; its is a tone,  
The soul and source of music, which makes known  
Eternal harmony, and sheds a charm,  
Like to the fabled Cytherea's zone,  
Binding all things with beauty;—'twould disarm  
The spectre Death, had he substantial power to harm!  
And this is in the night——"

BYRON.

### CHAPTER I.



**N**AT is night? Darkness—the absence of the sun—the changed position of a certain portion of the earth. And is that all, thinkest thou? Verily, then, thou art no philosopher, and hast yet to learn that the night is not only all that thou seest and knowest, but possesseth more of wonder and mystery than thou hast the least idea of. The influence by which the earth, and all things earthly, are affected in the day time, become totally changed, and assume at night, a mysterious character which, it is most probable, will never be fully understood; simply in consequence of its vast and complicated nature. If, as is believed, every star be a world, then, at night, we are under the influence of myriads of other worlds, with all their peculiar combinations of character. To this we may add the influence of the moon, of which, at present, we know comparatively little. We are now speaking of the probable effects, not upon inert *matter*, but upon mind, and upon all living things; and judging from what little we have already learned, namely, that the influence of the moon is capable of affecting our mental faculties and perception, it is only fair to suppose that other effects may be, and are, produced of a nature so subtle and impalpable, that we are subservient to them without being in the least conscious either of their existence or action. If any one doubts the correctness of this theory, let him consider for a moment the two grand principles which reigns throughout creation, namely, influence and reaction of influence, according to the special peculiarities of the spiritualities acting or acted upon. Influence and re-influence are the main springs of our own world, and without them it could not exist. Is it not, therefore, most probable that the same system of action and reaction, under various modifications, exists throughout the universe? We do not think any reasonable person can question the correctness of such a proposition, especially when we find that we are subject to mysterious influences which cannot be traced to any clear and intelligible cause. If you want us to explain our meaning more clearly by example, we will refer to the effect of the moon on many persons in sound health, and on all whose brain is in the least diseased, or has been rendered peculiarly susceptible of excitement by injury from violence, over exertion, or any kind of violent stimulant. It is well known that, even in the very lowest scale of organised existences, such as plants, mere *degrees of light* will produce the most singular changes and effects, and when the whole light of our world is almost entirely excluded, or supplied by another (or others) of a nature totally different from the one that not only lights but cherishes our waking existence, and it is reasonable to conclude that the effect, though not of such a kind as may be particularly discoverable, is, nevertheless, equally great and universal. We are inclined to believe that dreams are, in some mysterious way, not uncommonly, either modified or actually caused by the change we allude to; for although we may often trace them to direct and simple cause, yet there are many which cannot be at all so accounted for. Some are wild and inexplicable, and others are not only unmistakeably plain in their meaning, but have a direct and often an important purport; so much so that there can be no doubt as to the spiritual prompting (or communion we might call it) which has given rise to them. We have undeniable instances of this in Holy Writ, and even at the present day we frequently find the most remarkable cases of dreams *verified*, in a manner that clearly shows how *utterly unconnected* they may

be with all earthly causes. We say, then, that dreams are a portion of the *mysteries of night*, and, in further proof of our assertion, we may here remark that people sleeping in the daytime *seldom dream at all*—a circumstance that can be accounted for only by our theory of the existence of some strong and peculiar mental influence upon the minds of persons sleeping during the night-time.

We regard the world as having, indeed, two separate existences—day and night—sleeping and waking. It is most probable that there are waking existences at night, which are dormant, or in a state of trance during the day. That there are *different existences* for day and night is proved beyond all doubt by the peculiarities exhibited among the animal creation. No one can deny that bats and owls are birds of darkness—they belong exclusively to the night; so do cats, and all beasts of prey. In the day they are sluggish, and sleep heavily, but at night the air resounds with their strange cries and roarings. It is evident to us that these creatures are under an extraordinary nocturnal influence, and that, among some of the species, it is of a very peculiar and mysterious character. If you had ever heard the cry of the hyena at night, you would fully understand what we mean. We may here also remark that it is somewhat strange the configuration of the heavens, at night, should delineate the forms of many of these animals. Thus much for such of the mysteries of night as are of a more palpable and earthly nature;—we now come to the impalpable and unearthly. Some people will tell us that these things are all delusions. We cannot positively disprove the assertion, but we see nothing at all unreasonable in our theory, supported, as it is, not only by the experience of individuals at the present day, but of past centuries; in fact, we might almost say ever since the world was created. We could give instances beyond number, founded on the experience both of ourselves and others; but at present we shall be content to adduce only one or two. We had the pleasure of being personally acquainted with the celebrated author of the "Every Day Book," William Hone, the writer and publisher of the "Political House that Jack built," and a host of other facetious squibs of a like nature. There was a snug little room in his house on Ludgate-hill, which he used as his study, and this room had a small window in the partition that separated it from the staircase. Frequently he would sit writing until a very late hour at night. At the period we refer to he carried this habit to a very great extent, being then engaged in the composition of a certain work, which he expected would create a great sensation, inasmuch as, if not actually irreligious, it was extremely sceptical in its tendency. Night after night, while writing this book, he was haunted by the vision of a countenance, almost unearthly in its expression, intently watching him through the little window while he was at work, until at last he not only vacated his study at night altogether, but was impelled to give up the work he was writing. Not long afterwards he destroyed the manuscript, surmising (rightly enough, we think) that its objectionable character might have something to do with the mysterious visitation. But perhaps you will say that this instance refers more to the character of the book than to the influence of night. Very well; then here is a case of a diametrically opposite nature. Two young bachelors, law students, lived together in what is termed a double set of chambers, and they never parted for bed without first smoking their cigars and playing a game of cribbage together, the youngest being invariably, upon these occasions, a visitor in the apartment of his elder companion. Now, after they had lived together about a year in this manner, the youngest died—but his visits to his surviving companion were *still regularly continued every night, as before*. We certainly do not mean to say that the two friends still smoked cigars and drank brandy and water together, but that, at the hour when they had been in the habit of meeting, there was the *well known sound of footsteps*—and who cannot recognise the tread of an old friend's footsteps—entering the room. Then came the creaking of the old chair in the corner by the fire, as if of some one sitting down, and then—yes, and then—but we will tell you all about that in our next chapter.

(To be continued.)

## THE ART OF MAGIC, AS PRACTISED AMONG THE JEWS.



"The most interesting and instructive work that could be written would be a history of magic."—DR. JOHNSON,



ALLOWING that the Egyptian amulets are certainly not so ancient as the Babylonian talisman, in their uses they were exactly similar. Some little figures, supposed to have been intended as charms, have been found on several mummies, which have at various times been brought into Europe. Plutarch informs us, that the soldiers wore rings, on which the representation of an insect, resembling our beetle, was inscribed; and we learn from Ælian, that the judges had always suspended round their necks a small image of truth formed of emeralds. The belief in the virtues of amulets is far from extinct in the present age; the Cophts, the Arabians, and Syrians, and, indeed, almost all the inhabitants of Asia, west of the Ganges, whether Christians or Mahometans, still use them against possible evils.

The descendants of the Pharaohs, like the Chaldean kings, were always great encouragers of astronomy; and though the subjects of the latter were not so eminent as those of the former in the sister science, we have good reason to conclude that they made no inconsiderable progress in it. Herodotus, and other ancient historians, assert that astrology was, from the remotest times, cultivated by that people. They usually, indeed, prognosticated the general course of life, the disposition, and even the manner of death, of any one, by reference to the deity presiding over the day on which he was born; and not unfrequently amongst their eastern neighbours, by determining the position of the stars at the moment of delivery.

As Moses passed the greatest part of his life in Egypt, and as he could know little by personal experience of other nations, it may perhaps be inferred that generally, when he warns the Israelites against prevailing superstitions, he has a particular eye to those observed in the country in which the posterity of Adam had so long resided. He makes frequent allusion, indeed, to the magical rites and idolatrous practices of the Canaanites; but in this case he appears to speak rather from the information he had acquired from others than from his own experience. Should this inference be admitted, we shall have reason for believing that both witchcraft and necromancy were known to the Egyptians; and that some days were considered lucky and others unfavourable for the prosecution of any important affair. A careful perusal of the Pentateuch, and a reference to the Greek historians who have written on the affairs of Egypt, and whose works are necessary to elucidate many obscure allusions in the sacred text, will furnish the more curious reader with information on some minor points, which our limits, as a miscellaneous work, necessarily oblige us to omit.

We have hitherto had too much reason to complain of the paucity of information afforded by ancient writers on the magic of the Eastern nations; but when we come to consider that of the Jews, we no longer labour under so heavy a disadvantage. The Holy Scriptures, the works of native writers, and, above all, the laborious researches of learned Christian commentators, furnish us with abundant materials, from which we shall select such as appear best adapted to give an intelligible, but necessarily brief, view of the subject. Many Jewish doctors assign to their magic a remark-

able antiquity. They assert that it is of divine origin; that it was known to Adam and Abraham, both of whom were animated by the same soul; that the latter taught it by means of his concubines to his children; and that he wore round his neck a precious stone, the bare sight of which cured every disease. We have thus sufficient authority for saying that the Jews were at a very early period addicted to the magical arts.

Lightfoot has proved that the Jews, after their return from Babylon, having entirely forsaken idolatry, and being no longer favoured with the gift of prophecy, gradually abandoned themselves before the coming of our Saviour, to sorcery and divination. The Talmud, which they still regard with a reverence bordering on idolatry, abounds with instructions for the due observance of superstitious rites. After the destruction of their city and temple, many Israelitish necromancers were highly esteemed for their skill in magic. Many rabbins were quite as well versed in the school of Zoroaster as in that of Moses. They prescribed all kinds of conjuration, some for the cure of wounds, some against the dreaded bite of serpents, and others against thefts and enchantments. Like the Magi, they boasted that by means of their art, they held an intercourse with superior beings. Thus Bath-kool, daughter of the voice, is the name given by them to the echo: they regarded it as an oracle, which in the second temple was destined to supply the defect of the Urim and Thummim, the mysterious oracles of the first.

The divinations of the Israelites were founded on the influence of the stars, and on the operations of spirits: that singular people did not, indeed, like the Chaldeans and Magi, regard the heavenly bodies as gods, and genii; but they ascribed to them a great power over the actions and opinions of men. Hence the common proverb, "such a one may be thankful to his stars," when spoken of any person distinguished for his wealth, power, or wisdom. The mazzal-tool was the happy, and the mazzal-ra the malignant influence; and the fate of every one was supposed to be regulated by either one or the other. Like the notions from which their opinions were derived, the Jews constructed horoscopes, and predicted the fate of every one from his birth. Thus if any one were born under the sun, it was prognosticated that he would be fair, generous, open-hearted, and capricious; under Venus, rich and wanton; under Mercury, witty, and of a retentive memory; under the Moon, sickly, and inconstant; under Saturn, unfortunate; under Jupiter, just, and under Mars, quarrelsome.

As to the spirits whose agency was so often employed in divination, we have full information from Manasseh, Ben Israel, and others. "Of wicked spirits," says the author, "there are several varieties, of which some are intelligent and cunning, others ignorant and stupid. The former flying from one extent of the earth to the other, become acquainted with the general cause of human events, both past and present, and sometimes with those of the future. Hence many mortals conjure these spirits, by whose assistance they effect wonderful things. The books of the cabalists, and of some other writers, contain the names of the spirits usually invoked, and a particular account of the ceremonies are accompanied. If these spirits appear to one man alone, they portend no good; if to two persons together, they presage no evil: they were never known to appear to three mortals assembled together."

The magical rites of the Jews were, and indeed are still, chiefly performed on various important occasions, as on the birth of a child, a marriage, &c. On such occasions the evil spirits are believed to be peculiarly active in their malignity, which can only be counteracted by certain enchantments. Thus Tobit, according to the directions of the angel Raphael, exorcised the demon Asmodeus, whom he compelled, by means of the perfume of the heart and liver of a fish, to fly into upper Egypt.

Josephus does not think magic so ancient as many writers of this nation do; he makes Solomon the first who practised an art which is so powerful against demons; and the knowledge of which, he asserts, was communicated to that prince by immediate inspiration. The latter, continues the historian, invented and transmitted to posterity in his writings, certain incantations, for the cure of diseases, and for the expulsion and perpetual banishment of wicked spirits from the bodies of the possessed. This mode of cure, he further observes, is very prevalent in our nation. It consisted, according to his description, in the use of a certain root, which was sealed up, and held under the nose of the person

possessed; the name of Solomon, with the words prescribed by him, was then pronounced, and the demon forced immediately to retire. He does not even hesitate to assert, that he himself has been an eye-witness of such an effect produced on a person named Eleazer, in presence of the emperor Vespasian and his sons.

On the great day of propitiations, the Jews of the sixteenth century, in order to avert the angel of Samuel, endeavoured to appease him by presents. On that day, and on no other throughout the year, they believed that power was given him to accuse them. They aimed, therefore, to prevent their grand enemy from carrying accusations against them, by rendering it impossible for him to know the appointed day. For this purpose they used a somewhat singular stratagem; in reading the usual portion of the law, they were careful to leave out the beginning and the end,—an omission which the fiend was by no means prepared to expect on so important an occasion.

The cabal is chiefly conversant with enchantments, which are effected by a certain number of characters. It gives directions how to select and combine some passages and proper names of Scripture, which are believed both to render supernatural beings visible, and to produce many wonderful and surprising effects. In this manner the *Malcha-sheva*, (the Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon), has often been invoked, and as often made to appear. But the most famous wonders have been effected by the name of the sacred word Jehovah, which is, when read with points, multiplied by the Jewish doctors into twelve, forty-two, and seventy-two letters, of which words are composed that possess miraculous energy. By these Moses slew the Egyptians; by these Israel was preserved from the destroying angel of the Wilderness, and by these Elijah separated the waters of the river, to open a passage for himself and Elisha. The name of the arch-fiend is likewise used in magical devices. The five Hebrew letters of which that name is composed, exactly constitute the number 364, one less than the days in the whole year. Now the Jews stated, that owing to the wonderful virtue of the number comprised in the name of Satan, he is prevented from accusing them for an equal number of days: hence the stratagem of which we have before spoken, for depriving him of the power to injure them on the only day in which that power is granted him.

## POETRY.

### ETERNALLY.

Lose not thy faith,  
In all the symbols of man's sacred call,  
The truth that hath  
By mighty hand become impressed on all;  
The soothing hope of one eternal sphere,  
That circles all above, we held on earth most dear,      Eternally.

Lose not thy faith  
In woman's love, the fond, the fair, the pure,  
That treads the path  
Of Virtue's fashioning; and will endure  
The taunts and chafings of a harsh world's ill—  
Though many have proved false, love one bright image still,      Eternally.

Lose not thy faith  
In all the phases of the beautiful;—  
True wisdom saith,  
From evil weeds we flowers of good may cull,  
Bathe, then, the heart in sunshine—shun life's frost—  
And trust in friendship still, though still by mock friends crost,      Eternally.

Lose not thy faith  
In that immortal destiny of man,  
Which scorns the wraith  
Of gloomy horror, that doth set its ban  
On that fair rainbow of man's god-like creed,  
The tomb that hath "here lies" here lies to us indeed,      Eternally.

Love on—hope ever!  
These are the twin amenities of life,  
Which, once linked, never  
Will cease to aid thee through all earthly strife;  
Love on—through years of peril, pain, and grief;  
Hope ever—through the gloom of unbelief,  
And thou shalt live—Eternally.      B.

## THE MYSTERIOUS MONK OF ST. PETERSBURGH.

The Emperor of Russia has within his dominions at the present time one of the most extraordinary men of the age, and who has attained a longevity which renders even his existence a prodigy. He is an old Russian monk recently from Jerusalem, and has communicated to the Emperor some startling predictions of the future destinies of Europe. This monk is stated to be the very same who, from Catherine to Alexander, always warned the Russian sovereigns of the fatal catastrophes which have befallen them. On his first mission, he came to St. Petersburg, asked to speak to the Empress Catherine, and was repulsed by the palace people. He persisted in his application, but was again rejected. Unable to obtain access to the Empress, he stationed himself on a road through which he knew she sometimes passed, and watched an opportunity of addressing her. When he saw her, he approached her, and extended his hand to her, to prevent her Majesty's suite from driving away a religious mendicant. The Empress gave him some money, and he, after thanking her, said to the wife of Peter III., "*Madam, never go alone to any place, for a misfortune will befall you.*" The Empress looked at the bold beggar, and taking his simple looks for a sign of mental derangement, ordered him to be conveyed to a state prison. Three months after, Catherine was found dead of apoplexy, in a place which M. de Chateaubriand has ventured to name aloud in the French academy, whilst dwelling on the history of one of the emperors of Rome, but which we cannot designate; all that we can say is, that she had been to it alone, in despite of the wizard's warning. On the demise of the Empress, Paul I., remembering the monk who had foreseen the death of Catherine, sent for him, and told him that he might come to the palace whenever he had occasion to speak to the emperor. "I have nothing to say to him just now," replied the necromancer, "but I may have something later." He returned to his convent, and was not heard of for four years after. He then made his appearance again at the palace, solicited an audience, in compliance with the Emperor's former promise, and when he was in the presence of Paul I., said to him "*Your subjects are discontented; and God tells me, that if you do not alter your conduct, you will be strangled.*" The prophet's audacity irritated the Emperor to such a degree, that by his commands the monk was once more thrown into a dungeon. The wizard had been clear-sighted enough; in 1801, Paul I. was strangled. This is not all. Alexander succeeded Paul I. Struck at the coincidence of the death of Catherine, and his father with the monk's predictions, he restored him to his convent. After a lapse of two years the prophet again made his appearance at the Imperial Palace. When his arrival was announced to Alexander, the latter ordered him to be brought in. "What hast thou to predict to me?" asked the Emperor. "Is it another violent death?" "It is not the death of a man, sir, replied his inauspicious visitor, "it is that of a great city—yes, one of the most splendid and richest cities of the empire will shortly perish. *The French will penetrate into Moscow, and Moscow will vanish in smoke, like a handful of straw, or dry leaves.*" "Madman," exclaimed Alexander, "go thou and pray God to cure thy poor head. Begone to Archangel, its air is wholesome to the insane!" A convent of Archangel did therefore receive the monk, whose strange fate was to quit a convent for a prison, and a prison for a convent. The year 1812 beheld the accomplishment of his prophecy, when Alexander recalled the diviner, to whom he offered a compensation for his captivities. The monk only asked for a sum of money to enable him to proceed to Jerusalem, where he wished to visit the holy places. The money was given, and he took his departure; and at this moment there is in the fortress a monk who has come back from Palestine, and who is the acknowledged prophet of 1796.

## FRAGMENTS FOR THE FANCIFUL.

THE MYSTERIES OF THE FUTURE.—He who first breathed the principle of existence into the human body, never intended that the grandest of his earthly mysteries should be withheld from

human understanding. It is idle to allege that because we do not understand that we should not. Man, the noblest of God's creation, has not been gifted with powers, comparatively with the rest of the creatures that inhabit this earth, supernatural, for the mere end of blindly sitting down to behold the glories that surround him, without striving to withdraw the veil that seems to hang over them.

THE BELIEVERS AND THE SCEPTICS.—Sir Isaac Newton was a firm believer in judicial astrology; he who first calculated the distance of the stars, and revealed the laws of motion by which the Supreme Being organises and keeps in their orbits unnumbered worlds; he who had revealed the mysteries of the stars themselves. Dryden, Sir Isaac Newton's contemporary, believed in the same celestial art. Hobbes, who wrote the "*Leviathan*," a deist in creed, had a most extraordinary belief in spirits and apparitions. Locke, the philosopher, the matter-of-fact Locke, who wrote, and in fact established the decision of things by the rule of right reason, laying down the rule itself—he delighted in studying the occult sciences. Cardinal Richelieu, the minister of a great empire, believed in the calculation of nativities. Tasso believed in his good angel, and was often observed to converse with what he fancied was a spirit or demon, which he declared he saw. Dr. Samuel Johnson was notoriously addicted to the observance of omens and fortunate days. Sir Christopher Wren, who built St. Paul's Cathedral, was a believer in dreams. He had a pleurisy once, being in Paris, and dreamed that he was in a place where palm trees grew, and that a woman in a romantic dress gave him some dates. The next day he sent for some dates, in the full belief of their revealed virtues, and they cured him. Dr. Halley had the same belief. Melancthon believed in dreams or apparitions, and used to say that one came to him in his study, and told him to bid Guynceus, his friend, to go away for some time, as the Inquisition sought his life. His friend went away in consequence, and thus really saved his life. It would be an easy task to extend this list of the good and great men who have thus thought and felt, but the above may convince the matter-of-fact philosophers we have at least authority on our side.

FATALITY OF A TITLE.—The first prince who bore the title of Duke of York, was Edmund, son of Edward III. The second prince of the same royal house bearing the title was Richard Duke of York, grandson of Edmund, the first Duke, whose pretension to the crown originated the disastrous civil wars between the houses of York and Lancaster; he was slain at the battle of Wakefield, in December, 1460, and his head, together with the head of his young son, the Earl of Rutland, was placed over the principal gate of the city of York. His eldest son, Edward Earl of March, succeeded him in the Dukedom, and afterwards became King under the title of Edward IV.; he died in 1488, in the forty-second year of his age, not without strong suspicions of being poisoned by his ambitious and aspiring brother, Richard Duke of Gloucester. Edward IV.'s second son, Richard Duke of York, was, together with his brother King Edward V., barbarously murdered by their uncle, afterwards King Richard III., in the Tower of London. The next prince of the blood royal bearing the title was Henry, son of Henry VII., who, on the death of his elder brother, Prince Arthur, became Prince of Wales, and succeeded to the throne as King Henry VIII. The reign of that despot was marked with cruelty and bloodshed; and although his son, Edward VI., and his two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, successively reigned after him, yet, upon the death of the latter, the direct line of Tudor became extinct. The title of Duke of York was not borne by any prince of the blood royal for a period of upwards of one hundred years, when King James I. bestowed that title on his second son, Charles, afterwards the unfortunate Charles I. The fate of this prince is sufficiently well known. His son James, Duke of York, afterwards King James II., was compelled to abdicate the British throne, and died an exile at Paris. The next Duke of York was Edward, the younger brother of King George III., who died at the early age of twenty-seven. Frederick, Duke of York, the second son of George III., was the last prince who bore the title, and neither his life nor death was enviable.—Should the title be revived in the person of the prince whose birth has given rise to such expectation, we trust he will be more fortunate than his predecessors.

## THE ORACLE OF DESTINY.

In which all Questions from Correspondents are answered gratuitously, in accordance with the true and unerring principles of Astrological Science.



TO OUR QUERISTS.—This department of our work involves the solution of "horary questions," so called from a figure of the heavens being erected for the hour in which the question is asked, and from the indications manifest in which the corresponding answers are derived. It will, therefore, be absolutely necessary for all correspondents to *specify the exact hour and day* on which they commit the question to paper for our judgment, and the replies will then be given accordingly. As this important feature of the starry science will necessarily occupy considerable time which he is willing to devote, without reward, to benefit the public, THE ASTROLOGER hopes that the liberality of his offer will protect him from the correspondence of those who desire adjudication upon frivolous subjects, or who are merely actuated thereto by motives of idle and foolish curiosity. All subjects on which they may be *really anxious*, can be solved with absolute certainty; and the election of favourable periods for marriage, speculation, or commencing any new undertaking with advantage, will be cheerfully and readily pointed out from week to week. All communications addressed to "THE ASTROLOGER" will be considered as strictly confidential, and the initials only given in the oracle.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. R. (Birmingham).—You had better remain where you now are, but do not marry for another year at least. There is a surprise in store for you.

W. JOY.—Write or apply personally on the 18th of March next, and you will be successful. The child has a good prospect of succeeding in life if he survive the fourth year. The mark appears to be on the right side of the body beneath the shoulder.

F. H. A. LEO.—By unremitting attention and bold perseverance you will succeed, but not without an unavoidable delay. Be careful of fire.

A. J. B.—Do not leave your present situation for a month at least. There is an elderly gentleman who will speedily introduce you to a commercial firm.

FRANCES.—Apply or write on March 15th, in the afternoon, for a situation as housekeeper.

E. W. H. must write. We have repeatedly stated that interviews cannot be granted, except under peculiar circumstances.

B.—The production will be rejected where it now remains, but try another.

CLARA.—There are two parties with whom you have been lately intimate, but the one inquired after is infinitely the more honourable, and would make you an affectionate husband. He is not the one, however, destined to be your partner for life.

J. BOARDMAN.—Owing to our correspondent not having followed the instructions given in our former numbers for asking horary questions, we cannot solve the problem with certainty; but from the indication of another scheme, we should say the party inquired after was alive, and that he would speedily return. Canada is pointed out as the place where he now sojourns.

SCAPTIC.—The article shall be inserted, provided the arguments on both sides are temperate and fair. Truth is invariably strengthened by controversy, and from that we shall not shrink.

E. F. (Fitzroy-square).—The question proposed can only be correctly determined from the nativity. The horary figure is pretty accurate, and has good indications of coming prosperity for the querent. Both Zadkiel and Raphael give instructions in the art; for ourselves, we cannot spare the time.

AGNES DE LA ROCHE, KATE BELMONT, AND EMILY MORSON.—Fie! fie! young ladies; would ye attempt to deceive the seer? If we had a Cerberus head, we might attempt an answer; but ask your clever cousin to translate "*Tris juncta in uno*." Is there no dark-eyed swain in the neighbourhood of Newington-causeway who could resolve your single doubt?

L. H. Y.—Yes; and by the result of a marriage, which, if united with industry, will provide a competency for the querent that another country will receive.

INQUIREND.—A delay unforeseen by yourself will protract the period considerably; but you will be—*must* be—ultimately successful. The acquisition of knowledge is only attained by indefatigable study. We will endeavour to elicit further information for our correspondent by the next number.

L. L. D.—No. You will marry another whom you have not yet seen. Parental objections are the obstacles to this.

G. B.—Full instructions will be given in our "Self-instructor."

S. J. ASHTON.—Let us have the hour of your birth, and we will respond to your request; but, from present appearances, we should think not.

X. Y. Z. (Pimlico).—Your brother is still living, and will communicate with you in a month. You will be united to him you love before the year has expired; but his resources will be derived from a different source to what he now anticipates.

L. L.—We cannot undertake the casting of nativities merely to "afford much amusement;" we will, however, give him an outline of his person and character, though we cannot unfold his destiny without the hour.

"BETSY."—You will soon encounter a change in your destiny which will cause you to travel. Avoid the associations of law.

THE MYSTIC INFLUENCES OF LIFE.—In compliance with the wishes of several correspondents, who wish to forward to us their own solutions of the problem proposed in the leading article of our third number, we postpone the conclusion of the arguments there made use of until our next.

TYRO.—The planet Saturn is now a morning star in the constellation *capricorn*. You were born under Jupiter, which is now in *Pisces*, and will pass the meridian at a quarter-past one on the afternoon of Saturday next, the 15th instant. Choose that time and that hour for the undertaking you mention.

SPECULATOR is correct in his surmise. Some potent meteoric influence is the cause of this unprecedentedly protracted winter. Saturn and the moon in aspect always produce cold.

R. S. (York).—Yes; if not taken till April, see future Calendar.

THOMASINA.—You will remain in the country which gave you birth.

GOAT AND SATURN.—First letter answered privately. To the second, the harvest in the midland counties will be plentiful, but hops and wall fruit deficient, both in quantity and quality. The rest will be average crops.

J. D. (Swansea).—Move not, but persevere in thy present position.

LEO. (Bristol).—Trust not, but let the next fortnight resolve thy doubts. Your pecuniary hopes will be realised in the beginning of next month. Write to Zadkiel, near Painswick, Gloucester.

H. S. B.—Your father has changed his residence, and gone further up the country, but he will speedily return. A letter of his is on the passage. You seem to have some trouble of another kind on your mind.

E. S. (Wells-street).—Study the papers now in course of publication. An article on the Rosicrucians will speedily appear; in the meantime read Sir E. L. Bulwer's romance of *Zanoni* 1, choose a mechanical trade; 2, Great Britain; 3, None 4, No. The Conjuror's Column will be resumed occasionally.

CUPID.—Think first whether it be prudent to wed at all. Under any circumstances, let the present year, which will be an eventful one to you, pass by. Thanks for suggestion.

JOSKPH Houghton.—You will change your present place, but not your business. In 1844 you will be linked with a partner for life, of your own age and condition, which will still remain the same.

The Self Instructor in Astrology, No. III., is unavoidably excluded in the present number from want of room, but will be resumed in our next.

T. G. (Dublin).—We cannot undertake the irksome duties of private correspondence, which in this instance, particularly, would be unnecessary. By application to a superior, upon whom you will shortly have it in your power to confer a favour, you will remain. A promotion will slowly though surely follow.

EUDORA.—Your accomplishments and your evident amiability of disposition deserve a better fate, but duty compels us to add, you will be unhappy if the engagement at present subsisting is concluded. Could we have the hour of birth?

W. A. J.—Continue to work with iron, and prosper.

J. A. A. (Bristol).—The influence of the "Georgian Sidus," or, as we prefer the appellation, *Herschel*. Let the royalty succumb to intellect, has elicited much interesting controversy among the learned. We shall duly advert to these opinions when come to speak of the astrological attributes of the planets. Our own experience has tended to prove its beneficial influence, but much depends on its aspects. The complimentary lines forwarded do credit to the writer, but it would savour too much of egotism to give them insertion.

LA FLEUR.—It is our earnest wish to elevate, not to degrade the science, and therefore, though we occasionally adopt metaphysical arguments beyond the reach of ordinary apprehensions, we have our reward in the knowledge that a spirit of *thought* is being diffused, which must purify and ennoble the heart of the most grovelling amongst the worldly-minded.

All correspondents whose communications have not been responded to in this number, will find their replies in our next.

\* \* All letters and communications are requested to be addressed to "The Astrologer," 11, Wellington-street North, Strand, London.

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