

Chapter 6

Magicians and Spirit Mediums

INVOCATIONS—ELEMENTARIES—PLANETARIES—
MIRRORS AND CRYSTALS—KOBOLDS—FARIES—
SPIRITUALISM AS FOUND IN SCOTCH HIGHLANDS.

No page of retrospect in my fateful life-wanderings excites in me more surprise than the inferiority of the results obtained through magical processes, when compared with those which seem to arise spontaneously as an organic peculiarity of certain individuals. Our English associates had studied with profound and scholarly research most of the arts of magic recorded by the mystics of the Middle Ages, the sages of classic lands, and the thaumaturgists of the East. Many of them were perfectly well versed in the cabala, with all its veiled mysticism and apocalyptic significance; some of them had been initiated into the rites of both ancient and modern freemasonry, and become affiliated with the most potential of the Oriental societies now in existence. Like Moses, Thales, Orpheus, and other sages of old, they had mastered the secrets of Egyptian wisdom, Chaldean astrology, and Persian chemistry; yet notwithstanding all their occult knowledge and the fidelity with which they strove to make it a practical power, they failed to achieve the feats common to the whirling dervishes of Arabia or the wandering fakirs of modern India, whilst the glimpses they obtained of the invisible realms around them were vague, unsatisfactory, and partial; indeed, many a good somnambulist would have regarded them with pity if not contempt, and any powerful "spirit medium" of this day could have displayed more phenomena by aid of a dancing table in five minutes than many of these really earnest students could have evolved by magical processes in five times five years of profound occult experiments.

The methods of the great majority of the magians I was now introduced to may be briefly summed up as follows: Their first aim was to secure the services of such an one as they could discover to be a good natural magician—one whom the spiritists of to-day would call "a good clairvoyant" or "medium," and we Teutons style "a seer." This prerequisite obtained and the society in session, they proceeded to form a circle on the ground, prepared after the fashion prescribed by Cornelius Agrippa or some of the medieval mystics. They formed their book of spirits on the same approved patterns, and carefully conformed to every item of the magical ritual or other formulae declared to have been derived from the magians of Egypt and Chaldea and practiced by such renowned mystics as Thos. Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, Nostradamus, Count St. Germain, etc. I found the practices of different societies varied but little, and consisted chiefly in a due observance of days, hours, times, and seasons, planetary, solar, and lunar phases. Much reliance was placed on the fumigations said to be appropriate to different days of the week, months and seasons; in a word, our English

associates had carefully studied the formulae of magic as taught in the writings of Oriental and classical authorities, and faithfully endeavored to practicalize the directions laid down, as far as the usages of modern society permitted.

To those who are unfamiliar with the occult subjects I am now treating of, let me say with all candor, I have faithfully devoted many years to the study of spiritual mysteries; and both in my own person and that of my numerous associates of many lands have endeavored, by aid of all the light I could obtain, whether derived from ancient or modern sources, to discover what were the most effective methods of communing with the invisible world and penetrating into the actualities of other realms of being than those of mortality. The sum of all, to my apprehension, is that man, to obtain this boon, must be born a natural magician, or in more familiar phase, "a good spirit medium." Also that clairvoyance, clairaudience, seership, and all those spiritual gifts by which human beings can attain the privilege of communion with spirits, consist in certain organic specialties of constitution, naturally appertaining to some individuals, and latent in others, though susceptible of unfoldment by modes of culture.

I believe that forms, rites, and invocatory processes, fumigations, spells—in a word, the science and practice of magic, may be applied as means to aid in this communion, and are especially potent in enabling the operators to exercise control over lower orders of spirits than themselves; but I affirm that they are inoperative to open up the communion as a primary means, and that without the services of a good seer, clairvoyant, or spirit medium, magical rites alone cannot succeed in evolving spiritual phenomena. This I soon found to have been the general experience of our new associates in England. All their magical formulae were subordinate in use to the one grand desideratum of a good natural magician. Professor von Marx once questioned, in his cold, sarcastic way: What was the use of magical ceremonies at all, so long as they could not effect any results without the required medium? and having secured this great desideratum, would not his or her presence render the rites unnecessary? Our friends generally denied this position, however, alleging that magical rites were the means of culturing and unfolding spiritual gifts; also that they were essential to the orderly intercourse with spirits. and enabled mortals to command them instead of being commanded by them.

In years of experience subsequent to the period of my first visit to England, I have found abundant reason to accept opinions composed of both sides of this question. The results of my experiments may some day be given to the world in a more practical form than these autobiographical sketches.

To those unacquainted with the methods of invocation enjoined upon the high priest or chief magian of these rites, the following examples may not be uninteresting. After all the ceremonies of "purification," "ablution," and "fumigation" had been duly complied with, the chief magian proceeded to summon the spirit of the day, week, and season, after this fashion:

"I conjure and confirm upon you, strong, potent, and holy angels, in the name of the most dreadful Adonai, the God of Israel, and by the name of all the angels serving in the second host before Tetra, that great, strong, and powerful angel, and by the name of his star, and by the name of the seal, which is sealed by God most mighty and honorable, and by all things before spoken. I conjure upon thee, Raphael, the great angel who art ruler of the fourth day, that for me thou wilt labor and fulfill all my petitions according to my will and desire in my cause and business."

Invocations to Elementary spirits were given in a still more stringent and compulsory tone. The following will serve as a specimen thereof:

"Therefore, come ye! come ye, Serapiel, spirit of the air, ruling on the fourth day! Angel of the southwest wind, come ye. come ye! Adonai commandeth. Sadai commandeth—the most high and dreadful king of kings, whose power no creature is able to resist. Sadai be unto you most dreadful, unless ye obey and forthwith appear before this circle; and let miserable ruin and fire unquenchable remain with ye, unless ye forthwith obey. Therefore, come ye! in the awful name Tetragrammaton. Why tarriest thou? Hasten! Hasten! Hasten! Adonai, the most high, Sadai, king of kings commands!" etc., etc.

These words, lofty and sounding as they seem, can convey only the faintest idea of the fiery zeal and urgent ecstasy with which the invocants were accustomed to pronounce them.

The more they could stimulate themselves up to the pitch of fervent ecstasy, the more potential became the results. On many occasions, where the officiating magian was in deep, tremendous earnest, and the assistants partook of his fervent zeal, I have seen the whole assemblage sink on their knees, and break forth into uncontrollable sobs, cries, appeals to heaven, spirits, angels, and elementaries. I have felt the walls shake, the house tremble; beheld the floor riven apart; fiery tongues dash swiftly through the apartment, and forms of elemental spirits become visible to all. Hands have been seized; many amongst us have been thrown violently on the ground, lifted up to the roof, and held suspended in the air. The entire scene has been one of the most tremendous and occult character, and though the experience of modern investigators with strong "physical force mediums" may supply abundant parallels of such scenes, and furnish what they deem to be a complete explanation of its marvels, there can be no question that the strong mental efflatus evolved by the scene, time, and modes of invocation combined to supply the powerful pabulum by which invisible beings effected such demonstrations of their presence.

These magical circles were always effective in the production of strong responsive action from the spirit-world in proportion to the zeal, energy, and ecstatic fervor of the invocants; in short, it was the history of the Jewish Pentecost re-enacted in the nineteenth century.

It was the harmonious accord of the assemblage, the Pentecostal spirit in which they met, that supplied the invisible world with the force which exhibited itself in tongues of fire and a "mighty rushing wind." When our magians were most terribly in earnest, their spiritual respondents were most obedient and potential.

No doubt the specialty of certain human organisms present, always afforded the force necessary for spirits to work with. It is possible that our own spirits, too, stimulated to ecstasy by the efflatus of our earnest purpose, operated upon the inanimate objects around us, and served as instruments for the achievement of marvelous phenomena. I know Professor von Marx and myself were never present at magical seances without obtaining results of a Spiritualistic character. I believe we both furnished the pabulum by which spirits could come into contact with matter; but whether the wonderful phenomena we witnessed were the result of direct foreign intervention or the exercise of our own spiritual faculties, even Professor von Marx himself could not always determine.

I know it would be proper in this place to anticipate the questions of some sincere spiritists concerning the character of the beings who were seen at those magical circles, and declare whether they were not, as most believers in spiritism would expect they would be, the apparitions of our deceased friends. On this point I answer emphatically in the negative, nay, more, I hardly remember at this period of my researches—certainly not in these invocatory seances—ever to have seen human spirits as the respondents in acts of magic. Human spirits were not summoned. Those magians did not practice that phase of the art they termed necromancy, to

wit, communion with the spirits of the dead. Many of our English associates professed an unconquerable aversion to this idea, and Professor von Marx always discountenanced in me the belief that the spirits of the dead could subsist much longer than the period necessary to accomplish the disintegration of the body. No, we summoned the spirits of the elements, and they responded to us in all the varied forms in which these beings exist. Sometimes we communed with bright planetary spirits; but those radiant beings were rarely visible to the whole circle; in fact, were seldom seen except by the clairvoyants and somnambulists, of whom there were several belonging to these circles besides myself.

If my readers would inquire what beneficial results, temporal or spiritual, man could derive from these weird communings, I frankly admit I am unable to answer. Beyond the pursuit of knowledge or the attainment of power in some special direction. I do not myself realize any benefit from the achievement of intercourse with elementary spirits. These beings appeared to me to be often malevolent and incapable of attaining to the perception of good. They seemed to look up to man as a god to be feared, propitiated, and served: but few of their species realized the good, truth, and beauty which belongs to pure reason and high exaltation of soul; hence they naturally resorted to mischief, torment, and deceit, as their protection against the superior powers of man, and except in a few instances of communion with the higher realms of "nature spirits," I never knew good, happiness, peace of mind, or virtuous inspiration result from these intercommunings. If to know the universe of being, and the nature and immensity of the existences that people it, be the object sought, the search is legitimate to the philosopher; but efforts to attain these communings stimulated by mere curiosity, a desire to obtain wealth, discover hidden treasures, gain power over the elements, and subdue enemies, although often measurably successful, invariably bring unrest, disappointment, and ultimate evil to the seeker, and I would earnestly warn mankind against the attempt, stimulated, as before suggested, by purely selfish motives.

I have had many pleasant interviews with the harmless and innocent spirits of the mines, and those who preside over and correspond to the air, fire, and atmosphere. Although rarely identified by mortals, and shy of holding direct communication with them, these classes of elementaries are still noble and exalted in their natures, constantly engaged in directing and inspiring students in the natural sciences, indeed they are so intimately related to human destiny that we breathe in their influence with every noble thought, and attract them, as sparks of intellectual fire, with every aspiration we cherish for scientific knowledge.

During our residence in London we were constant attendants and welcome visitors at a circle which for distinction I shall name the Orphic Circle. Its president and "Grand Master" was a noble gentleman whom I shall call Lord Vivian.

His methods were inspired by far loftier aims and regulated by much more pious aspirations than those of most other English magians. The seers, of whom Lord Vivian's society numbered several, conducted their experiments through the mirror and crystal, and the young ladies especially who attended these interesting seances, were particularly happy in attracting pure and noble planetary spirits in response to their call. On one occasion I attended a seance in London, when a mirror was to be presented to a fair young girl, whose acquaintance I made about twenty years before the date of my present writing.

The seance of which I am about to speak took place several years later than the period at which I first visited London, and I am anticipating the events of that time in referring to it; but as I may not have an opportunity of mentioning it again, and the scene in question has exercised a most potential influence upon all the succeeding years of my life, I shall plead guilty to the anachronism of recording its details in this place.

The party in question consisted of the master of the house, three gentlemen, distinguished occultists of the country, the young lady before referred to, and her chaperone.

The exercises commenced with a deep and heartfelt invocation, the performance of some sweet part-songs, and the trance address of the fair somnambulist. This beautiful creature, like a Pythoness of old, rapt in ecstasy and filled with the divine efflatus, uttered one of the most sublime invocations for spiritual light, wisdom, and guidance to the source of all light and knowledge, I have ever listened to. How cold, lifeless, and insincere do the parrot-like prayers of hireling priests sound compared to the burning appeals and eloquent beseechings of these modern Pythia! If there was an angel in the high empyrean of the unknown heavens, he must have heard and answered the pleadings of this inspired girl. After the trance invocation our host, who was an adept of the modern magical school, unveiled the newly-made virgin mirror, and consecrated it in due form to Azrael, "the angel of life and death," whom the fair seeress had chosen as the guardian of her mirror. As its shining surface was disclosed to view, the lady, standing before it in a lofty attitude of rapt ecstasy, pronounced these words: "To Azrael, the shrouded angel, and his twin ministers of life and death, and to thee, O Father of spirits and ruler of all life and being! I do hereby dedicate the service and consecrate the use of this mirror." When the spirit whom this invocation summoned, first appeared in the mirror, the seeress started, turned pale, and with an aspect of terror and aversion beckoned me to come and inspect the vision with her.

What I then saw was as great a surprise to me as to the lady. There, distinctly outlined on, rather than in, the mirror, was the head and shoulders of a being whom for years I had been accustomed to regard as the presentation of my evil genius. It was a woman with a frightful aspect, full of malignity, rage, and ferocity. She wore a head-dress worthy of a Medusa. Her large, staring eyes glared hideously at the beholder; and according to the expression those malign features assumed, so had I been accustomed to expect the approach of the misfortunes of which this spectre was the invariable forerunner. When sickness was near at hand, the hag would appear to me mocking and mowing like a wailing idiot; on the approach of discord, slander, or enmity, she would assume a grimace impossible to describe, but still graphically significant to a seer. Death, this hideous ghoul portended by opening wide her cavernous jaws and presenting within them a miniature resemblance of some victim whom she affected to devour. This ghastly image always appeared to me objective, life-like, and real. I have faced it in the street, in my chamber, in the midst of the gayest assemblages, in royal salons, and quiet solitude.

Its appearance was an unfailing prophecy in the directions I have intimated, and I had become so accustomed to behold it that it created in me neither surprise nor alarm until I saw it appear as one of the legionaries of "Azrael, the angel of life and death," in my fair friend's mirror. I endeavored to calm her mind by explaining to her that it was but an image, representative of the action of mortal death, from which the angel Azrael sent shadows, some ghastly in their ugliness, others radiant with the promises of the better life to come. Whilst I spoke the mocking "image," as I had termed it, moved, smiled, or rather grinned, chattered at us, and shook her lean, skinny arms as if to assure us it was no image but a thing of life, one, too, which heard and understood my attempts to soothe my companion. "It is an elementary," she said, "and whilst it signifies all you say, it is still an actual existence, not a mere subjective image."

Once more I pause in my narrative to state that the seeress here alluded to has, since that time, been visited for a number of years—indeed, up to the present time—by the same apparition, in the same manner as I have described above, and with the same prophetic intimations. Banished almost instantly from the mirror by my will, I inquired what my friend

would now wish to behold, as I doubted not the angel of the mirror would be ready to yield her a more agreeable and instructive vision. "Let me see whatever the wise and good guardian is pleased to display," she replied; when, after due invocation, soliciting Azrael to show us whatsoever would be instructive and prophetic, we both simultaneously beheld the following singular picture: Two forms arose in the mirror which strongly suggested the idea of the genii of night and day. They were apparently female forms, attired in flowing robes of black and white. Their long tresses were also the one of raven, the other of golden hue. Their faces were exquisitely beautiful, but sad, silent and full of wonderfully pleading eloquence. The dark eyes of the one and the lustrous blue of the other were fixed upon us with a depth of sadness, pity, and sorrow which conveyed a whole history of prophetic meaning.

Between these figures was displayed an open book, upon the pages of which both the seeress and myself read two words. The lady informed me she had seen these spirits before, had been told that they were planetary spirits, the guardians of a mirror belonging to a friend whom she occasionally visited, and that the book which they thus presented was one which for ages they had been endeavoring to inspire some earthly scribe to write. She added: "These spirits seemed, when first I saw them at my friend, Mr. H.'s, to beseech me to write that book; but it now appears as if they had transferred their plea to you, and I cannot but think the vision is significant of the prophecy that you are destined to write it." "If so, then," I replied, "the first image is not meaningless, for the spirit of malignity as surely prophesies slander and malice in connection with what is to follow, as the beautiful legionaries of the stars prophesy that either you or I, or perhaps both, will become their scribe."

I give this example chiefly to illustrate the character of the intelligence which comes through the mirror and crystal in seances devoted to their exhibition. Whatever is thus presented is designed apparently by the guardian spirits of the mirror or crystal, to whom these objects are dedicated, to convey instruction, advice, warning, or prophecy. Some of the noblest communications I have ever received have been given by planetary spirits impressed upon the surface of the mirror, and some of the most startling and significant events of my life have been prophesied of by images, scenes, and representations rising up in the magnetic depths of a consecrated crystal. I do not claim that either of these instruments are essential to the unfoldment or exercise of clairvoyance; but where the power already exists, mirrors, crystals, a glass of water, or any polished, smooth, or untarnished surface seems available as a tablet for the use of the invisible artist, and a means of representation for scenic effects by attendant spirits.

Returning to the period when I first made the acquaintance of the English magians, I recall a special seance wherein I was myself the clairvoyant. Professor von Marx had as usual magnetized me by a single wave of his hand, and enjoined me to describe to those present various visionary scenes in which they were interested. In the course of the seance I suddenly perceived the loathsome image I have just alluded to—"the hag," as I was accustomed to call her—crouching down close beside my beloved master, extending a long, lean, skinny arm, as if about to clutch him, and gazing upon him with those distended jaws which to my shuddering apprehension prophesied the approach of death. My master at that moment seemed to be lost in profound abstraction. With folded arms he sat looking vacantly into the dim distance, his thoughts evidently centered on scenes far remote from his present surroundings. It was in this moment of abstraction, and in the absence of the intense and concentrated influence he was accustomed to throw around me, that I seemed to awake as with a sudden start from dreaming to reality, and piercing the mist of self-woven mystery in which he chose to enshroud himself and hide the realities of his being from me, I perceived a truth which he had not before permitted to dawn on my consciousness. He was unhappy,

and his appearance betokened to my newly-opened vision the signs of physical decay and the fever of deep unrest.

The pang of fear and anguish which thrilled through my frame touched his. He recovered from his state of abstraction with a slight shiver, turned an anxious, inquisitive glance upon me, rose, laid his hand lovingly on my shoulder, and instantly caused the clouds of reserve once more to roll down between us. The spectre vanished. Professor von Marx resumed his seat, carelessly waved his hand to recall me from the magnetic state, remarking: "Enough, my Louis; you are weary." To the external eye all was as calm and serene as ever, and our relations to each other had not in the least degree altered; interiorly, however, I had received a revelation which not even the will of this all-powerful controller could obliterate, and with this cherished independent secret stored away in my soul, arose the determination to effect a change in our circumstances. Under the pretence that the air of the metropolis affected me unfavorably, I induced my beloved friend to set out with me on a tour through North Britain, purposing amidst the breezy hills and in the pure atmosphere of Scotland and Wales, to obtain that rest and renovation for him which he fondly deemed I needed for myself.

My purpose is not to invite my readers to a perusal of my personal adventures, but to a retrospect of such scenes alone as may tend to throw light or bring evidence to bear upon the mysteries of spiritual existence.

When I write of myself it will only be in illustration of that realm of mind whose varying emotions should become the field of more profound explorations and analysis than has yet been bestowed upon that all-important subject. I pass by then, our wanderings through many memorable scenes, and only pause to record one illustration of spiritual interposition, in connection with events which are still well remembered at the place where they occurred. Professor von Marx's reputation as a man of letters, and the report that he was accompanied by one of the seers of the renowned "Berlin Brotherhood," procured us far more hospitable attention in our quiet rambles than we desired to attract. On one occasion we were so earnestly entreated to become the guests of a nobleman whose estate lay in the heart of the wild Trosachs, that we felt unable, without positive discourtesy, to resist his urgent invitation that we would remain with him for a few days.

We arrived at our place of destination early in the forenoon, and after partaking of a lunch characterized by all that profuse hospitality for which the "kindly Scot" is so justly celebrated, our host proposed that we should accompany him and one or two of his friends on a ride through some of the most romantic points of the neighborhood. In this excursion we visited many interesting places, frequently leaving our horses in charge of the grooms, whilst we explored on foot mountain passes whose savage wildness might never have been disturbed by the invading presence of man.

It seemed almost impossible for me to wander amidst these lovely glens, vales, and woods, climb mountains of rarest grandeur, and gaze over outstretched panoramas of gorgeous loveliness, without yielding to the spiritual efflatus which Nature in her profuse displays of scenic beauty ever inspires. Every foot of ground, too, was historical. Every wooded height was crowned with a castle or old manorial building, memorable as the residence of kings or princes, heroes or statesmen. We gazed upon gloomy fortresses which had once held captive the fairest and noblest of Scotland's peers and princes. Every scene was redolent of wild and thrilling memories. We passed through deep glens, or penetrated into the heart of mountain defiles, where the best blood of the land had drenched the ground, and lingered in many a fairy nook, imprinted with tragic legends of violence and wrong. Every towering crag or

peaceful glen, every deep defile or shady grove, was stamped with thrilling memories. To one who like me, lived on the borders of the unseen world, and whose clairvoyant sight revealed unbidden, a thousand pictures of interior life veiled to the outer eye, this land of mighty deeds and romantic associations opened up a page of wondrous revelation.

Oftentimes when solitude and silence brooded over the glowing landscape to the eyes of my companions, to me the air was thick with visions. I beheld flying armies, dying heroes, captive princes, persecuted martyrs, and all the weird phantasmagoria of life in its stormiest and most unresting moods. And these visions must not be classed as the result of a mere overheated imagination or creative fancy. The spectral forms of the long ago are indelibly fixed in the "astral light," which is the spiritual atmosphere of the universe, and what seer can pass amidst those scenes where these thronging phantoms most abound, without perceiving, through the rifts and rents of matter, the myriads of forms which hang on the gallery walls in an imperishable world of spiritual entities? Nothing that ever has been is lost to the vision of the seer; nothing that now is, can be hidden from his piercing gaze; nothing that shall be is wholly veiled from his prophetic glances. Involuntarily, though perhaps shudderingly, he finds his spiritual eyes are open, and he is compelled to gaze upon the innermost of life's awful mystery whether he will or no. No hand, not even that of his own tired spirit, can draw the curtain between his vision and that of the solemn scenes inscribed by the actors in life's wild drama upon the indestructible page of the astral light. Nature in her external loveliness afforded me but half-revealed glimpses of her meaning in each scene I looked upon. It was the array of phantom images that came trooping up before my soul's eyes, filling each spot with the living, dying, dead; with fierce battle-scenes, romances, intrigues; with all the stirring events, in short, which make up the wild legend of Scottish history, that I beheld, loading my spirit with the fatal burden of involuntary seership, filling my heart with anguish for the woes of poor humanity, and isolating me alike from human sympathy and human companionship.

Lost as I was in the absorption of this fatal gift of second sight, I could rarely contribute much to the entertainment of my companions. Professor von Marx was scarcely more sociable, for he was divided in his wish to gratify our host and his friends with his fluent strain of conversation, and his anxiety to watch the waves of thought which rolled in upon my soul, the full details of which he could master without the interchange of a single word between us, when he willed to do so. Meantime there was a markedly restless manner in our host and his friends, which could not escape the keen perception of the professor. They seemed to fence around some subject, which they were equally desirous yet unwilling to introduce. At length they asked abruptly what Professor von Marx thought of the nature of obsession—whether he had ever had any experience in that direction; and if, as he openly taught, the obsessing power did not proceed from the undeveloped spirits of human beings, how he would account for the strictly human tendencies (evil though they might be) manifested in the conduct of the obsessed. Professor von Marx replied that he believed, though he could not prove the fact, that the obsessing power was to be traced to the elementaries.

He claimed that these beings exist on every grade of the ladder which reaches from the lowest depths of inorganic matter to the highest stages of organized being; that many of the kingdoms of elemental existence were near enough to man to share his thoughts and inspire him with their own ideas. Meantime, he argued, in many notable cases of obsession, familiar enough to those who have studied the subject, a large proportion of the control seemed to influence its unfortunate victims to the commission of acts strangely in accordance with animal natures.

He cited a number of cases in which the obsessed exhibited the strongest tendencies to

bark, whine, cry, and whistle, leap, crawl, climb, roll their bodies up into the distorted resemblances of animals; in fact, to imitate by every possible method the habits of animals rather than human beings. It was in the midst of this discussion, and just as we had reached a romantic defile which wound its way partly through the mountains and occasionally opened up on the shores of an enchanting lake, that we all began to observe the unusual agitation and restlessness of our horses. They were rugged Highland steeds, strong, docile, yet sufficiently spirited to bear us safely over the most toilsome mountain roads. The pass we had now gained was intersected by numerous streams, which in many places swelled to torrents, and pouring over vast masses of piled-up rocks, formed cascades of exquisite beauty. Our horses had passed through many such scenes before in that very day's excursion; they had forded several streams, and in the midst of the foam and roar of the cascades had never before exhibited the least signs of terror. Now their obvious reluctance to proceed was marked and obstinate.

The evening was fast deepening around us; already we were beginning to view the scene through the haze of what the Scotch poetically term the "gloaming," and our host informed us of his intention to shorten our path by passing through a certain district which he had previously fixed upon as the scene of our next day's excursion. A nest of villages, through which we were to make our way, lay outstretched on the distant plain, at the foot of the mountain we were crossing, and presented a most inviting picture of rural peace and tranquillity. It was just as these village houses came into view, and whilst we were passing through the last portion of a very rugged defile, that my horse, which was somewhat in advance of the rest, became actually unmanageable, rearing, snorting, and plunging with all the signs of frantic terror.

From early childhood I was accustomed to the management of a horse, and had been taught to govern the wildest and most untrained animals of Arabia. In the present instance, however, my past experiences were utterly unavailing. Even when I had dismounted, and strove by every ordinary method to soothe the frightened creature into tranquillity, I could scarcely prevent him from plunging into the depths of a foaming cataract to which he seemed drawn by some irresistible attraction. Looking curiously around to discover the cause of this unaccountable action, I saw, or fancied I saw, amidst the vortex of foaming waters towards which the frantic creature was impelled, several dark bodies plunging and tossing, in the semblance of human beings.

Deeming it impossible that anyone, however hardy a swimmer, could live in the revel of those wild waters, I stooped down to examine them more closely, when I distinctly saw a long, lean, arm and misshapen skinny hand stretched out towards my horse's bridle as if to drag him forward into the cataract. At the same moment the animal gave a tremendous backward plunge, and as he dragged me with him from the torrent, it seemed as if I was suddenly losing my senses, and passing into the condition of deep somnambulism. Never in my life did I experience so powerful or malignant an influence as that which was now sinking me into helpless unconsciousness.

The more dim and shadowy the outer world grew to my sense of sight, the more real and horrible became the objects revealed to my interior senses. The air, the earth, the waters, appeared to be thick with grotesque and hideous semblances of half man, half beast. Creeping, crawling, flying, and leaping things, of all shapes and sizes, held goblin carnival around me. The outer world was receding, and I passed into a veritable realm of demons. I scarcely dare even now recall the full horrors of this vision, nor should I have attributed to it any objective reality had I not witnessed the terror of the poor horses, and connected the whole scene with subsequent incidents. I was aroused from this palsy of horror by the voice of

Professor von Marx, whose tones, though modulated almost to a whisper, so as to reach my ear alone, sounded like thunder, as he murmured: "Louis, Louis! rouse yourself, or you will let the demons of hell get possession of you!"

My strength and composure returned with the touch of my master's powerful hand. Even my poor horse owned the spell of his resistless influence; for I found it standing, with drooping head, and sides flecked with foam, and at my side; and though trembling violently, it was no longer restive or intractable. "You have forgotten your Eastern training, methinks," said the professor half reproachfully, as I looked at my poor steed. "No training will avail here," I replied in the same tone. "Through this accursed spot I will not attempt to lead this suffering creature."

There was no time for further discussion. In a single instant a thick, vaporous mist fell upon us, enveloping us in its damp, slimy folds as in a wet garment. It rolled, surged, and filled the atmosphere for a moment, just as I have seen the air grow instantaneously thick and almost impenetrable in the murky folds of a London fog; but before we could comment to each other on this remarkable phenomenon, the mists rose, curled, and separated into ten thousand fragments, and with slight, sharp, detonating sounds, exploded into the well-known appearances called will-o'-the-wisps, or as the country folk of England call them, "Jack-o'-Lanterns." Truth to tell, the appearance of these phosphorescent lights in a place where no marshy ground existed, and where, as our whole party affirmed, they had never been seen before, in no way tended to reassure us. As for me, I saw around these glimmering lights, which danced, flitted, wheeled, or floated by hundreds on every side of us, the opaque bodies and grotesque outlines of the elementaries, not as before in distinct resemblance of animals and men, but in a vague, undefined burr around each shimmering flame, which was situated, as my shuddering fancy suggested, just where the nervous centres of their strange life might be supposed to inhere. Sometimes fierce, malignant eyes glared at me through the fast-deepening gloom, when the sudden start and unmistakable terror of my poor horse, which I continued to lead, proved either that he shared with me the goblin sight, or my hand communicated a sense of repulsion to the sensitive animal. Soon after leaving the village, the phantom lights disappeared, one by one, and we reached our home without further interruption.

That night, after retiring to rest, the same vague sense of terror that had beset me in the glen at the moment of my involuntary entrancement again took possession of me, and again seemed to threaten a magnetic control as hateful to my feelings as it was strange and unusual. I felt that an unknown presence filled my apartment, and a nameless horror threw its chilling influence over every nerve. I had frequently visited the realms of the elementaries at the command of the Berlin Brotherhood or my dear master. In the service of these adepts I had penetrated, clairvoyantly, the interior of the earth's crust, its rocks, caverns, mines, oceans, rivers, forests, and atmospheres. My all-potential master had taught me how to summon and control elementary existences, as well as to penetrate the realms they inhabited. In all departments of Nature, my wandering spirit had explored, and communed with the countless spheres of graduated being that peopled the interior of Nature's wonderful and teeming laboratories.

Whilst I was sustained by the potency of Professor von Marx's magnetism, and maintained my relations of a superior being towards these elementaries, they could neither control nor distress me; but now, by the effect of some strong magnetic influence, of which I had not been forewarned, the mysterious dwellers of the innermost had overpowered and almost mastered me. Arrayed against me, in unconquerable force, these malignant beings had now subdued me with a facility as new as strange in my experience. Even the fear with

which they oppressed me I felt to be dangerous; and conscious that a mustering of these evil genii was even now pervading the suffocating air of my apartment, I arose hastily, dressed myself, and determined to seek Professor von Marx's apartment.

Just as I had gained the door which led into the corridor I was intercepted by a gigantic form, which seemed to loom up in the semi-darkness of my chamber as if it had arisen from the ground, and at the same moment a strong arm drove me back, and laid me, prostrate and breathless, on a couch near by. Being more astonished than frightened by this sudden apparition, I turned my gaze steadily upon it, and was able to master all the minutiae of its appearance.

The figure, as I have said, was gigantic in height, and of vast proportions; but as it seemed to be entirely shrouded in some envelope of a gray and misty nature, I was unable to determine whether it wore the human form or not. At first it loomed up before me like an irregularly-shaped column, but as I gazed, I could perceive the substance or material which enveloped it, it change, flutter, collapse, and expand, after the fashion of smoke or mist. It seemed, too, as if an atmosphere less dense than itself surrounded it, and occasionally emitted a luminous radiance through the apartment.

No word was spoken; no sound broke the deathly stillness as I reclined on the couch, where the force of that shrouded thing had cast me.

At first a sense of terrible helplessness possessed me, and I felt oppressed even unto death by the power of a crushing nightmare; but after the pause of a few breathless moments, the unknown stirred, and extended a part of itself—a robe or some attachment belonging to its columnar proportions—towards me in the attitude of protection. Following upon this motion others ensued, and then it seemed as if wreaths of mist were rolling through the apartment, and folding up like cloudy drapery around the quivering mass that stood erect at my side. All this I saw, and as it seemed with my natural eyes, for on this occasion I retained all the normal faculties of my waking state, and can never recall the slightest sensation either of dreaming, trance, or magnetic efflatus. Presently the mists which had filled the chamber cleared away, and with their dispersion the scene also changed. I beheld no more the walls, ceiling, and furniture of my sleeping-room, but I found myself gazing upon the interior of an old Gothic church.

I looked around, and could distinctly trace, aye, even read, the brass tablets on the walls, the inscriptions on many an ancient monument, and note various forms of marble statuary, some broken and defaced by time, others in a fine state of preservation. I saw no organ or instrument of music within the fane, but there were finely-carved stalls and a magnificent pulpit, the steps of which I perceived had been worn by the traces of many feet in by-gone ages. A splendid railing parted off the altar or communion-table from the body of the church, and behind it stood three men in black dresses, such as I learned afterwards were worn by ministers of the Scotch Kirk. Before the screen or railing, kneeling in long rows on the steps and ground, was a crowd of women and children clad in the ordinary dress of the poorer classes of the land; behind these again, and filling up the entire body of the church, was a crowd of earnest, sorrowful-looking men, who seemed to be regarding the kneeling figures with the deep sympathy of interested kindred. It appeared to me as if this vast concourse was gathered together to witness some ecclesiastical ceremony in which the kneeling women and children played the part of penitents.

One of the ministers appeared to be addressing them in a style of stern exhortation, though I could not hear the words he spoke. At length I felt the approach of a new presence. A sound came sighing through the air like the rush of heavy wings. I could feel the wind

stir the hair on my temples, when the same demon crew rushed by that I had seen in the glen a few hours before. There they were in swarms and myriads, dreadful-looking shapes, with gleaming eyes and faces distorted with the wild joy of their frantic revel. In an instant the whole host of demons swooped down on the kneeling crowd, and vanished, immersed as it seemed, in the bodies of their victims. I saw them no more, but in their places the women and children assumed the attitudes of the fiends that possessed them. They sprang up with whoops, yells, and shrieks of perfect frenzy. Some rolled on the ground, foaming at the mouth, others beat their breasts and tore their hair, uttering piteous cries and choking sobs; some stood erect, with clasped hands and upturned eyes, in silent prayer; and others danced around them, uttering mocking execrations that made the blood of every listener curdle.

Little children began to scale the walls and columns, run along the giddy heights of window-sills, and suspend themselves, coiled up like squirrels or monkeys, on cornice, roof, or pinnacle.

The whole scene was one of fiendish import, horrible to hear, witness, or think of; yet it was not such a rare spectacle to me as many an unaccustomed reader may suppose. I had often witnessed cases of obsession before, in some instances falling upon whole communities, in others attacking only solitary individuals.

The scene, shocking and loathsome as it was, I knew and felt to be a real picture; and so feeling, I looked with ever-deepening interest to discover from whence the deliverance would come. Yet come indeed it did, and thus it was: Whilst the ministers shouted forth their prayers and exorcisms, mingling up passages of Scripture and fierce cries for civic help in a strange jumble to which no one listened; whilst the excited friends and kindred of the possessed rushed from one to the other in the vain endeavor to subdue them into modest behavior by tears and supplications, in the midst of this pandemonium, another phase of the phantom scene transpired. I saw two fair and gracious beings float into the midst of the demon revel, clad in robes of glistening white, and leading by the hand a young man, in whom I at once recognized the exact presentment of myself.

The dress of this wraith, although resembling the one I then wore, was still remarkable from the fact that it seemed to be composed of some glittering substance, from which streams of light radiated in every direction, enveloping the phantom in an aura of wonderful brightness. As these figures appeared upon the scene, the disturbance instantly ceased. The cries died away; the children dropped down from their fantastic perches, and crept to their mothers' arms; every one subsided into the attitude of repose, and as if an enchanted wand had been waved over the wild revel, a deep, holy calm seemed to have been diffused on all around.

Whilst I was gazing in delight upon this happy change, I noticed that a strange blue mist began to rise from the forms of the obsessed. At first it appeared to be a mere thread-like vapor, but gradually it extended in volume until it filled the church, and in the midst of its rolling waves I saw the forms of the elementaries shooting up in air with the same wild shrieks, hisses, and grimaces with which they had borne down on their victims. Upwards and outwards they soared, an obscene host, before whose approach the walls, ceiling, and windows seemed to melt away, or become soluble, permitting the dark shapes to pass through as if they had been air; and they sped, screaming and gibbering, into the heavy-laden atmosphere, where they were at last lost in masses of rolling clouds.

Directly the elementaries disappeared from the building, I beheld the noble and erect form of Professor von Marx entering it. He wore his college robe and cap, and carried in

his hand a knotted staff wreathed around with a serpent, similar to one I had seen him use in certain invocatory processes. This staff he laid lightly on the heads of the lately obsessed ones, when instantly they arose from their semi-entranced positions like beings restored from the dead. With a slight start, as if awakening from slumber, the victims proceeded to arrange themselves in ranks before the altar, taking their places beside their husbands, fathers, and children with the calm and modest deportment of pure-minded matrons in attendance upon a religious ceremony. The ministers opened their books, and began to read. A dimness now crept over the scene, no longer emanating from the phantom worshipers, but stealing in insidious wreaths from the gigantic figure at my side. The couch on which I reclined rocked and reeled; enclosing walls seemed gradually to grow up around me; the church, with its tablets, sculptured ornaments, and silent congregation, melted out of view. My last memory was of a gloriously radiant face bending over me, loving eyes gazing tenderly into mine, and a sweet, distant, chiming voice murmuring as if from afar off: "He giveth His beloved sleep."

It was nearly noon before I felt able to join my host and his friends on the following day. My dear master, with his usual kind solicitude, paid me an early visit, and listened to a detailed account of my previous night's vision. On this, as on every other occasion when I related to him my extra-mundane experiences, he never wounded me by doubt or denial of my statements. Many points of my narrative drew from him instructive and philosophical comments, and when I had concluded, he informed me that we were expected to accompany our host to the villages he had designed to pass through on the previous night, and he further intimated that he somewhat anticipated I should find a commentary upon my previous night's vision in the proposed excursion.

The place we were to visit had a barbarous Highland name, which I am now unable to recall, but the main incidents I have to relate are too well known to the inhabitants of that district to need more particular indication. Once more we passed through the weird glen we had traversed the night before, and once more I experienced the approach of involuntary somnambulism, but being now on my guard, I was able to conquer the tendency, and we arrived without interruption at our destination.

This was a beautiful village, nestling at the foot of a range of mountains, covered as usual with sweet purple heather, and crowned with the ruins of a fine old castle. On our arrival, our host intimated his intention of carrying us to the house of the minister of the place, by whom he said our visit had been expected at a much earlier hour. My attention, however, was irresistibly attracted to a fine old Gothic church, which stood on an eminence surrounded by a grove of trees, and about the open doors of which were gathered an immense concourse of people. Without waiting for guidance or consultation, I felt impelled to dismount, throw the horse's reins to a groom, spring up the eminence, and push my way amongst the throng into the church. Everyone made way for me as I advanced. Whether they were impressed by my impulsive action, my foreign appearance, or some other inexplicable cause I know not, but the jostling crowds drew back as I approached, and parted a way for me, through which I sped on until I reached the scene of action.

This, I doubt not my readers will already be prepared to learn, was the exact counterpart of my last night's vision. There were the same brass tablets and marble monuments on the walls and floor; the same carved stalls and pulpit; the high Gothic windows of stained glass, casting their many-colored reflections of saints and apostles on the checkered marble aisle below. There, too, was the same gilded screen parting off the communion-table from the body of the church. Behind this dividing line stood the three ministerial men, in black, that I had seen in my vision. They each held open Bibles in their hands, and were occu-

ped, like their phantom presentments, in hurling exorcisms, prayers, passages of Scripture, and wrathful denunciations against a frenzied mob of women and children, who, with sobs, shrieks, wails, fierce laughter, wild oaths, and frantic gesticulations, were enacting in its hideous details, the exact counterpart of the scene I had beheld in vision twelve hours before.

Turning my eyes upwards I beheld, as I expected, little children running along the dizzy heights of the windows and cornices, mewing like cats, barking like dogs, or coiling themselves up like serpents in nooks which would hardly have afforded foothold for a squirrel. One ecstatic was actually suspended in the air, several feet above the ground, and her distracted husband, clinging to her feet, was vainly endeavoring by main force to drag her down to earth. Sobs and supplications, mingled groans and prayers, wild laughter and bitter wailings, resounded on every side of me. Had I been myself and in full possession of my normal faculties, I should have stopped my ears and fled from this inferno as from a pest-house; but the spirit was on me, and though in full possession of my sense of observation, every other faculty was under the dominion of a bright and beautiful band of planetary angels, who accompanied and impelled me on, and who from my boyhood had guided, counselled, and influenced me, under the spell of the deep magnetic trance. Awake now, and fully aware of their blessed presence and ministry, I passed amidst the demoniac rout as if I had myself become a spirit. I can not recollect that I touched the earth or realized the slightest sense of weight or hinderance to locomotion.

I moved silently through the maddened groups, and they fell at my feet, clasping and kissing my hands, addressing me as "the angel of deliverance," and hailing me as the "sent of God."

I do not recollect that I spoke in words, but I thought pity for these sufferers, and sent up thanks to an unknown God that they were to be free from their tormentors. I know that the same flight of demons that I had witnessed in vision rose through the groined arches and Gothic roof of the church; and when my part was done, and the stilled multitude, like rebuked children, subsided into their places, hushed, quiet, and prayerful, I, too, stood aside, moved by the angel presence that attended me, and just as I expected, Professor von Marx and his friends came forward and took my place.

At once assuming the post of authority that belonged to him, my noble master moved amongst the quiet and humble throng, laid his powerful hands upon them, and murmured a few words of encouragement in their ears. The effect of his action was no less magical than that which had attended mine. The women started up and began to arrange their disheveled hair and disordered dresses with modest haste. Many of them blushed, and dropped the peasant's courtesy of the country, thanking "the good doctor" for their recovery. One little child, whose shrieks had been most frantic and whose actions resembled only those of a tiger, humbly murmured: "Forgive me, mother dear! I have had a sad, drear dream, and I fear I have been very naughty."

Amongst this primitive and superstitious people it is almost unnecessary to say that the obsession which had thus fallen upon them had been attributed wholly to the power of witchcraft.

The cure now so suddenly wrought in their midst, however beneficial its results, could not fail to suggest the same weird influence. Of this the laird we were visiting was perfectly aware. He hastened, therefore, to whisper in the ears of some of the church officials, who had been amazed witnesses of the scene, that we were celebrated German doctors; that our

cures were effected by means of concealed but very potent drugs; and that, as warm Lutherans, they might rely upon our methods being strictly orthodox and in accordance with the doctrines of ecclesiastical practice.

Fearful lest our inveterate heterodoxy might in some unguarded moment display itself in contradiction to these whispered explanations, our good host hurried us away, and it was on our return to his hospitable mansion that we learned the material details of the circumstances in which we had been unpremeditated actors.

About four months ago, it appeared, a young girl in the parish, who had always been more or less the subject of strange dreams, visions, and tendencies to epilepsy, became suddenly frightened by what she insisted upon declaring to be the apparition of "six fairy people," who came into her chamber through the window, and after performing sundry pranks in her presence, laid their hands one after another upon her mouth, and declared that she should not again taste food until she came forth at midnight, to dance with the fairy people. After this strange narrative, the girl began to pine away, refused food, and for several weeks lived entirely without any sustenance; fits of deep somnolency attacked her; and to use her parents' simple phraseology, "She began to die while yet she lived." All at once she revived from this lethargic state, and at the recommendation of a neighbor, she and three girls of her acquaintance stole forth one night at the full of the moon to keep tryst with the mysterious "good people," who a month before had invited her to one of their midnight gatherings.

Without deeming it worth while to repeat the wild tale of glamour the romantic adventuresses brought back from their midnight escapade, it is enough to relate that from that time forth they began to manifest all the signs of obsession, the excess of which has been described in the foregoing pages. Unfortunately, their aberrations were not limited to themselves: At first their little brothers and sisters, next their mothers, and finally, scores of young people and females of their acquaintance, fell under the same dreadful ban. Even the domestic animals associated with them seemed to share their fatal propensities; they ran wild, changed their natures, and in some instances, died beneath the effect of the spell. Priests and mediciners exerted their powers in vain.

The fell disease only increased in proportion to the efforts made to quell it; and finally our host, fearing that the superstitions of the country people, once aroused, would induce them to lay violent hands upon some helpless persons suspected of being instrumental in promoting the witch mania, and hearing of our projected tour to the north, determined to try if genuine spirit power would not do for his afflicted neighbors what material science and superstitious piety had failed to effect. He confessed, in fact, that he had pressed his hospitality upon us as much in the hope that our occult knowledge might devise means of relieving the district as in admiration of Professor von Marx's high reputation and standing in a certain society to which he belonged.

The result was achieved with even more success than had been anticipated. Our host had purposely drawn us towards the scene of the visitation on the first day of our arrival, but without informing us of the real motives which prompted him. The effect of our near proximity to the possessed village upon our unfortunate horses baffled him at first, and made him fearful of trying further experiments, especially when, during the night which followed our visit to the glen, he was informed by his grooms that the horse I had ridden during the day had actually died of fright. "I prayed," said the good old man, "to the Father of spirits to send his angel to guide us through this wilderness of terror. Long and earnestly did I pray, and when the gray of the morning came, I fell asleep from sheer exhaustion, and dreamed I saw myself and you, my friends, leading the Israelites of old through an awful

wilderness, but I saw moreover, that we were guided by a pillar of cloud, which moved before us, and by this I knew that my prayers were answered, and that the angel of deliverance was at hand." Some months later we heard from our venerable friend that no signs of the demon fever had ever reappeared in his district, and that none of his young clanswomen had again seen fairies or stolen forth by moonlight to attend their midnight revels.