

# APPARITIONS:

A

## NARRATIVE OF FACTS.

BY THE

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"Ha! who comes here?  
I think it is the weakness of mine eyes  
That shapes this monstrous apparition.  
It comes upon me. Art thou anything?  
Art thou some god, some angel, or some devil,  
That makest my blood cold and my hair to stare?  
Speak to me what thou art."

SHAKESPEARE.

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Second Edition.

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P R E F A C E  
TO THE  
S E C O N D E D I T I O N .

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IN preparing a Second Edition of these "Apparitions, a Narrative of Facts," I gladly take the opportunity of thanking those numerous friends and strangers who have favoured me with communications in confirmation of the object which I have had in view by the publication of such a work—viz., to show that there is sufficient evidence for believing in the appearance, about the time of death or shortly after, of deceased persons to those living on the earth.

One of the most remarkable instances of such an appearance recorded in the following pages, will be found in the case of Captain German Wheatcroft, killed at the siege of Lucknow, on Saturday afternoon, Nov. 14th, 1857, who appeared to Professor

Nenner, his wife and a friend, at 9 p.m. of the same evening in London; and likewise to his own wife, then living with her mother at Cambridge, during the same night. . A brother-clergyman of the Church of England writes to inform me that his wife was a very intimate friend of the Wheatcroft family; and that she and G. W. had been playmates from their youth. Disappointed of seeing him before he sailed for India, G. W. sent her a message on leaving England to say "he should contrive to see her in some way." The remainder shall be stated in my informant's own words.

"On the morning of the 15th of Nov., 1857, my wife said to me on waking, 'My old friend German Wheatcroft is dead. About 12 or 1 o'clock in the night, I being wide awake, he came and stood there,' pointing to a place about four feet from the bed, 'and looking at me with a pleasant, but somewhat sad smile, said, 'Good bye!'" There was nothing distressful in the face or figure of the spectre; and

my wife does not recollect that her attention was directed to the dress or any other feature than the face, which appeared exactly as she had seen it often before. She noticed a paleness on the face: and though somewhat startled, she was not alarmed, nor did the apparition leave any unpleasing impression on her mind, save that of sorrow for what she fully believed to be the certainty of her friend's death."

Surely this threefold appearance of an officer who had been slain in India, very shortly after the moment of his death, to three different parties in England (the difference between London and Lucknow is about eight hours), in three different localities, neither of whom had any communication with each other, and one of the parties being an entire stranger to the other two, must be considered as placing the possibility of apparition phenomena beyond all reasonable doubt; and it is not saying too much, when we term those who refuse to believe such a cumulative amount of evidence as is here adduced, the victims

of what has been justly termed "*the superstition of incredulity*."

I am indebted to the kindness of George Sparkes, Esq., of Bromley, Kent, for the following very singular incident connected with that eminent statesman, Warren Hastings, who together with Lord Clive and the recently deceased Lord Lawrence have done more than any other of our great men to found and preserve to our descendants the finest empire in British India which the world has ever seen. Mr. Sparkes informs me that one evening, when his great-uncle, Joseph Cater, Esq., then secretary to Warren Hastings, was sitting with the Supreme Council of India, in the Council Chamber of Calcutta, Mr. Shakespeare, one of the members, suddenly looked up, exclaiming, "Good God, there is my father!" The whole Council then saw a figure of an unknown person glide through the chamber into another room which had no outlet, and disappear. What particularly attracted the attention of the Council was the fact that the figure

appeared with a hat of an unusual shape, commonly known in our day by the name of "chimney-pot." The Governor-General was so struck with the occurrence that he ordered a minute to be made of the matter, and placed in the record-chest; and where it may possibly still remain. In course of time a ship from England arrived, bringing the news of the death of Mr. Shakespeare's father; and likewise a cargo of "chimney-pot hats," the first ever brought to India.\*

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\* The change from hoods to "hats," as a head covering for men in the open air, first occurred towards the close of the 15th century. An existing picture of Louis de Gonzagues, Duke of Nivernois, painted in 1587, represents him as wearing a head covering not unlike what is called a stiff "billy-cock" hat of the present day; and this shape was seen in England as late as the middle of the 17th century, when the broad flapping hat with a feather of the Stuart period came into use. This was retained until early in the 18th century, when it gave way to the three-cornered hat which was worn by the head and under-master of Westminster School, when the author went there in 1828; and is still retained by state coachmen in the present day. The "chimney-pot" hat appears to have been introduced about the year 1780.

The only other instance of an apparition which I think necessary to mention is one of very recent date, having happened not thirty-four years ago, in a family with some members of which I happen to be connected by marriage, and the account of which I am enabled to state in the very words of one of the parties by whom the apparition was seen. It is contained in a letter written by Miss Weld, daughter of James Weld, Esq., of Archer's Lodge, Southampton, to her first cousin, the late Edward Weld, Esq., of Lulworth Castle, who married the author's first cousin Ellen, the eldest daughter of the late Sir Bouchier Wrey. Philip, a younger son of Mr. James Weld, and consequently a brother of the narrator, was sent by his father in 1842 to be educated at St. Edmund's College, near Ware, in Hertfordshire. On the afternoon of April 16, 1846, when the President of the College had given the students leave to go on the river Ware, Philip Weld, accompanied by some of his companions and the masters, went out for a row, of which sport he was

extremely fond. After enjoying themselves for some time, one of the master remarked that it was time to return to the College, but on Philip's urgent entreaty consented to allow one row more. On arriving at the accustomed turning point, as the boat was being turned, Philip suddenly lost his balance, and fell into a very deep pool in the river, and notwithstanding that every effort was made to save him, was drowned. As soon as the dead body was recovered, it was brought back to the College. Dr. Cox, the President of the College, was greatly shocked on hearing what had happened; and determined to set off without delay to break the news to the afflicted parents.

On reaching Southampton early the next morning, Dr. Cox at once drove to Archer's Lodge; but before entering the grounds, he saw Mr. Weld at a short distance from his gate walking towards the town. Dr. Cox immediately stopped the carriage, and on alighting was about to speak, when he was prevented by Mr.

Weld saying, "You need not say one word, for I know that Philip is dead. Yesterday afternoon I was walking with my daughter Katherine, and we suddenly saw him. He was standing on the path, on the opposite side of the turnpike road, between two persons, one of whom was a youth, dressed in a black robe. My daughter was the first person to perceive them, and exclaimed, 'Oh! papa, did you ever see anything so like Philip as that is?' 'Like him!' I answered, 'why it is him.' Strange to say, my daughter thought nothing of the circumstance, beyond that we had seen an extraordinary likeness of her brother. We walked towards the three figures; Philip was looking with a happy, smiling expression of countenance at the young man in the black robe, who was shorter than himself. Suddenly they all seemed to me to have vanished: I saw nothing but a countryman, whom I had before seen *through* the three figures, which gave me the impression that they were spirits. I, however, said nothing on



the subject to anyone, as I was fearful of alarming my wife. I looked out anxiously for the post the next morning : to my delight no letter came. I forgot that letters from Ware came in the afternoon, and my fears were quieted. I thought no more of the extraordinary circumstance, until I saw you in the carriage outside my gate. Then everything returned to my mind ; and I could not feel a doubt but that you came to tell me of the death of my dear boy."

Dr. Cox then related to the afflicted father all the circumstances of his son's death, which had taken place at the very hour in which he had appeared to his father and sister ; and they concluded that Philip had died in the grace of God and was in happiness, because of the placid smile on his face. Mr. Weld thanked God most fervently for granting him this consolation in his bitter trial.

As this is one of the best authenticated instances of a recently deceased person appearing to fond and loving relatives,

I need do no more than call attention to every particular of this remarkable case; incidentally mentioning that inasmuch as Mr. Weld appears to have seen the figure of a passing countryman *through* the apparition of his son and his companion, it affords us one of the innumerable proofs of the immateriality of substance, if we may use the term, in the future world, when soul and body shall be again reunited. Just as our blessed Master after His resurrection appeared twice to the disciples, when it is specially mentioned on both occasions that "the doors were shut," and stood suddenly in the midst of them, saying, "Peace be unto you." But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they saw a spirit. When He said unto them, "Why are ye troubled? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have."

I have only to add, that Mr. Weld, on attending the funeral of his son, discovered

in a remarkable way, the particulars of which are too long to be detailed, that the figure which appeared beside his son was that of St. Stanislaus Koska, a distinguished saint among Roman Catholics, and considered by them the special advocate of drowned men.

Amongst the number of dreams mentioned in the following pages, many of which have been the means of saving life, I would especially invite attention to the one recorded in chapter xvii., under the title of "STEER NOR'-WEST." And I gladly add a fresh instance of life being preserved as the result of a repeated dream, because it conveys a very remarkable lesson of most extraordinary interest in more points than one. The Rev. C. B. Taylor, an eminent divine of our Protestant Church of England, in that excellent publication *The Leisure Hour* of September 1872, has recorded how the lives of his mother and grandmother were preserved by a thrice-repeated dream. In the year 1782, his grandmother, the wife of Ralph Win-

stanley Wood, Esq., a protégé of that eminent and much-maligned statesman Warren Hastings, was about to rejoin her husband, who had preceded her to England about a year before, accompanied by her three younger children. Their passage was secured in the "Grosvenor" East Indiaman, which was appointed to sail on the 13th of June of that year. Some time before Mrs. R. W. Wood was troubled with a dream that the "Grosvenor" was shipwrecked. Being a woman of a strong mind, she would not allow herself to be disturbed by the unsubstantial visions of a dream. The impression might have worn away, had not the same dream occurred a second time. Still she kept the dream to herself, and the preparations for the voyage went on; when a few days before the vessel was to sail she again dreamt for the third time exactly the same dream over again.

Regarding this as an intimation from Providence that she should not sail in the "Grosvenor," she sent at once for the

captain, and informed him that her mind was made up, and that the "Grosvenor" must sail without her. Regardless of the entreaties of her friends, who endeavoured to laugh her out of what they termed her superstition, she replied firmly to all their affectionate importunities, maintaining her resolution not to leave India in that fated ship.

The "Grosvenor" sailed on the appointed day, viz., June 13, 1782. On the 4th of August the ship was wrecked on the eastern coast of Africa, in 29 degrees south latitude, about 80 miles north of Port d'Urban, and 25 east of the now well-known fort of Ekowe, but more than 500 miles distant from the nearest town belonging to the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, then in possession of the Dutch. Our space will not permit us to give any account of the terrible sufferings which followed the shipwrecked passengers and crew on that inhospitable shore. They are fully detailed in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of the time, and

have been repeated in periodicals of the present day. Suffice it to say, that of the 135 persons, men, women, and children, Europeans and Lascars, who escaped from the ship at the time of the wreck, six only succeeded in reaching the Dutch settlements; and 12 more were recovered by the first expedition sent out by the Dutch Government not long after (notwithstanding England and Holland were then at war) to inquire if any remained, making in all but 18 survivors of that ill-fated East Indiaman, from sharing in which Mrs. Winstanley Wood had been so providentially preserved by her thrice-repeated dream.

Here I might draw to a close, but there is something so remarkable and so extraordinary in the fate of the six English ladies who formed a part of the passengers of the "Grosvenor," and who were shipwrecked with the rest on the coast of Zululand, and who attempted the hazardous feat of marching 500 miles in order to reach the nearest settlement of civilized

men, that it deserves to be recorded. When Captain Cox, who commanded the "Grosvenor," was last seen by the party who quitted him, some of whom reached the colony alive, and who alone could give intelligence respecting him, he had with him all the passengers belonging to the vessel, whose names are as follows:— Col. James and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. and Miss Hosea, Capt. Adair, Mr. Newman, Mrs. Logie, Miss Denis, and Miss Wilmot, together with two little children and nine black servants, making twenty-two in all; and six of them consisting of English ladies, four unmarried and two married.

Although the Dutch Government, much to their credit, sent out two expeditions in 1784 and again in 1790 to learn if any survived, on account of reports having reached the colony a year previous that there were white women yet alive among the natives, none but the six English ladies were ever heard of again; and of them the only account we have is rather one of inference than of any positive nature.

In the Appendix to the Rev. John Campbell's *Travels in Africa*, there is an account of the Landroost (a Dutch official) of Graaf Reynet having seen two white females, habited like Kaffir women, who on being offered restoration to their country, refused to return, saying they had now affectionate husbands, children and grandchildren; that their former husbands and friends had been murdered; that they were no longer fitted for civilized society, and that their attachments were bounded by their actual enjoyments; and they refused to resign their lives of content for an exchange of what might not be productive of happiness.

This account has been confirmed in a most singular way by what has come to light within our own time. At a meeting of the *Ethnological Society* in London, A.D. 1864, Sir James Alexander, a distinguished officer of the British army, made the following statement respecting the six English ladies who had escaped from the wreck of the "Grosvenor" eighty-two years before.



He stated that when he was engaged in the Kaffir war of 1835, he fell in with a race of native warriors, who offered their services to the English as "brothers" against their own supposed countrymen. They declared that their tribe, which at that time amounted to 600 men, women and children, all told, were descended from the six English ladies who had been shipwrecked in the "Grosvenor" East India-man, as already described.

In the following year, Sir James Alexander succeeded in procuring a Dutch journal, giving an account of the transactions of the envoy sent by the Dutch Government to inquire after any Europeans who might be still alive. The envoy found that the English ladies were all married to native chiefs, surrounded by numerous and thriving families, and under the peculiar circumstances of the case they declined to return to their native land. And this is the last that has been known or heard of the shipwrecked passengers of the ill-fated "Grosvenor."

One cannot help thinking that when the British Government came into possession of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope at the commencement of this century, if they had resolutely followed up the efforts of the Dutch Government in 1790, and brought this Anglo-Kaffir tribe into communication with the Anglo-Saxon race, from which they were thus partly sprung, both the Kaffir war of 1835, and the massacre of our gallant soldiers at Isandlana in the Zulu war of 1879, might have been spared to old England.

There is one important lesson, however, which may be learnt by those who are interested in such studies, from the statement made by Sir James Alexander respecting the increase of population from six couples within a limited period. It is commonly asserted by those who prefer speculation to Scripture that the Mosaic record, which gives an increase to the Israelites during their 215 years' sojourn in Egypt from the "seventy souls," or thirty-five pairs, who went down to that coun-

try, cannot possibly be true, notwithstanding that so eminent a chronologer as Fynes Clinton, in his *Fasti Hellenici*, has adduced instances from other countries in support and confirmation of the Biblical statement. The Book of Exodus mentions that the Israelites at the time of the Exodus numbered "600,000 men, beside children," implying a population of about 1,800,000, independent of "the mixed multitude which also went up with them." And it may be seen that the relative increase of the children of Israel from thirty-five pairs in the course of 215 years in the sixteenth century B.C., is very much the same as the increase of the Anglo-Kaffirs from six pairs in the course of fifty-three years, from 1782 to 1835, when the tribe amounted, as they informed Sir James Alexander, to 600 men, women and children. I commend this interesting fact to the careful attention of sceptics in general, and of Bishop Colenso in particular, especially as the diocese of Natal extends to Zululand in the north, and to Kaffraria in the south.

The Bishop would be the best person in the world to conduct so interesting an investigation; inasmuch as it was a Zulu native, on the one hand, who first led him to doubt the truth of the Mosaic record; and, on the other, it is a portion of his flock in Kaffraria who can supply him with a satisfactory answer to his doubts by a practical confirmation of the truth of the Bible.

BOURCHIER WREY SAVILE.

SHILLINGFORD RECTORY,  
*Christmas, 1879.*

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# APPARITIONS.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE SPIRITUAL WORLD.

It may be safely affirmed that the existence of a world of spirits is a fundamental article in every religious creed, held more or less firmly by individuals according to circumstances and their own personal experience, of much which none but themselves can know.

Scripture distinctly recognises the reality of spiritual agency in human affairs. It teaches us that God not only employs the material elements—earth, air, sea, and “the stormy wind,” as the Psalmist expresses it, “fulfilling His word,” and

likewise that He operates through human agency in a way which none can fully discover; but it also teaches that "ministering spirits" are specially instrumental in accomplishing His ends, and that they take a lively interest in the eternal welfare of those who are expressly called "heirs of salvation." This principle is set forth alike in the Old and New Testament in a variety of ways. Angelic missions to the inhabitants of earth are recorded in almost every part of the Bible. The belief in a spiritual or celestial guardianship of every individual in the world was a common belief amongst the Jews of all ages. The most notable instance recorded in Scripture of such guardianship is when the King of Syria sent "a great host" to seize Elisha; when the prophet, speaking to his servant of their (to him) invisible guardians, comforted him with the assurance, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them;" and when the young man's spiritual sight was opened, he beheld "the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha." (2 Kings vi. 16, 17.) So



we read of the wise King of Israel, in the book of Ecclesiastes, mentioning this guardianship in the words, "Say not before the angel that it was an error." In the Apocrypha, Judith is represented as saying, "His angel hath been my keeper, both going here, and abiding there, and returning from thence." And so our Lord, in speaking of children, says :—" *Their* angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." The prevalence of this belief amongst the early Christians may be inferred from the fact that when the Apostle Peter, after the angel had delivered him from prison, went to the disciples, they would not believe it was him, but said, "It is *his* angel."

The belief that a spiritual guardianship is exercised over mankind is diffused beyond the boundaries of both Judaism and Christianity alike, as Archbishop Tillotson remarks :—"This doctrine of angels is not a peculiar doctrine of the Jewish or Christian religion; but the general doctrine of *all* religions that ever were." And Sir Thomas Browne, the author of the

*Religio Medici*, when advocating the doctrine of this celestial guardianship over mortals on earth, well observes:—"I do think that many mysteries ascribed to our own inventions, have been the courteous revelation of spirits; for those noble essences in heaven bear a friendly regard unto their fellow-natures on earth. I could easily believe, that not only whole countries, but particular persons have their tutelary and guardian angels. It is not a new opinion of the Church of Rome, but an old one of Pythagoras and Plato. There is no heresy in it; and if not manifestly defined in Scripture, yet it is an opinion of a good and wholesome use in the course and actions of a man's life; and would serve as an hypothesis to solve many doubts whereof common philosophy affords no solution."

Amongst eminent Nonconformist ministers we find the saintly Baxter exclaiming:—"Oh! if the eyes of Christians were but opened to see their glorious attendants, they would be more sensible of this privilege, and more thankful than they now be. For my part, I have had

many deliverances so marvellous as convinceth me of the ministry of angels in them."

In a similar strain John Wesley, in a Sermon on Hebrews i. 14, observes: "It seems, what are usually called divine dreams may frequently be ascribed to angels. We have a remarkable instance of this kind related by one who will hardly be called an enthusiast, for he was a heathen, a philosopher, and an emperor; I mean Marcus Antoninus. In his meditations he solemnly thanks God for revealing to him when he was at Cajeta, in a dream, what totally cured the bloody flux, which none of his physicians were able to heal. And why may we not suppose that God gave him this notice by the ministry of an angel?"

And so speaks a modern poet in one of the Seatonian prize poems a few years ago, when he represents the angels as singing:—

"For ye—for ye have a soul like ours;  
It heaves in your bosom, it beams through your eye;  
Baptized in the feelings, endowed with the powers,  
That burn through the depth of eternity.

And happy are we, unto whom 'tis given,  
To tend you, as guardians, and cheer you as friends,  
Happy to speed from our homes in Heaven,  
And carry the blessings your Father sends."

HANKINSON'S *Ministry of Angels*.

The belief in guardian angels and ministering spirits cannot become a barren creed, if we meditate on the subject and allow it to work out its own natural results. The thought that we are watched by pure and loving eyes, the possibility that those whose memories we cherish and revere—dear, departed ones, who are not lost but gone before—are still with us, interesting themselves in our welfare, guarding us from evil, and strengthening us in the path of duty, cannot surely fail to exercise upon us an influence of the most salutary kind. And if it be good for us to *believe* in the ministry of these guardian angels, assuredly it must be better still to have such evidence of its truth that we may *know* its power and realize its full results. Such appears to be the doctrine of the Church of England, when she teaches her children on the festival of Saint Michael and all Angels to pray in this form:—

“O Everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order; mercifully grant, that as Thy holy angels alway do Thee service in heaven, so by Thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

We have in Scripture evidence of Divine communications to mankind in other ways besides those of ministering spirits or guardian angels. In trances and in dreams, by visions and apparitions God has occasionally revealed Himself to mortal men. In the book of Job, Elihu is represented as saying: “God spake once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth not; in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that He may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.”

God informed Abimelech in a dream that Sarah was the wife of Abraham; He showed to Jacob at Bethel the mysterious ladder reaching to

heaven by a *dream*. Joseph in his youth was remarkably favoured with prophetic *dreams*, which were explained by his father; as he himself was subsequently enabled to interpret those of Pharaoh and his chief butler and baker, all of which subsequently proved true.

Many other *dreams* are recorded in Holy Writ which bear upon this subject. How solemn the language of Eliphaz the Temanite in the book already referred to when he says: "In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up. It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and *I heard a voice*." The Jewish Targum supposes this to refer to an angel or spirit named "Jarchi," who, clothed in a human form, passed and repassed before Eliphaz, in order that he might take notice of it. How graphic and forcible the description of Eliphaz' terror at the sight of the apparition, "*the hair of*

*my flesh stood up !*” just as Virgil describes the natural terror at such a sight—

“Mute and amaz’d, my hair with terror stood ;  
Fear shrunk my sinews, and congeal’d my blood.”

*Æneid* iii. 40.

Now inasmuch as it was one of the chief purposes of the Christian religion to bring life and immortality to light, it is not surprising that the Almighty should occasionally condescend to confirm the great truths of the Gospel, not only by prophecies and miracles, but also by apparitions and celestial visions.

Apparitions of departed persons in these latter days have been attested by a mass of evidence as conclusive in the aggregate as those of which Scripture speaks when a revelation from God was first made known to the sons of men, and all the laboured efforts to account for them on any other theory than that of their spiritual reality suffer under this defect, that they are inadequate to meet the world-wide facts by which such theories are confronted. I wish, however, pointedly to disclaim the presumptuous idea of thinking or as-

serting that a disbelief in the existence of ministering spirits or of apparitions of the departed implies in any way disbelief in religion either natural or revealed; and in this way I desire to treat the whole subject, leaving my readers to decide whether the evidence I am about to adduce is sufficiently clear to warrant our acceptance of its truth.

If, as St. Paul teaches in writing to the Corinthians, there go to make up as the personality of man "a natural body and a spiritual body;"\* if the Bible declares that these co-exist, while life endures, in each one of us; if the same apostle intimates that occasionally the spiritual body can and does detach itself, to some extent or other for a time, from the material flesh and blood with which it is so closely allied, as he says himself, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot

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\* 1 Cor. xv. 44. The phrase is not a "spirit," as generally so called, but "there is a *spiritual body*," *σῶμα πνευματικόν*, as well as a "natural body."



tell ; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell : God knoweth ;) such an one caught up to the third heaven ;"—and if death be but the going 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 length is thus entirely separated from it, and passes into another state of existence, waiting patiently for the morn of resurrection, when, as the Psalmist teaches, it will awake up from the sleep of the grave to be satisfied with the likeness of God. (Ps. xvii. 15.)

If, then, Scripture teaches that the spiritual body, while still connected with its earthly associate, may, under certain circumstances, appear distinct from the natural body, and perceptible to human vision, if not to human touch, why should not the same spiritual body, after its final emancipation from the trammels of the flesh, be permitted to appear again on earth and show itself to man ? The improbability arising from the rareness of such an occurrence is no disproof of the fact.

One true and well authenticated report of the appearance of a departed person may give birth to many false reports of similar incidents ; but universal and unconcerted testimony on behalf of a supernatural manifestation of the dead cannot always be untrue. Such a prodigy is too singular in its nature to become the subject of general invention. It will be scarcely possible for those who are uninfluenced by popular prejudice to believe that apparitions would have been vouched for in all countries had they never been seen in any.

Between two and three thousand years ago we find Homer recording the *apparition* of Patroclus as it appeared to his friend Achilles :—

“ Hush’d by the murmurs of the rolling deep,  
At length he sinks in the soft arms of sleep,  
When, lo ! the shade before his closing eyes  
Of sad Patroclus rose, or seem’d to rise ;  
In the same robe he living wore he came,  
In stature, voice, and pleasing look the same.”

*Iliad*, B. xxiii. 76.

No differences in race, religion, language, or civilization—no argument or reason has uprooted from the heart of mankind in general this deep-

seated belief of the occasional appearance of departed spirits to persons living in the natural world. The patriarch Job and the Roman Brutus professed to have seen spiritual beings; and similar manifestations have been made to men in every age. The belief in them is equally an element in sacred, classical, and modern literature. That the spirits of departed persons might, and occasionally did appear was a doctrine held by some of the wisest and most devout men that ever existed.

Baxter, in his *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, part ii., ch. vii., observes on this subject:—"For my own part, though I am as suspicious as most in such reports, and do believe that most of them are conceits or delusions, yet having been very inquisitive in all such cases, I have received undoubted testimony of the truth of such apparitions . . . . . The writings of Gregory, Augustine, Chrysostom, &c., make frequent mention of apparitions, and relate the several stories at large. . . . . Lavater, a learned, godly Protestant divine, who hath written a book (*De Spectris*)

wholly on apparitions, tells us that it was then an undeniable thing, confirmed by the testimonies of many credible persons, both men and women, sometimes by night and sometimes by day, have both seen and heard such things; confessing they were the souls of such and such persons lately departed."

Addison, in the *Spectator*, while justly reprobating an excessive credulity concerning the supernatural, remarks: "I think a person who is terrified with the imagination of ghosts and spectres much more reasonable than one who, contrary to the report of all historians—sacred and profane, ancient and modern—and to the traditions of all nations, thinks the appearance of spirits fabulous and groundless. I might add, that not only the historians, to whom we may join the poets, but likewise the philosophers of antiquity have favoured this opinion."

Dr. Watts, in his *Essay on the Proof of a Separate State of Souls between Death and the Resurrection*, observes: "I cannot help taking notice that the multitude of narratives which we

have heard of in all ages of the apparitions of the spirits or ghosts of persons departed from this life, can hardly be all delusion and falsehood. Scripture seems to mention such sort of ghosts or appearances of souls so departed. Matt. xiv. 26 : when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, 'they thought it had been a *spirit*;' and Luke xxiv. 37 : after His resurrection they saw Him at once appearing in the midst of them, and they supposed they had seen a *spirit*. And our Saviour doth not contradict their notion, but argues with them upon the supposition of its truth : 'A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.' And in Acts xxiii. 8, 9, the word *spirit* seems to signify the 'apparition of a departed soul,' where it is said, 'The Sadducees say there is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit;' and ver. 9, 'If a spirit or an angel had spoken to this man,' &c. A spirit here is plainly distinct from an angel, and what can it mean *but an apparition of a human soul which has left the body.*"

In the last century belief in the fact of departed

persons having appeared to others in the flesh was held by such men as Judge Blackstone, Doddridge, Goldsmith, and Johnson, and many besides. The latter, in his well-known *Rasselas*, puts into the mouth of the wise Imlac these words: "That the dead are seen no more I will not undertake to maintain against the concurrent and unvaried testimony of all ages and all nations. There is no people, rude or learned, among whom apparitions of the dead are not related and believed. This opinion, which perhaps prevails as far as human nature is diffused, could become universal only by its truth; those that never heard of another world would not have agreed in a tale which nothing but experience could render credible. That it is doubted by single cavillers can very little weaken the general evidence; and some who deny it with their tongues confess it by their fears."

On this remarkable admission of the sage of the 18th century, Byron, who occasionally under the mask of levity gave utterance to the deepest feelings of his heart, wrote:—

“I merely mean to say what Johnson said,  
That, in the course of some six thousand years,  
All nations have believed that from the dead  
A visitant at intervals appears,  
And what is strangest upon this strange head,  
Is, that whatever bar the reason rears  
'Gainst such belief, *there's something stronger still*  
*In its behalf*, let those deny who will.”

And so Boswell relates that once, when speaking with Johnson on the subject of *Apparitions*, the great philosopher remarked: “It is wonderful that 6000 years have now elapsed since the creation of the world, and still it is undecided *whether or not there has ever been an instance of the spirit of any person appearing after death. All argument is against it, but all belief is for it.* The idea of the deceased revisiting the scenes on earth, where in the flesh they had either suffered or rejoiced, seems to have been grafted in the human mind by the Creator.”

And in order to show the superiority of faith to reason, Dr. Johnson assured his audience that he knew a man, old Mr. Edward Cave, the printer of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, at

St. John's-gate, who had seen an apparition. "Pray, sir," asked the inquisitive Boswell, "what did he say was the appearance?" "Why, sir," replied the doctor, "something of a shadowy being." Goldsmith, who was present, added that he was assured by his brother, the Rev. Mr. Goldsmith, that he had also once seen an apparition. And General Oglethorpe related that a Capt. Prendergast, when serving under the Duke of Marlborough, had mentioned to many of his friends that he should die on a certain day—that upon that day he was engaged in action (the battle of Ramilles, May 22nd, 1706) against the French, that after it was over, and the captain still living, some of his brother-officers jestingly asked him where was his prediction now. Prendergast gravely answered, "I shall die, notwithstanding what you see." A little later there came a shot from a French battery, to which the orders for a cessation of arms had not reached, and he was killed upon the spot. Colonel Cecil, who took possession of his effects, found in his pocket-book the



following entry: "Dreamed or ———\* that on May 22, 1706, Sir John Friend meets me." Pendergast had been intimate with Sir John Friend, whose execution for high treason during the reign of William III. is so fully recorded by Macaulay in his *History of England*. General Oglethorpe said he was with Colonel Cecil when Pope came to inquire into the truth of the story, which made a great noise at the time, and was then formally confirmed by the colonel.

A singular instance of premonition of death conveyed by an apparition forewarning the individual's own self is related by Aubrey in his *Miscellanies*, who mentions that "the beautiful Lady Diana Rich, daughter to the Earl of Holland, as she was walking in her father's garden at Kensington, to take the fresh air *before dinner*, about eleven o'clock, (A.M.,) being then very well,

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\* Boswell says that the blank might be thus filled up, "*was told by an apparition*"—the writer being probably uncertain whether he was asleep or awake, when his mind was impressed with the solemn presentiment with which the facts afterwards so wonderfully correspond.

*met with her own apparition, habit and every thing, as in a looking-glass. About a month after, she died of the small pox. And it is said that her sister, the Lady Isabella Thynne, saw the apparition of herself also before she died. This account I had from a person of honour."*

As a counterpoise to this belief, it is related of the celebrated musician Glück, when residing in Ghent, about the middle of the 18th century, that one night, when returning late to his lodging, he observed before him *a figure resembling himself*. It took every turn through the streets which he was accustomed to make, and finally, on reaching the door, drew out a key, opened it and entered. On this Glück, overcome with fright at what he had seen with his own eyes, returned to the friends with whom he had been spending the evening, and begged to be taken in for the night. The next morning they accompanied him to his lodging, and found that the heavy wooden roof of Glück's chamber had fallen during the night; that Glück had he occupied the bed would inevitably have been killed. I refer the reader

to Henderson's interesting work, *Folk Lore*, for the authenticity of this singular tale.

Although, as is well known, there is a very common belief, or rather superstition, amongst the peasantry of England respecting omens as the precursor of death—such, for example, as the omen of a *shroud in the candle* when the tallow gutters up in an unusual manner, or the sound of the *timber-boring beetle*, commonly known as the *death-watch*,\* or the cry of the *death's-head moth*, or the hooting of the *tawney owl*, hens laying eggs with double yolks, or bringing off a brood all her birds, or a clap of thunder in mid-winter—† yet

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\* The old popular superstition respecting the *death-watch* is well known, a mysterious ticking being heard in the dead of night which was supposed to presage the approaching death of some one in the house. The ticking of the *death-watch* is in reality the call of the *Anobium* beetle to its mate, and, as the insect is always found in old wood, this is a very natural way of accounting for the fact of the *death-watch* being generally heard in old houses. It is known that a species of cockroach acts in a similar manner, and generally disports itself on board ship, where the sailors give it the name of the *drummer*. See Wood's *Insects at Home*.

† At the meeting of the Wiltshire Archæological Society

there are in various families of the higher orders well authenticated legends respecting omens or premonitions of death apparently resting upon a more substantial basis than the stories current amongst the villages and rural districts of our native land. Thus the *Oxenhams*, an ancient family of repute in Devon, had a tradition that at the death of any of its members *a bird with a white breast* was seen for awhile fluttering about their beds. James Howell, in one of his *Familiar Letters*, dated July 3, 1632, mentions that he saw in a lapidary's shop in Fleet-street, London, a large marble slab to be sent into Devonshire with the following inscription engraven on it: "*That John Oxenham, Mary his sister, James his son, and Elizabeth his mother, had each the appearance of such a bird fluttering about their beds as they were dying.*" (Fifth edit. p. 232.)

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in 1873, Sir John Awdrey is reported to have given a blow to this superstition by saying that he knew a gentleman, the owner of an entire parish, who was awakened in the middle of a Sunday night by a heavy clap of thunder, but he added, it happened twenty years ago, and the gentleman was *still alive*.

The birth of a *parti-coloured calf* from the wild breed in Chartley Park, is considered as an omen of death to some member of the noble house of Ferrers, in Staffordshire; and by a noticeable coincidence, observes the *Staffordshire Chronicle* of July, 1835, a calf of this description has been born whenever a death has happened in the family of late years. The decease of the seventh Earl Ferrers, in 1827, and of his son and heir, Viscount Tamworth, in 1824, as well as the deaths of the son and heir of the eighth earl, in 1830, and his daughter, Lady Frances Shirley, in 1834, were each preceded by the ominous birth of a *parti-coloured calf*. This family tradition, which has existed for a prolonged period, has been effectively wrought into a romantic story, entitled *Chartley, or the Fatalist*.

The Clifton family, in Nottinghamshire, are said to be forewarned of the approach of death by a *sturgeon* forcing itself up the river Trent, on whose bank the mansion is situated. The Yorkshire family of Middleton are said to be apprised of death visiting them

by the apparition of a *Benedictine nun*. And Camden, in his *Magna Britannia*, after speaking of the great antiquity of the Brereton family, says: "This wonderful thing respecting them is commonly believed, and I have heard it myself affirmed by many, that for some days before the death of the heir of the family, *the trunk of a tree* has always been seen floating in the lake adjoining their mansion." It is to this singular omen that Mrs. Hemans alludes in one of her most affecting poems:—

"Yes! I have seen that ancient oak  
On the dark, deep water cast,  
And it was not felled by the woodman's stroke  
Or the rush of that sweeping blast;  
For the axe might never touch that tree  
And the air was still as summer sea.

'Tis fallen! but think thou not I weep  
For the forest pride o'erthrown  
An old man's tears lie far too deep  
To be poured for that alone.  
But by that sign too well I know  
That a youthful head must soon be low.

\* \* \* \* \*

Say not 'tis vain ! I tell thee some  
Are warned by a meteor's light,  
Or a pale bird fitting calls them home,  
Or a voice on the winds by night ;  
And they must go ! and he, too, he—  
Woe for the fall of the glorious tree !”

*The Vassal's Lament for the Fallen Tree.*

I know an instance, which occurred only a few years ago in the family of the Pine-Coffins of Portledge in North-Devon, where a similar premonition of death is occasionally vouchsafed previous to the decease of some of its members. In the year 1868, when their place was tenanted by Mr. and Lady Mary Crosse, the family household were unexpectedly startled by hearing the *Church-bell* suddenly toll out at midnight, and on mentioning the fact to their neighbours were assured that bad tidings would soon be heard of one of the Coffin family ; which was confirmed by news being received from India shortly after of the death of Mrs. Kitson, (wife of an officer in the East-Devon Militia and daughter of Mr. Pine-Coffin,) at the very time when Mr. Crosse's household had heard the bell toll out so mournfully in the dead of night.

Concerning the innumerable instances—apparently so well attested—of *apparitions* of departed persons revealing themselves to those on earth, I would ask if it is not possible to conceive that, at the convulsive moment which separates soul and body, there may be evolved a transient condition of being, entirely separate from spirit, soul, and body in its present state? It may be regarded as the veil of the disembodied spirit—a species of vaporous essence, invisible in its normal state, but during the brief space of its new condition, exercising some of the properties of matter. If it be objected that this essence is of a form so subtle as to be incapable of acting on matter, or of affecting the eye or ear—we can point to the most subtle and invisible of fluids, like electricity, from which, as science teaches, the most powerful agents are obtained. It is not a little remarkable that the profound contemplations of Sir Isaac Newton, as set forth in his work on *Optics*, should have led him to the following inquiries: “Is not heat conveyed through a vacuum by the *vibrations of a much more subtle medium than air*? Is not



this medium the same by which light is refracted and reflected, and communicates heat to bodies, and is put into fits of easy transmission and reflexion? Do not hot bodies communicate their heat to cold ones by the vibration of this medium? And is it not exceedingly more rare and subtle than the air, and exceedingly more elastic and active? And does it not readily pervade all bodies? And is it not by its elastic force expanded through all the heavens?" All these questions were in a measure answered more than a century later by Sir Humphrey Davy, when considering *Heat* in reference to Motion, pointing out that, "it seems possible to account for all the phenomena of heat, if it be supposed that in *solids* the particles are in a state of *vibration*, those of the hottest bodies moving with the greatest velocity; and that in *liquids* and *elastic fluids*, besides the vibratory motion the particles move round their own axis with different velocities. This refers to three states of matter—the solid, the fluid, the gaseous or aëriform; but when heat becomes radiant, we can only explain

its complete analogy to light by supposing that motion is communicated to the particles of a *luminiferous ether*."

Professor Tyndall has shown, in his interesting Lectures on *Heat considered as a Mode of Motion*, how mere changes of light exercise chemical action upon ponderable substances. He carefully describes an apparatus he had contrived—a "thermo-electricpile"—by means of which the smallest amount of heat received was caused to generate an electric current. This was rendered perceptible by a needle, whose motion was clearly visible to his audience. Thus possessed of a most accurate and delicate test of the slightest change of temperature, he led on his audience from one step in demonstration to another, and that on the firm basis of science actually *proven*. Hence the learned professor observes most truly, "No chemist ever weighed the perfume of a rose, but in radiant heat we have a test more refined than the chemist's balance."

If, then, we admit the possibility of the existence of such a transition state in the condition of

“body, soul, and spirit,” as supposed above, the supernatural features would be referable to the circumstance that the spirit, as the surviving and superior essence, accomplishing what was impracticable while wholly clad in its fleshy garment, might annihilate time and space, and in the image and reflexion of the form from which it has hardly escaped, be itself the bearer of the tidings of its own dissolution. “Who can say,” asks a modern writer on this subject, “but that these mysterious visitations, instead of being, as some allege, the suspension or supercession of natural laws, may prove to be rather the complete fulfilment of one of the most beautiful and interesting of the marvellous code?” Or, to put the question clothed in the poetical language of the Laureate—

“ — Dare I say  
No spirit ever brake the band  
That stays him from his 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.”

It has happened to the Author to have collected, in the course of some years' research, a certain number of apparently well authenticated instances of APPARITIONS; which he is desirous of publishing as a plain *Narrative of Facts*, though the first two on the list will naturally be objected to more than the rest, on account of their age, and the difficulty of testing their credibility, as well as the legendary nature belonging to them; but as he has endeavoured, in reference to the others, to ascertain all the *names, places, and dates* possible of each case, which is a most important element in considering the credit belonging to such tales, he is not without hope that he may succeed in convincing some who have hitherto rejected all such testimony, that, as the well-known proverb, *Truth is stranger than fiction*, is now admitted universally, so they will allow, in reference to the world of spirits, there are "stranger things" taking place on earth as well as in heaven than have hitherto been "dreamt of in their philosophy."

Let me mention that about twenty years ago a

society was formed by some members of the University of Cambridge, for the purpose of instituting "a serious and earnest inquiry into the nature of the phenomena which are vaguely called supernatural." One of its most distinguished members, now a dignitary of the Church of England, and an eminent biblical scholar, replied to an inquirer on the subject that "the researches of the society had resulted in a conviction, shared, he believed, by all its members, that there is sufficient testimony for the appearance, *about the time of death or after it*, of the apparitions of deceased persons; while, in regard to other classes of apparitions, the evidence so far as obtained was deemed too slight to prove their reality."

I would commend the following extract from one of the *Letters to a Lady*, dated April 25, 1823, by William Von Humboldt, celebrated for his unsurpassed intellectual attainments, to all who are interested in the subject:—

"That a beloved friend, in the moment of dissolution, may gain power over the elements, and,

in defiance of the laws of nature, be able to appear to us, would be perfectly incomprehensible, if it were not for the half-defined feeling in our hearts *that it may be so*. It is quite probable that a very earnest desire might give strength sufficient to break through the laws of nature. But there may be needed a peculiar disposition for the perception of a spirit, and we may be often unconsciously in the presence of disembodied souls."

## CHAPTER II.

### THE GHOSTLY CRUSADER.

AMONGST the host of gallant Crusaders of the 13th century, no two names are to be found in the rolls of England's chivalry more illustrious or distinguished by their martial deeds than those of William de Longespee, father and son, commonly known as Earls of Salisbury. William the elder was son of Henry II. by the fair Rosomond de Clifford. In the early part of the reign of Henry III. he accompanied the Earl of Chester, and took part in the great battle of Damietta, where, though the crescent was for a time triumphant, he distinguished himself by prodigies of valour. He served after this in the wars of Gascony, and on the return voyage homewards, Dugdale relates, "there arose so great a

tempest at sea, that, despairing of life, he threw his money and rich apparel overboard. But when all hopes were passed, they discerned *a mighty taper of wax*, burning bright at the prow of the ship, and *a beautiful woman* standing by it, who preserved it from wind and rain, so that it gave a clear and bright lustre. Upon sight of which heavenly vision, both himself and the mariners concluded of their future security : but every one there being ignorant what this vision might portend except the earl ; he however attributed it to the benignity of the blessed Virgin, by reason that upon the day when he was honoured with the girdle of knighthood, he brought a taper to her altar, to be lighted every day at mass, when the canonical hours used to be sung, and to the intent that for this terrestrial light he might enjoy that which is eternal."

Thus much for the marine apparition which appeared to the father on his homeward voyage, and though it is not of the same nature as that which concerns the son, of which we shall presently speak, we may suppose that a vision of a



similar nature must have been seen by his faithful wife at home, for history records that a rumour having reached England of the earl having been lost at sea, Hubert de Burgh, then Prime Minister, proceeded, with the king's concurrence, to provide a second husband for the supposed widow, according to the custom of the times, which the countess at once rejected with becoming scorn.

On the earl's arrival in England soon after, he found the king keeping court at Marlborough, and as he was received with signal honour and joy, he at once preferred a strong complaint against Hubert de Burgh, declaring that unless the king would render him justice, he would take the law into his hands, and avenge himself as best he could, though it might disturb the public peace. Hubert, however, appeased his wrath with rich presents, and invited him to his table, where it was subsequently rumoured he was poisoned; but whether or not there was any real foundation for so terrible an accusation, it is certain that shortly after he retired to his

castle in extreme sickness, and died almost immediately after, in the year A.D. 1226.

By Ella, daughter and sole heiress of William de Evereux, second Earl of Salisbury of that family, the deceased earl left issue four sons and five daughters, the eldest of whom was named like his father, William de Longespee, and commonly called also "Earl of Salisbury," though unrecognised by the Crown, for an old MS. chronicle expressly declares that in the seventeenth year of Henry III., A.D. 1233, "he was girt with the sword of knighthood, but not made Earl of Salisbury."

This William, the hero of our tale, three years after receiving knighthood, accompanied the king's brother, Richard, Earl of Cornwall, to the Holy Land, from which he returned in 1242. Before the end of that year he took part in the war against France, and was present at the battle of Xantoigne, where the French were defeated. On the announcement of the Crusade in 1245, he again assumed the cross, and two years later proceeded to Rome, and thus addressed Pope Inno-

cent IV., as Matthew Paris records: "My lord, you see that I have taken the sign of the cross, and am in readiness for the journey to join the King of France in his pilgrimage, and to fight for God. I bear the great and well-known name of WILLIAM LONGESPEE, but my property is small. The King of England, my kinsman and liege lord, has taken from me my title of earl and all my substance, not in anger or by any violence of self-will; therefore I do not blame him. I am compelled to appeal to your compassion, and to ask for aid in my necessity; for we see the noble Earl Richard, (brother to Henry III.,) who, although he did not assume the cross, when protected by your favour, collected a large sum of money from those who had signed, while I who have taken the cross am in great want, and now ask the same favour may be granted to me."

Thus the Pope, influenced by his arguments and the beauty of his person, complied with his request, by which means he obtained 1000 marks for his present need, or, as Matthew Paris ex-

presses it, "the Pope in part granted what he demanded, *i.e.*, *a thong out of another man's skin.*"

On the 27th of June, 1249, William received letters of protection from the king, which were to be efficacious until his return from the Holy Land. In the following month, after having received his mother's blessing, he sailed from England, attended by a troop of 200 horse, with which he joined the army of the King of France, at Damietta, in October, 1249, by whom he was treated with great respect.

After pre-eminently distinguishing himself in almost daily conflicts with the Saracenic army, he fell eventually in the great battle fought in the neighbourhood of "the great river" of Egypt, on the 8th of January, 1250. The Cottonian MS. of the British Museum contains a lengthy poem, entitled, "The Assault of Massandra," attributed to Peter de Langtoft, a contemporary chronicler, which contains a graphic account of the last day on earth of the great Crusader, from which I have made the following selection.

The great disaster which befel the Christian

army on that occasion is attributed to the Count of Artois, brother of the French king, called in the poem, "Sir Robert *the arrogant*, who, by his pride and overweening conduct, was the cause of the disaster; and many other esquires and valorous knights lost their lives there, so great was the slaughter; and many a valiant man was slain, as well as the brave knight, the good *William Longespee*."

It appears that a difference having arisen amongst the leaders of the Christian army as to the policy of attacking the Saracens, and the English generals manifesting that discretion which is in reality, as the proverb implies, "the better part of valour," the Count of Artois so far forgot himself as to interrupt the speaker, and "to give vent with unbecoming oaths to the following reproaches in the hearing of the multitude: 'What cowardice is there in these timid, *long-tailed English*; how happy would this army be if purged of these *tails and tailed men*.'"<sup>\*</sup> This speech so provoked William Longespee,

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\* This curious theory of the Count of Artois originated

that he calmly replied, like a brave Englishman, "Count Robert, I shall most certainly proceed undismayed by any peril of impending death; we shall be, I imagine, to-day where you will not dare to touch my horse's tail!"

After this altercation, and finding themselves surrounded on all sides by the enemy in a dense mass, and sustaining the chief weight of the battle, Count Robert imprudently and shamelessly called out, "William, God fights against us; we can no longer resist; consult your safety by flight, and escape alive while your horse can bear you away, or you may begin to want so to do when it is too late." To this William Longespee replied briefly, as well as the din of battle permitted, "God forbid that my father's son should

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probably in consequence of a report current in those days that the English had *tails* fixed to their persons, through the indiscretion of the inhabitants of Stroud, near Rochester, who had insulted Thomas à Becket, by cutting off the tails of his horses, for which they were so vigorously cursed by the angry primate, that their descendants were said ever after to be *born with horses' tails!* I recommend this to the attention of Mr. Darwin and his disciples.

fly from any Saracen ; I would rather die happily than live disgraced." The count, seeing himself in danger of being hedged in by his numerous enemies, turned his horse's head and galloped with speed towards the river, into which he plunged, but the horse, being encumbered with heavy armour, was unable to rise, and so the boasting count perished ingloriously by sticking fast in the Nile mud.

The Count of Artois being thus drowned, the French began to despair, and retreated in scattered bodies ; at seeing which William found that it was indeed a matter of life and death, but continued to perform prodigies of valour before he fell. His standard-bearer, Sir Robert de Vere, was slain, but not before he had killed seventeen Saracens with his own hand. Sir Richard de Ascalon, Sir Ralph de Flanders, and others fell at the same time ; and it is recorded of another gallant knight, Sir Richard de Guise, William's banner-bearer, that after having lost his left hand, he supported the banner with the stump. Seeing that no hope of success remained,

and disdaining to flee, William asked his remaining companions if they would continue to support him, and being assured they would, he bade them remain firm and collected. He then communicated his wishes about the disposal of his property to Sir Alexander Giffard, bidding him take all his goods and try to escape. After many efforts to dismount William Longespee, the enemy cut off his left foot, when he alighted, and resting on the shoulder of Sir Richard de Ascalon, did great execution with his sword. To the summons to surrender, and the threat that unless he did so, instead of being protected, he should be "cut into pieces like meat put into salt," he returned a haughty defiance; and a Saracen having severed his right arm, he grasped his sword with his other hand, and so severely wounded one of the enemy, who, as a last effort, aimed a blow at him, which separated his left hand from his body. William then fell to the ground, and the Saracens rushing on him, cut him to pieces. Thus the death of the gallant and illustrious William Longespee was finally accomplished.



On the same night on which this doleful event occurred—viz., February 8th, 1250, William's widowed mother Ella, at that time Abbess of Lacock, saw in a vision *the apparition of a knight*, armed *cap-a-pied*, being taken up into heaven, which opened to receive him; and as she recognised the knight's shield by its device, she inquired in astonishment the name of the knight who was thus suddenly rapt up into glory, when an angelic voice sounded in her ears—"It is your son William!"

Matthew Paris, in his *English History*, says it was on the night *previous* to his death that the apparition appeared, which, of course, must be a mistake, though singular enough, as I shall have occasion to show in the course of this work, a very similar mistake was made in the official announcement of the death of an English officer killed in India during the year of the mutiny, the rectification of which was subsequently made in the most extraordinary manner which it is possible to conceive.

The same old chronicler relates that the news

of the Battle of Massandra did not reach England until the 1st of August, or nearly six months after the battle had been fought, a striking difference in the rapidity of communication between the thirteenth and nineteenth centuries. When the news at length reached the Abbess of Lacock, she remembering *the apparition* which she had seen six months before, the mother's heart was overcome with joy, and so far from mourning over her departed son, gave utterance to her feelings in a song of triumphant praise by exclaiming, "I, Thy handmaid, give thanks to Thee, O Lord, that out of my sinful flesh Thou hast caused such a champion against Thy enemies to be born."

Two years later, when messengers were sent to the Sultan of Babylon to negotiate the redemption of prisoners taken in that Crusade, the Saracenic chief expressed his surprise at their forgetfulness of their great countryman, saying, "I wonder at you *Christians, who venerate the bones of the dead*, that you make no enquiry for that most illustrious and nobly born William, to whom you give the

name of *Longsword*. We, as well as others, hear many reports, whether idle tales or not we cannot say, concerning these same bones—viz., that on dark nights they appear upon his tomb, and that many benefits are conferred by Heaven on those who call upon his God at the spot. Wherefore, as he was slain in battle, and on account of his eminent qualities and his noble birth, we have buried his body with all due honour.”

When the king’s envoys heard this, they said amongst themselves, “How can we disparage this man who is an Englishman, when even the Saracens cannot refuse what is due to the nobility of this same William?” They therefore requested that his bones should be given to him, with which the Sultan willingly complied. Then they brought with them a large number of ransomed prisoners, and collecting the bones of the said William Longespee, as Moses had done with those of Jacob some 3000 years before, not very distant from that same place, when he carried them away to the land which God had given to Abraham and his seed as an “everlasting possession,”

and proceeded to Acre, where they were buried with all due respect in the Church of the Holy Cross."

I would observe, in conclusion, that so far as England was concerned, these "bones" of William Longespee remained undisturbed for 600 years, until England's cannon were heard thundering at Acre—the first time at the beginning of this century, under Sir Sydney Smythe, in defence of the city; and secondly, in our own time, when Acre was besieged by Sir Charles Napier, and wrested from the power of the Viceroy of Egypt.

## CHAPTER III.

### AN APPARITION OF SMOKE.

AT the commencement of the 16th century, when the great race of Plantagenet had been succeeded by that mean and contemptible sovereign, Henry VII., there were dwelling, not far from the mouth of the river Exe, two potent knights, who though neighbours were the reverse of friends. Sir Roger de Whalingham held the manor of Withecombe-Raleigh, a few miles east of Exmouth, while the adjoining manor of Littleham was possessed by Sir Hugh de Creveldt, a knight of German extraction, who could talk English well enough for all ordinary purposes, but when overcome with anger he gave utterance to his rage in those guttural sounds which are the marked characteristic of his own native land.

Many things were continually transpiring to place them in enmity with each other. Their respective tenants used to encroach on each other's rights relative to the fisheries at the mouth of the Exe ; and there were many other sources of discord beside. Sir Hugh de Crevelde's son furtively entrapped herons in the marshes of Marpool, which belonged to Sir Roger ; and had been more than once warned of his trespass by a shot from a cross-bow. On the other hand, Hawise de Whalingham had been adjudged the Queen of Beauty in the games held at Newton-Poppleford, while the fair Isabel Crevelde had been passed by with little or no notice.

Again, in the case of a wreck on the bar of the river Exe, Sir Roger's men, who were first on the spot, had secured a rich cargo of Genoese velvets for their master's use ; while the servants of Sir Hugh could only obtain some sixteen jars of *caviare* from the Caspian sea ; which, as it displeased their lord's palate, caused him to discharge his whole vocabulary of German invective on all around him.

Unhappily, these two rivals neighbours did not adopt the course pursued by two families in the same neighbourhood, of whom Westcote, in his *View of Devonshire* tells the following tale: In the parish of Colyton near Sidmouth are ye remaining the two ancient seats of Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire and Shute, belonging to the Lord Bonville, each of them having their parks and broad lands, but seldom any good friendship between them. This emulation increased at length to a quarrel about a couple of dogs, which could not be appeased, until a settlement was happily effected, after wager of battle on Clystheath; and after they had well tried each other's strength and valour, they at length (as the two kings Edmund and Canute did in the Isle of Olney, near Gloucester A.D. 1016) came to a loving agreement and embraced each other, and ever after lived in amity and peace together.

It was, however, far different with the rival families of De Whalingham and De Creveldt. Year after year their mutual hatred waxed stronger and stronger, until at length Sir Hugh was so

heated with passion during a personal altercation with his neighbour as to be unable any longer to contain himself, and he burst forth in plain English, as he had frequently done before in that guttural German which was totally unintelligible to all around him, calling his neighbour to his face "the Withecombe bogle feeder," "the foul fiend of ghosts and goblins," and many other equally dreadful names. This was indeed to wound his enemy to the quick. For according to the popular tradition of the locality the Whalingham family were afflicted with the heavy calamity of *a nightly visit from the inhabitants of the neighbouring churchyard* to demand the performance of *seven requiems for their souls*, in which the apparitions themselves would join. The mournful tunes of the unearthly requiems were nightly wafted down the vale of the Exe and across to the opposite bank of the river, where lies the village of *Kenton* or *Ken-tone*,\*

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\* Close by Kenton are the villages of *Ken* and *Kenford*, adjoining the parish of Shillingford, where the Author is now residing.



which retains to this day, the name derived from the inhabitants listening to the mournful songs of departed souls.

Sir Hugh's cruel shaft had sped home, and Sir Roger sank into the deepest gloom at the sneers of his bitter enemy; his feelings at first were too deep for utterance; until at length eying his tormentor with a keen and cutting glance, he gave utterance to the following malediction: "Look to thyself, thou cruel De Creveldt, for when my spirit quits the body, it shall haunt thee by night and by day within thy fair domain of Littleham; it shall sit by thee in thy hall, it shall meet thee in they walks, it shall draw the curtains of thy bed! until thou shalt long and pray for the immortal choir of Withecombe to hasten to thy rescue, and sing their requiem to my disturbed and wandering soul!"

Years rolled by, the knightly neighbours rarely met, and when they did a frown or a scowl alone marked the accidental *rencontre*, for no words ever again passed between them while in this mortal state.

It was on a dark and gloomy night of December, 1540, when Sir Hugh de Crevelde, dozing in his chair after the fatigues of the day's otter hunt, was startled on hearing *three* deep and distinct tolls booming out from the old church tower of Withecombe, distant between one and two miles from Littleham. To hear the church bell tolling was nothing new to Sir Hugh; but on this occasion it fell deeper and louder, more distinct and more melancholy on his ear, than he had ever heard it before. He knew there was something strange and mystical about this bell, which, like the famous one in the cathedral tower of Saragossa in Spain, was said to toll the knell for the departing spirit without being moved by mortal hand,\* and as the far-famed bell of Saragossa tolled out by its deep note the death of a Gothic monarch of Spain, so the Withecombe monitor informed the affrighted peasant that a De Whalingham was no more; hence the ancient rhyme—

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\* See incident mentioned at p. 25, relating to the family of Pine-Coffin.

"The bell of Withecombe, they say,  
Spontaneous tells the fatal day."

But on no peasant's ear on that memorable night did it fall with the deep and overwhelming interest which it aroused in De Creveldt's mind. He had just been dreaming of the promise of his neighbour when released from the flesh, and that deep bell had solemnly warned him that the release had now taken place. Recovering from his first surprise Sir Hugh hastened to the window, hoping to catch the sound of further tolling, for if the number exceeded *three*, it would then in all probability be the knell tolled by human hands for some other departed parishioner. But, alas! all was silent. Sir Hugh turned to throw himself on his chair from which he had been so suddenly roused, when, to his horror and dismay, he saw the chair occupied by *his ancient foe*, sitting calmly and serenely in it. Sir Hugh was too horrified to speak, although there was an apparent mildness of demeanour about *the apparition* which might have encouraged a man less under the influence

of sudden alarm. No conversation ensued between the two, and after a silent visit of an hour's duration *the apparition of old Sir Roger* quietly left the seat, retreating to the door with its face towards Sir Hugh, and then suddenly vanished from sight with a soft, musical sound.

For the space of one month, thrice in every twenty-four hours, were the visits regularly repeated: for one hour in his walks, another in the night, and a third hour at meal time did they recur with undeviating regularity; but in the latter case only was the conduct of the apparition oppressive and afflictive; for on these occasions, as Sir Hugh was about to satisfy his appetite with the food congenial to the Teutonic taste, the apparition was always at his elbow, and whatever was placed before the knight it was instantly removed, and replaced by a *plate of caviare*. In vain was the whole store of that famous fish sunk in the river Exe, the apparition had always plenty at his command. Sir Hugh soon recovered the use both of his tongue and his fists; he would strike at the apparition;

he would apostrophise it in German; he would beseech it in English; with his hands he fought the air; his words never disturbed the immovable placidity with which the apparition regarded him, and never more so than when it reached out to him his plate of caviare, which he must either eat or starve. The more furiously Sir Hugh stormed, the more mildly the apparition smiled on him; the more indignant he felt, the more good-natured the apparition appeared: a settled gloom hung over the household at Littleham. In vain the old huntsman brought the otter-hounds before the windows to entice his master to the sport; Sir Hugh pined slowly away before the daily mockery of his ghostly visitor.

Matters were in this state, when news arrived that an Exeter trading vessel had anchored in the river, just arrived from the West Indies, commanded by a captain well known to and under some obligations to Sir Hugh. A man who could tell news from foreign climes was at all times a most welcome visitor, and the knight's well-known hospitality was a sufficient induce-

ment to the sea-captain to seek his abode ; he had heard likewise rumours of his ghostly visitor, which the more inclined him to be earnest in his inquiries, for he was a man little troubled with apprehensions about apparitions, having always observed that if he preserved personal politeness to a ghost, the ghost would do the same to him.

As the foreign skipper entered Sir Hugh's mansion he met *the apparition* at the door, and in accordance with his sentiments on the subject, he contented himself with a low bow, and passed on. The knight unfolded his tale of woe, which was fully confirmed by his pale and haggard looks ; the captain mused for awhile ; at length, turning to Sir Hugh, he exclaimed suddenly, "I have it, Sir Knight, I have it ! by St. Baccho, *I would smoke him out !*"

"Smoke him out !" replied the knight, with astonishment, "why he himself is *mere smoke*, air, vapour, or what you will."

"So much the better," quoth the skipper, "for the old proverb may prove true in this instance, that two of a trade can never agree."

He then proceeded with infinite gusto to describe the nature and properties of the American weed, which had been brought for the first time to Europe by some of the returning companions of Columbus, and of which he had brought a considerable quantity in his vessel, then in the *Exe*. The plan to be pursued was soon settled between the pair, and no sooner had the apparition taken its leave after the morning's visit, than the captain proceeded, as he technically termed it, to "caulk the room," by closing up every hole and corner, for the double purpose of confining the vapour and of preventing the egress of the spirit. The door was purposely left ajar, as if to invite a visit; the vacant chair was placed opposite the host; the apparition entered as usual—serene, but rather inquisitive at seeing a stranger seated beside the host.

In due course supper was served, but no sooner was a smoking dish placed before Sir Hugh than the savoury viand was removed as usual, and the knight's daily allowance of *caviare* substituted in its stead. He looked more impatient than usual,

but was silent. Supper was removed, the door closed and abruptly fastened by the captain, when, for the first time, the apparition perceived there was no avenue by which fresh air could enter the room. Two pipes were speedily produced, the Indian weed ignited, and the whole room shortly enveloped in so dense an atmosphere of smoke that the spirit soon became invisible; but a rustling of velvets was constantly perceived from one end of the room to the other, accompanied by deep and unearthly sneezes. It was indeed an awful night, but the persevering intrepidity with which the captain persisted in his smoking was very conspicuous. At length a hollow groan was heard, and a voice murmuring, "If thou wilt only open the door, Sir Knight, I will haunt thee no more: bear in mind, that thou canst not destroy me; the poisonous nature of *tobacco* may afflict my aerial substance, but it cannot annihilate me."

A parley ensued between the parties, by which Sir Hugh de Creveldt obtained exemption from the spirit-persecutions he had so long endured. Having thus once acquired the habit, he con-



tinued, whenever he could procure it, to indulge in smoking tobacco. It was the last year of his life, A.D. 1563, that, returning one gloomy night over Woodbury Common, he found himself pursued and mocked by several spectres and phantoms, who at length formed a circle round him, and, in accompaniment to a kind of grotesque dance, repeated the following prophetic strains:—

“Sir Knight, Sir Knight, there ne’er shall lack, O,  
The smoky weed that’s called tobacco;  
Thy sons in clouds of noxious fume,  
Shall long fulfil their father’s doom;  
From age to age, from north to south,  
Shall pass the day with weed in mouth,  
And raise the stupefying vapour,  
By morning dawn, by nightly taper;  
’Mid clouds of smoke shall eat and drink,  
And studying, only they think;  
For *all that issues from their head,*  
*Shall savour of the noxious weed:*  
Now quick, Sir Knight, from earth begone,  
*The curse is fixed—the deed is done!*”

Sir Hugh de Crevelدت reached his home in a most woful and dejected condition; he sickened soon after, and ere another week his spirit had passed to that bourne from whence

there is no return. His body, by his own will, was removed to the town of Creveltdt, near Cologne, to be buried with his ancestors. Sir Walter Raleigh, who sprung from the neighbouring village of Withecombe-Raleigh, (which, after the last of the De Whalinghams was gathered to his fathers, became the property of his family, and thence took its second name,) was so excited in his infancy by the narration of this extraordinary *apparition* tale, that one of the first acts of his roving career was to bring a quantity of tobacco from the colony of Virginia to England, and to that great and glorious Englishman has been attributed in consequence the first introduction of the smoking weed amongst us.\*

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\* As a suitable appendix to this *Apparition of Smoke* tale, I would mention the following curious story relative to the introduction of tobacco into Russia, about a century after the time of Sir Walter Raleigh. When that erratic despot, Peter the Great, consulted the Russian clergy upon the advisability of admitting the smoky weed within the precincts of his mighty empire, they stoutly opposed its introduction, upon the ground that it was positively forbidden in Scripture by these words: "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth

The son of Sir Hugh de Creveldt grew up a determined smoker from his infancy; but, living in his old age unto the days of King James, he was so deeply hurt by that monarch's noted and angry work, *The Counter-blaste to Tobacco*, that he removed with his household to the seat of

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a man." Another anecdote relative to the effect of tobacco on the body, which seems to support the theory respecting the terrible curse fixed by the spectral apparitions upon the De Creveldt family, conveys a solemn warning against the unlimited indulgence in the evanescent charm of tobacco. Captain Wilkes, in an exploring expedition of the Southern Pacific Ocean, having met with a native of the Fiji Islands, interrogated him as to the fate of the crew of a vessel whose shattered hull still lay on the beach. "All kill," replied the savage. "What did you do with them?" asked Captain Wilkes. "Eat 'em. Good, good!" returned the cannibal. "Did you eat them all?" enquired the horrified captain. "All but one," holding up a finger. "And why did you spare one?" "'Cause him taste *too like tobacco*; couldn't eat him no how."

Among the many questions so eagerly discussed in the present day, unquestionably the most absorbing is that which relates to *the origin of man*. Few of our *savans* appear to be aware that as rational a theory as any which they have propounded apart from, or contradictory of, Scripture, is that which is held most tenaciously by the North-West American Indians, and which runs somewhat as

his ancestors, near the Rhine, where the family still remains, performing, it is said, the condition of the perpetual smoking curse with a constancy perfectly astounding, even to the present day.

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follows: Many ages after their creation, *the Great Spirit* assembled all the tribes together at a place called "the Red Rocks," on the top of which HE stood, while the red men in vast numbers stood in a plain below. HE took from the rock a piece of the red stone, and made a *large pipe*. He smoked it over them all, and told them it was *part of their flesh*. Hence Catlin records that once a Sioux chief near the Mississippi addressed him in the following way: "This red pipe was given to the red men by the Great Spirit. *It is part of our flesh*, and therefore is great medicine." I think this is as sensible a way of accounting for *the origin of man* as the theory propounded by one of our great lay preachers, who tells us that by eating mutton, "sheep is transubstantiated into man," or by supping on lobster, "the matter of life of the crustacean undergoes the same wonderful metamorphosis into humanity!!!"—See *Lay Sermons*, by T. H. Huxley, LL.D., F.R.S.; p. 146.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE BERESFORD APPARITION.

THE well-known story of an apparition having been seen by Lady Beresford, wife of Sir Tristram, the third baronet of that name, has been so often related in print, that it would seem almost superfluous to repeat it, and I should not propose to trespass on the patience of my readers by recording it afresh, had I ever met with it correctly stated. But the blunders are so many, that I think it deserves to be lifted out of the region of error by which it is surrounded, and placed, as I believe it may, upon the surer basis of historic truth.

Even Burke, who relates the story in his *Family Romance, or Episodes in the Domestic Annals of the Aristocracy*, has committed several mistakes, which may be corrected by

reference to dates in his own works, notwithstanding that he claims to have received it from a member of the Beresford family, as he writes, "This strange and marvellous story has been given to the world by others, but in shapes so false as regards the real agents, that we venture to tell it here as related to us by a descendant of the family. Even the persons of this spectral scene have been totally mistaken. The ghost and ghost-seer were not the individuals to whom the usual narrators have chosen to assign those parts. They were James, third and last Earl of Tyrone; and Lady Beresford, widow of Sir Tristram Beresford. It was on the 19th of August, 1704; for tradition has preserved the day with wonderful exactness."

The confidence with which Burke makes the above statement resembles the story of M. Dupin's reply to the French Academy of Science. Having sent him a present of one of their works on *Natural History*, in which it was said that "Crab is a *red fish* that walks backward," he replied, "Admirable! Gentlemen, your defini-

tion would be perfect, but for the trifling circumstance that a crab is *not* a fish, that it is *not* red, and that it does *not* walk backward!" Even so it should be known that Lady Beresford was *not* a widow at the time of the appearance; that James, third and last Earl of Tyrone, was not the veritable ghost, but his elder brother John, the second earl; and that so far from "tradition having preserved the day (August 19, 1704) with wonderful exactness," there is no family tradition extant on the subject—the only authority for the statement is that it happens to be the true date of the third earl's death; the real time of the occurrence being on the night of October 14th, 1693, as I shall hope to show in the following account.

A writer in *All the Year Round* observes that "the Beresford story rests upon a mass of testimony which, could it be brought to harmonise *without a flaw*, could be only dismissed on the plea that it was a cleverly concocted experiment upon public credulity. For tales so closely canvassed have been ultimately left in a condition of equal

uncertainty. It has been conjectured that members of the Beresford family might be in the possession of particulars which, if they failed to elucidate the source of the narrative, might at least correct its inaccuracies. But neither hint nor challenge from the curious has produced any such evidence, nor is there any special reason for believing that any such is in existence."

The writer goes on to relate the story in the same way which Burke has done, with many additional mistakes besides. To mention only one. He makes Lady Betty Cobbe to be a friend of the same age as, and to be present with, Lady Beresford at her decease; to receive from her lips the account of the ghost's prediction concerning her own death; and to be living as late as the year 1802; whereas Lady Beresford was married in 1693; and if Lady Betty Cobbe was of the same age, supposing her to be about twenty in 1693, this would make her out to be living in 1802, at the venerable age of 129! But, in truth, Lady Betty Cobbe happened to be *the granddaughter* of Lady Beresford, and *unborn* at



the time of her grandmother's death. Well may the late Mr. Charles Dickens, as editor of *All the Year Round*, have added the following cautious note to the above statement: "Without presumptuously denying the possibility suggested by the esteemed writer of this paper, it is to be observed of such a story as Lady Beresford's that the *alleged facts need to be very distinctly agreed upon.*"

The writer has availed himself of his family connexion (his wife being the granddaughter of the grandson of the Lady Beresford to whom the Apparition appeared) to produce a more correct account of what really took place on this solemn occasion: and if any, after reading the account, shall still deem that it is not "without a flaw," he thinks it will be impossible to substantiate such a tale as that which is commonly known as "The Beresford Ghost," but which, it may be observed at starting, is in itself a misnomer, for it is no tale of any one of that name appearing as a ghost, but of an Earl of Tyrone who appeared after death to Lady Beresford. Having then a

due regard to *names, places, and dates*, the account may be related as follows:—

John de la Poer, the second Earl of Tyrone, and Nichola Sophia Hamilton, youngest daughter and co-heiress of Hugh Lord Glenawly, were distantly related, and being left orphans about the same time, were placed under the care of the same guardian, who being inclined to scepticism, reared them in disbelief of the truth of all revealed religion. On the death of this guardian they fell into the hands of others, who endeavoured to eradicate the principles of their early life, which were so far successful, that they entered upon a mutual compact, that whoever should die first would, if permitted, appear to the other, and testify to the truth or falsity of revealed religion.

In the “*Life of William Smellie*,” the distinguished author of the *Philosophy of Natural History*, a similar agreement is recorded as having been made between his intimate friend, the Rev. William Greenlaw, and himself. They had entered into a most solemn compact in writing, and signed with their blood, that who-

ever died first should return, if possible, and testify to the survivor regarding the spiritual world; but if the deceased did not appear within a year after the day of his death, it was to be concluded that he could not return. Greenlaw died June 26th, 1774. As the first anniversary of his death approached without any sign having been made, Smellie became exceedingly anxious, and even lost rest during several successive nights, in expectation of the reappearance of his friend. At last, fatigued with watching, and having fallen asleep in his arm-chair, Greenlaw appeared to him, stating that he was now in another and better world, from which he had found great difficulty in communicating with the friend he had left behind, and adding as to that world, that "the hopes and wishes of its inhabitants were by no means satisfied, for, like those of the lower world, they still looked forward in the hope of eventually reaching a still happier state of existence."\*

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\* *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of William Smellie*, F.R.S., &c., by Robert Kerr, F.R.S., p. 187.

In the year 1687, the Hon. Nichola Sophia Hamilton, then one and twenty, married Sir Tristram Beresford, the third baronet of that name, descended from John de Beresford, who was seized in 1087 of the manor of Alstonfield, in the county of Stafford, whose descendant went over to Ireland in the reign of James I. as manager of the Corporation of Londoners, known as *The Society of the New Plantation in Ulster*, settling at Coleraine, in the county of Londonderry, and became the father of Sir Tristram Beresford, the first baronet, and lineal ancestor of the present Marquess of Waterford.

Sir Tristram and Lady Beresford then resided at Lexlip Castle, on the banks of the river Liffey, about ten miles from Dublin, and not far from the present College of Maynooth, which we thus particularise, as it subsequently became the scene of the apparition which was seen by Lady Beresford.

The Earl of Tyrone's seat was in the same neighbourhood, and much intercourse was kept up between the two families, frequent visits

being interchanged between them; although Lord Tyrone had never thought fit to exchange his bachelor life for that of a married man. During the first six years of their wedded life Lady Beresford had given birth to three daughters—Susanna, who subsequently became the wife of Lord Riverstone; Arabella, who died unmarried in 1732; and Jane, who two years before her mother's death became the wife of George Lowther, Esq., M.P. of Kilrue, county Meath; but no son had been given to them to inherit the honours of the house.

One morning (October 15, 1693) Lady Beresford appeared at the breakfast table deadly pale, with evident tokens of something having happened during the night, causing great distress of mind, which she in vain endeavoured to conceal. In answer to her husband's inquiries, she sought to assure him that she was as usual. "But," exclaimed Sir Tristram, observing a black ribbon round her wrist which he had never seen before, "have you not hurt your wrist?" No, she had not sprained it, but added, "Let me conjure you

never to inquire the cause of my wearing this ribbon; you will never more see me without it. I would not for a moment conceal it, if it concerned you as a husband to know it. I never in my life refused you anything you requested, but of this I must entreat you to forgive my refusal, and never again to mention the subject." Sir Tristram consented to these terms, and the matter was never again alluded to by either of them.

In the course of the day a dispatch was received from the steward of Lord Tyrone, saying his master had died during the preceding night, as suddenly and unexpectedly as the melancholy event which happened in our time to the head of the Beresford family, when the well-known sporting Marquess of Waterford was killed in the hunting-field by his horse treading on a rolling stone.

Sir Tristram and Lady Beresford were exceedingly shocked at this intelligence, and while Sir Tristram was endeavouring to console his wife, she suddenly informed him that she was again *enceinte*, adding that she felt assured this

time she would give birth to a son. Sir Tristram naturally expressed the great pleasure he felt at hearing such news.

On the following July, 1694, Lady Beresford gave birth to a son, who succeeded his father as Sir Marcus Beresford, the fourth baronet of that family, and who was subsequently raised to the peerage as Baron Beresford and Viscount Tyrone, in 1720, and twenty-six years later advanced to the earldom of that name. Sir Tristram survived the birth of his son and heir not quite seven years, as he died June 16, 1701. Lady Beresford for three years lived in the closest retirement with the family of a clergyman, Dr. Robert Gorges, of Kilbrew, who married Jane Loftus, sister of Adam Viscount Lisburne; and in 1704 Lady Beresford married their only son, General Richard Gorges, who, as he was born in 1662, must have been four years older than his wife, and could not have been that "youth," as he is traditionally reported to have been, according to the usual mode of relating the "Beresford Ghost Story."

General Gorges and Lady Beresford had a family of two sons and two daughters. Richard, of Kilbrew, the elder, became M.P. for Enniskillen; and Hamilton of Castlegrove, the younger, M.P. for Swords. Dorothy married the Earl of Desart; and Lucy, the eldest daughter, wedded William, the twenty-sixth Baron Howth, and became the mother of Thomas, the first earl of that name.

The original surname of this very ancient family was *Tristram*, and exchanged for its present one of *St. Lawrence* from the following circumstances. One of the house of Tristram having defeated a party of invaders on the festival day of St. Lawrence, near Clontarf, assumed, in consequence of a vow made previous to the battle, the saint's name, which his descendants have borne ever since. The sword with which Sir Tristram fought still hangs in the hall of Howth, where the family has resided since its first arrival in Ireland, seven centuries ago.

Lady Beresford's second union only lasted two years longer than her first. Having in the



ninth year of her married life with General Gorges resolved to celebrate her forty-eighth birthday, which she had long before notified her intention of doing, and about which she seemed exceedingly anxious, she assembled her kinsfolk and neighbours for a grand festival. During the banquet she appeared in the highest spirits, and happening to remark to her guests that she felt more than usually happy at having reached her forty-eighth birthday, an elderly clergyman then present suddenly replied, "No, my lady, you are mistaken; your mother, Lady Glenawly, and I used to have many disputes concerning your exact age, and I at length am able to prove myself right. Happening to go last week into the parish where you were born, I was resolved to put an end to all further doubts on the subject by searching the baptismal register, and I find you are really only forty-seven years old to-day."

On hearing this speech, Lady Beresford turned ghastly pale, exclaiming, "Then you have signed my death-warrant." The party broke up in confusion. Lady Beresford sent to request the

attendance of her eldest son, Sir Marcus, then a youth in his nineteenth year, and also of an old and very intimate friend, whom she addressed in the following terms:—

“My dear son, and you, my beloved friend, whom I have known so long, I have something of the greatest importance to communicate to you before I die, a period which is not far distant. You know the terms of intimacy which existed between the late Earl of Tyrone and myself; how we were thrown much together when orphans possessing the same guardian, who unhappily endeavoured to imbue us with his own principles of infidelity, in which, alas! he met with too great success. After many years of scepticism and doubt, we made a mutual agreement that whoever should die first would, if permitted by the Almighty, appear to the other and testify to the truth or falsity of revealed religion.

“Accordingly, one night, when Sir Tristram and I were in bed, I awoke suddenly from a sound sleep, and found to my horror Lord Tyrone sitting by my bedside. I screamed out, ‘For

heaven's sake, Lord Tyrone, what brings you here at this time of night ?'

" 'Have you then forgotten our promise?' said he, in a manner of awful solemnity. 'Did we not mutually engage to appear to each other after death? I have just quitted the world, and am now permitted to appear to you for the purpose of assuring you of the truth of revealed religion, and that it is the only one by which we can be saved. I am further suffered to inform you that you will in due time give birth to a son, that you will become a widow and marry again, and that you will die on your forty-seventh birthday.'

" 'Good heavens,' cried I, 'cannot I prevent this?'

" 'Yes,' he replied, 'you are a free agent, and can prevent it by abstaining from a second marriage. Hitherto you have had no trials. More I am not permitted to tell you, but if, after this warning, you persist in your infidelity as regards religion, your lot in another world will be most miserable.'

" 'May I not ask,' said I, 'if you are happy?'

“‘Had I been otherwise,’ said he, ‘I should not have been allowed to appear to you.’

“‘I may then infer that you are happy?’ He smiled.

“‘But how,’ said I, ‘when the morning comes, shall I know that your appearance before me has been real, and not the mere phantom of a dream?’

‘Will not the news of my death convince you?’

“‘No,’ I replied, ‘I might have had such a dream, and that dream might accidentally become true. I wish for some stronger proof of its reality.’

“‘You shall have such,’ he said; then, waving his hand, the crimson velvet bed-curtains were instantly drawn through a large iron hoop, by which the tester of the bed was suspended. ‘In that you cannot be mistaken; no mortal arm could have performed this.’

“‘True,’ I replied, ‘but asleep we sometimes possess much greater strength than awake. Although I could not have done this when

awake, I might have done it in my sleep, and I still have doubt.'

"He then proceeded to write his name in my pocket-book, which was lying on my table, remarking, 'You know my handwriting.'

"'Nevertheless,' I said, 'though I could not imitate your writing when awake, I might do so in my sleep.'"

"'You are hard of belief, indeed. I must not touch you; it would injure you irreparably. It is not for spiritual bodies to touch mortal flesh.'

"'I do not regard a small blemish,' said I.

"'You are a courageous woman,' said he. 'Then hold out your hand.' He touched my wrist. His hand was cold as ice! In an instant every sinew and nerve shrunk, leaving an indelible mark as if a pair of red-hot pincers had gripped me.

"'Now,' said he, 'let no mortal eye while you live behold that wrist; to see it would be sacrilege.' He rose from his seat, walked a few steps from the bed, and laid his hand on a bureau which always stood in the room. 'In the morning,' he

added, 'when you behold this, you will find another proof that what you have seen and heard this night is not an idle dream, or the mere fancy of your brain.'

"He stopped—I turned to look at him again—he was gone.

"During the time I had conversed with him, my thoughts were perfectly calm and collected, but the moment he had departed, I felt chilled with terror, a cold perspiration came over me, and I endeavoured in vain to awake Sir Tristram, in order to tell what had occurred. In this state of terror and agitation I lay for some time, until a flood of tears came to my relief, when I dropped asleep. In the morning, when I awoke, I found that Sir Tristram had got up without noticing anything that had happened during the night. On rising, I found my pocket-book lying in its usual place, with some pencil marks inside, which I knew at once to be in the handwriting of Lord Tyrone. I took a piece of black ribbon and bound it tightly round my wrist, which presented the appearance of having

been scarred and burnt during the night; and then, turning to the bureau, I observed the impression of a man's hand deeply burnt into the lid. I was overcome with agitation, and on descending to breakfast the horrors of the night had left such tokens on my countenance, that my husband naturally inquired after my health and what had happened to distress me so much.

"Quieting him as well as I could, I informed him of these two events. First, that Lord Tyrone had died on the preceding night; and, second, that I should in due time give birth to a son. Sir Tristram kindly desisted from any further importunities. A few hours later proved the truth of the information respecting Lord Tyrone's death, by a despatch from his steward confirming the painful news; and several months after this you, my son, were born, to the great joy of your father as well as myself.

"I pass over the intervening twenty years\* between that eventful night and the present time.

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\* Lord Tyrone died in 1693; Lady Beresford in 1713.

Mindful of what the apparition had predicted respecting my death on my forty-seventh birthday, I hoped he was mistaken, believing that had passed a year ago; I therefore determined to celebrate my forty-eighth birthday, as I thought, in the way we have been doing to-day. The information I have just learnt from an authority which cannot be doubted tells me I was mistaken, and convinces me that I have only a few hours to live. But I bless God that death has now no terrors for me. I have learnt the truth of revealed religion, and trusting solely to the death and merits of my Saviour for my hopes of happiness hereafter, I can depart in peace. When I am dead, as concealment is no longer necessary, I request that you, my beloved friend, will unbind my wrist, take from it the black riband, and let my son behold it with yourself."

Lady Beresford then expressed a wish to be left alone, with the intention of endeavouring to compose herself to sleep. Sir Marcus immediately quitted the room, and called his mother's attendants, having desired them to watch their mistress



attentively, and should they observe any change in her, to call them instantly.

An hour passed, and all was silent; they listened at the door, but not a sound was heard. Before long a bell rang violently; they flew to her apartment, and as they entered, they heard the servants exclaiming, "Oh, she is dead; my mistress is dead!"

Sir Marcus and his mother's friend, after ordering the attendants to leave the room, proceeded to fulfil Lady Beresford's dying request. They lifted her hand, unclosed the riband, and found the wrist exactly in the condition she had described, every nerve withered, and the sinews shrunk up.

Such is the story which has been preserved in the family during the last century and a half. The bureau which was in Lady Beresford's room on that memorable night when the apparition appeared, still exists; and I have now before me a letter written by a lady connected with the family, who remarks, "Colonel Blackler told me he had often seen the chest of drawers with the

mark of a hand on it, which was attributed to the ghost having touched it." A painting of Lady Beresford, with a piece of black riband round her wrist, is I believe still in existence. It remained for many years in Lord Tyrone's Dublin mansion, and was purchased by a friend of the family as late as 1835, when the house was sold by Henry Marquess of Waterford, the well-known and popular sporting nobleman. His great grandfather, Sir Marcus, and son of the Lady Beresford, the heroine of our tale, having married Lady Catherine de la Poer, sole heiress of James third Earl of Tyrone, the brother of John second earl, (the apparition,) and having, in 1746, been created Earl of Tyrone in consequence of that marriage, the title is now merged in the higher one of the Marquisate of Waterford.

## CHAPTER V.

### MURDER WILL OUT.

IN the first half of the eighteenth century the well-known family of Harris of Heyne were residing at their ancient seat in the county of Devon, not far from the borders of Cornwall. The family was wealthy, and their estates extended far and wide round the mansion. The head of the family at that time held a situation in the court of George II., which obliged him to reside in London during a part of the year. Travelling in those days was very different from what it is now, as may be judged from the anecdote respecting Lord Godolphin, prime minister in the reign of Queen Anne, of whom it is told that when he visited his estate in Cornwall, as the post did not then extend beyond Exeter, he

was accustomed to have a private post of his own for the conveyance of despatches into the far west once a week, and his neighbours used to assemble in his hall for the purpose of hearing the news from London read out *pro bono publico*.

When the time of his attendance at court arrived, Mr. Harris was accustomed to move the greater part of his establishment to London, leaving behind a few servants only, under the charge of one Richard Morris, who had been long in the family as head butler.

In the year 1730, when Mr. Harris was in London, he received a letter from his confidential servant, informing him that the house had been broken into at night, and that a lad who had lately been taken into service had mysteriously disappeared. Mr. Harris immediately left London for his seat in Devonshire, and on his arrival was told that no alarm had been given on the night of the robbery until the morning, when a window opening on the lawn was discovered to have been broken through, and footstep marks discovered outside. Morris, the butler, was

found in the plate-room half dressed, tied to a table, and with a gag in his mouth. His own account of the robbery was that having been roused by some noise in the middle of the night, he had got up and gone down to the plate-room, the door of which had been previously forced, that he was there seized, gagged, and bound before he could escape, or even call for help; and that there were five or six men altogether, none of whom he recognised, except the lad lately taken into service, who had disappeared since that night.

In those days there were no telegraph wires, no means by which a criminal fleeing from the scene of his crime could be outstripped by that wondrous machinery which elicited the remark of the silent traveller, "Them's the cords that hung John Tawell;" and no detective or rural police. A week had elapsed before Mr. Harris could reach his home. In the meanwhile, the village constables had attempted to trace out the robbers, but without success. No clue to the missing plate or the thieves could be discovered. After making a careful and strict search of the pre-

mises, Mr. Harris returned to his court duties in town, giving up all hope of finding either his lost property or the criminals.

Some six months passed away before Mr. Harris again visited his country seat, where he was received by Morris, and found everything in its usual state, nothing more having been ascertained about the robbery. Tired with his long journey from town, Mr. Harris retired early to bed, and soon fell into a sound sleep.

In the middle of the night he suddenly awoke—as he himself was always wont to declare on relating the incident, he was in an instant thoroughly wide awake, how or why he never could explain—and he saw by the light of a small lamp burning in his room the lad who had disappeared on the night when the plate was stolen, standing at the foot of the bed. Mr. Harris asked what he wanted at that time of night; the boy beckoned to him, but made no reply. Again he asked him for what purpose he had come, and again the boy beckoned to him and pointed to the door.

Mr. Harris was as devoid of fear as most men ; so he rose from his bed, partly dressed himself, took his sword under his arm, and then followed the lad, still beckoning and pointing with his arm out of the room. His own statement subsequently of his feelings was that he was in doubt as to whether the lad was alive or an apparition, that he felt no fear, but only a strong desire and determination to see the matter to an end. The two went down the staircase, and through a side door, which Mr. Harris remembers to have been to his astonishment unlocked and open, they passed into the park.

The lad led the way for about a hundred yards towards a very large oak, the trunk of which was surrounded and almost hidden by low shrubs and bushes, which had been allowed to grow wild from time immemorial. Here the lad stopped, pointed to the ground with his forefinger, and then seemed to pass towards the other side of the tree. It was not a dark night, and when Mr. Harris followed, as he immediately did, the lad had vanished from his sight. It seemed useless

to search for him; and after a little while Mr. Harris returned to the house, fastened the door as he let himself in, and went to his room for the remainder of the night.

Before the dawn he had resolved on his course of action, and having made his arrangements, he first had the butler, Richard Morris, taken into custody. He then set workmen to dig round the oak tree, who after a short search came upon the body of the lad, buried in his clothes, scarcely a foot below the surface. It was evident that his death was occasioned by strangulation, as the cord was still fastened tightly round his neck.

The butler, after attempting at first to deny having had any hand in the business, soon made a confession of the whole affair. He had two accomplices to help him in the robbery, who had carried off the stolen plate to Plymouth, but being interrupted by the lad whilst removing it, they had murdered him, and buried his body under the tree, where it was subsequently discovered in the way related above. They then proceeded to tie and gag the butler, as he was found in the pantry. The



murderers were never traced, and so escaped the penalty of their crime; but Morris, the butler, was tried at the ensuing Exeter assizes, and having pleaded guilty, was condemned and executed.

The details given above were mentioned at the trial of Richard Morris, as explaining the cause of his being suspected and of his subsequent arrest. Mr. Harris always avowed most solemnly the reality of the apparition, and that he had actually gone out of the house in the dead of night, and accompanied the spirit of the murdered lad to the very spot where he had been buried. Though all who are disbelievers in supernatural appearances will readily attribute it to the effect of a dream, this plausible theory will not account for the fact of the place where the lad was buried having been so quickly found.

Lord Brougham, in his *Autobiography*, recording the case of a friend who had suddenly died in India, and who appeared to him when on a tour in Northern Europe, accounts for the apparition on this wise: "When one reflects on the vast

number of dreams which night after night pass through our brains, the number of coincidences between the vision and the event are perhaps fewer and less remarkable than a fair calculation of chances would warrant us to expect. Nor is it surprising, considering the variety of our thoughts in sleep, and that they all bear some analogy to the affairs of life, that a dream should sometimes coincide with a contemporaneous event or with a future event." But I scarcely think this is a satisfactory way of accounting for the detection of the crime as recorded above.

## CHAPTER VI.

### AN APPARITION WITNESS.

IN the year 1749 the highland district of Braemar, in Aberdeenshire, was the scene of a murder, which was subsequently alleged to have been discovered by means of the apparition of the murdered person. From the details of the trial, which have been printed in a separate volume by the Bannatyne Club, we may gather the following particulars, which, though the result was different from the case mentioned in the preceding chapter, tend to confirm the theory of the value of apparition testimony in the cause of justice.

On the 10th of June, 1754, Duncan Clark and Alexander Macdonald, two Highlanders, were tried before the Court of Justiciary, Edinburgh, for

the murder of Arthur Davis, sergeant in Guise's Regiment, on the 28th of September, 1749. The murder occurred a few years after the Jacobite rising of 1745, when the young Pretender had succeeded in leading his followers as far as Derby, and the Bank of England, in its fright, was trying to delay its expected ruin by paying sixpences across the counter, so there existed many reasons for an English soldier, who had wandered away from his companions, being privately cut off by the inhabitants of that wild district.

Sergeant Davis was known to have had about his person both money and rings, some of which were subsequently found to be in possession of the accused; and it was assumed that robbery had been the sole object of his murderers. It is certain that Davis was missing for several years without any certainty as to his fate. At length an account of the murder appeared from the evidence of one Alexander Macpherson, a farm servant living at Inverary, about twenty-six years of age, and speaking

no language but Gaelic, who by means of a sworn interpreter related to the court the way by which he obtained his knowledge respecting the murder.

He stated that on a certain night, when he was in bed in his cottage, he was disturbed by an apparition which came to his bedside, and commanded him to rise and follow him out of doors. Believing his visitor to be one Farquharson, a neighbour and friend, the witness did as he was bid; and when they were without the cottage, the apparition informed him that he was the spirit of Sergeant Davis, who had been murdered five years before, requesting him at the same time to go and bury his remains, which lay concealed in a place that he pointed out, in a wild moorland spot known by the name of "the hill of Christie." He also desired the witness to take his neighbour Farquharson as an assistant. The day following the witness accompanied by his neighbour proceeded to the place specified, where they discovered the bones of a human body, though evidently in a very

great state of decay. They did not at the time bury the bones so found ; in consequence of which Sergeant Davis' apparition again appeared to Macpherson, upbraiding him with his breach of promise. On this occasion the witness inquired of the apparition the names of the murderers, and received for answer that he had been slain by the prisoners at the bar. The witness after this second appearance again visited the scene of the murder and with the assistance of his companion at once buried the remains of Sergeant Davis.

Farquharson was brought in evidence to prove that Macpherson had called him to the burial of the bones, and had told him the same story which he repeated in court. Another witness, one Isabel Machardie, a servant, who slept in one of the beds which stretch along the wall in an ordinary highland hut, declared that on the same night, when Macpherson said he saw the apparition, she saw a naked man enter the house, and go towards Macpherson's bed. Her evidence was to this effect : "She saw some-

thing naked come in at the door, which frightened her so much that she drew the clothes over her head; that when it appeared, it came in a bowing posture; that she could not tell what it was; that next morning she asked Macpherson what it was that had disturbed them the night before? and that he answered, she might be easy, for it would not trouble them any more.”

Notwithstanding this extraordinary tale, corroborated though it was by other strong presumptions against the prisoners, the story of the apparition threw an air of ridicule on the whole evidence for the prosecution. This was increased by the counsel for the prisoners asking, in the cross-examination of Macpherson, “What language did the ghost speak in?” The witness, who was himself entirely ignorant of the English language, replied, “As good Gaelic as I ever heard in Lochaber.” “Pretty well for the ghost of an English sergeant,” answered the counsel, whose argument savoured more of smartness than soundness, for if the theory of apparitions be once admitted, we know too little of the other

world to judge whether all languages may not be alike familiar to all who belong to it; as doubtless its inhabitants are in this matter like those who lived before "the confusion of tongues," the truth of which has been confirmed by a cuneiform inscription of the age of Nebuchadnezzar, and who are described in Scripture as being "of one language and one speech." At all events, this attempt at wit on the part of the prisoners' counsel had sufficient effect upon the stolid jury, unable to discriminate between truth and falsehood; and so, giving the accused the benefit of a doubt, in very much the same way as in the celebrated trial of the "Protestant Ritualist," Mr. W. Bennett, Vicar of Frome, they returned a verdict of *Not guilty*, although everyone in court, the counsel and solicitor of the prisoners among the number, were fully satisfied of their being the real murderers.\*

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\* The *European Magazine* of May, 1793, contains an account of the trial, from the recital of the solicitor of the prisoners; and the fact of his being fully persuaded of the guilt of the prisoners is there stated.



Surtees, in his *History of the County of Durham*, records a similar instance of a murder having been committed about a century before the last-mentioned case, and discovered by means of an apparition, which may be briefly stated as follows.

Mr. Walker, a yeoman of good estate and a widower, living at Chester-le-Street, in the county of Durham, had a young relative, named Anne Walker, in his service as housekeeper. For reasons not necessary to be detailed, the master sent away Anne under the care of one Mark Sharp, with secret orders to dispose of her, so that she might be no more troublesome to her relative in this world of sin and sorrow.

Nothing more was heard of Anne, until one night in the ensuing winter one James Graham, a miller, who lived about six miles from Mr. Walker's house, as he was descending from the upper to the lower part of the hill, found a woman standing there, with her hair hanging about her head, in which were five bloody wounds. According to Graham's evidence at the trial, (his original deposition is said to be

now in the Bodleian library at Oxford; see Richardson's *Borderer's Table Book*, vi. 351,) he asked her who she was and what she wanted; when she replied that she had been killed by Sharp on the moor during their journey, and thrown into a coalpit hard by, and that the instrument, a pick, with which the murder was committed, had been hid under a bank, along with his clothes, which were stained with her blood. She demanded of the miller that he should undertake the duty of exposing the murder, and of having her murderers punished; a task which Graham did not attempt until the apparition had twice reappeared to him, and the last time with a severe and threatening aspect.

The body of the poor girl, the pick, and the bloody clothes were found by Graham exactly as the apparition had described; and consequently little doubt remained but that Walker and Sharp were the guilty men. They were at once arrested, and tried at the Durham assizes by Judge Davenport in August, 1631; and being found guilty, did the penalty of their fearful crime.

## CHAPTER VII.

### NOSTRADAMUS.

MICHAEL NOSTRADAMUS was born on the 14th of December, 1503, and died on the 2nd of July, 1566. He gave himself to the study of mathematics and astrology before becoming, as he eventually did, physician to Charles IX.; and became famous as *the Seer of Salon*, a provincial town in the south of France, between Marseilles and Avignon. His first efforts in astrology took the humble form of almanac making. His almanacs became so popular, that imitations of them were frequently made, and these containing nothing but folly, while supposed to be his, caused a satirical poet named Jodelle to salute him with the following punning couplet—

“ *Nostra damus cum falsa damus, nam fallere nostra est,  
Et cum falsa damus, nil nisi Nostra damus ;* ”

which may be thus rendered in English: "We give out our own thoughts, when we utter false things, for it is the part of man to deceive; and when we utter false things, we are only giving out our own."

Amongst the many predictions uttered by the French seer, there are two at least which appear to have had a singular fulfilment, which relate to the death of King Charles I. and the subsequent fire of London, and which were certainly delivered many years before they came to pass, as the copy of his work in the British museum, which I have personally consulted, will testify.\*

The double prediction is thus worded:

"Gand et Bruceles marcheront contre Anvers,  
Senat de Londres mettront à mort leur Roy," &c.

"Le sang de juste à Londres sera faute,  
Brulez par feu," &c.

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\* *Les Prophéties de M. Michael Nostradamus.* A Troyes par Pierre Chevillot. L'Imprimeur Ordinaire du Roy, avec permission. Dedicated to Henry King of France. Dated June 27th, 1580.

In the English edition (1672) of the *Prophecies of Nostradamus*, the following curious story is recorded of this Gallic necromancer. One day, being at the Castle of Faim, in Lorraine, attending on the sick mother of its proprietor, the Lord of Florinville, Nostradamus happened to walk through the yard, where there were two little pigs, one white, the other black. The nobleman asked in jest, "What will become of these two pigs?" To which the seer replied, "We shall eat the black one, and the wolf will eat the white." The Lord Florinville, intending to convict him of falsehood, secretly commanded the cook to dress the white one for supper. The cook obeyed, and placed the white pig on the spit, ready to be roasted at the proper time. In the meantime, during the cook's absence from the kitchen, a young tame wolf came in and eat up a great portion of the white pig. The cook, on his return, seeing what had happened, and fearing his master's anger, quietly placed the black pig on the spit, and sent that one up for supper. The nobleman, thinking he had done the seer, said to

him, "Well, sir, we are now eating the *white* pig, and the wolf shall not touch it." "I don't believe it," replied Nostradamus, "it is the black one that is upon the table." Immediately the cook was sent for, who at once confessed the accident, the relation of which was as pleasing to the two grantees as the best dressed dish could be!

Connected with Nostradamus and the town where he dwelt, there is a tradition of the following very remarkable story. In the month of April, 1697, an apparition of the great seer of Salon appeared one night to an artisan dwelling in that town, commanding him on pain of death to observe inviolable secrecy in respect to what he was required to do. He was to go to the Intendant of the province, and require letters of recommendation, that should enable him on his arrival at Versailles to obtain a private audience of the king (Louis XIV.) "What thou art to say to the king," continued the apparition, "thou wilt not be informed of till the day of thy being at court, when I shall appear to thee again, and give thee full instructions; but

remember thy life depends upon absolute secrecy towards every one save the Intendant."

The apparition then vanished, leaving the poor man half dead with fright; and soon after his wife, finding him in such a condition, earnestly besought him to tell her the cause. Long did he resist her importunities, until at length, for the sake of peace, he confided to her all that had occurred; but no sooner had he confessed, than he paid the penalty of his indiscretion with his life.

Shortly after this tragical event had occurred another inhabitant of the same town received a visit from the apparition of Nostradamus, and notwithstanding the threat held out in the event of a betrayal of the secret, informed his brother of what had occurred, and then, as in the previous instance, paid the penalty with his life. And now, not only in the town of Salon, but for many miles round, these two sudden deaths became the subject of general conversation.

The same apparition again appeared after some days to one François Michel, a farrier,

who lived very near the scene of his previous exploits, and who, after profiting by what had occurred, at once repaired to the Intendant. It was with the greatest difficulty that François could obtain an interview with the great man, who treated him as if he were of unsound mind. "I can readily conceive, your excellency," said the farrier, who was a plain, sensible man, "that I must seem to you to be playing an exceedingly ridiculous part; but if you will be pleased to order your officials to examine into the fact of the late sudden deaths in our town, I flatter myself that your excellency will recall me."

François' expectation was confirmed by the fact that he was again sent for by the now astonished Intendant, who listened to his tale with the greatest attention; and then giving him despatches for M. de Baobefieux, Minister of State, and money to defray his travelling expenses, wished him a prosperous journey.

In due time François arrived at Versailles, and was not a little perplexed about what he



should say to the minister, as the apparition had not appeared to him again according to his promise. But on that very night Nostradamus' ghost at the witching hour of midnight drew aside the curtains of his bed, bid him take courage, and dictated to him word for word what he was to deliver to M. de Baobefieux, and what to say to the king, and to them alone. "Many difficulties will be laid in your way," added the apparition, "in obtaining this private audience, but beware of desisting from your purpose, and of letting your secret be drawn from you by the minister or any one else, under pain of instant death."

The minister did his utmost to worm out the secret; but François was firm, and kept the most rigid silence respecting the dreadful secret which he was to confide solely to the king, affirming that his life was at stake, and concluding with these words, "That your excellency may not think that what I am instructed to tell the king is all a mere farce, be pleased to say that his majesty at the last hunting party

at Fontainebleau had himself seen the apparition, that his horse took fright at it, and started aside, that his majesty, as the appearance was only momentary, took it for a deception of sight, and therefore abstained from mentioning it to any one."

The mention of this incident so struck the minister, that he thought it his duty to acquaint the king of François' arrival, and to give him an account of the wonderful tale he had related. And not a little was he surprised when Louis, after a momentary silence, required to speak with the farrier without a moment's delay.

What passed between the two at this extraordinary interview has never transpired. All that is known is that François, the humble provincial farrier, after having staid for three or four days at the court of the *grande monarque*, publicly took leave of the king, by his own permission, as he was setting out for the chase. And it was asserted that the Duc de Duras, captain of the king's guard, was heard to say aloud on the occasion, "Sire, if your majesty

had not expressly ordered me to bring this man to your presence, I should never have done it, for most assuredly he is only a fool!" The king replied, with a significant smile, "My dear Duras, thus is it that men frequently judge falsely of others; François is a more sensible man than you and your friends imagine."

This speech of the king made a great impression on the public in general. People exerted all their ingenuity, but in vain, to decipher the meaning of the conference between the mighty monarch and the humble farrier. The vulgar, always inclined to the marvellous, took it into their heads that imposts, which had been laid on by reason of the long and burdensome wars which marked the reign of Louis XIV., were the real motives of it, and drew from it happy omens of speedy relief; but they were entirely mistaken, as the imposts continued long after, until Marlborough's great victories humbled the *grande nation* to the dust, and eventually brought about peace.

François, the apparition seer, having thus

taken leave of the king, returned to his provincial home. He received money from the minister, and a strict command not to mention to any living soul what had passed between his sovereign and himself. This command he religiously obeyed to the end of his days, thus proving himself equal to the most illustrious warrior of modern days, the celebrated Count Von Moltke, of whom it has been so well said that "he is able to hold his tongue in seven languages." Rouillet, the leading artist of his day, was employed to paint the fortunate farrier of Salon : the portrait was extensively engraved, and copies still exist in several collections of old prints of Paris, which show the pensive features of a man about forty years of age, who more than once saw the apparition of old Nostradamus, and had the wit and skill ever after to hold his tongue.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE FOUR SISTERS.

Nothing, perhaps, displays the difference between the customs of the 16th and the 19th centuries more strikingly, in what relates peculiarly to the "Upper Ten," than the fact that during the former period young ladies of *haut ton* rose at 6 A.M., drank small beer or home-brewed ale for breakfast, and that their studies during the day were directed with a view to acquire some knowledge of the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues. Indeed, there is an anecdote on record that "ale," which has since become so celebrated in the halls of our universities, and the mansions of country squires, was only discovered in the reign of England's "Maiden Queen," who was herself a good Greek scholar, and able to talk Latin with facility.

Nowell, Head Master of Westminster School, subsequently Dean of St. Paul's, in the reign of "bloody" Queen Mary, "was much given to angling; but," says quaint old Fuller, "while Nowell was catching of fishes, Bishop Bonner was for catching Nowell, and would certainly have sent him to the shambles, had not a good London merchant conveyed him away on the seas." Nowell was one day fishing on the banks of the Thames, when he received the first intimation of his danger, which was so pressing that he was unable to return to his own house, but compelled to escape to the Continent without a moment's delay. When, in the first year of England's happy deliverance, he was enabled to return home, he remembered he had left, on the day of his flight, a bottle of beer carefully stowed away in a hole by the river's side; there he went to look for it; and, says Fuller, "he found no bottle, but a gun—such the sound at the opening thereof; and this is believed (casualty is mother of more inventions than industry) to be the *origin of bottled ale in England.*"

Amongst the learned ladies of the court of Queen Elizabeth, none shone more brightly than the four daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, the tutor of King Edward VI. Mildred, the eldest, married William Cecil, afterwards Lord Burleigh, the celebrated statesman of Elizabeth's reign; and so deeply learned that she could read with critical accuracy Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. She was a great patroness of scholars, and presented a Hebrew Bible to the University of Cambridge, accompanied by a letter written by herself in Greek.

Anna, the second daughter, married Sir Nicholas Bacon, and became the mother of one of England's greatest men in point of mental culture, the celebrated Francis Lord Bacon. She was no less a scholar than her elder sister, and is famed for having translated from the Latin Bishop Jewel's famous *Apology for the Church of England*, which was so faithfully and admirably done, that Jewel, on revising the manuscript, did not find it necessary to alter a single word.

Katherine, the youngest daughter, in addition

to her knowledge of Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, was also celebrated as a poetess of no common order. She married Sir Henry Killebrew, and was buried in the Church of St. Thomas the Apostle, in Vintry Yard, London, where a handsome monument was erected to her memory, inscribed with a Latin epitaph composed by herself, and which in English reads as follows :—

“ To God I sleep, but in God I shall rise,  
And in the flesh, my Lord and Saviour see.  
Call me not dead, my soul to Christ is fled,  
And soon both soul and body joined shall be.”

Elizabeth, the third daughter, and heroine of our present tale, was equally remarkable for her learning as her three sisters. She wrote epitaphs and elegies in Greek, Latin, and English verse. She married, first, Sir Thomas Hobby, of Bisham, the ambassador of Elizabeth at the French court; and, second, John Lord Russell, whom she survived, and wrote (in three languages) the epitaph on the tomb which she erected to his memory in Westminster Abbey. Lady Russell's second husband was great grand-uncle of that



admirable and devoted patriot, the Lord Russell so infamously put to death by the degraded Stuart, for his glorious resistance to the crafty measures of the Papists, and which need to be resisted as determinately by every true lover of his country in the present day as they were two centuries ago.

The following apparition-story is related concerning Elizabeth Lady Russell, the third daughter of Sir Anthony Cooke. She was buried at Bisham, beside her first husband, Sir Thomas Hobby; and in the adjoining mansion there is still to be seen her portrait, representing her in widow's weeds, and with a face of death-like pallor. The apparition of her ladyship, in close resemblance to the portrait, which is still supposed to haunt a certain chamber of the mansion, is thus accounted for by local tradition.

Lady Russell had by her first husband a son, who, unlike his mother and her sisters, had a most determined antipathy to every kind of learning; and such was his obstinate repugnance against learning to write that he would wilfully blot over his copy-books in the most slovenly manner.

This conduct so irritated his refined and intellectual mother, that in order to cure him of such propensity to idleness, and doubtless in remembrance of the advice of the wise King of Israel, "Spare the rod and spoil the child," she beat her son again and again, and growing stronger by the exercise of birching her stupid child, at length hit one blow too many, which is said to have caused the child's death. As a punishment for her cruelty, the stern mother is doomed to haunt the room where the fatal occurrence took place; and as her *apparition* glides through the room, there is always seen *a river passing close before her, in which she is ever trying, but in vain, to wash off the blood-stains of her son from her hands.*

In confirmation of the truth of this tale, it is certain that about the year 1850, in altering a window-shutter, a quantity of very ancient copy-books were discovered pushed into the rubble between the joists of the floor, and one of these books was so covered all over with blots, that it appeared to answer exactly to the description of the legend of the learned mother and her obtuse son.

## CHAPTER IX.

### ST. MARK'S EVE.

“ ‘Tis now,’ replied the village belle,  
    ‘St. Mark’s mysterious eve,  
And all that old traditions tell,  
    I tremblingly believe.  
How, when the midnight signal tolls,  
    Along the churchyard green,  
A mournful train of sentenced souls  
    In winding-sheets are seen.  
The ghosts of all whom death shall doom  
    Within the coming year,  
In pale procession walk the gloom,  
    Amid the silence drear.’ ”—*Montgomery.*

IN Yorkshire and other northern counties of England, it is commonly believed by the peasantry that if a person keeps watch in the church porch on *St. Mark’s Eve* (April 24) for an hour on each side of midnight for three successive years—some consider one year is sufficient—he will see the forms of those doomed to die within the twelve-

month passing one by one into the church ; and if the watcher fall asleep during his vigil, he will die himself in the course of the year.

Henderson, in his *Folk Lore*, relates an instance known to him of an old woman at Scarborough, who kept St. Mark's vigil in the porch of St. Mary's Church in that town, A.D. 1786. Figure after figure glided into the church, turning round to her as they went in, so that she easily recognized their familiar faces. At length, one figure, which she recognized as an apparition of herself, turned and gazed at her ; she screamed, and fell senseless to the ground. Her neighbours found her there in the morning, and carried her home, but the presage of death proved true, and she speedily sank under the shock.

The best authenticated instance of this superstition is to be found amongst the Hollis MSS. in the Lansdowne collection. The writer, Colonel Gervase Hollis, of Great Grimsby, in Lincolnshire, during the reign of Charles I., and by no means a superstitious man, relates the following tale, which he received from Mr. Liveman Ram-

paine, minister of God's Word at Great Grimsby, who was household chaplain to Sir Thomas Munson, of Burton, in Lincoln, at the time of the occurrence.

In the year 1634, two of the parishioners of Burton agreed to watch in the churchyard at Burton on St. Mark's Eve, in order to try whether or no they should see "the *spectra* or *phantasma* of those persons which should die in that parish in the year following." With this intention, after having first performed the usual ceremonies, late in the night, the moon then shining out very clear, they repaired to the church porch, and there seated themselves, continuing at that spot until "near twelve of the clock;" at which hour, being wearied, partly with expectation and partly with fear, they determined to depart, but were prevented by being "held fast by a kind of insensible violence, not being able to move a foot. About midnight, upon a sudden, (as if the moon had been eclipsed,) they were environed with a black darkness; immediately after, a kind of light, as if it had been a resultancy from torches.

Then appears, coming towards the church porch, the minister of the place, with a book in his hand, and after him one in a winding-sheet, whom they both knew to resemble one of their neighbours. The church doors immediately fly open, and through pass *the apparitions*, and then the doors clap to again. Then they seem to hear a muttering as if it were the burial service, with a rattling of bones and noise of earth, as in the filling up of a grave.

“Suddenly a still silence, and immediately after *the apparition of the curate again*, with another of their neighbours following in a winding-sheet, and so a *third, fourth, and fifth*, every one attended with the same circumstance as the first. These all having passed away, there ensued a serenity of the sky, the moon shining bright, as at the first; they themselves being restored to their former liberty to walk away, which they did, sufficiently affrighted. The next day they kept within doors, and met not together, being both of them exceedingly ill, by reason of the affrightment which had terrified them the night before. Then they conferred their notes, and

both of them could very well remember the circumstances of every passage.

“Three of the *apparitions* they well knew to resemble three of their neighbours; but the *fourth* (which seemed an infant) and the *fifth* (like an old man) they could not conceive any resemblance of. After this, they confidently reported to every one what they had done and seen, and in order designed to death those three of their neighbours, *which came to pass accordingly*.

“Shortly after their deaths, a woman in the town was delivered of a child, which died likewise. So that now there wanted but one (the old man) to accomplish their predictions, which likewise came to pass in this manner: in that winter, about mid-January, began a sharp and long frost, during the continuance of which, some of Sir John Munson's friends in Cheshire, having some occasion of intercourse with him, despatched away a foot messenger (an ancient man) with letters to him. This man, travelling this bitter weather over the mountains in Derbyshire, was nearly perished with cold, yet at last he arrived

at Burton with his letters, *where within a day or two he died*. And these men,\* as soon as ever they saw him, said peremptorily that *he was the man whose apparition they had seen*, and that doubtless he would die before he returned, which accordingly he did."

Another custom connected with *St. Mark's Eve*, of a very different nature from the foregoing, appears to have been enjoyed by our simple-minded, if not superstitious peasantry, as late as the middle of the last century. In a curious publication entitled *Poor Robin's Almanack*, for 1770, we meet with the following stanza:—

" On *St. Mark's Eve*, at twelve o'clock,  
The fair maid will watch her smock  
To find her husband in the dark,  
By praying unto good *St. Mark*."

The practice was for the village maidens, who were desirous of finding a help-meet for better or worse in the course of the year, to hang their dress before the fire during the night; the rest of the household having retired to rest, the anxious damsel would fix her eyes patiently on the door



until *an apparition*, with the resemblance of the coming man, would enter, turn the hanging garment, and thus betray the future husband to the mind of the expectant maid.

Among other curious customs still lingering in different parts of England in connection with St. Mark's Day, there is one at Alnwick, respecting the admission of *freemen of the borough*, which deserves a passing notice. Those who are to be made freemen march on horseback, in great ceremony, dressed in white, headed by the Duke of Northumberland's bailiff and servants. When they arrive at the *Freemen's Well*—a large, dirty pool on the border of the common—they all deliberately walk into and through it, from which they emerge begrimed with mud and dripping all over. Then, hastily changing their clothes, and comforting themselves with something hot within in order to keep the cold without, these newly-baptized freemen return to the town, where a ceremonial reception by fantastically dressed women awaits them, and end the day by calling at each other's houses and imbibing more drink.

It is traditionally reported that this singular custom has reference to a visit which King John, of evil memory, once paid to Alnwick some seven centuries ago. Having been accidentally "soused" in this identical pool when on a tour through the northern parts of his kingdom, he punished the inhabitants for their bad roads by imposing upon them, in the charter of their common, an obligation that every one taking up the freedom of the borough should subject himself to a similar process of a bath in dirty water!

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## CHAPTER X.

### THE SCEPTIC LORD.

So many different versions have been published respecting the death of Thomas second Lord Lyttleton of the first creation, on November 27th, 1779, famed, alas! both for his irregularity of life and his sceptical ideas on the subject of religion, that it will require some care in our investigation of the case, in order that we may discover the exact truth of what may be fairly considered the best authenticated story in the long list of *apparition* literature.

The family of Lyttleton has held considerable possessions in the county of Worcester since the beginning of the 13th century. In the reign of Henry VI. they fell into the hands of Elizabeth, sole daughter and heiress of Thomas de Leettleton,

(as the name was then spelt,) who had held the office of "esquire of the body" to the three preceding monarchs, viz., Richard II., Henry IV., and his son, the hero of Agincourt.

The heiress bestowed her hand upon Thomas Westcote, Esq., a gentleman of an ancient Devonshire family; but she being, as Lord Coke expresses it, "fair and of noble spirit, and having large possessions and inheritances from her ancestors," resolved to continue the honour of her name, required before marriage that her issue should bear that of "Leetleton," as had been done three centuries before in the great Percy family, when the heiress of that house, Agnes de Percy, married Josceline, brother of our Henry the First's wife, and a lineal male descendant of the celebrated Emperor Charlemagne.

Tenth in descent from the marriage of Thomas Westcote and the heiress Elizabeth brings us to Sir George Lyttleton, the fifth baronet of that name. He was born in 1709. After representing the borough of Okehampton in Parliament, and becoming secretary to the Prince of Wales in

1737, and subsequently Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was raised to the peerage in 1757, as Lord Lyttleton of Frankley. He married Lucy, daughter of Hugh Fortescue, Esq., of Filleigh, in Devon, whose beautiful character is thus touchingly drawn by her husband, as may be seen in the epitaph on her tomb in Hagley Church, Worcestershire.

“Made to engage all hearts and charm all eyes ;  
Though meek, magnanimous ; though witty, wise ;  
Polite as all her life in courts had been ;  
Yet good as she the world had never seen ;  
The noble sire of an exalted mind,  
With gentlest female tenderness combined ;  
Her speech was the melodious voice of love,  
Her song the warbling of the vernal grove,  
Her eloquence was sweeter than her song,  
Soft as her heart, and as her reason strong ;  
Her form each beauty of her mind exprest,  
Her mind was virtue by the Graces drest.”

Sir George, the first Lord Lyttleton, who is celebrated in literature as the author of a valuable work on *The Life of St. Paul*, died in 1773, leaving by the above named Lucy, who predeceased him, an only son Thomas, the second and last lord of that creation, who married Apphia,

the daughter of Broome Witts, Esq., of Chipping Norton, and is the hero of our present tale. The title, which expired at the time of this lord's death in 1779, was re-created in the person of his uncle, Lord Westcote, of the Irish peerage, in 1794, whose descendant in the present generation is the distinguished representative of the house of Lyttleton, and who by means of family papers has contributed his quota to the authenticity of this *apparition* story.

In the middle of the last century there was residing in the neighbourhood of Hagley Park, the seat of Lord Lyttleton, a family of the name of Amphlet of Clent. A relationship existed between the two families: Anne Lyttleton, aunt of the first lord, having married Joseph Amphlet of Clent, became thereby the ancestress of the existing generation. In June, 1778, Mr. Amphlet died, leaving a widow and four daughters to lament their heavy loss.

On the following New Year's day Thomas Lord Lyttleton presented the young ladies with some elegant paraphernalia, together with a long

letter addressed to the mother, with whom he wished to ingratiate himself, as she was a woman of excellent understanding and great dignity; and Lord Lyttleton was conscious that his principles on the subject of morality and religion were of a nature calculated to make a mother beware of encouraging too great an intimacy between her daughter and their wealthy kinsman and neighbour.

The extraordinary letter alluded to was a sort of parody upon Scripture, being entitled, *The First Chapter of St. Thomas' Epistle to the Clentiles*, and began as follows:—"Behold I will speak to you, O daughters of Clent, in the language of wisdom, and give you understanding in the paths of peace." The whole consisted of twenty-eight verses in the same strain, containing much good advice; and though the style was rather too artificial and rhapsodical, it proved only too attractive, and the result was fatal to the peace of all concerned.

Mrs. Amphlet read the epistle to her daughters without apprehending any evil consequences, but

bitterly repented having done so ere long, for the result was that her three unmarried daughters, to the surprise of every one in the neighbourhood, suddenly quitted their maternal home, in order to take up their abode at Hagley Park, contrary to the express prohibition of their mother, who was deeply shocked at their living under the roof of a man like Lord Lyttleton, whose free character was known to all.

Of the four daughters, Mary, the eldest, was already married to Mr. Cameron, and in whose *Life* there is a confirmation of this apparition story; and the younger ones, Eliza, Christian, and Margaret, then living at Hagley Park, became in after years the wives respectively of Colonel Andrews, Mr. William Wilkinson, and Mr. Noel.

In September, 1779, Miss Christian Amphlet, together with Mrs. Flood, a lady of Irish extraction, accompanied Lord Lyttleton to Ireland. About a month later, the other sisters, Eliza and Margaret, who had remained at Hagley during their absence, met the party on their return to



England, when the three sisters accompanied Lord Lyttleton to his town residence in Hill-street, Berkeley-square, where they remained without any thing particular having occurred until Thursday, November 25th, in the following month.

In the course of that night, about 2 a.m., Lord Lyttleton was awoke, as he declared the following morning, by the sound apparently of a bird fluttering within the folds of his bed curtain, which all of a sudden flew away, leaving in its place the form of a dignified woman, whom Lord Lyttleton recognised as the mother of the Miss Amphlets. The apparition addressed him, warning him to prepare for death, as he would very shortly be summoned to another world; to which he replied, "I hope not very soon—not in two months." "Yes," replied the apparition, "*within hree days*;" and then suddenly vanished.

On the following morning he related at the breakfast table the occurrence of the preceding night, and accounted for it by mentioning that a few days before he had been talking with Mrs.

Dawson, when a robin redbreast had flown into the room, which had caused a momentary disturbance. However, he endeavoured to ridicule what had occurred, proposing on the following day that the whole party should go down to his house at Epsom, where he hoped that the gloom caused by the scene of the preceding night would be entirely dispelled. Shortly after, when he was dressed in his state robes to go to the House of Lords—for Parliament was opened on that day by George III. in person, and Lord Lyttleton was there, as his name appears on the roll of the peers then present—he remarked to those around him, that he did not look like a person about to die the next day. Towards the evening, on seeing the eldest Miss Amphlet look unusually sad, he remarked to her, “You are foolish and fearful; I have lived two days, and have no doubt but that I shall outlive the third.”

On the following morning, which was Saturday, November 27th, 1779, Lord Lyttleton informed his friends at breakfast that he felt extremely

well, and believed, as he lightly expressed it, that he should "*bilk* the ghost." In the course of the day he went down to Pitt-place, a mansion near Epsom, which Lord Lyttleton was said to have won from Lord Foley in some gambling transaction. He was accompanied by a party of friends, consisting of the three Miss Amphlets, Mrs. Flood, his first cousin the Hon. Mr. Fortescue, (son of the first Baron Fortescue, and who himself became the first earl of that name, dying in 1841,) and Captain, afterwards Admiral, Wolseley. They were joined in the evening of that memorable Saturday night by other visitors, and notably by Mr. William Russell, an organist of Guildford, whose company was much courted on account of his musical talent, and who has left a narrative in his own handwriting of what occurred at Pitt-place at the time of Lord Lyttleton's death; but it is somewhat incomplete as regards *the apparition* previously seen by him when the time of his departure was foretold.

As the evening wore away, and midnight approached, his nervousness visibly increased;

and one of the visitors remarked during his absence from the room, "Lyttleton will frighten himself into another fit with this foolish ghost story." On which the company agreed to put a clock standing in the room forward; and when he returned, one remarked, "Hurrah, Lyttleton, twelve o'clock is past; you've jockeyed the ghost: now the best thing to do is to go quietly to bed, and in the morning you will be all right." To which Lord Lyttleton replied, "Very well, if I must leave you, agreeable as you all are, for I have to think over my speech for Wednesday next. I have actually brought down some books for the purpose."

As he was undressing he talked cheerfully to his valet, William Stuckey, telling him to have his accustomed rolls for breakfast on the following morning, stepped into bed with his waistcoat on, and as the servant was in the act of pulling it off, placed his hand on his side, sank back in his servant's arms, and *expired without a word or a groan*. He had eaten a good dinner, and did not appear to be in any way out of health, save that

he experienced a slight rising in the throat whilst eating. Dr. Faulkner, his physician, mentioned that he had complained the previous summer of a bad pain in his side, and concluded that some large vessel had suddenly given way, which produced instantaneous death.

Such is the plain and truthful account, though it has been frequently related in a slightly different way,\* which Lord Westcote has recorded of his relative's sudden death. Mrs. Flood, the eldest Miss Amphlet, Captain Wolseley, and a servant named Faulkner, who was with him in London on the morning after he had seen *the apparition* of Mrs. Amphlet on the preceding Thursday, related to Lord Westcote the particu-

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\* Mr. William Russell, in his *Narrative*, says, when Lord Lyttleton went up stairs, and some of the guests were preparing to depart, his valet came down to fetch some mint-water, which he was in the habit of taking, leaving his lordship alone. At that moment, the clock of the Parish Church, which of course had not been tampered with, began slowly to strike the true midnight hour. The valet returned to his master, and called out loudly; the company ran up stairs, and found his lordship had fallen dead.

lars of that scene and the expressions. William Stuckey, the valet who attended him to his chamber on the night of his death, and in whose arms he expired, related to Lord Westcote the exact incidents within a few days of its occurrence, in the presence of Mr. Fortescue and Captain Wolseley; so that as far as evidence goes, we have as good as any can possibly be on such a subject.

In addition to the awe arising from the sudden death of Lord Lyttleton, which had been predicted by the apparition three days before its occurrence in the way already related, the party at Pitt-place were additionally horrified by receiving intelligence on the following morning that the mother of the Miss Amphlets had expired in Warwickshire, unknown to them, at the very time when she appeared to Lord Lyttleton on the Thursday night, and warned him of his coming doom. This statement is made on the authority of a MS., written at the commencement of this century by a Derbyshire gentleman whose mother was related to Lord Lyttleton.

Moreover, in this remarkable account of Lord Lyttleton's death there is one more incident to be recorded of the apparition order, as important as the event itself. It appears that one of his friends, Mr. Peter Miles Andrews, M.P. for Northamptonshire, was invited to join the party at Pitt-place on Saturday, November 27th, but had declined on account of an engagement at Dartford Mills, belonging to his partner, Mr. Pigou, where he slept that night, and where, *a few minutes after twelve*, according to Mr. Andrews' own account, Lord Lyttleton thrust himself between the curtains, dressed in the yellow nightgown in which he used to read at night, and said, in a mournful tone, "Ah, Andrews, it is all over!" "Oh," replied his friend quickly, "are you there, you dog?" Receiving no answer to this, Andrews exclaimed, "Oh! you are at some of your old tricks;" and then threw a slipper at the apparition, which his servant found next morning by the door. When Andrews asked, "Where is Lord Lyttleton? he is surely in the house;" the servant

replied that he knew nothing about it; and on inquiry this was of course confirmed. At 4 p.m. the following afternoon a despatch from Pitt-place was received by Mr. Andrews, giving an account of Lord Lyttleton's sudden death the night before, at the exact time\* in which he had appeared by the bedside of Andrews, in accordance with an agreement between these two friends, that the one who died first should appear to the other. This finale to the Lyttleton apparition is related in the *Life of Mrs. Cameron*, (p. 435,) who heard Mrs. Flood, who was at Pitt-place at the time of Lord Lyttleton's death, relate the particulars to her mother.

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\* It is deserving of note to see how exactly two of the accounts, relating to Lord Lyttleton's death, confirm their mutual truthfulness. According to Mr. Russell's *Narrative*, Lord Lyttleton died as the clock was striking twelve. According to Mr. Andrews, the apparition of his friend, just at that moment deceased, appeared to him *a few minutes after twelve*, which can be explained by the fact that Dartford Mills, where Mr. Andrews was then sleeping, is a few miles *east* of Greenwich, and Pitt-place a few miles *west*, so that the mean time of the two places exactly corresponds with the two narratives.



In Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, the great moralist, when alluding to the fact of Lord Lyttleton's sudden death, which naturally created much excitement at the time, is represented as saying, "It is the most extraordinary occurrence in my days. I heard it from Lord Westcote, his uncle. I am so glad to have evidence of the spiritual world, that I am willing to believe it." Dr. Adams replied, "You have evidence enough—good evidence, which needs no support." (Vol. iv., p. 313.) Mr. Croker, in his edition of *Boswell*, notes that he had heard Mr. Andrews relate the details respecting Lord Lyttleton's death more than once, but always reluctantly, and evidently with a solemn conviction of their truth.

As a further confirmation of the fact that Lord Lyttleton was forewarned of his approaching death, Mrs. Thrale, the well-known friend of Johnson, writing to a friend at the time, says, "On Saturday, (*i.e.*, the day on which Lord Lyttleton died,) a lady from Wales dropped in, and told us she had been at Drury Lane last night. 'How were you entertained?' said I.

‘Very strangely indeed,’ was the reply; ‘not with the play, though, for I scarcely knew what they acted, but with the discourse of a Captain Askew, who averred that a friend of his, the profligate Lord Lyttleton, had certainly seen a spirit, who has warned him that he is to die within the next three days, and I have thought of nothing else ever since.’” Within a few hours after this conversation had taken place all was over with the sceptic lord, exactly as the avenging apparition had forewarned him.

As a counterpoise to the melancholy life and death of Lord Lyttleton, we may quote the case of his contemporary, Lord Chedworth, who had similar doubts respecting a future world, but which were happily set at rest by an apparition of a departed friend. Mrs. Crawford relates in the *Metropolitan Magazine* of 1836, that Lord Chedworth had living with him the orphan daughter of his sister, a Miss Wright, from whom Mrs. Crawford received the account. Lord Chedworth had a great friendship for a gentleman who, like himself, entertained doubts

as to the existence of the soul in another world. One morning, Miss Wright observed on her uncle's joining her at the breakfast table, that he was very thoughtful, ate little, and was unusually silent. At length he said, "Molly, I had a strange visitor last night; my old friend B—— came to me." "How?" asked Miss Wright. "Did he come after I went to bed?" "*His spirit did*," said Lord Chedworth, solemnly. "Oh, my dear uncle! how could the spirit of a living man appear?" "He is dead, beyond doubt," replied his lordship: "listen, and then laugh as much as you please. I had not entered my bedroom many minutes, when he stood before me. Like you, I could not believe but that I was looking on the living man, and so accosted him; but *the apparition* answered, 'Chedworth, I died this night at eight o'clock. I came to tell you there is another world beyond the grave: there is a righteous God that judgeth all.'" "Depend upon it, uncle, it was only a dream." But while Miss Wright was yet speaking, a groom on horseback rode up the

avenue, and immediately afterwards delivered a letter to Lord Chedworth, announcing the sudden death of his friend. The effect of this solemn warning upon the mind of Lord Chedworth was as happy as it was permanent; all his doubts were at once removed, and for ever.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### PREMONITIONS OF DEATH.

IN the opening chapter of this work on *Apparitions* as a narrative of facts, we had occasion to refer to some of the various omens which are supposed to foretell the approach of death to some member of the family where such things are seen. These solemn premonitions are not confined to any single class of the community, but are common with high and low alike; though there appears to be a different sort of way by which such warnings are conveyed—like a tutelary deity of the destructive, rather than of the preserving, order for the three nations which compose the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Thus, in the latter we have the *Ban-shee*; in Scotland, the *Bodach-Glas*; while in our own

southern portion of the empire called England, we have the more practical explanation of the matter conveyed in the form of a dream. I propose, therefore, in the present chapter to give as well-authenticated an instance as I have been enabled to discover of each of these several national and characteristic Premonitions of Death.

Mrs. Schimmelpenninck, in her interesting *Memoirs*, gives the well-attested instance of a presage of death conveyed under the form of a dream. When Dr. Priestly occupied the post of librarian to Lord Shelburne, (great grand-uncle of the present Marquis of Lansdowne,) he was sent for one day, during Lord Shelburne's absence from home, to see his son, Mr. Petty. On the doctor's arrival, Mr. Petty told him that he had been much disturbed during the night by uncomfortable dreams, which he wished to relate to Dr. Priestly, hoping that by so doing the painful impressions would pass away. He had dreamed that he had been very unwell, when suddenly the whole household appeared as if about to undertake a journey; he was too ill to sit up, but was

carried, lying down, into the carriage; and his surprise was great on seeing carriage after carriage arrive in an almost interminable procession. He felt conscious that he was alone, and unable to speak; he could only look on in mute astonishment.

The procession at length moved slowly away. After pursuing the road for many miles towards London, it at length appeared to stop at the door of a church, which Mr. Petty recognised as that of High Wycombe, and the burial-place of the Shelburne family. He then felt as if he was carried into the church; and, on looking back, he perceived the long procession all draped in black, and that the carriage from which he had been taken appeared to resemble a hearse. Here the dream ended, and he awoke.

Dr. Priestly told him that his dream was the result of a feverish cold, and that the impression would soon pass off. Nevertheless, he thought it best to send for the family physician. The next day Mr. Petty was much better; on the third he was completely convalescent, so that the doctor

permitted him to leave his room : but as it was the month of January, he desired him on no account to leave the house, and with that precaution bid him adieu. Late on the following afternoon, as the doctor was returning from seeing other patients, and his road lay by the gates of Bowood, the seat of Lord Shelburne, he thought he might as well call to inquire after Mr. Petty. What was his surprise, when he had passed the lodge, at seeing the youth himself, without his hat, apparently running to meet him ! The doctor was greatly astonished, as it was a bitterly cold day, and the ground covered with snow. He rode towards Mr. Petty to rebuke him for his imprudence, when the figure, which he had seen a moment before, suddenly disappeared he knew not how. The doctor thought it very extraordinary, but that probably the youth did not wish to be found transgressing his physician's orders ; and so he rode at once to the house, where he learnt that *Mr. Petty had just expired.*

Of the *Bodach-Glas*, or "dark grey man," whose appearance is said to herald the approach of



death to certain clans in Scotland, and of which Sir Walter Scott has made such effective use in *Waverley* when relating the end of his hero, Fergus Mac Ivor, we have the following well-authenticated instance of its having been seen in our own day.

The late excellent and justly popular Earl of Eglinton, whose sudden death was truly felt as a national loss in Scotland, and who is famed for an attempt to revive an ancient custom of mediæval times by the tournament held at Eglinton Castle in 1839, was engaged on the 4th of October, 1861, in playing, on the links of St. Andrew's, at the national game of golf. Suddenly he stopped in the middle of a game, exclaiming, "I can play no longer, there is the *Bodach-Glas*. I have seen it for the *third* time; something fearful is going to befall me." Within a few hours, Lord Eglinton was a corpse; he died the same night, and with such suddenness, that he was engaged in handing a candlestick to a lady who was retiring to her room when he expired. Henderson, in *Folk Lore*, mentions that he received this account of Lord

Eglinton's death from a Scotch clergyman, who endorses every particular as authentic and perfectly true.

Singularly enough this much-lamented nobleman had a warning only a few months previous, concerning his second wife's sudden death, conveyed, however, on this occasion by a dream. He had married in November, 1858, the Lady Adela Capel, only daughter of the Earl of Essex. Shortly after her confinement in December, 1860, he left home to attend a wedding, and during his absence dreamed that he read in the *Times* newspaper an announcement of Lady Eglinton's death on a day not far distant. The dream affected him a good deal, and his dejection on the day following was apparent to everyone. He returned home at once, and found his wife progressing favourably, and his alarm subsided. Soon after, the countess caught cold from having removed to another room; illness came on, and her husband was aroused one night with tidings that she was in a dangerous state. It was the last day of the old year, and the very morning

indicated in his dream. Lord Eglinton rose up, as he afterwards expressed it, with a yell of agony. Before nightfall his wife expired.

Of the *Ban-shee*, or as Moore terms it in one of his *Irish Melodies*,

“How oft has the *Benshee* cried,”

as the harbinger of death in certain families of ancient descent in the Emerald Isle, Sir Walter Scott, in a note to the *Lady of the Lake*, gives the following account from the MS. memoirs of Lady Fanshawe.

Her husband, Sir Richard Fanshawe, and herself, during their abode in Ireland, paid a visit to the head of a renowned sept, who resided in his old baronial castle, surrounded by a moat. One night Lady Fanshawe was awakened by a shrill, supernatural scream; and looking out of bed, beheld, by the moonlight, a female face and part of a human form hovering at the window. The face was that of a young and rather handsome woman, though deadly pale; and the hair, which was of beautiful auburn, was loose and dishevelled. The dress, which Lady Fanshawe, notwithstand-

ing her terror, accurately noticed, was that of the ancient Irish. This *apparition* continued in the same position for some time; and then, after uttering two shrill shrieks, suddenly vanished.

In the morning Lady Fanshawe communicated to her host what she had witnessed during the night; and found him prepared, not only to credit, but to explain the meaning of the *apparition*. "A near relation of mine," he said, "expired last night in this castle. We concealed our expectation of this event from you, lest it should throw a gloom over the cheerful reception we desired to give you, and which was your due. Now, before such an event happens in this family and this castle, the female *apparition*, or Ban-shee, whom you have seen, is always visible. She is believed to be the spirit of a woman of inferior rank, whom one of my ancestors degraded himself by marrying, and whom afterwards, to expiate the dishonour done to his family, he caused to be drowned in the castle moat." Such is the mode of accounting for the appearance of the Ban-shee as the harbinger of approaching death.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE TWO PRIME MINISTERS.

IN the previous chapter we have been considering instances of Premonitions of Death vouchsafed to those who were the sufferers themselves ; in the present I propose to adduce two well-authenticated instances of persons of the highest rank in the kingdom, whose sudden and unexpected deaths by assassination was in each case foreseen and revealed to others, who confidently spoke of the event before it had taken place.

Lord Clarendon and Bishop Burnet have both related the fact of the assassination of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, (who certainly held the office of chief minister to Charles I., though probably the more modern title of "Prime Minister" had not then come into vogue,) having

been foretold by an apparition. The story is recorded circumstantially by the former historian, and is rather too tedious to be repeated, but the substance is as follows :—

About six months before the duke's assassination, which took place on the 23rd August, 1628, at No. 10, High-street, Portsmouth, in a house which still exists, with slight modern alterations, as Mr. Twose, an officer of the king's wardrobe, was in bed at Windsor Castle, an apparition of an old man with a venerable aspect appeared at his bedside, and drawing aside the curtains of his bed, asked him if he knew who he was. Poor Twose, half dead with fright, was unable to answer his question, until, on being asked a second time, he stammered out that he thought he was Sir George Villiers, the father of the Duke of Buckingham. Burnet says that Twose had formerly been in the household of Sir George, which may account for his recognition of his former master.

The apparition told him he was right, and then bade him go to the duke, and assure him that if

he did not endeavour to ingratiate himself with the people, and seek to lessen their enmity against him by a change of measures, he would not be suffered to live long.

The following morning Mr. Twose tried to persuade himself that what he had heard during the night was only a disturbed dream, and thought no more on the subject. The next night, however, the same apparition visited him, reproached him for his refusal to attend to the warning, and told him he should have no peace until he did so. Mr. Twose then promised to obey; but when the morning came, he still again considered it no more than a dream, and acted accordingly. On the *third* night the same apparition again appeared at his bedside, and, as Lord Clarendon declares, "with a terrible countenance, bitterly reproached him for not performing what he had promised to do."

Mr. Twose then ventured to address the apparition, and to assure him that he would willingly execute his commands, but he knew not how to get access to the Duke of Buckingham; and that if

he did, how could he convince the great minister that what he had seen and heard was anything more than a delusion or a dream. The apparition replied that Twose would have no rest until he had fulfilled his commission; that access to the duke was easy; and that he would mention two particular events, in the strictest secrecy, to repeat to him, which would at once insure Twose a confidential interview; and after repeating his threats, the apparition immediately vanished.

Having obtained an interview, Mr. Twose informed the duke of what he had seen and heard, and on mentioning "the two secrets" the Duke of Buckingham changed colour, exclaiming, "It must be true, for excepting to himself and to one person more, (who was safe not to disclose it,) the same was unknown to anyone living." After the interview, the duke had a long conference with his mother. But he made no change in his conduct; nor is it known whether he himself gave any credit to the tale he had heard. It is supposed, however, that it made some impression on his



mother, (Mary, daughter of Anthony Beaumont, Esq., and created Countess of Buckingham for her life,) for when the news arrived of her son's assassination by Felton, "she seemed not in the least degree surprised, but received it as if she had foreseen it."

There is a singular confirmation of this story recorded by Bishop Burnet, as in the case of Lord Lyttleton, where a double apparition was seen. On the day following the duke's death, John Buckenridge, Bishop of Ely, was considered the most suitable person to break to the Countess of Denbigh the melancholly tidings of her brother's death, whom she tenderly loved. When the bishop arrived, Lady Denbigh was asleep, from which she awoke having had a frightful dream, which she related to her attendant as follows:—She said that she appeared to be passing through a field with her brother in a coach, when, hearing a sudden shouting, and asking for an explanation, was told "that it was for joy the Duke of Buckingham was dead." She had scarcely related the dream to her gentlewoman, when the Bishop of Ely

entered the room to acquaint her with the dreadful news.

The second instance on record of an English Prime Minister having been assassinated, and that assassination having been communicated to a complete stranger in a *thrice* repeated dream, is the well-known case of Mr. Spencer Percival, who was shot in the lobby of the House of Commons on the 11th of May, 1812, by John Bellingham, an English merchant connected with a Russian house, who, from brooding over an act of intolerable oppression committed by an English consul abroad, for which he was unable to obtain redress, was led to commit the dreadful deed. Bellingham's feelings may be understood by what he stated at his trial, when he was found guilty and executed: "Sooner than suffer," said he, "what I have suffered for the last eight years, I should consider five hundred deaths—if it were possible for human nature to endure them—far more to be preferred."

The account of the dream relating to this terrible event (which recalls to mind the two

similar events which have happened in our own day of the assassination of President Lincoln in the far West, and that of Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India, in the far East) has been well authenticated by many parties, and especially by the celebrated Dr. Abercrombie,\* and may be related as follows:—

Mr. John Williams, of Scorrier House, near Redruth in Cornwall, a gentleman well known for his vigorous practical talents as a mining speculator, dreamed on May 12th, 1812, (*i.e.*, on the night *after* its occurrence, but before the intelligence of the event could have reached him by any means known to man in those days,) that he was in the lobby of the House of Commons, when he saw a small person enter, dressed in a blue coat and white waistcoat. Immediately after, he saw another man, dressed in a brown coat with

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\* *Inquiries Concerning the Intellectual Powers*, p. 301, 5th Edit.; and *Early Years and Late Reflections*, by Dr. Clement Carlyon, (vol. i., p. 219,) who more than once heard the particulars from Mr. Williams' own lips.

yellow basket buttons, draw a pistol from under his coat and discharge it at the former, who instantly fell, the blood issuing from a wound a little below the left breast, and staining the white waistcoat as it trickled down. He saw the murderer seized by some persons who were present, and on asking who the gentleman was that had been shot, was told that it was "*the Chancellor.*" He then awoke and mentioned the particulars of the dream to his wife, who naturally made light of it, and recommended him to go to sleep again as soon as he could. He did so, and shortly after again awoke Mrs. Williams, telling her that he had the second time had exactly the same dream; whereupon she observed he had been so much agitated by his former dream that she supposed it must have dwelt upon his mind, and recommended him again to try and get some more sleep, which he accordingly did. *A third time*, however, the dream was repeated exactly similar in every particular to what he had dreamed twice before; on which Mr. Williams arose, notwithstanding his wife's entreaties to the contrary, it

being then about 2 A.M., dressed himself, and remained up for the remainder of the night,

So much for this remarkable and thrice-repeated dream : now for the confirmation of its truth.

At breakfast on the following morning (May 13th) the dreams were naturally the sole subject of conversation ; and in the forenoon Mr. Williams went to Falmouth, about ten miles distant, where he related the particulars of the dreams to all his acquaintance. On the next day (May 14th) Mr. Tucker, of Tremanton Castle, Mr. Williams' son-in-law, accompanied by his wife, visited Scorrier House ; and no sooner were the first salutations over, than Mr. Williams began to relate to Mr. Tucker the particulars of the dream which had such a deep effect on his mind ; while Mrs. Williams laughingly observed to her daughter that her father could not even suffer Mr. Tucker to sit down before he had told him of his nocturnal visitation. Mr. Tucker remarked that Mr. Williams' account of the " Chancellor " being shot in the lobby of the House of Commons might

do very well for a dream, but could not accord with real fact, as the Chancellor's place was in the House of Lords, and he was never to be seen near the door of the House of Commons. He then asked Mr. Williams what sort of person the one who was shot appeared to be? On hearing his father-in-law's minute description of the person he had seen in his dream, Mr. Tucker remarked, "Your description is not that of the Lord Chancellor, but it is certainly that of Mr. Spencer Percival, the Chancellor of the Exchequer,\* and although he has been my greatest enemy through life for a supposed cause which had no foundation in fact, I should be truly sorry to hear of his having been assassinated or any injury of the kind." He then inquired of Mr. Williams if he had ever seen Mr. Percival, and received from him an assurance that he had never seen the Chancellor, or had any public or private

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\* Mr. Percival held the double office of First Lord of the Treasury, or Prime Minister, and Chancellor of the Exchequer: as both Mr. Pitt and Mr. Gladstone had done before and since.

correspondence with him, nor had he ever been in the lobby of the House of Commons in his life.

While they were thus in conversation together, they heard a horse gallop up to the door, and immediately after Mr. Michael Williams of Treviner, son of Mr. Williams of Scorrier, entered the room, and said he had ridden from Truro (a distance of seven miles) to tell them that he had just seen a gentleman who had come from London by that day's mail, and who having been in the lobby of the House of Commons on the evening of the 11th, had seen Mr. Percival shot by Bellingham; and that as the event might cause some ministerial changes, and affect Mr. Tucker's political friends, he had come as fast as he could to inform him of it. After the astonishment which this intelligence created had subsided, Mr. Williams, the father, again described most minutely the appearance and dress of the person whom he had seen in his dream firing a pistol at Mr. Percival.

About six weeks later, Mr. Williams, having business in town, went with a friend to the House

of Commons, where he had never been before. Immediately he arrived at the lobby entrance he remarked, "This place is as distinctly within my recollection in my dream as any in my own house." He then pointed out the exact spot where Bellingham stood when he fired, and which Mr. Percival had reached when he was struck by the ball, and when and how he fell. The dress both of Mr. Percival and Bellingham agreed with the description given by Mr. Williams, even to the most minute particulars.

Mr. Williams, of Scorier, died in April, 1841; and though the account, which appears in Dr. Abercrombie's work, of his remarkable and extraordinary dream had been published some years before, no contradiction of the narrative, or of any particular of it, ever appeared, from which we are warranted in concluding this narrative to be a well authenticated and truthful testimony to the facts herein contained.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### HEARD, BUT NOT SEEN.

MR. BARHAM, the well-known and popular author of *The Ingoldsby Legends*, relates the following *apparition* story in reference to the family of Dr. Blomberg, the foster-brother of George IV. "This story," says Mr. Barham, "was repeated to me by Mr. Atwood at Dr. Blomberg's own table in his temporary absence. Mr. Atwood declared that he had heard the story related by George IV. more than once, and on one occasion when the doctor himself was present. He further stated that the king had mentioned the names of all the parties concerned, but that with the exception of Major Blomberg's they had escaped his memory." The story, with fuller explanations than those given by Mr. Barham, runs as follows:—

During the American war of Independence, (A.D. 1774,) two officers of rank were seated in their tent awaiting the return of Major Blomberg, then absent on a foraging party, to go to supper. Their patience was well-nigh exhausted, and they were about to commence their meal, when suddenly his well-known footstep was heard approaching. Contrary, however, to their expectation, he paused at the entrance of the tent, and without coming in, called to one of them by name, requesting him with much earnestness, as soon as he returned to England, to go to a house in a certain street in Westminster, and in one of the rooms, which the speaker minutely described, he would find papers of great consequence to his son, then a child about ten years of age. He then apparently turned away, and his footsteps were distinctly heard retiring till their sound was lost in the distance.

Struck with the singularity of their friend's behaviour, both officers at once rose from the table and proceeded in search of him who had just been speaking to them in so singular a way.

A sentinel keeping his watch not far from the tent was questioned, but denied that he had seen or heard anyone, although, as they believed, their friend must have passed close by his post. Shortly after their amazement was changed into a more painful feeling by the approach of the visiting officer of the night, who informed them that the party which went out in the morning had been surprised, and that the dead body of poor Major Blomberg had been brought into the camp about ten minutes before.

The two friends sought the corpse of their friend, who, as both were fully persuaded, had addressed them at the very time when he was killed. They found him pierced by three bullets, one of which had passed through his temples, and must have occasioned instantaneous death.

It may easily be conceived that a careful memorandum was at once drawn up of the request which had been made to them in so remarkable a way by Major Blomberg, and which both the officers had so distinctly heard. On the return of the regiment to England, no time was lost in

endeavouring to fulfil the request of their deceased friend. The house was found without difficulty, and in a certain room, agreeably to the information which they had received in so extraordinary a manner, an old tin box was discovered, which had been there unnoticed and unknown evidently for a great many years, containing the title-deeds of some property in Yorkshire, at that time held by a collateral relative of Major Blomberg, but which eventually came into possession of his only son.

There were apparently some family disputes respecting the true heir to this property, which occasioned the audible but unseen visit of the father to friends whom he knew would protect the interests of his orphan son. This remarkable story happened to reach the ears of the Queen's governess, Lady Caroline Finch, who repeated it to Her Majesty. The Queen, feeling an interest in the child, as the foster-brother of her eldest son, the Prince of Wales, declared that little Blomberg should never want a home; and immediately sending for him, ordered that he should be brought up in the royal nursery. She after-

wards provided for his education, and interested herself in obtaining the settlement of the property, the claim to which had been discovered in the way related above.

When the boy had attained the age of nine years, Queen Charlotte employed Gainsborough to paint his portrait, and subsequently presented the picture to the original, who became in after years chaplain to his foster-brother George IV., and canon residentiary of St. Paul's Cathedral. He married Miss Floyer, a Dorsetshire lady; and having no children of his own adopted a niece of his wife, whose representative is the present possessor of the narrative, portrait, title-deeds, and estate, all of which were acquired by means of an apparition, who may be truly described as HEARD, BUT NOT SEEN.



## CHAPTER XIV.

### SEEN, BUT NOT HEARD.

THE scene of the present apparition story, as in that of the preceding chapter, lies in America, and may therefore be not improperly described as a tale belonging to the Far West, and although that country is proverbial for its stories of the long-bow order, I venture to think, when the following evidence is placed before my readers, they will deem this as one of the best authenticated instances on record of apparitions of the dead being seen by the living.

On the 15th of October, 1785, about 4 p.m., and therefore in broad daylight, two young officers of the 33rd regiment of the line were sitting together engaged in study in a room belonging to a block house at Sydney, in the

island of Cape Breton, which formed the usual quarters of officers whose regiments were serving in Canada. The room in question had two doors, one opening on an outer passage, the other into a bed-room, from which there was no exit except through the sitting-room.

These officers, who became distinguished in their profession, were subsequently known as Sir John Sherbroke\* and General Wynyard.

As they were pursuing their studies, Sherbroke, happening to look up from the book he was reading, saw beside the door, which opened on the passage, the figure of a tall youth, of about twenty years of age, whose appearance was that of extreme emaciation. Astonished at the presence of a stranger, especially as the figure appeared clad in a light in-door costume, while they wore furs and wraps owing to the severity of the weather, Sherbroke called the attention

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\* The death of one is thus announced in *Blackwood's Magazine*, for June, 1830: "At Calverton, General Sir John Cope Sherbroke, G.C.B." The other, General Wynyard, died Colonel of the 24th Light Dragoons, June 13th, 1809.



of his companion to their unexpected visitor. "I have often heard," he was wont to say when subsequently relating the incident, "of a man being as pale as death, but I never saw a living face assume the appearance of a corpse as Wynyard's did at that moment."

Both the officers remained silently gazing at the figure as it slowly passed through the room, and entered the bed-chamber, casting on young Wynyard, as Sherbroke thought, a look of intense melancholy affection. The oppression of its presence was no sooner removed than Wynyard, grasping his friend's arm, exclaimed in a whisper, "Why, good God, that's my brother!" "Your brother!" replied Sherbroke, knowing that he was then in England, "what can you mean? There must be some deception in this." And with that he instantly rushed into the bed-room, followed by his friend. Not a soul was there! They searched in every part, until thoroughly convinced that the room was untenanted. Wynyard persisted in declaring that he had seen the apparition of his brother, while Sherbroke

was inclined to regard it as a delusion, or probably a trick played by their brother-officers.

They took note of the day and hour in which the event had happened, but they resolved not to mention the occurrence in the regiment, and gradually they persuaded each other that they had been the subject of some unaccountable delusion. Nevertheless, they waited with great anxiety for letters from England, communication between the two countries being then very different in the eighteenth century, both as regards speed and regularity, from what it is now. Consequently they had to wait for a considerable length of time, during which the anxiety of Wynyard became so apparent and distressing, 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 quickly bruited abroad, and naturally produced great excitement throughout the regiment. When the long-expected mail at length arrived, there were no letters for Wynyard, but one for Sherbrooke. As soon as he had opened the packet,

he beckoned his friend from the room. Expectation was at its climax during the hour in which the two friends remained closeted together. On their return to the mess-room the mystery was solved. The letter for Sherbroke was from a brother-officer in England, the first line of which read thus: "Dear John, break to your friend Wynyard the death of his favourite brother." He had suddenly expired on the very day, and, making due allowance for difference of latitude, at the very time, at which the friends saw the apparition in Canada.

Although it might be supposed that this solemn event would have been sufficient to have convinced Sherbroke of its truth, his mind was so strongly prepossessed against the possibility of any supernatural intercourse with the dead, that he still entertained a doubt of the report of his senses, supported as their testimony was by the coincidence of vision and fact. Some years after, however, Sherbroke had a singular confirmation of its truth. Walking one day down Piccadilly, he saw on the opposite side of the street a gentleman, whom he

instantly recognized as the exact counterpart of the mysterious apparition which had been seen in Canada. Crossing over the way he accosted the stranger, and after apologizing for the intrusion, learnt that he was a Mr. Hayman,\* who was noted for his resemblance to the deceased officer, John Wynyard, and who affected to dress like him.

The truth of this marvellous tale of so unusual a character, compared with ordinary ghost stories, from the fact that the apparition was seen by two persons in broad daylight, one of whom had never seen the deceased party in his life, has been confirmed by a great number of persons who have investigated the matter. Some years ago Sir John Harvey, Adjutant-General of the Forces in Canada, forwarded a series of questions to Colonel Gore, of the same garrison, who was in the regiment with

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\* It is generally thought that the party whom Sherbroke thus accosted in London was a twin-brother of John Wynyard; but Colonel Gore considered it to be the gentleman named in the text. Those who know the story of "Martin Guerre," or its more modern prototype of "Sir Roger," will have no difficulty in crediting the perfect resemblance which doubtless existed between John Wynyard and Hayman.

Sherbroke and Wynyard at the time of its occurrence, to which he replied as follows:—That he was present at Sydney when the incident happened. It was at the then new barrack, which was so blocked up with ice as to have no communication with any other part of the world. He was one of the first persons who entered the room after the apparition had passed through, and, as he says, “went into J. Wynyard’s bedroom, the window of which was puttied down.” The next day he suggested to Sherbroke the propriety of making a careful memorandum of every particular connected with the incident, which was then done. Colonel Gore adds: “I remember on the 6th of June our first letters from England brought the news of John Wynyard’s death (which had happened) on the very night they saw his *apparition*.”

Captain Henry Scott, R.N., who was Assistant Surveyor of Nova Scotia about fifty years ago, when Sir John Sherbroke was governor of that province, used to relate, when residing at Blackheath, that on one occasion at a state dinner party

at the governor's table, a guest happened to remark that a newspaper, just received from England, contained a most extraordinary ghost story, in which his excellency's name appeared. Whereupon Sir John Sherbroke, with much emotion, quickly replied, "I earnestly beg that the subject may not be again mentioned." The impression on the minds of the company being that he considered the matter too awful to be talked about on such an occasion.

Captain Harvey Scott subsequently wrote to Mr. Robert Owen, the United States Ambassador at the court of Naples, the following account of what he had heard on the subject:—"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 Wynyard's apparition, in substance exactly as you have it. When I had finished, 'It is extraordinary enough,' said he, 'that you have related the story almost *verbatim* as I heard it from Sir John Sherbroke's own lips a short time before his death.' (May, 1830.) I asked the General whether Sir John 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."

I would only add, that this remarkable story, which has been investigated by so many persons,\* affords as clear an instance of the truth of an *apparition* of the dead as it is possible for the mind to conceive.

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\* See also *Letters on the Truths contained in Popular Superstitions*, by Herbert Mayo, M.D. Ed. Frankfort, 1849, p 62.





## CHAPTER XV.

### “LAYING” THE PARSON’S GHOST.

Do any of my readers know the meaning of “Laying a Ghost,” which used to be of not unfrequent occurrence amongst the provincials of the western counties of England about three generations ago? Possibly not: yet assuredly such was done, not merely by the uneducated peasantry, but by those who were supposed to be emphatically the teachers of the day—the country clergy of the Church of England.

Previous to relating the account of “laying” the Parson’s Ghost, which I am enabled to do on the authority of Henderson’s curious work on the *Folk Lore of England*, I would mention a similar instance of this custom, as it was told me by a descendant of the lady to whom the Apparition .

appeared, and with which some of my relatives were in a measure connected. I would add that the locality itself where the *apparition* was seen has been intimately known to me from my childhood.

On the right bank of the river Taw, which winds along some of the choicest scenery of North Devon, and not far distant from the river's mouth as it empties itself into Barnstaple Bay, stands the remains of a grand pile of buildings, known by the name of Heanton Court, for many ages the seat of the ancient Bassett family. At the beginning of this century there were sufficient remains of the park to tell of its former grandeur, and so large was the mansion itself that it certainly had no less a number of windows than one for each day in the year.\* It is now reduced to the position of a large farm-house, and is possessed by the present Sir F. Williams, M.P. for Truro.

Mrs. Hill, the wife of my lamented friend, the

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\* A similar fact is related of old Tawstock Court, the seat of Sir Bouchier Wrey, which was burnt down in 1796, and which stood about six miles higher up, and on the opposite bank of the river. Such mansions were evidently built before the days of the window tax!

Rev. W. Hill, Vicar of Fremington, which lies on the other side of the river, exactly opposite Heanton Court, about twenty years ago, related to me the following *apparition* tale connected with that place. She had received the story from her great-aunt, of the same name as herself, who was the person more immediately concerned.

This lady, whom I must term for the sake of distinction "old" Mrs. Hill, had the charge or my great-grandfather, the Sir Bouchier Wrey of the time, and his younger brothers, who were left orphans at a very early age, during the reign of George II. About the year 1730-1, Mrs. Hill, with her young charges, went to keep Christmas-tide at Heanton Court. On the first night of their arrival, when the children were safely put to bed, and Mrs. Hill had taken the post of watcher in order to allow the waiting-maid to go down to supper, she proceeded to perform that feminine feat which, to use the forcible expression of a wit in our own time, is the sure precursor of confidence, when two of the fairer sex are present, of letting down her back hair.

Sitting opposite her mirror, with her hands fully occupied as becometh such an interesting feat, and doubtless in a reflective frame of mind, she suddenly saw to her boundless amazement the figure of a tall man pass out of a china closet which was in the corner of the room, walk close up to her side, and look over her shoulder. The figure had the appearance of a fine man dressed in a handsome court suit of the reign of George II., which consisted of blue and silver brocade. After silently gazing at one another through the medium of the mirror for several seconds, either unable or unwilling to utter a word, the apparition slowly retreated to the china closet and then disappeared.

The following morning, Mrs. Hill gave an account of her nocturnal visitor to her hostess, Lady Bassett, who taking her to the picture gallery, asked her if she could detect amongst the family portraits any one resembling the apparition of the preceding night. Mrs. Hill soon recognized the exact counterpart of the apparition she had seen only a few hours before; and, upon asking for an explanation, Lady Bassett informed her

that there were some painful stories afloat relative to that individual, whose apparition had been occasionally seen in the chamber occupied by the children under Mrs. Hill’s care. And in memory of the incident, Lady Bassett requested Mrs. Hill to accept a handsome dress of blue and silver brocade, said to have been worn during his lifetime by the individual in question; which said dress Mrs. Hill left by will to her grand-niece, who presented it to the author of this work, and it is now lying before me as I write my tale.

As a finale to this incident, and in order to prevent the apparition troubling her guests any more, Lady Bassett resolved to call in the assistance of the neighbouring clergy for the purpose of “laying” the ghost. The Rectors of Heanton and Ashford (the adjoining parish) were, I know, two of the party, and with others to make up the perfectly orthodox number of seven, they so successfully did their work that the Bassett apparition has never been seen or heard of from that day to this.

To come now to the equally successful “laying”

of another apparition, which I have already designated as "the Parson's Ghost." Towards the close of the last century, and therefore more than half-a-century later in point of time than the preceding tale, a newly instituted incumbent, after taking possession of his living on the confines of Dartmoor Forest, which appears in our maps like a backbone to the county of Devon, found it necessary to obtain a little more elbow room for his humble abode. He enlarged his only parlour, added a drawing-room and two or three more bed-rooms, improving considerably the appearance of his house thereby.

These necessary alterations gave great satisfaction to his wife and children, but there was one interested person whom he had omitted to consult, viz., the spirit of his predecessor, an old gentleman who had outlived all his family, and passed many solitary years in the house. The consequences of this neglect were soon apparent: sounds were heard of an evening as though a figure in a long gown were sweeping in and out of the rooms, and particularly in the dining-room,

where the old vicar had spent the last years of his life, sitting over the fire, or pacing up and down in his gown and slippers. These mysterious sounds began at nightfall, and continued, until morning. Servants gave warning and left, and no one was willing to come into their places. The children fell ill, and were sent away for change of air; the anxious mother speedily followed to see how they were getting on; and so the new vicar was left alone at the mercy of his old predecessor's ghost.

At first he bore up bravely, but one Saturday night, while sitting up late preparing for his work on the morrow, the *pad, pad, pad* of the muffled tread struck so painfully upon his ear that he could bear it no longer. He started up, opened the window, jumped out, and made the best of his way to the nearest farm, where dwelt his churchwarden, a worthy Dartmoor farmer. There the bewildered vicar found a hearty welcome, and when he told his tale in a hesitating way, attributing it all to the weakness of his nerves, his host declared at once his belief that

the old parson must be at the bottom of it all just because of the alterations in the house in which he had lived so many years.

“He never could abide any changes,” said the farmer; “but he’s had his day, and you shall have yours now. He must be *laid*, that’s certain; and if you’ll go away next week to your missus and the young people, I’ll see to it.”

And see to it the gude man quickly did. A jury of seven neighbouring parsons was convoked without delay, and six of the number sat for half-an-hour, each with his candle in his hand, which burnt out its time, showing plainly that no one of them could *lay the ghost*. But this was no wonder, for were they not all old acquaintances of the ghost, so that he knew all their tricks? The spirit could afford to defy them; it was not worth his while to blow their candles out. But the seventh parson was a stranger, and a scholar fresh from Oxford. In his hand the light went out at once. He was clearly the man to *lay the ghost*, and he did not shrink from the important task; he laid it at once; and the place selected for the purpose was—a *beer barrel*!



But now a fresh difficulty arose. What was to be done with the beer barrel and its ghostly tenant? Where could it be placed secure from any profane hand, which might be tempted to tap the barrel, and thus set free the ghost? Nothing better occurred to the assembled party but to roll the beer barrel into a corner of the room, and send for the village mason to enclose it with bricks and mortar. As soon as this was done, the room looked very odd with one corner cut off. Uniformity could alone be obtained by filling up the other three corners in a similar manner, by which means the ghost would be safer if no one knew the exact corner in which he was safely *laid*. So the other corners were blocked up with success, and the ghost of the old Dartmoor Parson was at length laid to rest. What matters if the room be somewhat quaint in its shape? The parson’s house has never been haunted since.



## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE MYSTERIOUS HORSEMAN.

THE *Traethodydd*, or "Essayist," a Welsh quarterly periodical for 1853, contains a biographical memoir of the late Rev. John Jones, of Holiwell, Flintshire; and in that memoir there is an account of as remarkable an interposition of Providence by means of an *apparition*, which resulted in the preservation of life, as any on record.

I think it will be best to allow Mr. Jones to relate the incident in his own words, as he was often wont to do, merely premising that he was a minister of high principle and unblemished character, and renowned throughout the Principality for his zeal and fervour as a preacher of the Gospel; and one who showed by his life his just

appreciation of what Plutarch has so finely said respecting—

“Truth,

Than which no greater blessing can man receive or God bestow.”

One summer day, at the commencement of the present century, I was travelling from Bala, in Merionethshire, to Machynlleth, in the neighbouring county of Montgomery, in order to attend a religious meeting. I left Bala about 2 p.m., and travelled on horseback and alone. My journey lay through a wild, desolate part of the country, and one which at that time was almost uninhabited. When I had performed about half my journey, as I was emerging from a wood situated at the commencement of a long, steep decline, I observed coming towards me a man on foot. By his appearance, judging from the sickle which he carried sheathed in straw over his shoulder, he was doubtless a reaper in search of employment. As he drew near, I recognised a man whom I had seen at the door of the village inn of Llanwhellyn, where I had stopped to bait my horse. On our meeting he touched his hat

and asked if I could tell him the time of day. I pulled out my watch for the purpose, noticing at the same time the peculiar look which the man cast at its heavy silver case. Nothing else, however, occurred to excite any suspicion on my part, so, wishing him a "good afternoon," I continued my journey.

When I had ridden about half-way down the hill, I noticed something moving, and in the same direction as myself, on the other side of a large hedge, which ran nearly parallel with the road, and ultimately terminated at a gate through which I had to pass. At first I thought it an animal of some kind or other, but soon discovered by certain depressions in the hedge that it was a man running in a stooping position. I continued for a short time to watch his progress with some curiosity, but my curiosity soon changed to fear when I recognized the reaper with whom I had conversed a few minutes before, engaged in tearing off the strawband which sheathed his sickle.

He hurried on until he reached the gate, and then concealed himself behind the hedge within a

few yards of the road. I did not then doubt for a moment but that he had resolved to attack—perhaps murder—me for the sake of my watch and whatever money I might have about me. I looked around in all directions, but not a single human being was to be seen, so reining in my horse, I asked myself in much alarm what I could do. Should I turn back? No; my business was of the utmost importance to the cause for which I was journeying, and as long as there existed the faintest possibility of getting there, I could not think of returning. Should I trust to the speed of my horse, and endeavour to dash by the man at full speed? No; for the gate through which I had to pass was not open. Could I leave the road and make my way through the fields? I could not; for I was hemmed in by rocky banks or high hedges on both sides. The idea of risking a personal encounter could not be entertained for a moment, for what chance could I—weak and unarmed—have against a powerful man with a dangerous weapon in his hand? What course then should I pursue? I could not tell; and at

length, in despair rather than in a spirit of humble trust and confidence, I bowed my head and offered up a silent prayer. This had a soothing effect upon my mind, so that, refreshed and invigorated, I proceeded anew to consider the difficulties of my position.

At this juncture my horse, growing impatient at the delay, started off: I clutched the reins, which I had let fall on his neck, for the purpose of checking him, when happening to turn my eyes, I saw to my utter astonishment that I was no longer alone. There, by my side, I beheld a horseman in a dark dress, mounted on a white steed. In intense amazement I gazed upon him; where could he have come from? He appeared as suddenly as if he had sprung from the earth. He must have been riding behind and have overtaken me. And yet I had not heard the slightest sound: it was mysterious, inexplicable. But the joy of being released from my perilous position soon overcame my feelings of wonder, and I began at once to address my companion. I asked him if he had seen any one, and then described to him

what had taken place, and how relieved I felt by his sudden appearance, which now removed all cause of fear. He made no reply, and on looking at his face, he seemed paying but slight attention to my words, but continued intently gazing in the direction of the gate, now about a quarter of a mile ahead. I followed his gaze, and saw the reaper emerge from his concealment and cut across a field to our left, resheathing his sickle as he hurried along. He had evidently seen that I was no longer alone, and had relinquished his intended attempt.

All cause for alarm being gone, I once more sought to enter into conversation with my deliverer, but again without the slightest success. Not a word did he deign to give me in reply. I continued talking, however, as we rode on our way towards the gate, though I confess feeling both surprised and hurt at my companion's mysterious silence. Once, however, and only once did I hear his voice. Having watched the figure of the reaper disappear over the brow of a neighbouring hill, I turned to my companion and said,



“Can it for a moment be doubted that my prayer was heard, and that you were sent for my deliverance by the Lord?” Then it was that I thought I heard the horseman speak, and that he uttered the single word, “*Amen.*” Not another word did he give utterance to, though I tried to elicit from him replies to my questions, both in English and Welsh.

We were now approaching the gate, which I hastened to open, and having done so with my stick, I waited at the side of the road for him to pass through; but he came not; I turned my head to look—the *mysterious horseman* was gone! I was dumbfounded; I looked back in the direction from which we had just been riding, but though I could command a view of the road for a considerable distance, he was not to be seen. He had disappeared as mysteriously as he had come. What could have become of him? He could not have gone through the gate, nor have made his horse leap the high hedges which on both sides shut in the road. Where was he? Had I been dreaming? Was it an apparition, a spectre which

had been riding by my side for the last ten minutes? Could it be possible that I had seen no man or horse at all, and that the vision was but a creature of my imagination? I tried hard to convince myself that this was the case, but in vain; for, unless some one had been with me, why had the reaper resheathed his murderous-looking sickle and fled? Surely no; this mysterious horseman was no creation of my brain. I had seen him; who could he have been?

I asked myself this question again and again; and then a feeling of profound awe began to creep over my soul. I remembered the singular way of his first appearance—his long silence—and then again the single word to which he had given utterance; I called to mind that this reply had been elicited from him by my mentioning the name of the Lord, and that this was the single occasion on which I had done so. What could I then believe?—but one thing, and that was, that my prayer had indeed been heard, and that help had been given from on high at a time of great danger. Full of this thought, I dismounted, and

throwing myself on my knees, I offered up a prayer of thankfulness to Him who had heard my cry, and found help for me in time of need.

I then mounted my horse and continued my journey. But through the long years that have elapsed since that memorable summer's day, I have never for a moment wavered in my belief that in *the mysterious horseman* I had a special interference of Providence, by which means I was delivered from a position of extreme danger.



## CHAPTER XVII.

“STEER NOR’-WEST.”

Our last chapter contained a thrilling account of the deliverance of a clergyman from a position of extreme danger through a manifest interposition of Providence, conveyed apparently by means of a *visible apparition*. The following narrative of a similar providential deliverance, equally mysterious and inexplicable, may be said to have been effected through the agency of an invisible spirit.

At the close of the last century, there was born in the neighbourhood of one of Devon’s favourite watering-places, the far-famed Torquay, though at that time consisting of a few straggling cottages on a shingly beach, one Robert Bruce, who, though bearing a royal name, was of humble parentage, and reared like his fathers before him to a sea-

faring life. When he had attained the age of thirty, he became first mate of a ship sailing between Liverpool and St. John's, New Brunswick. On one of her voyages westward, having been about six weeks at sea, and being near the banks of Newfoundland, the captain and mate, after having taken an observation, went below to calculate their day's work.

The mate, absorbed in his calculation, which did not answer to his expectations, had not observed that the captain had quitted the cabin. As soon as he had finished his calculations, he called out without looking round, "I make the 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. On which he rose, and as he did so the figure he had mistaken for the captain raised its head, and disclosed to the astonished mate the features of an entire stranger.

Bruce, like his great namesake, was no coward,

but as he met that fixed gaze looking silently at him, and conscious that it was not the face of any one 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,” exclaimed the skipper, “what is the matter with you?”

“The matter, sir? Who is that at your desk?”

“No one that I know of.”

“But there is, sir,” retorted the mate; “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 go down without orders?”

“But, sir, sitting in your arm-chair, 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!” cried the captain; “whom do you mean?”

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

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

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

"Go down and see who it is."

The mate hesitated. "I never believed in ghosts," said he; "but if the truth must be told, sir, I'd rather not face it alone."

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

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

The captain descended the stairs, accompanied by the mate. But not a soul could they find, either in the cabin or anywhere else.

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

"It is 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 again !”

“Ah ! writing on the slate ! Then it should be there.” And the captain held the slate up to the light. “Good 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 NOR’-WEST.”

“Have you been trifling with me ?” asked the captain, sternly.

“On my word as a man and a sailor, sir,” replied Bruce, “I know no more about this matter than you do. I have told you the exact truth.”

The captain sat down at his desk in deep thought. At length, turning the slate over, and pushing it towards Bruce, he said, “Write the words, *Steer to the nor’-west.*”

The mate complied, and the captain, after narrowly comparing the two handwritings, said, “Mr. Bruce, tell the second mate to come here.”

On entering the cabin, the captain told him to

write the same words, which he did. So did the steward; and so in succession did every man in the crew who could write at all. But not one of the various hands resembled in any degree the mysterious writing on the captain's slate. When the crew had retired, the captain remained silent for a time. At length he said, "Could any one have been stowed away? The ship must be searched. Order up all hands."

Every corner of the vessel was thoroughly searched with eager curiosity; for the report was spread that a stranger had come on board in a mysterious manner. When this fruitless search was over, the captain asked the mate what it could mean.

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

"Well," said the captain, "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, in your place. It's only a few hours lost at the worst."

“Well, be it so. Go and give the course *Nor’-west*. And, Mr. Bruce, have a good look-out aloft, and let it be a hand you can depend on.”

The mate gave the necessary orders; and about three P.M. 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 detected by a telescope 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 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 position. She was stove in, her decks swept—in fact, a mere wreck; all her provisions and almost all her water gone. Her crew and passengers had given up all thoughts of being saved, and their gratitude for the unexpected deliverance 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 felt that he was right. Not only the face, but the person and the dress corresponded exactly.

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, remarking, "It seems, sir, that it was not a ghost which I saw this morning, for the man's alive and now in the ship."

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

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

"Upon my word, Mr. Bruce," said 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, when both of them expressed in the warmest terms their gratitude for having been delivered from a horrible fate—slow-coming death from exposure and starvation.

The captain replied that he had only done his duty, and was sure they would have done the same for him under similar circumstances, and asked them both to step down to the cabin. Then turning to the passenger, he said, “I hope you will not think I am trifling with you, if I ask you to be kind enough to write a few words on that slate.” And he handed him the slate with that side up which did *not* contain the mysterious writing.

“I will do anything 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, observing, "You say that is your handwriting?"

"I need not say so," replied the passenger, "for you saw me write it."

"And this also?" said the captain, turning the slate over.

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

"That, sir, is more than I can tell you. My mate 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, when the former asked the latter, "Did you dream that you wrote on this slate?"

"No, not that I remember," replied the passenger.

"You speak of dreaming," said the skipper. "May I ask what this gentleman was about at noon to-day?"

"Captain," rejoined the other, "the whole thing is most mysterious, 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 his reason for so saying, he replied that he had dreamed he was on board a vessel, and that she was coming to our rescue. He described its appearance and outward rig, and to our utter astonishment, when your vessel hove in sight, she corresponded exactly to his description. 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, captain, will catch at straws. As it has turned out, I cannot doubt 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 merciful preservation of us."

"There cannot be a doubt," replied 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 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. "Everything here on board seems to me quite familiar, yet I am certain I was never in your vessel before. It is all a puzzle to me. But what did your mate see?"

Whereupon Bruce related to them the circumstances detailed above. And the conclusion at



which the whole party finally arrived was that it was certainly a special interposition of Providence to save them from what seemed certain death.

The above extraordinary account was related to Mr. Robert Owen, formerly American minister to Naples, by Captain J. S. Clarke, of the *Julia Hallowell*, a schooner trading in 1859 between New York and the Isle of Cuba, who received it directly from Mr. Bruce himself. They sailed together for nearly two years, in 1836 and 1837; so that Captain Clarke had the story from the mate about eight years after its occurrence.

It is not known whether Mr. Bruce is still alive, as all that Captain Clarke has heard of him since they were shipmates together is that he became master of the brig *Comet*, trading to New Brunswick, and that the *Comet* was eventually lost at sea.

In reply to a question as to the character which Bruce bore for uprightness, Captain Clarke replied, “As truthful and straightforward a man as ever I met in my life. We were as intimate

as brothers; and two men can't be together, shut up for nearly two years 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 than anything that had ever happened to him in his life before. I'd stake my life upon it, that he was speaking the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, in the very extraordinary account which I have related to you just as he delivered it to me."

Such is the narrative, which, though it might naturally appear incredible from our inability to account for it or explain it on the ordinary principles of cause and effect, has a sufficient air of truth about it to make us ready to regard it as one of the many instances in which it has pleased the Almighty to interfere in a wonderful manner on behalf of His creatures, when all hope of assistance was passed and gone.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### THE TWO LORD CHANCELLORS.

PROBABLY Lord Erskine and Lord Brougham were as free from what is generally regarded as “superstitions,” as any of that long line of chancellors who have adorned the woolsack, and helped to benefit mankind. Yet both of them bear testimony to the existence of *apparitions*, or some communication with the inhabitants of another world, as the following tales will declare; and which I purposely relate in the very words of their distinguished tale-bearers.

The circumstances of Lord Chancellor Erskine’s intercourse with an *apparition*, as related by himself, are given in Lady Morgan’s *Book of the Boudoir*, as follows:—

“When I was a very young man, I had been

for some time absent from Scotland. On *the morning* of my arrival in Edinburgh, as I was coming out from a book shop, I met our old family butler. He looked greatly changed, pale, wan and shadowy *as a ghost*. 'Eh! old boy,' I said, 'what brings you here?' He replied, 'To meet your honour, and solicit your interference with my lord, to recover a sum due to me, which the steward at the last settlement did not pay.' Struck by his looks and manner, I bade him follow me to the bookseller's shop, into whose shop I stepped back; but when I turned round to speak to him, he had vanished.

"I remembered that his wife carried on some little trade in the Old Town, I remembered even the house and flat she occupied, which I had often visited in my boyhood. Having made it out, I found the old woman in widow's mourning. Her husband had been dead for some months, and had told her on his death-bed, that my father's steward had wronged him of some money, but that when *Master Tom* returned, he would see her righted. This I promised to do, and

shortly after I fulfilled my promise. The impression was indelible."

"Master Tom" was the third son of Henry, fifth Earl of Buchan; entered the navy as a midshipman at the age of fourteen; four years later he transferred his services to the army; which he again changed to the law, (A.D. 1778,) in which he obtained such great celebrity, having been appointed Lord High Chancellor of Great Britain in 1806, and died in 1823.

The late Lord Brougham, who attained the same exalted office in 1830, and is consequently better known to the present generation, in his recently published Autobiography, records the following *apparition* story,\* as having been seen by himself. It refers to an early period of his life, at the commencement of this present century, when he was on a tour in the north of Europe.

"At Kongelf, near Gottenburg, we stopped to eat some cold provisions, and then continued our

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\* *The Life and Times of Henry Lord Brougham*, written by himself. Vol. i. chap. iv.

journey in the dark. The carriage being shut, we were not actually frozen, but the road was execrably rough, and we went at a foot's pace; besides, it was more hilly than is usual in Sweden. At one in the morning, arriving at a decent inn, we decided to stop for the night, and found a couple of comfortable rooms.

“Tired with the cold of yesterday, I was glad to take advantage of a hot bath before I turned in. And here a most remarkable thing happened to me—so remarkable, that I must tell the story from the beginning. After I left the High School, I went with G——, my most intimate friend, to attend the classes in the University. There was no divinity class, but we frequently in our walks discussed and speculated upon many grave subjects—among others, on the immortality of the soul, and on a future state. This question, and the possibility, I will not say of ghosts walking, but of *the dead appearing to the living*, were subjects of much speculation; and we actually committed the folly of drawing up an agreement, *written with our blood*, to the effect,

that whichever of us died the first should appear to the other, and thus solve any doubts we had entertained of the 'life after death.'

"After we had finished our classes at the college, G—— went to India, having got an appointment there in the civil service. He seldom wrote to me, and after the lapse of a few years I had almost forgotten him; moreover, his family having little connection with Edinburgh, I seldom saw or heard anything of them, or of him through them, so that all the old school-boy intimacy had died out, and I had nearly forgotten his existence. I had taken, as I have said, a warm bath; and while lying in it, and enjoying the comfort of the heat after the late freezing I had undergone, I turned my head round, looking towards the chair on which I had deposited my clothes, as I was about to get up out of the bath. *On the chair sat G——, looking calmly at me.* How I got out of the bath I know not, but *on recovering my senses* I found myself sprawling on the floor. The *apparition*, or whatever it was that had taken the likeness of G——, had disappeared.

“The vision produced such a shock that I had no inclination to talk about it, or to speak about it even to Stuart; but the impression it made upon me was too vivid to be easily forgotten; and so strongly was I affected by it, that I have here written down the whole history, *with the date, 19th December*, and all the particulars, as they are now fresh before me.

“No doubt I had fallen asleep; and that the appearance presented so distinctly to my eyes was a dream, I cannot for a moment doubt; yet for years I had had no communication with G——, nor had there been anything to recall him to my recollection; nothing had taken place during our Swedish travels either connected with G—— or with India, or with anything relating to him or to any member of his family. I recollected quickly enough our old discussion, and *the bargain we had made*. I could not discharge from my mind the impression that G—— must have died, and that his appearance to me was to be received by me *as a proof of a future state*; yet all the while I felt convinced that the whole was *a dream*; and



so painfully vivid, and so unfading was the impression, that I could not bring myself to talk of it, or to make the slightest allusion to it. I finished dressing; and as we agreed to make an early start, I was ready by six o'clock, the hour of our early breakfast.

“Brougham, October 16th, 1862.—I have just been copying out from my journal the account of this strange dream: *Certissima mortis imago!* And now to finish the story begun above sixty years since. Soon after my return to Edinburgh, there arrived a letter from India, announcing G——’s death! and stating that *he had died on the 19th of December!*”

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### MARSHAL BLUCHER.

BEFORE recording the extraordinary incident in the life of that famous old Prussian warrior, Marshal Blucher, it may not be inappropriate to introduce it by *an apparition story* of a brother-officer, on the memorable occasion with which Blucher's name is so intimately connected, viz., the march to that crowning victory of the great Revolutionary War—the Battle of Waterloo.

Lady Clementina Davies, in her *Recollections*, mentions that General Von Gravan, who had fought at Waterloo, narrated to her the following story; and inasmuch as on this occasion the apparition is represented as having been both *seen* and *heard*, it can hardly be explained, as Lord Brougham has endeavoured to explain it in the previous instance, under the form of a *dream*.

The Prussian General Von Gravan and a brother-officer had been ordered during the campaign to approach the supposed field of battle with their respective troops, the one to the right and the other to the left. After a long day's march, the former halted his men in a church, where they found beds of straw but lately vacated, and other indications which showed that the enemy were nearer than had been expected. Nevertheless they lay down to rest. At dawn of day, however, the general awoke, (it must have been then daylight, as it was the month of June, 1815,) and found the brother-officer from whom he had parted the previous morning, standing by his side. Great as was his surprise, it was considerably increased when the latter addressed him as follows :—" Do not follow orders, do not proceed on your present route, for the French have got possession of it, and are awaiting your approach." Then *the apparition* vanished; but so impressed was Von Gravan by its warning, that he took a fresh route, quite different from the one which he had been ordered to take, and

by this means reached the allies in safety. His friend had been killed at the precise moment when his spirit had appeared to Von Gravan, and the greater part of his men had been cut to pieces.

In the autumn of the year in which Waterloo had been fought, Marshal Blucher quitted France for the last time. Chagrined at finding himself reduced to a life of inaction, he retired to his property, and fell into a state of melancholy, increased by an attack of dropsy on the chest. From this time a change came over his character; the rough and ready soldier became timid, and even nervous. He would not remain in the dark; solitude was agonising, and such was the uneasiness caused by his failing health, that the King of Prussia, (father of the present Emperor of Germany,) started for Krieblowitz, as soon as he learned that his old and favourite general had several times expressed a wish to see him before dying. The king arrived in the evening at the castle, and was instantly conducted to Blucher, then in his seventy-fourth year.

On seeing the king, Marshal Blucher tried to rise for the purpose of receiving his majesty, who kindly prevented him, and sat down by his side; when the old soldier, after dismissing his attendants, spoke as follows:—

“Sire, I intreated you to come here, as I heard you were in the neighbourhood, yet had you been at the other extremity of Europe, dying as I now am, I must have endeavoured to have reached you, for I have a terrible secret to reveal. Sire, be pleased to look at me well, and assure yourself that I am now in the full enjoyment of my reason, and that I am not mad; for at times, I almost think I am deluded into mistaking recollections of past events for visions of the present war. But no, I cannot doubt! It must be true.

“When, sire, in 1756 the Seven-years’ War broke out, my father, who lived on his estate of Gross Renson, sent me to one of our relations, the Princess Kranswick, in the Isle of Rugen. I was then fourteen, and after a time passed in the old fortress without news from my family, I

entered a regiment of hussars in the Swedish service, and being taken prisoner at Suokow, the Prussian government pressed me to take service in its army. For a year I resisted, and only obtained my liberty by accepting the rank of cornet in the regiment of Black Hussars. I then obtained leave for some months, as I was very anxious concerning my mother and sisters, and started at once for Gross Renson, which had been the scene of war during my year's imprisonment.

“It is just fifty-nine years ago, this very day, the 12th August, (1816,) and about the same hour that I am speaking to your majesty, verging toward midnight, when in the midst of a raging storm, and after long wandering in the forest, I reached my father's house, drenched to the skin and alone, for my servant, bewildered by the tempest, had lost me in the darkness of the night. Without dismounting, I struck the nail-studded oaken door with the but-end of my whip. No one replied, though I hammered again and again at the door; until losing all patience I jumped off

my horse, when the door appeared to open of its own accord, as I could perceive no one, and I entered; and hurrying up the steps, quickly penetrated the interior.

“There was no light to be seen or sound heard. I confess that my heart sank within me, and a cold shudder ran through my veins. ‘What folly!’ I exclaimed; ‘the house must be empty; my family must have left when I quitted it, and have not returned, still I must remain for the night.’ I reached my father’s bed-room; a faint and fitful flame threw a dim light upon a group of persons seated, amongst whom I recognized my father, mother, and four sisters, who rose on seeing me enter. I was about to throw myself into my father’s arms, when he arrested me by a solemn gesture. I held out my arms to my mother, but she retreated with a mournful air. I called out to my sisters, who, taking each other by the hand, again seated themselves.

“‘Do you not know me?’ I cried. ‘Is it thus you receive me after so long a separation. Do you not know that I am now serving Prussia? I



was compelled to make the sacrifice in order to regain my liberty, and to see you. But no one responds to my affection. My mother, you are silent! My sisters, have you forgotten the love of our childhood, and the games of which these walls have been the silent witnesses?’

“At these last words, my sisters seemed to be moved, and they spoke to one another in a low voice: they rose up and signalled to me to approach. One of them then knelt down before my mother, and hid her face in her lap as if she wished to play at a game called *Hot-kok-hiry*, (a childish game, where one has his eyes bound, and guesses who strikes with the flat of the hand.) Surprised at this strange freak at such a solemn time, I nevertheless touched my sister’s hand with the whip that I still grasped, as a mysterious force seemed to impel me so to do. Then came my turn to kneel before my mother, and to hide my face in her lap.

“Oh! horror! I felt through her silk dress a cold and angular form; I heard a sound of rattling bones; and when a hand was placed in mine, the

hand remained there; and it was *the hand of a skeleton*. I arose with a cry of terror; all had disappeared, and there only remained to me of this dreadful vision the human remains which I convulsively grasped.

“Almost beside myself, I ran from the chamber, hurried down stairs, jumped on my horse, and galloped wildly through the forest. At day-break my horse sank beneath me and expired. I fell insensible at the foot of a huge tree, and was found there by my attendants with my skull fractured. I almost died from the combined effects of horror of mind and the injury in my head, and it was only after some weeks of fever and delirium that I regained my senses, and gradually recovered.

“It was then I learned that all my family had perished in the terrible war which had desolated Mecklenburg, and that my father’s castle had been several times pillaged and sacked. Scarcely convalescent, I hastened to the castle to render the last rites to my deceased parents and sisters; but after a most rigorous search no trace of their

remains could be found, *save one hand only*—a female hand, surrounded by a golden bracelet, lay on the floor of the room in which the *fatal apparition* had appeared to me. I took the golden chain—the same, your majesty, which I hold now in my hands—and deposited the hand, all that remained of my family, in the oratory chapel.

“Many years have glided by since that awful scene which I witnessed in my father’s castle; and it was only two months ago, while lying in this arm-chair, a slight noise awoke me. I looked up. There stood my father, mother, and four sisters around, just as they appeared on that awful night at the castle of Gross Renson. My sisters commenced playing at the same game, and signalled me to advance. ‘Never! never!’ I exclaimed; and then the apparitions, joining hands, passed slowly around my chair. ‘*Justice!*’ cried my father, as he passed before me; ‘*Penitence!*’ exclaimed my mother, leaning towards me; ‘*Prayer!*’ murmured my youngest sister; ‘*The sword!*’ sighed another; ‘*The 12th of August, at midnight!*’ whispered the eldest.’ Again the pro-

cession moved slowly around me thrice; then, with one terrible roar, they all cried out together, 'Adieu! adieu! To our next meeting!'

"I felt then it was a warning of my approaching death, and that I had only to look to God to receive my soul, and bid farewell to your majesty and friends."

"My dear marshal!" said the king, "what you have related to me is very strange; still do you not think the vision may have been caused by delirium! Take courage, strive against these hallucinations, and you will rally and live many years yet. Will you not try and believe what I say? Give me your hand."

The king, receiving no answer, took the old man's hand. It was icy cold. Just then the old clock on the mantel-piece struck the midnight hour. *The spirit of Marshal Blucher had quietly passed away.*

## CHAPTER XX.

### THE SIEGE OF LUCKNOW.

ANY one who can refer to a file of the *Times* may read in that journal of December 29th, 1857, the following announcement:—

“The following telegram was received at the East India House yesterday morning:—The Commander-in-Chief, (Sir Colin Campbell, afterwards Lord Clyde,) entered Oude on the 9th inst. (November.) On the 13th he commenced operations by blowing-up the fort of Jhullawau, near the Alumbagh; on the 15th he occupied Dilkhoosha Park and Martinere, after a running fight of two hours. Our loss is small; Lieutenant Mayne, Horse Artillery, and *Lieutenant Wheatcroft, Carbineers, killed.*”

The Bombay correspondent of the *Times* adds:

“On Sunday, the 15th, (of November,) the Commander-in-Chief marched across the country to the house and park of *Dilkhoosha*, ‘Heart’s Delight,’ which was carried by Sir Colin after a running fight of two hours—the operations of the day, during which the English loss in officers had been Lieutenants Mayne, of the Quarter-master-General’s department, and *Wheatcroft* of the Carbineers, came to an end.”

Notwithstanding the above statement from the official Gazette of the Commander-in-Chief, backed up by the supposed accuracy of the *Times* newspaper, it is quite certain, as we shall be able presently to show, that the regiment of “Carabiniers,” as it is more correctly spelt in the *Army List*, was not at the siege of Lucknow, nor ever near it; that there was no “Lieutenant” of the name of *Wheatcroft* belonging to that corps, as the officer of that name is twice represented; and that he was not killed on “Sunday, November 15th, 1857,” as he is stated to have been, all of which we shall proceed to prove by the following extraordinary tale.

The facts connected with the *apparition* which we are about to relate are these. By the *Army List of March, 1857*, it appears that Captain (not Lieutenant) Wheatcroft was an officer in the 6th Dragoons, which regiment was known by the name of "The Inniskillings." In July, 1857, he exchanged into the 6th Dragoon Guards, called "The Carabiniers," which has been a good deal before the public of late in consequence of its having been the regiment to which the noted "Sir Roger" is said to have belonged. In September of the same year Captain Wheatcroft sailed from England to join his regiment, then quartered at Meerut, where the Indian Mutiny commenced on the memorable Sunday, May 10th, of that year. And the *Army List of January 29th, 1858*, contains an entry, "Captain German Wheatcroft killed in action, November 15th, 1857."

Mrs. German Wheatcroft did not accompany her husband to India, but remained in England, residing with her mother at Cambridge. On Saturday night, November 14th, (it is necessary

to note the exact dates,) she dreamed that she saw her husband looking anxious and ill, upon which she awoke naturally much agitated. It was bright moonlight; and on looking up, what was her horror at seeing the same figure that had appeared in her dream standing close by her bed-side. He appeared dressed in his uniform, the hands pressed across the breast, his hair dishevelled, and his face deadly pale. His large dark eyes were fondly and mournfully fixed upon her, their expression was that of great excitement, and there was a peculiar contraction of the mouth, which was common to him when agitated. She detected each particular of his dress, as distinctly as she had ever done in her life; and she remarked having noticed between his hands the white of his shirt bosom, unstained apparently with blood. The *apparition* seemed to bend forward as if in much pain, and to make an effort to speak; but there was no sound. It remained visible about sixty seconds, and then silently vanished away.

The first idea of the poor bereaved wife 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 to its breathing—the sound was distinct: she became convinced that what she had seen was no dream; and it need not be added that she could obtain no more sleep on that night.

On the following morning she told her mother what had occurred a few hours before, expressing at the same time her strong conviction—though she had not noticed any marks of blood on his dress—that her husband must have been either killed or grievously wounded. And so fully impressed was she with this thought, and the reality of the apparition she had seen, that she positively declined all parties, notwithstanding the entreaties of her friends, declaring that, uncertain whether she was not already a widow, she would remain at home until she had received tidings of her husband (if he was still alive) of a later date than the 14th of November.

We have already seen that the telegram an-

nouncing the fate of Captain German Wheatcroft was published in the *Times* of December 29th, 1857, stating that he was killed before Lucknow on the *fifteenth* of November. The sad intelligence attracted the attention of Mr. Wilkinson, a London solicitor, who had charge of Captain Wheatcroft's affairs. When he subsequently met the widow on business, she informed him that she "had been quite prepared for the melancholy news, but that she was quite convinced her husband could not have been killed on the *fifteenth* of November, as the official despatch stated, inasmuch as she had seen his *apparition* on the night of the *fourteenth*." Allowing for the difference of longitude between London and Lucknow as about five hours, midnight of the 14th in England would synchronize with 5 A.M. of the 15th in India. But it was in the *afternoon* of the 15th in India, according to Sir Colin Campbell's despatch, that Captain Wheatcroft is represented as having been killed; and therefore the *apparition*, which stood by the bedside of Mrs. Wheatcroft on the night of the 14th in England, must

have been seen by her several hours before the engagement in which he fell had taken place, and while he was still alive!

It was necessary for Mr. Wilkinson to apply to the War Office for the official certificate of his client's death; and the return which he received in reply to his application was worded as follows:

"No. <sup>2672</sup><sub>1</sub>. War Office, 30th January, 1858.

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

"(Signed) B. HAWES."

While Mr. Wilkinson's mind remained in a great state of uncertainty as to the exact date of Captain Wheatcroft's death, on account of the conflicting evidence between Mrs. Wheatcroft and the War Office, a remarkable incident occurred, which seemed to cast further suspicion on the accuracy of both the telegram and the official records, and to confirm in no slight degree the evidence of the widow from the apparition she had seen.

Happening one evening to be paying a visit to

some friends—the Rev. Mr. Nenner, Professor of Hebrew at the Independent College in St. John's Wood, London, and his wife—Mr. Wilkinson related to them as an extraordinary circumstance the apparition which Mrs. German Wheatcroft had seen of her husband, and described the figure as it had appeared to her at Cambridge; upon which Mrs. Nenner, turning to her husband, observed, “Why that must be the very person I saw the evening we were talking about India, when you were drawing a picture of 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 great pain. The figure appeared just behind my husband, looking over his left shoulder.”

“Did you attempt to obtain any communication from the apparition?” asked Mr. Wilkinson.

“Yes; we procured one through the medium of my husband.” \*

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\* It is necessary to explain that Mr. and Mrs. Nenner

"Can you recollect what it was?" asked Mr. Wilkinson.

"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, these words:—'*That thing I used to go about in is not buried yet.*' I particularly remarked the expression."

"When did this happen?"

"About 9 P.M. several weeks ago; but I do not recollect the exact date."

"Can you not call to mind," asked Mr. Wilkinson, "something that would enable you to fix the exact day?"

Mrs. Nenner reflected for a few minutes, and then said, "I remember nothing except that, while my husband was drawing and I was talking to a lady who had called to see us, a servant brought in a bill for some German vinegar, and that as I recommended it as being superior

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are supporters of the system called "Spiritualism." I abstain from expressing any opinion on that singular phenomenon; I merely desire to record *facts*.

to English, we had a bottle brought for inspection."

"Did you pay the bill?"

"Yes: I recollect sending out the money by the servant."

"Was the bill receipted?"

"I suppose so; but I can soon see."

Mrs. Nenner quickly found the bill; and on looking it over, the receipt bore the date of the *fourteenth* of November!

This remarkable confirmation of Mrs. German Wheatcroft's conviction as to the day of her husband's death produced such an impression on Mr. Wilkinson, that he called at the office of the well-known army agents, Cox and Greenwood, to ascertain if there was any mistake in the certificate. Nothing there disclosed any sign of inaccuracy, but the reverse; for Captain Wheatcroft's death was mentioned in *two separate despatches* of Sir Colin Campbell; and in both instances the date corresponded with that given in the telegram.

So matters rested until the following March, when the family of Captain German Wheatcroft

received a letter from Captain Godfrey Cooper, an officer belonging to the Military Train Corps, dated Lucknow, December 19th, 1857, informing them that Captain German Wheatcroft had been killed before Lucknow while gallantly charging with the Military Train *on the afternoon of the fourteenth of November*, and not on the day following, as erroneously reported in the telegram, the official despatches of Sir Colin Campbell, and the records of the War Office. Captain Wheatcroft was not serving with his own regiment, the Carabiniers, which was then quartered at Meerut. Immediately on arriving at Cawnpore he had volunteered his services, which were at first declined, but subsequently accepted; and he joined the Military Train then starting for Lucknow; and in their ranks, as Byron says of Brunswick's fated chieftain,—

“He rushed into the field, and fighting foremost fell.”

Captain Godfrey Cooper was riding close beside him when he was struck by the fragment of a shell in the breast, and never spoke after he was.

hit. He was buried in the Dilkoosha ; and there may be seen to this day the little wooden cross erected by his friend, Lieutenant Rich, of the 9th. Lancers, at the head of his grave, on which are cut the initial letters, "G. W.," with the date of his death, November 14th, 1857.

After the lapse of more than a year, the War Office made the proper correction as to the date of Captain Wheatcroft's death ; for Mr. Wilkinson having occasion, as solicitor for the estate of the deceased officer, to apply for a *second* copy of the certificate in April, 1859, found it in exactly the same words of those already given, save that the 14th of November was substituted for the 15th.

This is probably the only instance on record where an *apparition* has proved the means of correcting an erroneous date in the official despatch of a General Commanding-in-Chief. It is also valuable as furnishing the very rare example of the same *apparition* appearing to two different parties on the same night in England shortly after Captain Wheatcroft had been killed in



battle in India; for, supposing he fell on the afternoon of the 14th in India, it was within a few hours *after* that he appeared to two different parties in England. Nor can it be alleged that the narrative related by one caused the apparition of the same figure to the other. For Mrs. German Wheatcroft was at the same time at Cambridge, while Mrs. Nenner on the same night was in London; and it was not until weeks after the occurrence that either knew what the other had seen.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### APPARITIONS AT SEA.

THE late Lieutenant Metherell, R.N., told me that on one occasion, when in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, a sailor came up to him and asked leave to go off his watch on account of his having just heard of the death of his mother. Permission was readily granted, until after a time the officer remembering that they had not spoken any vessel at sea that day, and that it was impossible to have received any communication by any other means, recalled the sailor in order to inquire how he had learnt the news.

“Please, your honour, my mother stood by my hammock last night, and told me she was dead!”

“Oh,” replied my friend, “you’ve been taking

a drop too much this morning;" gave him a slight punishment in place of exempting him from his watch, and dismissed the subject from his thoughts.

Some months after, the ship arrived at Portsmouth, and the above-mentioned sailor having obtained leave to go on shore, speedily returned to inform Lieutenant Metherell that he was no false prophet, as his mother had died at the exact date he had seen her apparition standing at his hammock's side.

As a suitable sequel to the above, the following well-authenticated instance of an apparition in mid-ocean may not be uninteresting to the reader.

Towards the close of 1870, Mr. James Greaves, superintendent of the Anglo-American Telegraph Company's office at Valencia, informed Mr. Varley, the electrician, that some excitement had been caused amongst the crew of the cable-repairing ship *Robert Lowe*, by the alleged appearance of several *apparitions* to one of the crew, when the ship was in the middle of the

Atlantic, which was confirmed by the commander of the vessel, Captain James Blacklock; and subsequently the following statement was drawn up and signed, in order to authenticate fully the whole narrative, which reads as follows:—

STATEMENT OF THE CAPTAIN AND OFFICERS.

The steamship *Robert Lowe* returned to the Thames on Tuesday, October 11th, 1870, from St. Pierre, Newfoundland, where she had been repairing one of the French Atlantic Telegraph Company's cables. An engineer on board, Mr. W. H. Pierce, of 37, Augusta-street, East India-road, Poplar, was taken ill with the typhus fever, and on the 4th October last he died. One of his mates—Mr. D. Brown, of 1, Edward-street, Hudson's-road, Canning-town, Plaistow, a strong, healthy man, a stoker, not likely to be led astray by imagination—attended him till the day before he died. On the afternoon before his death, at three P.M., in broad daylight, Brown was attending the sick man, who wanted to get out of bed, but his companion prevented

him. And this is what the witness says he saw:—

“I was standing on one side of the bunk, and while trying to prevent Pierce from rising, I saw on the other side of the bunk *the wife, two children, and the mother of the dying man, all of whom I knew very well*, and they are all still living. They appeared to be very sorrowful, but in all other respects were the same as other ordinary human beings. I could not see through them: they were not at all transparent.\* They had on their ordinary clothes, and perhaps looked rather paler than usual. The mother said to me, in a clearly audible voice, ‘*He will be buried on Thursday, at twelve o’clock, in about 1400 fathoms of water.*’

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\* It is remarkable that in this day-light apparition tale there are two points to be noted of unusual occurrence in the records of *Ghost-lore*. 1st. That the apparitions were *not* transparent, contrary to the usual belief; as Ossian describes Ghosts to be of so thin a substance that the *moon shines through them*. 2nd. The apparition of Pierce’s mother was said to speak “*in a clearly audible voice!*” This is difficult to explain.

“They all then vanished instantaneously, and I saw them no more. Pierce did not see them, as he was delirious, and had been so for two days previously. I ran out of the berth in a state of great excitement, and did not enter it again while he was alive. He died on Tuesday, not Thursday, and was buried at four o’clock, and not twelve. It was a sudden surprise to me to see the apparitions. I expected nothing of the kind, and when I first saw them I was perfectly cool and collected. I had never before seen anything of the kind in my life, and my health is and always has been good. About five minutes afterwards I told Captain Blacklock I would stop with the sick man no longer, but would not tell him why, thinking that if I did nobody else would take my place. About an hour later, I told Captain Blacklock and Mr. Dunbar, the chief engineer, whose address is, ‘Old Mill, near Port William, Wigtownshire, Scotland.’”

The other sailors on board say they saw that Mr. Brown was greatly agitated, and they gradually drew the above narrative from him. Captain Blacklock adds:—

“Brown came down into the cabin, looking very pale and frightened, and declared in a strong and decided way that he would not attend the sick man any more—not for £1000. I told him that he ought to attend a sick and dying comrade, especially as a storm was raging, and he needed kind and considerate help as much as any of us might need one day. I pressed him the more, as I wanted a strong, steady man to attend the delirious invalid; besides, it being bad weather, the other men were fagged and overworked. Brown would not go back, and he left the cabin, as I think, crying; so I sent him out a glass of brandy. Shortly after that, I heard he was very ill, and that his mates had some trouble in calming him.”

We, the undersigned officials on board the *Robert Lowe*, declare the above statements to be true, so far as each of the circumstances came under our personal notice, but we none of us commit ourselves to any opinion as to the cause of the phenomenon. We give this statement simply because we have been requested so to do,



rumours having gone abroad and caused inquiries to be made.

(Signed)

JOHN BLACKLOCK, Commander.

DAVID BROWN, Stoker.

ANDREW DUNBAR, First Engineer.

REUBEN RICHARDSON, Stoker.

ROBERT KNOX, Trimmer.

HENRY HAMMOND, Stoker.

JOHN WOODCOCK, Stoker.

HENRY PUGH, Cook.

*Witness*, W. H. HARRISON,

27, Queen-street, Horselydown, Bermondsey,

*October 20th*, 1870.

Mr. D. Brown, who saw the *apparition*, bears an excellent character, being thoroughly trusted by his captain, and had a warm friendship for the deceased. Mrs. Pierce, the widow, shortly before her husband's death, experienced, when in London, a strange sensation, which caused her to anticipate the melancholy event. For, being at the house of her mother-in-law, in Camden-town, on the 28th of September, a few days before her

husband's death, she was awakened in the night by a loud knocking, apparently at the street door, but on looking out could not see any one there. A dreadful presentiment came into her mind that she would soon receive some bad news. Afterwards she dreamed that she was a widow, and that her children were dressed in deep mourning; the household, consisting of Mrs. Pierce, her two children, and mother-in-law, formed the very same group of individuals who appeared as *apparitions* to Mr. D. Brown, when watching beside his dying companion in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### CLAIRVOYANCE.

PASSING from the subject of *Apparitions* to another branch of the supernatural, and which for want of a better term is generally known by the name of *Clairvoyance*, I desire to record some *facts* relating to that curious phenomenon, rather than to reason on the probability of such being true, leaving the reader to determine how far such facts are worthy of credit.

A writer of an amusing article entitled *The Lost Faculty, or Sixth Sense*, supposes that one sense more than the orthodox number existed in the early ages of the world, and was universally recognized as such, and which, he says, "consisted in the power of perceiving by the mind's eye spiritual beings with the same ordinary faculty

with which the corporeal eye perceives natural substances." And he further defines this mental faculty as "an ordinary endowment of humanity in its original state of innocence ;" but "by the fall and consequent corruption of the race it was lost, or held in abeyance, as a common attribute of our nature ; being, however, occasionally and temporally restored or imparted to individuals for special purposes." And this, he contends, is not wholly lost ; being, as he says, "still latent in the human constitution." Spirit - seeing of things past, present, and future, by means of a clairvoyant state produced by animal magnetism, is to be regarded as a specimen of its "artificial and temporary recovery." Whether this will explain satisfactorily the cases about to be related, must be left, as I have already said, to the discretion of the reader.

St. Augustine would explain all clairvoyant powers under the head of dreams, reasoning that when one in a dream sees a dead person, he thinks he sees his soul, but when he dreams of a living man, he has no doubt that it is neither a soul or

a body, but the likeness of a man that has appeared to him; as if it were not possible in regard to dead men that it should not be their souls, but their likenesses that appear to the sleepers.

Augustine then confirms his opinion by relating the following story, about one *Curma of the Curia*, at Tullium, near Hippo, who having fallen into a trance for several days, exclaimed on waking, "Let some one go to the house of *Curma the Goldsmith*, and see what he is doing there;" when it was found he had just died. The one Curma reviving at the same moment, telling them how the other had been ordered to be had up when he himself was dismissed, and that he had heard it said in the place from which he had returned, that it was not *Curma of the Curia*, but *Curma the Goldsmith* who had been ordered to be brought to the place of the dead. "But," adds St. Augustine, "he also saw many dead persons at the same place, and others who are still alive, *myself among the number*. Why may he not be thought to have seen both the dead and the living in the same way; consequently, not the persons themselves,

but similitudes of them, just as of various places he had known before ?”\*

Mr. William White, in his life of *Emanuel Swedenborg*, relates a story of this wonderful mystic, by his clairvoyant powers, telling, when at such a distance that there could be no possibility of deception, of the death of Peter III., the Emperor of Russia, which occurred in 1762. A friend mentions (vol. ii. p. 87) that he was conversing with Swedenborg at Amsterdam. “In the midst of our conversation,” he says, “his countenance changed. It was evident *his soul was no longer present*, and that something was passing in him. As soon as he had come to himself, he was asked what had happened. He would not at first tell, but being pressed he said, ‘*This very hour the Emperor Peter has died in prison*, (mentioning at the same time the manner of his death.) Gentlemen will please to note down the day, that they may be able to compare it with the intelligence of his death in the newspapers.’ In due time Peter’s death was announced *on that very day*.”

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\* *August. Retract.* ii., c. 64.

It is well known that *Clairvoyance* has long flourished in the East—years, indeed, before it was known or heard of in its now congenial home in the far West. I do not refer to the real or pretended powers of the Pythoness in the heathen oracles, of which such wonders are told, as in the earliest instance of the Delphic oracle related by Thucydides respecting the death of Hesiod. But to come to more modern times, I may mention two instances of the exercise of this power in India and Arabia, which may fairly compete with any recorded by the heathen of old.

In the year 1766, there were three parties struggling for mastery in the government of Bombay. At the head of one stood Spencer; of the other Crommelin; while the third was led by Hodges, who, it was whispered, had been deprived of a collectorship in an unjust manner. Hodges had written an intemperate letter to the Council, and as he refused to retract what he had written, the collectorship of Surat was taken from him; he was recalled to Bombay, and

immediately dismissed from the Company's service; the Government at the same time sending a report of these things to the Directors of the East India Company at home.

Some time previous to this, when Hodges was residing in Bombay, he had made the acquaintance of a Brahmin, who, though little known to the English, was celebrated amongst the Hindoos as a prophet. They gradually became as intimate as the difference in religion and caste would permit. The Brahmin, an upright man, often admonished his friend never to depart from the path of virtue, which would assuredly lead him to success, and honour, and eternal happiness; and in order to impress this more strongly on the Englishman's mind, the Brahmin predicted that he would rise from the situation he then held in Bombay to higher posts in the Company's service; after which he would become collector of the districts of Tellicherry and Surat, and eventually rise to the highest post of all by *becoming Governor of Bombay!*

Mr. Hodges used frequently to mention these



predictions to his friends, while paying little or no heed to them himself. It was only when he rose to one post after another, particularly when he was named collector of Surat, that he began to place more confidence in the Brahmin's words. When, however, in course of time, Spencer became Governor of Bombay, and Hodges was dismissed the Company's service, he sent to the prophet, who was at that time living at Bulpara, a sacred village on the banks of the Tappy. He went to Hodges, and listened to the disagreeable tale of his lost hopes and fruitless endeavours. Hodges told him in conclusion that he had quite made up his mind to sail for Europe, and therefore did not expect the brilliant fulfilment of his friend's predictions, adding at the same time some reproaches on account of their mistaken nature.

The Brahminee prophet listened to everything with the greatest composure, and did not move a single muscle, but quietly said, "You see this ante-chamber, and the room to which it leads. Mr. Spencer has reached the portico, but will not

enter the palace; he has placed his foot on the threshold, but he will not enter the house. Notwithstanding every appearance to the contrary, you will reach the honours and fill the elevated position exactly as I have foretold, and to which he has been appointed; *for a dark and heavy cloud hangs over him.*"

This remarkable prediction was soon known in Surat and Bombay; it was the topic of conversation in every society. Hodges, however, had so little confidence in it, that he began to make preparations for returning to England. In the meanwhile despatches from Bombay had reached the Directors at home, who condemned Spencer's proceedings, dismissed him from the Company's service, and, to the surprise of every one but the Brahmin, made Hodges governor in his place.

From this time the Brahmin gained the greatest influence over Governor Hodges, who undertook nothing of importance without asking counsel of his friend. It was remarked that the Brahmin never prophesied anything beyond

the government of Bombay, but maintained a mysterious silence after the commencement of the year 1771. Governor Hodges died suddenly in the night of February 22nd, of the same year.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### AN ARABIAN NIGHT STORY.

PASSING from India to Arabia, the following instance of clairvoyant power is related by Palgrave, in his interesting work on that country.

In the year 1850, which answers to 1228 E.H., during the reign of the Sultan Sa'eed, king of the eastern portion of Arabia called *Oman*, a young merchant of Muscat, who had recently married one of the fairest damsels of that city, embarked on commercial business in a ship bound for the coast of Zanzibar. After a prosperous voyage he arrived at the market for his traffic, and there remained, according to his custom, some months, laying in a suitable cargo for his return home.

One evening, while residing at a place opposite the island of Zanzibar, about 2000 miles south of

Muscat, he was seated on the roof of the house where he lodged in company with an Arabian, whose acquaintance he had recently made. Chance had thrown them together, and community of race in a foreign land had produced a certain degree of intimacy.

The sun was setting, and the two friends were smoking their pipes in that peaceful way peculiar to Orientals generally, when the merchant remarked a strange expression pass over his companion's face, which caused him to inquire the cause. "Did you see what I this moment behold," answered the Arabian seer, "you would look even graver than I do." Such a reply naturally led to further inquiry, on which the magician, after a suitable show of reluctance at having to communicate painful news, at length said, "I have just seen such a person," naming a well-known libertine of Muscat, "enter your house *at this very hour*, and at a moment when there is no one at home but your wife, who appears to greet him with great joy."

It was now the husband's turn to look grave

indeed. Starting instantly to his feet, and seizing the magician by the throat, the merchant extracted from him a minute relation of all that was passing between his wife and her visitor, which cannot be better told than in the well-known words which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Iago, when saying to Othello,

“There are a kind of men so loose of soul,  
That in their sleep will mutter their affairs :  
One of this kind is Cassio,” &c.

The indignation of the injured husband rose to the highest pitch. “Are there no means,” he eagerly inquired, “to forestall, or at least avenge the crime?” To the latter part of the question the Arabian seer replied that he was indeed possessed of the most effectual means for that end, and would willingly exert them. “Do so at once,” rejoined the merchant.

“Not so fast,” answered the other, “we must first preclude the possibility of ill consequences to ourselves.”

He then directed the merchant to draw up a document, empowering his friend, the magician,

to take vengeance on the guilty woman and her paramour. The paper was quickly written, dated, signed, and sealed. "Now," said the clairvoyant, "call up the whole family to whom this house belongs, after which I myself will countersign the document."

The orders of the seer were fulfilled. By this time night had set in, and the whole party stood in silence on the roof, under the open canopy of the starry sky. The writ of death lay on a table in the midst. "Now, give me your dagger," said the magician to the husband. The latter drew from his belt the crooked, silver-handled dirk, commonly worn by Arabs of a certain rank, and handed it to his friend. He took it in silence, turned slowly towards the north, and after muttering a few words, *stabbed the air twice*. "Now go and sleep in peace," said he to the husband; "your vengeance is complete, *for the criminals are both dead*."

Shortly after this extraordinary incident had occurred, the merchant left Zanzibar for Muscat. Immediately on his landing he was told that his



only brother had been cast into prison, and was there detained on suspicion of murder. "Your wife," said his friends to him, "and with her such an one," mentioning the name of the individual denounced by the clairvoyant at Zanzibar, "were found one morning dead within a chamber of your house; a dagger had pierced them *twice* through and through. No trace could be obtained of the murderer or his weapon; but as your brother seemed the most likely person to have done the deed, he was arrested and questioned before the judges. Nothing, however, appeared to prove his guilt; so the government consigned him to prison until your return, in order that a fresh examination of the matter might then take place."

The merchant went at once to the authorities, and told his wondrous tale. The case seemed too strange not to be sifted to the bottom; so it was referred from tribunal to tribunal, till the Sultan Sa'eed declared that he reserved to himself the right to judge the case in person.

Accordingly, the Sultan caused the merchant

and his brother to be brought to Nezwah, the capital of Oman, his usual place of residence, but without permission to quit the city. Then he sent orders to Zanzibar, that all who had signed the document, or been in any way witnesses of the scene on the house-top, should be sent to his capital without delay. When all the party were assembled at Nezwah, consisting of the two brothers, the African householder and his family, together with some of his neighbours and the clairvoyant magician, the Sultan held a sort of *lit de justice* in the open air. The document was produced, and all present recognized and authenticated their respective signatures, while cross-examination only confirmed the correctness of the merchant's statement. Whereupon Sultan Sa'eed declared himself utterly unable to decide the guilt or to award punishment in such an extraordinary case, and dismissed both the merchant and his brother, together with the witnesses from Zanzibar, after granting them a handsome recompence for loss of time and trouble incurred.

At the same time the Sultan strongly advised

the Arabian seer to be henceforth more discreet in the exercise of his occult powers, a recommendation afterwards extended to all the magicians and clairvoyants of Oman. And if the all-potent monarch did no more, popular rumour assigned a reason for his forbearance—that his own favourite spouse, the mother of the present Sultan, was the very Hecate of Arabian wizards and witches, and worthy to preside at any weird meeting of black cats, broom-sticks, he-goats, magic cauldrons, or any of the spiritualistic circles which exist either in Europe or America at the present day.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE SIEGE OF CIUDAD RODRIGO.

IN one of the many controversies in which Sir William Napier was too often engaged, as the result of his outspoken opinion of men and events in his celebrated work, *The History of the Peninsular War*, was that concerning the officer to whom properly belonged the honour of having first mounted the breach at the storming of the citadel of Ciudad Rodrigo, one of "the Duke's" brilliant victories during that memorable war.

Colonel Gurwood, editor of the Duke of Wellington's *Despatches*, recounts in that work (vol. viii., p. 431) his own share in the siege. While Napier's view is contained in vol. vi., pp. 4—18, of his *History*; from which it would appear that Lieutenant Mackie, of the 88th, who led the

forlorn hope at the siege, was first inside the citadel, and received the offer of surrender tendered him by two officers who caught hold of him, one on each arm, for protection, and while so situated, as Napier affirms, "Lieutenant Gurwood came up and obtained the sword of the governor," (General Barree.) The question to be decided was—Did Lieutenant Gurwood ascend "the breach *twice* before the other officers of the storming party went up?" as Sir George Napier, in writing to his brother the historian, expresses it, though he admits that if Colonel Gurwood had so stated it, he could not contradict him.

Now this is just what Colonel Gurwood, in his *Correct Statement*, in reply to Sir William Napier, distinctly does state. He contends that he was knocked down when storming the breach at the head of his men, and that on recovering from this, as it was only cold shot thrown by one of the enemy, he rushed up a *second* time, entered the fortress with others, and received from the governor the surrender of his sword. A remarkable incident happened during the second attempt,

which eventually led to the instance of clairvoyant manifestation which I am about to relate.

Colonel Gurwood told the late Rev. Robert McGhee, Rector of Hollywell, who was kind enough to give me an account of the conversation in writing, that in the struggle at the breach he saw a French officer lying on the ground, whose life he saved from the hands of his enraged men; that after the surrender of Ciudad Rodrigo, Colonel Gurwood took this officer to his tent, supplied him with brandy and other necessaries, and eventually was the means of effecting his exchange.

In the course of his controversy with Sir William Napier, Colonel Gurwood, unable to discover any English officer still living who was at the breach on that occasion, and who could bear testimony to what had actually taken place, bethought himself of applying to the War Office in Paris, in order to discover if the French officer, whose name was well known to him, was alive, as he would certainly be able to confirm the truth of Colonel Gurwood's statement.

His application, however, to the officials in Paris was entirely fruitless. The French officer had quitted the army at the fall of Napoleon, and as thirty years had elapsed since then, the War Office could give no further information about him. Colonel Gurwood was advised by a friend to apply to Alexis, a celebrated *clairvoyant*, who at that time was creating no small stir in Paris by his revelations, which appeared to border on the supernatural.

Colonel Gurwood followed this advice: visiting Alexis alone and *incog.*, he sought to test his powers, previous to the chief object of his visit, by requesting him to describe his usual residence in London. Alexis at once described his abode in a fortress, mentioning several minute details respecting the arrangement of the furniture in the rooms, which astonished the colonel exceedingly, adding that the room opened into a second one better furnished, in which he saw a grey-haired, military-looking man seated at a table. All this was exactly true, as Colonel Gurwood, at that time, was acting as secretary to the Duke of



Wellington, then Constable of the Tower, and was engaged in preparing for publication those admirable *Despatches* which have added to the Duke's previous high renown.

Upon making further inquiries respecting the chief object of his visit, Alexis was equally successful, as by that means Colonel Gurwood was enabled to discover the French officer of whom he was in search. And here I cannot do better than give an extract from the letter which I received some years ago from Mr. McGhee on the subject. After lamenting that he could not remember all which the late Colonel Gurwood had related to him, the letter proceeds:—

“I do know he discovered the place of the officer's residence. He was placed *en rapport* with Alexis, the *clairvoyant*, and when Alexis mentioned to him, ‘I see you now entering the breach at the head of your men. Now I see you knocked down with a cannon ball,’ which a man flung at him and knocked him down. ‘Ah! now I see you get up again—now I see you get up again. Now I see you saving the life of an

officer.' 'This,' said Colonel Gurwood to me, 'was exactly true; my men were going to bayonet the officer who commanded the breach, and I saved his life. Then I asked Alexis, 'Is that officer alive, and where can I hear of him?' 'He is, and you will hear of him in such a town in France.' I forget the name of the town, but Colonel Gurwood told me. 'I knew the name of the officer, for after that I had saved his life, and had the surrender of the town from the commanding officer, I took him to my tent and gave him some brandy and water, and he asked me to send some letters for him to the town, which I did.' Colonel Gurwood wrote to the officer in command of the town that Alexis mentioned. The officer told him in reply that the person for whom he had inquired was not in that town, but in another commanded by his brother. He then wrote to the brother of this officer in command, who informed him of the residence of the officer whose life he had saved. *Colonel Gurwood showed me a letter from that officer, expressing his gratification at hearing from*

*his benefactor*, and inviting him to go and see him, that he might introduce him to those who owed their existence to his generosity—his wife and children; and Colonel Gurwood told me he intended at that time to pay him a visit.”

The above letter, which is dated July 1st, 1868, is sufficient to prove that Colonel Gurwood succeeded in discovering the object of his search, solely through the assistance of some extraordinary and apparently supernatural power possessed by Alexis, when all other means of tracing the French officer had entirely failed.

As a finale to this remarkable instance of *clairvoyance*, I would adduce the testimony of the poet Rogers on the same subject. Writing in his *Table Talk*, he says, “When I was in Paris, I went to Alexis, and desired him to describe my house in St. James’-place. On my word, he astonished me! He described most exactly the peculiarities of the staircase; said that not far from the window in the drawing-room there was the picture of a man in armour—the painting by Giorgione—and so on. Colonel Gurwood, shortly

before his death, assured me that he was reminded by Alexis of some circumstances that had happened to him in Spain, and which he could not conceive how any human being except himself should know. Still, I cannot believe in *clairvoyance*, because the thing is impossible."

I think we must conclude that Rogers could never have studied La Place's celebrated work on *Probabilities*, or else that he did not assent to its teaching, such, *e.g.*, as is contained in the following passage: "It is exceedingly unphilosophical to deny magnetic phenomena, merely because they are inexplicable in the present state of our knowledge," (p. 348.) It certainly is somewhat remarkable that in a matter like *clairvoyance*, and the powers claimed for it by its supporters, and usually deemed to savour of imagination more than anything else, the mathematician should reprove the incredibility of the poet.

As a close to our narrative of *facts* in respect to *clairvoyance*, I would quote the opinion of Froude, the historian, on the case of Elizabeth Barton, the nun of Kent, whose cell at Canterbury for a

few years in the beginning of the 16th century was the Delphic shrine of the Popish oracle; "from which the orders of Heaven were communicated even to the Pope himself. By the Papal party she was universally believed to be inspired. Wolsey believed it; Warham believed it; the bishops believed it; Queen Catherine believed it; Sir Thomas More's philosophy was no protection to him against the same delusion. Her story is a psychological curiosity. In the year 1525 she was attacked by some internal disease, and after many months of suffering she was reduced into that abnormal and singular condition in which she exhibited the phenomena known to modern wonder-seekers as those of somnambulism, or *clairvoyance*. The scientific value of such phenomena is still undetermined, but that they are not purely imaginary is generally agreed. In the histories of all countries, and of all times, we are familiar with accounts of young women of bad health and irritable nerves, who have exhibited at recurring periods certain unusual powers; and these exhibitions have had

especial attraction for superstitious persons, whether they have believed in God, in the devil, or in neither." \*

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\* Froude's *History of England*, chap. iv., vol. i., p. 315.

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