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Defoe, Daniel,

A SYSTEM OF
MAGIC.

IN ONE VOLUME.

OXFORD:

PRINTED BY D. A. TALBOYS,

FOR THOMAS TEGG, 73, CHEAPSIDE, LONDON.

1840.

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M A G I C K ;
O R, A
H I S T O R Y
O F T H E
B L A C K A R T .
B E I N G A N

Historical Account of Mankind's most early
Dealing with the Devil; and how the Ac-
quaintance on both Sides first begun.

*Our Magic, Now, commands the Troops of Hell,
The Devil himself submits to Charm and Spell.
The Conjurer in his Circles and his Rounds
Just whistles up his Spirits, as Men do Hounds.
Th' obsequious Devil obeys the Sorcerer's Skill,
The Mill turns round the Horse, that first turns round
the Mill.*

LONDON, Printed: And Sold by ANDREW
MILLAR, at *Buchanan's Head*, against St.
Clement's Church in the *Strand*. MDCCXXVIII.

PREFACE.



To remove a difficulty in my title, and that we may not stumble at the threshold, some preface to this new undertaking may be necessary, but it will be very short.

If by a system of this terrible thing called magic, my readers should expect a body of the black art as a science, a book of rules for instruction in the practice, or a magical grammar for introduction to young beginners, all I can say to such is, that they will be mistaken.

The world has perhaps been imposed upon in nothing more than in their notions of this dark practice, as well its ancient, as its modern state. Most people, when they read of the ancient magicians, think they are reading of old necromancers and conjurers, when really at first they were very honest men; and now, when they read of them in their modern practice, they take them for honest fellows, when they are, generally speaking, mere jugglers, cheats, mountebanks, and posture-masters; or else, real wizards, and downright dealers with the Devil.

There is one sort would fain be called cunning men, than which nothing can be a grosser piece of delusion; and it is not their cunning, but their

clients' want of cunning, that gives them the least appearance of common sense in all their practice. It is a strange piece of art where fools cheat fools, and the blind and the ignorant are imposed upon by the blind and the ignorant.

All the discovery I can make by it is, to note what a visible difference there is between cunning and wit ; between sleight of hand, as I may call it, and understanding. It is evident the pretenders to magic at this time are so far from dealing with the Devil, that they must certainly be dealt with by the Devil, that have anything to do with them.

In the first ages they were wise men ; in the middle age, madmen ; in these latter ages, cunning men : in the earliest time they were honest ; in the middle time, rogues ; in these last times, fools : at first they dealt with nature ; then with the Devil ; and now not with the Devil, or with nature either : in the first ages the magicians were wiser than the people ; in the second age, wickeder than the people ; and in our age, the people are both wiser and wickeder than the magicians.

I see no great harm in our present pretenders to magic, if the poor people could but keep their money in their pockets ; and that they should have their pockets picked by such an unperforming, unmeaning, ignorant crew as these are, is the only magic that I can find in the whole science.

The best course that I can think of to cure the people of this itch of their brain, the tarantula of the present age, in running to cunning men, as you

call them, and the most likely to have success, is this, of laughing at them : the satire has reformed the age of many a folly, which the solid and the solemn could never reach : even general vice, would the men of wit and men of quality join in the attempt, might be hissed out of the world, though all the preaching and all the preachers should prove fruitless and exhausted : men are to be ridiculed into good manners, when they will not be cudgelled into it.

Your modern harlequins, especially so exquisitely contrived, and so perfectly well performed as those of late by Mr. Rich, (in which, not to flatter him, we must acknowledge he has outdone all that was before him,) have gone further to expose and run down the magic I am speaking of, and cure the world of the hippo, and the vapours, than the whole stage could do before ; nay, than all the brightest dramatic performances of the last age could pretend to.

Never was the popular frenzy better exposed ; the ignorance on one side, and the impudence on the other, more accurately laid open ; the mimicry is mimicked to the life ; the magician made a fool, the fool tickled into more wit, and the Devil himself laughed out of countenance.

We leave the remainder to be completed by the same hand ; the success cannot fail, while the senses and the passions are to be wrought upon by the eyesight : our method looks the same way, only that we bring it up from its original, and pursue

it to the end of its prospect. Mr. Rich shows you what foolish things you are just now doing; we show you what your ancestors did before you, and what still worse things the ages to come are like to do after you.

Let no man be disgusted at the good account we give of the original and wisdom of the magi, and then call them magicians: if we will debauch the word with a degeneracy of practice, the fault is our own. Their magic was truly science, whereas ours is neither magic or science, but a kind of devilism, a practice carried on, by men that would be wicked if they did not want wit, and are no otherwise harmless, than as they happen to be fools.

Even at its best, it is a Babel-like confusion, that speaks several languages, and none to be understood; a complete degeneracy of, or deviation from, common sense; a complication of negatives, that how many soever you put together, will not make up one affirmative.

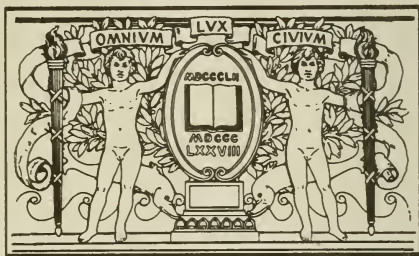
Now, to bring this nothing from the something it derived from, though it seems a little difficult, yet it is very necessary, and this is the reason why I call it a history.

I have traced it as far back as antiquity gives us any clue to discover it by; it seems to have its beginning in the ignorance and curiosity of the darkest ages of the world, when miracle, and something wonderful, was expected to confirm every advanced notion; and when the wise men, having racked their invention to the utmost, called in the

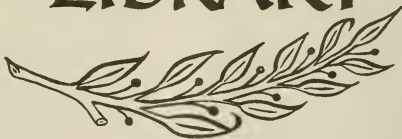
Devil to their assistance, for want of better help ; and those that did not run into Satan's measures, and give themselves up to the infernal, yet trod so near, and upon the very edge of Hell, that it was hard to distinguish between the magician and the Devil ; and there they have gone on ever since : so that almost all the dispute between us and the magicians is, that they say they converse with good spirits, and we say if they deal with any spirits, it is with the Devil : let the following sheets determine the matter.

Hail! dangerous science, falsely called sublime,
Which treads upon the very brink of crime.
Hell's mimic, Satan's mountebank of state,
Deals with more devils than Heav'n did e'er create.
The infernal juggling-box, by Hell design'd,
To put the grand parade upon mankind.
The Devil's first game, which he in Eden play'd,
When he harangu'd to Eve in masquerade.

In the first ages men mistook thy face,
Thy conj'ring past for wit, thy gravity for grace.
By thee the junior world in witchcraft grew.
That witchcraft still the senior worlds pursue.
Nature's first usher, to induct mankind,
Prompting wise arts to his inquiring mind.
To Jubal thou, and Tubal, science brought,
To this his metals, that his music taught.
But born a cheat, under the cloak of grave,
First made him a mechanic, then a knave,



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A SYSTEM OF MAGIC.



INTRODUCTION.

Of the meaning of the terms; who and what kind of people the magicians were, and how the words 'magic' or 'magician' were originally understood.

BEFORE I come to the main end of this undertaking, which is plainly laid down in my title, it is necessary to explain the terms, and to determine fully what is and is not to be understood by Magic, the Black Art, and such-like hard words as we shall be obliged to make frequent use of as we go along.

I am willing to suppose my readers not so unacquainted with the ancient usage, as not to know that the word magic had a quite different signification in former times, from what it is now applied to; and that the people who studied or professed that which we now call 'magic,' were quite another sort of folk, than those worthy gentlemen who now apply themselves to that profession.

In a word, a magician was no more or less in the ancient Chaldean times, than a mathematician, a man of science, who, stored with knowledge and learning, as learning went in those days, was a kind of walking dictionary to other people, and instructed the rest of mankind in any niceties and difficulties which occurred to them, and which they wanted to be informed about; and in this sense we are to be

understood when we speak of the magicians in Egypt, in Persia, in Babylon, &c.

Thus when any omens, ill signs, and tokens, dreams, or other strange things, happened in those times, whether publicly in the air, or particular to persons and families, we find not only the ordinary people, but even kings and princes sent immediately for the magicians and the wise men, the south-sayers, &c., to tell them what the meaning of such things was.

These magicians are explained on many occasions by the term of wise men, and that term again by men of knowledge, and more than ordinary understanding. Men, in a word, who studied nature, looked up into, and made observations from, the motions of the stars and other heavenly bodies, and who, as it is said in the Scriptures, understood the signs of the times, the face of the heavens, and the influences of the superior luminaries there; who searched into the arcana of nature, and were masters of perhaps a little experimental philosophy; I say a little, for reasons which I shall repeat presently.

It was no impropriety in speech to call such as these wise men at that time, though perhaps the utmost of their knowledge might arrive to no more than what we would now justly call superficial. Because at that time the knowledge of nature was very green and young in the world; and the philosopher of those times, if he was to be rated by the rules men are pleased to judge by at this time, would be something like our learned friend sir Tho. J. . . ., whose particular honour it was to be a doctor among fools, and a fool among doctors.

To these magicians men went, on the several occasions hinted as above, for the solution of doubtful questions; to be resolved and directed in difficult and intricate undertakings; to be advised in things

of moment; and these were therefore called sages first, and for a long time; and afterwards magi, from the greatness of their wisdom. Hence the wise statesmen to whom the government of the Median interregnum was committed were called magi; as wise men to whom alone it was fit to intrust so important an article as that of the government of an empire.

Thus afterwards, in the Israelites' times, their wise men were called by another but very significant name or term, viz., seers, a word afterwards held in such veneration, that they thought fit to bestow it upon their prophets, who also were called seers, though afterwards they obtained a superior title, namely, that of man of God. But before that, I say the wiser men were called seers; and this is most expressly signified in that eminent text, 1 Sam. ix. 9, where it is said that beforetime they used to say when they wanted to inquire of God, that is, to inquire about anything difficult, *Come and let us go to the seer*, that is, to the magician, the wise man, the prophet, or what else you please to call him.

It is plain from the same text also that they sometimes went to those people called seers upon meaner inquiries; for they took it for granted that those seers dealt in all secret matters; thus Ahaziah sent to Baal-zebub when he was sick, to know if he should live or die, 2 Kings i. 2, 3; and so the king of Syria's captains told their master, that Elisha the prophet told the king of Israel what he did in his bed-chamber, 2 Kings vi. 12. And to bring it down to a meaner case still; even when Saul wanted but to find his father's lost asses or cattle, his servants said to him, *Let us go and inquire of the seer*; and so they did, and found news of them.

Likewise it appears by the same text, that those

seers, or prophets, or magi, made an employment of it, that it was their business to tell men of their lost goods, direct them in their way, foretell of their health, and the like; and that they made a livelihood or trade of it; therefore when Saul's servant proposed to him to go to the seer, Saul made a difficulty of it because he had nothing to give him; as if he should have said, I have no money in my pocket, and not a loaf of bread to give the cunning man or seer, and how should I expect that he should give me any account of my cattle for nothing? Then when the servant told him he had a fourth part of a shekel of silver in his purse, (which, by the way, was not above seven-pence half-penny, or thereabouts,) Saul was mighty glad, resolving to give the low-prized magician or prophet that vast fee, to tell him what was become of his father's asses.

It seems the lawyers' fees were not so high in those days as they have been since; for if he had not had that piece of silver, perhaps about as big as an English groat, I say, if he had not had that, a couple of half-penny barley loaves it seems would have been as good, and have done as well; those loaves being not usually bigger than our half-penny, or at best than our penny wheaten brown bread loaves are now.

Again; you find when Ben-hadad king of Damascus sent to Elisha the prophet to know if he should live or die, he sent the prophet a present, forty camels loaden with all the good things of Damascus, 2 Kings viii. 9. A large fee! But it is to be supposed, the gift sent was not suited to the prophet so much as to the sender; he gave as a king; but still we find the seers were supposed to make the gain their business.

That it was the same thing with the magi, before that, we have no reason to doubt, though we

have no particular in story relating to that part. But we find those southsayers, magicians, and wise men, who were sent for by Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to interpret his dream, were to have received great rewards, if they had given satisfaction to the king ; and Joseph, we see, did receive great rewards, as well as honour, on that account.

Again afterwards, in the case of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, there is a sufficient testimony that those wise men, astrologers, magicians, &c., were esteemed not to be wizards and dealers with the Devil, but only (as I have explained the word above) mere philosophers, or wise men, men of learning and knowledge, men of science and of skill in the works of nature ; for when the king demanded of them to tell him not only the interpretation of the dream, but the dream itself, and threatened them with death in case they failed to perform it, they expostulate with the king upon the unreasonableness of the proposal, as a thing that no king in the world would expect from them, and that was not in the power of nature to perform :

As if they had said, Does your majesty think we deal with the Devil, that you should expect such a piece of work as this from us ? It is not in the power of any, or of all the wise men, or philosophers in the world, and therefore it cannot be imagined we should do it ; but let the king tell us the dream, and then we will interpret it, and that's as much as man can do.

It is plain from hence, not only that the magi or magicians in those days were not really conjurers and dealers with the Devil, but that they were understood to be what we may call scholars, men of learning, of wisdom, and of a superior understanding : so when the king calls for Daniel to prefer him, it is said he did it because *an excellent spirit was found in him* ; and in another place it is

said, that *the spirit of the holy Gods was in him* ; whereas at the same time it is certain that the king esteemed him as one of the magicians ; nay, and he was set over them as the chief and governor of all the rest. Certainly then they did not take those magicians to be what we have since understood of ours, viz., dealers with the Devil, and sorcerers, such as ought to be punished for having or using unlawful arts and practices with evil spirits and the like.

Had this been the common opinion of them, they would have been treated after another manner, both then and in after-ages ; for not only among the Jews, but in other nations, such as we call now magicians were punished as criminals.

But to go back a little to originals, and to fetch up knowledge from the fountain : man, born ignorant, arrives to very little knowledge but what comes by one of these two channels.

First, Long experience, study, and application.

Secondly, Teaching and instruction from those that went before.

I shall insist only upon the last, and that particularly for the sake of what was antediluvian. The most early knowledge which mankind obtained in those days, is supposed to be by teaching immediately from heaven ; for example : Adam and Eve's mouths were opened at the same time with their eyes, and they could speak, and knew what language to speak, as soon as they were made. But it is most certain also, that all the speaking world since Adam and Eve learnt it successively from them, by mere imitation of sounds, teaching of parents and nurses, and the like.

After Adam, his posterity having learnt to speak immediately from him, and so to converse with one another, a consummate acquired knowledge in several other things quickly followed ; particular arts

and sciences were either taught by inspiration from heaven, or attained by the exquisite capacities of their minds ; one having a genius to this, another to that kind of knowledge ; as one to music, another to working in and finding out metals and minerals in the earth, then melting, refining, casting, and other operations and improvements, as knowledge came in by the door of experiment.

Adam's posterity (I mean his particular house or family) learnt to speak more immediately from him and Eve their mother, by mere imitation of sounds, as we do to this day from one another.

But having thus obtained speech from their immediate parents, all other acquired knowledge mentioned above, such as of their improvement of culture, discoveries in nature, and the like, seemed to be the consequence, 1. Of a vehement and inflamed desire after knowledge, planted in their minds by nature itself ; an inquiring disposition ; being sensible of a vast treasure hidden in nature apt for discovery, and which, as it were, waited only for the search, in order to open itself to their view for the general good. 2. A vast capacious understanding fitted for that search, and which we have reason to believe the antediluvian fathers were more than ordinarily furnished with, guiding them directly to the search after and into all the arcana of nature, with a readiness and accuracy so pointed, as if they had been beforehand instructed what to search for, how to search for it, and where to find it. 3. A secret inspiration from heaven, filling them with, or at least directing them to, the knowledge of things in a more than ordinary manner.

N. B. We cannot doubt but were there now to appear a man perfectly untaught, not having conversed at all with men taught and instructed before him, and yet should have a treasure of such knowledge in his mind, exerting itself in action to such a

degree as was ordinary to the patriarchs of the antediluvian age, we should presently give him up for a magician in the grossest acceptation of the word, and say, in short, that he deals with the Devil.

But be it so or not, and let the consummate knowledge of those patriarchs come which way it will, and be as great as it will, or as you will suppose it to be, this is certain, it died with them; it was all drowned in the flood, the postdiluvian age inherited very little of it; or if they did, it was drowned again in the flood of vice and wickedness, which almost as soon overspread the world, as the people did the plains of Shinaar, and much sooner than they spread the rest of the earth with their posterity, however fast they multiplied.

Nor do I wrong the people of those first ages after the flood in the least, when I say they seemed to have lost all that fund of knowledge, all that capacious understanding, and all that sacred inspiration, which their predecessors the antediluvians were masters of; I need go no further for an example of it than the building of Babel. For was it possible that anything so absurd and ridiculous could have entered into the thoughts of men, if they had not been sunk into an unexpressible degeneracy as to sense, a mere stupidity of understanding? To say nothing of their having lost all pretence to inspiration, so far were they from any share of sacred light in it, that they could not be said to have acted with common sense. Bless us! to build a house to reach up to heaven! or as we may with more propriety express it, to build a staircase to go up into heaven by; and that in case of another flood too, which adds to the madness of the design many ways.

1. They had certainly no notion of heaven itself; not to speak of religious notions of heaven, they must be entirely dark and stupid as to the philo-

sophy of it; the immense distance, the differing regions, the alteration of things in their natural circumstances and situation, by the way, or in the passage.

2. They had no understanding of their own constitution, or at least they must have very gross and absurd conceptions about it; as particularly of their breathing and subsisting in the regions above the atmosphere, and in the pure unmixed ether, (or what else it should be called,) which they who mounted up to such height would be sure to meet with, and in which they might as easily conceive an impossibility of breathing, as they could conceive of the impossibility of living without breath.

3. They must have had no notion of the nature of the flood itself; as that of the power, force, and weight of the waters, when moving in such a collected body; how unable anything they could build would be to resist the force, and not be presently blown up and driven away by the stream.

4. They must be utterly ignorant of the nature of the earth on which their building stood; how no foundation could be laid so deep or so firm in it, but what by the violence of such an immense ocean of water would be loosened and overwhelmed, and the fabric by consequence be brought down; the earth which upheld it being washed away.

5. They must be wholly ignorant of what our learned theory-men insist to have been the causes of the deluge, namely, an absorption or breaking in of the surface of that earth, which was before a known cavity or hollow filled up with water, into which the earth fell with a violence equal to the fall of the highest mountain that could be supposed to fall into the lowest subterranean deep; and in which case the height, and strength, and magnitude of their building could only serve to make

its fall more violent, more certain, and more terrible.

All these things, and many more, which nature, had they been capable of consulting it, would have dictated to them, they must be perfectly ignorant of; otherwise they could never, with a deliberation and long consulting one another, as the relation of the story implies, have gone about so ridiculous a piece of work as that of Babel, than which nothing attempted by the grossest and dullest fancies on earth was ever more abominably foolish and ignorant.

Were these the posterity of the wise antediluvian age! whose minds were inspired from heaven, and whose understandings were so eminently large and capacious; whose genius led them to the inventing the most useful arts, and to exalt them in quest of the noblest parts of science, (such as music in particular;) and to make the most refined experiments, such as the melting, mixing, separating, and refining of metals; and which was still as much as all the rest, the finding those metals in the ore, as the iron, the copper, the silver, and the gold, of which we find they had a complete knowledge, and carried it on no doubt to the most useful experiments? Thus Jabal and Jubal, for example, the sons of Lamech, who, severally applying themselves to useful arts, became instructors of their posterity in culture of the earth, husbandry, breeding of cattle, &c. Others, we find, were proficient in philosophy, and the study of nature; for the doctrine of sounds is one of the nicest parts of philosophical study, and we find them immediately masters of music, and inventing and instructing others in making the instruments of music; and particularly those nicest and most difficult of all the rest, the harp, and the organ, that is to say, wind-music, which is vocal; and music by vibration, which we

call instrumental: likewise Tubal-Cain their brother, who was the first artificer, of whom we may say that he was a true natural mechanic, and the first and best tinker in the world.

In the room of this capacious understanding, and this inquiring and applying temper in those ages, behold a stupid generation risen up in succession; stript as naked of the natural glories of their ancestors, as the earth was of its natural fruitfulness after the curse in Paradise; and instead of applying themselves to useful arts, and to the acquiring of knowledge, grown as indolent as they were ignorant, having, like Solomon's fool, no delight in understanding.

Instead of qualifying themselves to instruct their posterity, we see no marks of wisdom left behind them fit for imitation; nothing that could recommend them to their children for anything but a race of brutish, unpolished, unfinished creatures, that neither understood heaven or earth, themselves, or anything about them; that seemed qualified for nothing but merely, as the rest of the brutal world were, to propagate their kind, and overspread the earth.

Nor in their multiplying their species did they seem to promise anything but to people the world with a race of fools as ignorant and sordid as their antediluvian progenitors had been outrageously wicked; a race that threatened to make heaven as sick of them for their folly, as it was of those that went before them for their corruptions and abominable vices; and that might be as likely to have brought a deluge upon them for their obstinate untractable ignorance, as the other had been for their rebellion and looseness, had not God's promise not to destroy the world any more, been their security.

Nor indeed were they less corrupt, their capa-

cities considered, than the old world, whose flagrant crimes had involved them in a general destruction; and if they fell short in anything, it was for want of wit, not for want of wickedness.

This appears in all their subsequent conduct, from the first peopling of the world after Noah, to that foolish Babel-building age I speak of. In the old world we found, that, at least for a time, men began to call on the name of the Lord; and the patriarchs of that age were famous for piety, of whom it is said, as particularly of Enoch, that *he walked with God*; an emphatic significant expression, which our learned commentators have spent a great deal of time in expatiating upon and explaining. The Scripture again expresses this walking with God to be an act of faith, and quotes it, Heb. xi. 5, as a glorious example of such faith as was rewarded with an immediate translation of the person into heaven: *He was not, for God took him*; and from which the most exquisitely and accomplishedly-whimsical Mr. Asgill formed his new system of going the nearest way (home) to heaven by the furthest way about, a fiery chariot instead of dying; as if the former were not a change as well as the latter, and as if Heaven had not already made the best choice for us: but though he suffered martyrdom for his scheme (having been expelled the parliament of two kingdoms for it,) we do not find he has yet had the benefit of his project, so we must wait till he is pleased to make the experiment.

But to return to the antediluvians: the old world, I say, as wicked as they were, had some shadow of good in them, and for some years, nay, some hundreds of years, they maintained the character of the sons of God, before they were debauched by the daughters of men; that is to say, before they blended the race with the corrupt seed of Cain, and mingled

blood with idolaters. Where, by the way, we have an accurate description of the times, I mean in those early days of the race ; it is evident it was just then as it is now, the ladies were the devils of the age ; the beauties, the toasts, the fine faces, were the baits ; the hell lay concealed in the smiles of the charming sex ; they were the magicians, taking the word in its present acceptation and its grossest sense : there lay the witchcraft, and its force was so irresistible, that it drew in even the sons of God, just, in a word, as it does now, and of which I shall have occasion to speak again at large as we go on. In the mean time, I descend with the story to the next generation.

The antediluvians might have something of religion in them, however fatally mixed with crime ; but as for the new good-for-nothing race, we hardly read of anything that ever was to be found among them that may be called valuable, from Noah himself downward ; and even Noah himself, we all know, fell into the debaucheries of wine, and if you will believe tradition, continued in it a hundred years. Now from him, and from his immediate race, nature seemed prepared for the utmost degeneracy, for they fell into all manner of crimes, nay, into the worst crimes first ; for they did not begin low, and sin gradually, but immediately after the drunkenness of Noah himself, his posterity degenerated into idolatry, or rather returned to it ; for some think, and that not without probability enough, that Noah's sons were idolaters before the flood, and were saved in the ark, such was the will of God, merely for being the posterity or progeny of a righteous father ; if so, then they only returned to the idolatry which they had been practised in before.

But be that as it will, it is certain that the posterity of Noah fell immediately into idolatry, and that all his wise dictates which he gave to his children,

which for so many ages were preserved by oral tradition, and were called the precepts of Noah, had no sufficient effect upon them to prevent that hated sin of idolatry, no, not even while he was alive.

It is worth observing here indeed, were it not too grave for your reading, how effectually Noah, by the horrid defection of his own morals in that one act of drunkenness, I say how effectually he shut the door against the force of all his own future instructions: he was till then, indeed, a preacher of righteousness, and had been so to the antediluvian world for near six hundred years; but after that, he might preach indeed if he would, but what regard would he obtain, when the debauched instructor had exposed himself by his drunkenness to the ridicule instead of the reverence of his posterity, and when the drunken monitor, by his own practice, had rendered his instructions fruitless and ridiculous?

How justly might they bid him hold his tongue, and go and reform his life, before he pretended to instruct them! bid him first learn the precepts he taught, and show them, by his example, what it was he would have them practise! how might they upbraid him with exhorting them to be sober, while he went drunk to bed! exhorting them to modesty and virtue, while he appeared in the most scandalous manner, lying drunk in his tent, and his nakedness exposed to the banter and impious jest of his grandson Ham!

How must it cover his face with blushes, to find he had dishonoured, by his example, the doctrine of sobriety which he had preached to his children, who were thereby brought to mock him, rather than to listen to him, and to make ballads of him, rather than copy his precept for their imitation!

But, I say, this is a subject too solemn for the age, and you will presently tell me I am going to write a comment upon the ninth chapter of Genesis. So I

leave it for you to consider of, and return to the chronology of early wickedness in the postdiluvian world.

Noah being thus disabled, by his own falling into crime, from instructing his posterity, what was the consequence? He lived to see them run headlong into that worst of all crimes, idolatry, and the worship of God sunk as it were out of the world, even in his own time, and before his eyes.

This is evident from Abraham, whom the Scripture acknowledges to have been not an idolater only, but even bred up in idolatry while he lived in Mesopotamia; and it is certain Abraham was born above fifty years before Noah died: so that Noah lived to see his posterity degenerated into idolatry, not all his preaching or practice being able to prevent it.

Having thus seen all the wickedness of the old world revived in its new inhabitants, without the wit and capacities which they had before; and the race being thus entirely degenerated, we must begin all our historical account of them with taking them just as we find them, and that will bring us directly to the subject I propose.

The race being thus, as I have said, stript naked of the beauties of their ancestors, whether in matters of sense and understanding, or in matters of piety and religion, and running on into all manner of foolish and simple as well as wicked excesses, it is not at all wonderful if, when any particular person appeared more than ordinary knowing, or but a lover of and searcher after knowledge and wisdom, such a person was honoured in a more than ordinary manner, was revered as an extraordinary man, exalted in the common esteem when alive, and perhaps placed among the stars after his death; that he who shined in their esteem when living, might be supposed to be made immortal at his death, and to be exalted to shine in a higher orbit.

Hence it became a vulgar error among the first ages, but was riveted so fast in the minds of men, that nothing could persuade them not to believe it, viz., that the stars were all the transparent bright souls of their wise ancestors, who for their virtue and wisdom were exalted by the immortal powers to a station of glory, and were made to shine in that manner for the further enlightening the world, to whom they had been so beneficent when they were here; and from hence it came, at last, that all their great men, and especially their kings, were thus revered and exalted, whether they were good men or no.

It could not be, but that in process of time, as the world grew populous, though they had none of the rare parts and exalted understandings of the antediluvian patriarchs, yet there would be some men of a more refined genius, and of more capacious souls than others. Surely the world would not be all fools, or not all equally and alike so; nor can I doubt but that while the gross of the people went about that hairbrained preposterous piece of work which we call Babel, there were some wiser heads who though they might not care to oppose themselves to the popular humour, or perhaps to their resentment, and did not ridicule and mock the undertaking, yet looked on it with a different view, and entertained wiser notions of things, and consequently (when by the confusions which afterwards happened among the builders on account of their speech, they were obliged to give over their work) might take the liberty to expostulate with them upon the weakness of the design, and convince them afterwards that it was an unlikely impracticable thing: or perhaps those men had calmly argued that part with them before, and had, as far as the times would bear it, declared their sentiments about it; these men would certainly obtain the character of wise men upon this

occasion, and be valued by them as such upon all subsequent events.

As, upon the confusion of languages, the several families who understood one another's speech kept together, so it is very probable they did not separate singly, every one running his own way, but by families and tribes, or by nations, as their speech was or was not understood by one another; and this was directed by Providence, no doubt, for it is said in the text, *God scattered them upon the face, or over the face, of the whole earth.*

It is not unlikely but that when they left off building, and found they were not able to pursue the design, with that impossibility they began also to see into the folly and absurdity of the undertaking; and began more and more every day to reflect upon their stupidity in going about it; that being withal ashamed of the work, they were ashamed of the place too, and went every man, or tribe of men at least, their own way, to get as far out of the sight of it as they could: I grant, indeed, that this is but my conjecture, but I think it is a very just conjecture, and it is made on supposition that all wise men looked back with regret upon those actions of their lives which they have been drawn into, and in which they have reason to see themselves mistaken. In short, as no man loves to see himself a fool, and if he has done a foolish thing, does not care to have the remembrance of it always in his view; so, generally, if he cannot get the object removed and put out of his sight, he will remove himself from it, if he can.

Upon this foot, I cannot doubt but that all the people quitted the plain of Shinaar as fast as they could, and run away from the hated monument of their shame; we would have done so ourselves, and I cannot doubt, I say, but they did so too.

Suppose then the people to be upon their march,

and going to the several quarters of the world, whither they were directed to settle; and let that be where you and sir Walter Raleigh please; for that learned author, following Scripture light, has really marshalled them, and laid out their several routes, as exactly and authentically as if he had been commissary-general, and had gone before to provide them quarters.

Wherever, I say, these several nations went, and in what country soever they settled and fixed their abode, though the government and monarchy of each division was patriarchal and hereditary, yet we shall find upon several occasions afterward, that they had among them many particular men, famous for their wisdom and knowledge, and for their search into the secrets of nature, whose consummate wisdom by degrees not only obtained for them a more than ordinary reverence among the people, but, in short, brought the people to subject themselves to their government, and make some of them kings.

Thus Cadmus, a Phœnician born, became king of Thebes in Greece, by having obtained the fame of a wise man, and one who dedicated himself to the common good of mankind; so Prometheus obtained the government of a part of Armenia, and Atlas the like in Africa; and thus several others, by their wisdom, and earnest search after knowledge, obtained the empire and government of those countries where their wisdom was so conspicuous. But pray take this with you as you go, that those days are over, that wisdom crowns no man now, except it be with the rage and malice of enemies, with poverty and insult.

Probitas laudatur et alget.

Honesty shall be praised and starved; wisdom

and knowledge are marks for the men of power to shoot at; to be high and great, is to be wise and good.

He that is rich is wise,
And all men learned poverty despise.

But this is but an excursion, I come back re-proved: the magi were not always kings or emperors; the wise men and the southsayers, the magicians and astrologers, (who, by the way, were all but one sort of people,) were oftentimes in mean circumstances as to money, even in those graver days; they acted for the public good indeed, but it was in conjunction with their own interest too, they had their rewards for southsaying and divining; and when the king of Syria asked his servants to go to Elisha the prophet to inquire for him about his health, he bade them take a present in their hand for the man of God.

I cannot indeed say how high-prized things went in those days, and whether wisdom was not underrated then, as it is now; whether there was due encouragement given for the search, or whether wit went threadbare and in rags, as it does since; authors are not agreed upon it indeed, and it may be hard to bring them to a point: it is true, later and more modern philosophers learned to despise money, and Solon preferred wisdom and a retired life to the wealth of Cræsus; but in the more early times of the world, the knowledge of nature and the study of wisdom, as it went then, seemed to be a communicative good, which, therefore, as they that reaped the benefit of it ought to pay for and did so, so their wise men grew, in time, mercenary and mean, as in other places.

This leads me to the times when the primitive wisdom of those early days beginning, as I said, to be more common, and that the magi had communi-

cated much of their knowledge to the common people, those then who still pretended to be something beyond the rest of the world, were obliged to go higher in their studies, and inquire into nature, view the aspect of the heavens, calculate the motions of the stars, and especially dwell upon their influences in human affairs, which is since called astrology.

By this study they obtained the name of south-sayers and astrologers, added to that of magicians, which they had before: and on the foot of these studies they interpreted dreams, explained good and bad omens, foretold events, and perhaps played some legerdemain tricks too, to impose upon the world, as their worthy successors do to this day; and, in a word, it is likely they did all those things then, which these people do now, of whom we say, with more freedom perhaps than truth, that they deal with the Devil.

Not that those people were charged, at least not yet, with any criminal conversation with the old gentleman; nor, if I understand how the case stood with Satan at that time, had he any manner of occasion for them, but did his business quite another way; for the Devil had altars and temples of his own, was another kind of a king in those days than he has appeared to be since: then he gave audience in form of a deity, and saw himself worshipped like a god almost throughout the whole world: here, under the name of Baal; there, Moloch; here in one manner, there in another: nor had the God of heaven one temple in the world, when the Devil had a great many scattered here and there, almost in every nation. I assure you, however modern writers think fit to represent him, he scorned in those days to go about like a poor shabby out-at-heels devil, as he has done since, and may perhaps be now. No, he appeared in state, and as he

usurped divine honours, so he made a figure suitable to his usurpation, and had his shrines and his votaries, his priests and his places of worship, in whatever shapes or places he pleased to be worshipped in : thus as Dagon, he had a house of solemn worship at Ashdod, 1 Sam. v. 2 ; and as Baal-zebub, at Ekron, and the like.

Now as the Devil had thus the government of the whole world in his own hand, and that he was almost, in the very letter of it, the God of the world, so he had no need at that time to employ secret agents, and work by way of familiars or private intelligence, as he does since ; nor, to do the honest men justice, had any of the southsayers and magicians, and those which were at first called their wise men, any conversation with the Devil at all, no, or with any of his works ; they carried on no business for him.

But they were men of thought, or, if you please, men of deeper thinking than the ordinary sort : they studied the sciences, and inquired into useful things, searched the works of nature and providence, studied the meaning and end of things, the causes and events, and consequently were able to see further into the ordinary course and causes both of things about them, and things above them, than other men.

In the study of astronomy, they soon found the secret influences of the stars upon the surface of the earth, upon plants and animals, nay, upon both man and beast : as for example, how the growth and virtues of earthly bodies were guided and governed by the heavenly, and how even the events of the greatest moment on earth oftentimes obeyed the force of those heavenly bodies ; their conjunctions, oppositions, near or remote positions, revolutions and appearances ; and accordingly they were capable of making such probable conjectures of things not yet come to pass, as were amazing and surprising to the rest of the world ; and by which they took them

either for men filled with sacred knowledge, and that those things were communicated to them immediately from heaven, or that, however they got it, they had a prophetic knowledge of what should come to pass, and could foretell events even before the apparent causes were ordinarily known.

This gave the common people an extraordinary veneration for the persons of those magicians and wise men, as they had an awful notion of their exceeding wisdom and knowledge. Thus Nebuchadnezzar, after he had exalted the prophet Daniel to be the chief of his wise men, stooped to him with a kind of reverence, and begins his address not like that of a tyrant, the terror of the world, as he at that time really was, but as one that had an awe upon his mind of the great respect he ought to show to a person divinely inspired, as Daniel was. See the text Dan. iv. 9: *O Belteshazzar, master of the magicians, because I know that the spirit of the holy gods is in thee, &c.* And so in the 8th verse of the same chapter: *At last Daniel came in before me, whose name is Belteshazzar, after the name of my God, and in whom is the spirit of the holy gods.*

These were the magicians of the first ages of the world, and such was the opinion which the people had of them in those days; not that they were conjurers, or cunning men, or such sort of people as we now call them, but were men who at that time knew more than the ordinary rate of knowledge instructed others to know, and were endued from heaven with extraordinary degrees of wisdom above other men. Nor was the respect paid to them equal, but more or less in degree, according to the particular degrees of sacred inspiration which they were supposed to have. Thus in the case of the prophet Daniel, as above, the king treats him not as a magician only, nor as the chief of the magicians only, but as a man filled with higher degrees of wisdom

and knowledge than any, nay, than all the rest of the magicians of the age put together, as appears Dan. iv. 18: *Now thou, O Belteshazzar, declare the interpretation thereof, (that is of the dream,) forasmuch as all the wise men of my kingdom are not able to make known unto me the interpretation, but thou art able, for the spirit of the holy gods is in thee.*

This is still further explained in the next chapter, and in the transactions of the next reign: I say it is further and fully explained to my purpose, viz. as to what was the people's opinion of these magicians, as well as their king. The story is very particular. It was in the reign of Belshazzar, the son and successor, according to some, of the great Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; when the king saw a hand come out, and writing words upon the wall, see the text Dan. v. 7: *The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers, to read the writing* Why were these called, but as they were men of fame, for their learning in reading strange characters, men of skill in languages and books, which in those days the common people knew little or nothing of?

Well, all the learned men of the kingdom were accordingly called together, but none of them could answer the end; no, notwithstanding all the great rewards promised them. Ver. 8. *Then came in all the kings wise men; that is to say, the Flamsteads, the sir Isaacs, the Halleys, the Whistons, &c. of the age, but they could not read the writing, &c. and what follows? Then was the king Belshazzar greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him. Nor is that all, but the text adds, and his lords were astonished.*

It seems they thought those wise men knew everything, that they had been able to understand all the languages in the world, and that therefore if they

could not read it, it must be something supernatural, something from above, or something from below, which was worse; and in those cases indeed they did not expect the wise men should read it, for they did not suppose those wise men corresponded with the Devil, or had an evil spirit. They thought, indeed, if it depended upon human understanding, they could do it, but as to higher things than those, they did not expect them; so the king and his lords began to be the more surprised at it. But now see the 10th verse. The queen directs them to inquire out Daniel, and send for him, and tells them he would certainly read the writing, and tell them the meaning or interpretation of it. See the words at large.

Now the queen, by reason of the words of the king and his lords, came to the banquet-house; and the queen spake and said, O king, live for ever: let not thy thoughts trouble thee, nor let thy countenance be changed:

There is a man in thy kingdom, in whom is the spirit of the holy gods: and, in the days of thy father, light, and understanding, and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him; whom the king Nebuchadnezzar thy father, the king, I say, thy father, made master of the magicians, astrologers, Chaldeans, and soothsayers;

Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar: now let Daniel be called, and he will shew the interpretation.

After this story no man need inquire what the world understood by the magicians and astrologers, and wise men of those days; but it is plain they were looked upon not as dealers with the Devil, but as men inspired from heaven, filled with inspired knowledge, light, and understanding, and excellent

wisdom; that they could make interpretations, resolve doubts, &c. as ver. 15, 16. of the same 5th chapter. And as such, the princes and lords of the country applied to them in all difficult and extraordinary cases.

Now it is true, we have only examples of the kings and princes making use of these people in difficult cases, as Pharaoh, Nebuchadnezzar, Belshazzar. But it is not to be doubted that the people in general, of all qualities and conditions, went to them to be resolved in their doubts, and to have questions answered them in difficult cases; in short, this was their general employment, and they made a trade of it.

On this account we find in several ancient writings that the southsayers were made use of to interpret dreams, and foretell things to come; to represent good or bad omens, and give their opinions upon the appearances of any extraordinary phenomena in nature; thus you have Julian the Apostate reproached with encouraging such men, and listening to them, some ages after this, when their reputation was sunk to a lower degree by far than it was at in former times.

This being then the case, we are not to talk of the magic of those ages, or of the people called magicians, in the present vulgar acceptance of the word; but they are to be understood to be what Solon, Plato, Seneca, Aristotle, or any of the best and brightest of the philosophers of after-ages were known to be, namely, men of learning; who had applied themselves to the study of virtue, and to the knowledge of and search into the most hidden treasures of nature; who understood the reasons of things, the causes and originals of the most retired and difficult accidents in nature; that searched into and calculated all astronomical difficulties; the motions and revolutions of heavenly bodies; and, as I

said before, their influences on things below; that studied and found out the physical virtues of plants, metals, minerals, and, in a word, every difficult thing, either in natural or experimental philosophy.

These were the magicians of those days; and to write a system of magic as it was then practised, and is to this day understood to be the first meaning of it, would be to write a system of natural philosophy; only with this specific difference, namely, that with the utmost of their search, the highest of their reach, and the greatest of their understandings, they knew so little of everything, or indeed of anything, that the wisest of their wise men, the most accomplished magician or Chaldean, in all the Egyptian or Chaldean courts, could not pretend to know what our present pupils in science come to the understanding of in the first lectures of philosophy, which they go through in a course of academic study.

Their conceptions of things were rough and rude; what they entertained was either received by the instruction of others, as by oral tradition from the like wise men that went before them, or from the dark conjectures of their own reasoning and inquiring dispositions, joined perhaps to some few, and those but very mean experiments of their own making, from observation and reflection.

These first lights burnt very dim in their understandings, and gave but little helps to them in their search after knowledge; but still, as the rest of the world was infinitely darker, and more ignorant also than they are now, so this dim light, and these glimmerings of knowledge, appeared to them (in proportion to the light they had to judge by) as bright and shining as the greatest and most consummate knowledge does now to us in the heads of a Boyle, a Newton, or the most exquisite and best accomplished philosophers of the age.

All things in nature are great or little in their

appearances, in proportion to those proper objects which they are to be considered with, or measured by. The earth itself is considered as a vast globe of solid substances, formed into one body by an infinitely powerful hand; when on the one hand, it is measured by any particular bodies, either part of itself, or of any other body, which are small, and, as it may be said, inconsiderable in bulk compared to it: whereas on the other hand, that very globe or vast body which we call this earth, is but as a point, a mote, or a grain of dust, when considered with and measured by the immense bodies of the comets, the sun, the fixed stars, or other those glorious luminaries which we see ranged above us, and out of the reach even almost of our conceptions.

Thus the knowledge and acquirement of the magicians and wise men in the first ages of time, and of whom I have been now speaking, though mean and trifling, superficial, and of little worth, when compared with the accomplished and consummate wisdom of the moderns, their experimental philosophy, their knowledge in astronomy, their improvement of nature and art; yet it was great, and worthy of admiration, when compared in those days, to what the rest of mankind knew, and looked upon by and compared with an ignorant age, such as that was; and therefore the king tells Daniel, that an *excellent spirit of wisdom was found in him*; Dan. v. 14. And doubtless the people looked upon Daniel to be inspired with wisdom and knowledge from the holy gods, that is to say, from heaven, as indeed he was, though not from their dumb idols, whom they called by the name of the holy gods.

In like manner, though perhaps not with so strong a conviction, they had an opinion of all those they called the Chaldeans and southsayers, magi-

cians and astrologers, that they had secret communication with their gods, and that they received all the knowledge with which they were inspired, and in which they so much excelled the rest of mankind, from the several deities which they worshipped. I will not deny but that those magicians might endeavour by many subtilties and arts, to confirm and preserve the delusion (for they knew it to be so) in the minds of the people; that they might also work up the veneration of the deluded multitude to a due height, and preserve the opinion both of their persons and of their capacities; and this perhaps will appear, when further inquired into, to be the foundation of all the wicked things which followed, as I shall demonstrate in its order.

It was really a temptation to those wise men, as they were called, to see that the world had a vast opinion of them; while the world was blind, and, in the infancy of their own understanding, a little matter would impose upon them; but in process of things the world grew wiser, and the light of nature began to receive illuminations from the light of reason, and then it behoved the wise men to see that their knowledge also increased in proportion; for still they were obliged to keep the reputation of their understandings, by passing from one study to another, and aspiring still higher and higher in their several classes of improvement.

Now this it was easy to do, in all those early days of knowledge. Nay, they had a thousand years before them still, in which a moderate competence of acquired knowledge would keep up their characters; what course was taken afterwards, we shall see by and by.

To sum it up then in few words; a magician in the first ages of the world was nothing more or less than a man of learning; only you must take this with you as you go, that by the word learning

is to be understood not a man of letters and books, for the world knew little of either in the first days of those acquirements; nay, we have reason to be assured that the knowledge of letters was not arrived in the world at the time when Pharaoh summoned the wise men, and the southsayers, and magicians, to interpret his dream; and as they had no letters, they had no books; and therefore when it is said that Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, it must be understood of oral learning, wisdom conveyed to him by observation, or instruction, or inspiration, as afterwards he really received it from heaven.

The magicians, I say, were men of learning, that is to say, men of study, men of observation, busy in the search after knowledge; and if we will take pains to inquire into it, we shall find their observations chiefly respected the motions of the heavenly bodies, the aspects and influences of the planets and fixed stars; and considering that they were absolutely without the help of instruments and glasses to make their observations by, and without books by which to communicate the knowledge of one age, or of one person, to another; I say, considering these things were wanting, it is a wonderful thing that they arrived to such a degree of astronomical knowledge as they did.

Others studied the knowledge of nature in the constitution and contexture of human bodies; the originals, the progress, and the causes of diseases and distempers, both in men and women; and also the physical or medicinal virtue of drugs and plants, for cure and ease of those diseases; the qualities of the several herbs and trees, and productions of the earth; and as in these things they made daily discoveries in nature, which the world was till then ignorant of, and by which they performed surprising cures, and delivered the dis-

tressed people in divers maladies, they were on that account, and deservedly too, had in great esteem, were revered, and even worshipped by the people.

I could give many examples in history from the most ancient times, when their physicians and astronomers were, after their decease, ranked among their gods, and doubtless were had in a profound veneration, while they were living.

In a word, science and useful knowledge being young in the world, those men who gave themselves up to the first searches after those things, were thought worthy of the greatest honours, and were had in the greatest esteem; indeed they very well deserved of mankind, since they gave such noble testimonies of their being devoted to the public good. Thus Prometheus, who is said to be chained down to mount Caucasus, with a vulture preying upon his bowels; the substance or meaning of which was no more than this: that he gave himself so entirely up to the study of astronomy, and to search after the knowledge of the heavenly motions, that the eager desire after the knowledge of them gnawed into his very vitals, consumed his natural strength, and proved fatal to his health; and that this was upon mount Caucasus, intimated only, that he chose a high hill, or a summit among those mountains, where he used to lie on his back whole nights together, to make his observations more exactly of the revolving motions of the stars, till he contracted distempers by the colds and damps of the air, so that he was, as it were, chained down to those mountains, till the diseases he contracted eat out his very bowels.

This is that Prometheus, who, for his exquisite knowledge, is feigned by the poets to have first formed man; that is to say, formed the model of a man by the help of water and earth, and then stole

fire from the sun to animate the model, and to give him life and motion.

The meaning of which is no more than this: that by his wisdom he instructed and formed the minds of men in true notions and right knowledge of the most sublime objects.

Prometheus first, as ancient authors say,
 First made the model of a man in clay ;
 Formed all the beauteous parts, and when he'd done
 Stole vital heat from the prolific sun.

And here, by the way, the first atheists, the Epicureans and others, who showed their mighty willingness to deny a First Cause, a being prior, and therefore superior, to all beings, would make man to be the author of his own form and life ; and that Prometheus, having thus formed the model, and, by borrowing fire from the sun, given it life, the new-formed creatures had ever since communicated that life by generation. But this empty notion stands confuted most effectually, by only joining the following four lines to those above :

But not an author tells us, to this day,
 Who made Prometheus first, and who the clay ;
 Who gave the heat prolific to the sun,
 And where the first productive power begun.

But to leave moralizing, which my merry readers seem to have an aversion to, I go on with my story.

The learned sir Walter Raleigh says, they are greatly mistaken who think that the thing as well as the word 'magic' is derived from Simon Magus. He adds, that Simon's name was not Magus, a magician, but Goes, a person familiar with evil spirits, and that he only usurped the title of 'Simon the Magician' because the title of a magician was

honourable and good; and my opinion is thus strengthened by his authority, viz., that there is a manifest difference between magic, which is wisdom and supernatural knowledge, and the witchery and conjuring by which we now understand the word, and use it accordingly.

I join with this exposition of the word magic; and shall therefore carefully distinguish, as I go along, betwixt the several differing persons known in history for magi, magicians, and professors or practisers of magic, and those magicians by which we are to understand sorcerers and enchanters, and dealers with the Devil; of whom, nevertheless, I shall have occasion frequently to speak in this work, because, though I shall let you know that the magicians were not all sorcerers and devil-dealers, yet I must also let you know too, that I am to point the main of this discourse to such as are so.

Nor is this previous determining the point anything less than necessary at this time. With respect to the variety of worthy gentlemen, our present contemporaries in fashionable wisdom, who, however willing they are to be taken for magicians, even in the very worst sense of the word, rather than not to pass for conjurers, must be vindicated, even against their wills, if it be only upon the single consideration of incapacity; since, as none of the magi of the world were famed for wanting brains, so the Devil, having no occasion for fools in the natural sense, will always disown them, in spite of the strongest pretences they make to his service.

In justice, therefore, to those would-be witches, I must clear the way as I go, and openly distinguish between magicians, understanding them as wise and learned men; or magicians, understanding them as black-art men; and fools, that are only not sorcerers because the Devil does not think it worth his while

to employ them, and, in short, that they are incapable of being as wicked as they would be.

The word 'Magus,' from whence the words 'magic' and 'magician' are derived, is a Persian, or perhaps Chaldean term, used originally to signify a student in divinity, a man conversant in divine studies; and Plato says the art of magic is nothing but the knowledge of the worship of the gods; and the Persians call their gods *μάγους*; which exposition of the word is agreeable to that of Matt. ii. 2, *There came wise men of the East, who, having seen the star of him that was born king of the Jews, came so far to worship him.*

These wise men the Greeks afterwards called philosophers, that is, lovers of wisdom; and the same is understood in the Indian language by Brachmans, and now Brahmins; by the Babylonians, Chaldeans; by the Hebrews, seers; and among the Persians, magicians.

It is true, as king James I. says in his book of demonology, that under the name of magic all other unlawful arts are comprehended; but that is only as we moderns understand it, not that it was understood so by the ancients; and even in that the king distinguishes between magic, in its worst sense, and the arts or practices of witchcraft and sorcery, which, with his majesty's leave, I think a needless distinction: nor shall I be so nice; but all those dealings which we call necromancy, sorcery, witchcraft, and all kinds of diabolical doings, shall pass with me for magic and the black-art, and in this sense I shall afterwards use the word.

The wise men of Babylon are distinguished in the prophecy of Daniel into four classes: the magicians, that is, the wise men, in the sense as above, I mean philosophers; the astrologers, which are understood the same with our astronomers, and with them southsayers; the third sort are the sor-

cerers, who were called *malefici*, or workers of evil or mischief, as some call them ; these are the kind I am to treat of, who are workers of evil by the assistance of an evil spirit ; and the last are called Chaldeans, by which are understood foretellers of things to come, who understand their hidden and secret causes.

This exposition brings us down to the case in hand, where by the word or term of magic is understood the two last sorts, who working evil of several kinds, do it also by the assistance of an evil spirit ; that is, in English, by the help of the Devil, by enchantment, conjurations, and corrupt methods.

The practices of these people were many ways diabolical, even in those days ; and if we may credit king James's account of them, they were rather worse in those latter ages of the world than in former times ; but of that in its place.

Philo Judæus carries it further than any of the most ancient writers and sages, and says that by this kind of magic, that is by astrology, and observation of the heavenly bodies, their motions, and revolutions, Abraham, who was certainly a very great magician, arrived to the knowledge of the true God ; even before he came out from Ur of the Chaldees ; that is to say, he gathered from the wise government, the wonderful order and motion, and the immovable decrees and revolutions of the heavenly bodies, that there must be an infinite, wise, and intelligent being, who, as he was the first cause of their beings, so he was likewise the great director of their motions, and by his appointment everything in the whole system of their operations was guided and appointed : in short, that Abraham learned to know the Creator, by the contemplation of the creature. And doubtless, as this study of nature directly leads us to the great author of nature, so Abraham,

by his sincere application to the first, and his sincere desire to be led into the number of the last ; God, who knew those desires of his heart to be sincere, and aiming at a right end, was pleased to make a more clear discovery of himself to him by vision and revelation ; teaching him more than he could ever have obtained by all the study and application imaginable.

It is not doubted however that Abraham was the first teacher of astronomy and of arithmetic in the world, and perhaps of the several branches of the mathematics ; the ancients affirm, that he taught the Phœnicians, that is to say, the Canaanites among whom he lived, and the Egyptians also, all the knowledge they had, whether philosophical or divine.

Thus then, whatever notions we have now entertained of magic as diabolical, yet certainly, as our Saviour says in another case, *in the beginning it was not so*. In the first ages of the world, the knowledge of magic was the wisdom of nature ; and nothing but ignorance brought men to prostitute themselves to the Devil for the increase of their understandings.

And this indeed is the way by which magic, and the knowledge of the most excellent things, has been abused in the world ; when men seeking beyond themselves for knowledge, and ignorant of the way to increase true knowledge, have been imposed upon to make use of wicked and diabolical methods to obtain it ; the Devil not only readily concurring to assist them, but openly acting with them by concert, to encourage the delusion.

Hence the weakest and most impotent of all capacities, mere fools excepted, have been found sufficient to make tools for the Devil ; who hardening them for his own work, trains them up to his hand, with such an unwearied diligence, that

nothing can prevent their improving in his service.

Thus while magic is the wisdom of nature, and the magicians of those ages were the wisest and best of men ; the magicians of our times, and of this new kind, improve from nothing, begin with the vilest of ignorance, and proceed to the vilest of wickedness, till they come to be the most diabolical creatures in the world.

Magic being therefore nothing in those times, but, as I have said, a degree of useful knowledge, and the magicians being a race of honest studious men, searching after wisdom, and blest with greater shares of it than the ordinary race of men were arrived to ; we must look further, and come down lower into time, for the present vulgar acceptance of the word : in which inquiry, it will not be sufficient to jump at once from the beginning of things to the present times, and from what the magicians were in Egypt and Chaldea, to what they are now in a Christian age : but we must a little inquire into the gradations of the change, and see by what several progressions of art the useful magicians of those ages have come on, from mere philosophy, to all the extraordinaries of mystery, cunning, trick, cheat, star-gazing, fortune-telling, conjuring, witchcraft, and the devil ; and if this be not an inquiry both profitable and diverting, I must be mistaken in my subject, or in my readers. Let us enter into it gradually, and with caution, lest we raise the Devil before we come at him.

CHAP. II.

How wisdom and learning advanced men in the first ages to royalty and government, and how many of the magicians were made kings on that account; as Zoroaster, Cadmus, and many others.

IT was not many ages that the world continued in a state of dulness, equal to that at the first scattering the nations. We do not find them building any more Babels, or entertaining themselves with such gross notions any more.

As they travelled abroad, they learned experience; they saw further into nature, and into the reason of things; instead of building ladders and Babels to reach up to heaven, and keep them from drowning, they soon learnt to build cities to keep out their enemies, and ships to sail upon the water; they baffled the fears of another deluge, not by their faith that God would not drown the world again, so much as by the relief of this whimsey, that seeing they could swim in ships and boats, he could not do it; or that knowing they could live upon the water, they might seem not to care whether he did or no.

In this travelling circumstance they grew in knowledge, as I say, and, at least some of them, being of a brighter genius than others, advanced beyond their neighbours in wisdom and understanding, both speculative and practical; and these, as they gained every day more knowledge, even by knowing, so that knowledge gained them infinite applause and esteem among the people.

Hence every aspiring genius among them, get-

ting the start of the rest, either in real or affected knowledge of things, and thereby gaining admirers and dependents, took little differing routes in their wanderings; and wherever they thought fit to plant and settle, they built houses, called it a city, and the leader made himself be called their particular king.

This petty royalty, as it was raised upon the foot of chance, rather than blood, and upon the mean circumstance of a bold aspiring head, which a small share of brains above his neighbours gave a title to, so it seemed to subsist on the foot of the same chance; those kings being as easily, and as often deposed, as they were either overpowered by their neighbours, or as any decay and defect of the bright part that raised them, caused them to sink in the opinion of their subjects, and gave the king of the next city a better place in their favour.

Yet this diminutive rank of sovereignty remained many ages in the world; and we find, not only in Abraham's time, when the five cities of the lake or valley, where Sodom stood, had five kings over them; and afterwards in Jacob's time, the city of Sichem had a king over it; but even at the coming of the Israelites into Canaan, almost every city had its king; and we have a great deal of room to judge, that these kings did not derive from a patriarchal succession, for then there would have been many thousands of kings more than there were; but from the exalted merit of the understandings and genius of such and such a person, whom the people thought fit to admire and follow, and consequently subject themselves to; and we have abundance of examples in history, to prove that this was the practice of those first ages. But this is a dry study, and the search after their names would be as needless, as the list, when obtained, would be tedious to read; so I leave it, and go on.

The reason of my naming this part, is not to show the veneration the most early ages of the world had for wisdom and virtue ; for, God knows, these magi, though they had the merit of some knowledge above the rest, yet we do not find they had a much greater share of virtue than other people : but even as we find it now, the most knowing men are not the best men, even so it was then, every wise man, much less every great man, was not a good man : and as in our age it may be feared, we have more clergy than Christians, so there were in those days more sages than saints : till at last their wise men turned whimsical, their kings madmen, their southsayers mere conjurers, and their magicians devils : of all which I shall give a further account presently.

I'll suppose now, that the magicians of those ages were, as I have described them in the chapter before, nothing but men famed for extraordinary knowledge ; mere astrologers, philosophers, men of study, and the like. You will next see how those men frequently raised their fortunes by their wisdom, or rather by the opinion which the ignorant world had of their wisdom and capacities.

Zoroaster was a famous magician, in the sense which I have already given of the word. History tells us he was a great astrologer, and foretold things, by his art, which were to come ; that by his wonderful predictions he obtained such a veneration among the people, that the Bactrians adored him as a man sent down from the gods, or if you like it as well in Scripture terms, as a man of God ; and by this mighty opinion which they had of him, he obtained the empire of the Bactrians. This must be at the time when Ninus was monarch of Assyria ; for he was afterwards conquered, dispossessed of his dominions, and slain by Semiramis, that warlike widow queen of Assyria.

They report that he foretold he should be slain

by lightning, or by the fire of heaven; and that he told the Assyrians, that if they could find his ashes, they should carefully preserve them, for that their empire should continue no longer than while his ashes should remain in being; that afterward it fell out accordingly, that he was killed by lightning, and that the Assyrians did so preserve his ashes, but that they were afterwards taken from them by the Persians, who overthrew their empire.

N. B. All this is summed up thus in fact; that Zoroaster left behind him wholesome rules of virtue and good government, which as long as the Assyrians kept in memory, and worthily followed, they were prosperous, as he foretold them they would be; but when afterwards they degenerated into vice, and ceased to obey the rules which he had set them, they fell into divisions and factions, civil wars and devastations, which at length ended in the ruin of their empire.

Cadmus, mentioned before, was a Phœnician, but went from his own country and settled in Greece, where, as they say, he built the city of Thebes, and was made king of it, in consequence of the performance, and in veneration of his learning, having brought sixteen letters of the Greek alphabet among them; not that he invented those letters, though he has the fame of it to this day: the letters were these; $\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta, \epsilon, \iota, \eta, \kappa, \lambda, \nu, \omicron, \pi, \zeta, \sigma, \tau, \upsilon$; the other four θ, ξ, ϕ, χ , they tell us were afterwards supplied by Palamedes, during the siege of Troy.

But the moral of the story is this; that Cadmus came from Phœnicia into Greece, where by his learning he instructed the people, civilized and polished their manners, and taught them the knowledge of letters; directed them to build houses, and inhabit together in towns and villages, which they then called cities; and, in a word, introduced among them discipline and good government: in

recompense for which they made him their king, and called their first town Thebes, in honour of Cadmus, who was originally of the great Egyptian Thebes, a city much more ancient than the nation of the Grecians.

Atlas (also mentioned before) was an African, conspicuous for his excellence in all human wisdom and knowledge; by this he was raised to such a height in the affection of the people, that they made him king of Mauritania, in the northern part of Afric. He was one of the most learned magicians of the time, and by his knowledge in the motions of the stars, and his excellent judgment in the good government of nations, he is feigned by the ancients to carry the world upon his shoulders; that is to say, his precepts of government supported the nations, and preserved order and discipline in the world; and for this he was, as he well deserved, chosen by the people of Afric to be their king.

I have done with my examples of wise men being made kings, especially being made so for their wisdom too; and indeed, to what purpose should I go on with the account? it is not pretended the example should move the world in this age, or in the next: the world at present has no great occasion for more wise kings than they have; and besides, as there is a right wise generation rising up to supply the place of power, as fast as nature wears off the incumbents, and we see no danger of wanting a suitable succession, so I leave that part of the subject, and shall talk of another class.

The magicians or wise men being, as I have thus described, men of worth, and justly valued in the world, let us see how long they held it, and how they lost that character.

The first step which I meet with, which lessens their figure in my account, was when the magi or wise men were called in to support the govern-

ment of the Persian empire : and here they showed indeed, that wisdom is not the only qualification of a prince ; that there is another thing requisite, which though it is but trifling indeed among the moderns, was an essential among the ancients, who found, that to make a good governor, it was requisite that he should not only be a wise man, but an honest man ; and in defect of this qualification, the Persians cut the throats of all the magi, to whom they had committed the government of the country ; for though they were all philosophers, and wise men, yet, as fame hands it down to us, they did not find one honest man among them.

These magi are called by some, priests, by others philosophers, by others astrologers ; it is certain they foretold things to come, or, at least, made the people believe so ; as in the case of the queen of Persia, mother of king Sapore. The Persians, it seems, were in great perplexity for want of a king, (there were no pretenders at that time to put in their claim,) a thing which very seldom happens in our times ; the nobility being assembled, in order to consider of a nomination, the magi sent them word that they should not proceed, for that the queen dowager was with child, and would bring forth a prince, who should be a mighty king, and do great things for the honour of his country.

Upon this their consultations broke off, and with great joy they sent for the queen, and laying the crown upon her belly, they solemnly crowned the embryo, gave it the title of king, and saluted it king by the name of Sapor, or Sapore ; all which came to pass ; and yet I may say all this might come to pass, and no great matter owing to the prophetic knowledge of the magi ; for the queen, loath to have a king chosen too soon, before she knew how it was with her, might venture to say she was with child, or, at least, get the priests, the magi, to say so for

her, and leave the rest all to fate ; for if it had not proved so, nobody was injured, and it would only have been said that the magi were mistaken.

But we are, if you please, to suppose, that, as I said, this did not last long ; the low-prized learning of the magicians answered very well, while the world was ignorant in proportion ; but as the world increased in people, and as years went over their heads, knowledge had its gradations too, and though it must be confessed it was at a very slow rate, yet some advances they did make ; and as princes severally were lovers of learning, so they encouraged men of learning too, and their numbers increased, as well as their knowledge.

As the common people became more knowing and intelligent, so it behoved the magicians to advance their studies, and seek further into the more sublime parts of learning, to preserve the distance they stood in from the lower class of their countrymen, and to maintain the respect and veneration which, as I said, the people had for them ; if they had not done this, they had soon been upon a level with the rest of mankind, the rabble had been their equals in wisdom, and they had lost themselves in the superior station of magicians which they enjoyed before.

This put them presently upon searching further and further into the arcana of nature, pursuing the highest and most elevated studies with the utmost diligence and application ; advancing from one thing to another, still to keep up the figure and character of wise men which they had before ; that is to say, being still as many degrees above the common sort, however the common sort might be improved in knowledge, as they were before.

Nor was this difficult to do ; for as knowledge was then, and even is still, an unexhausted mine and storehouse of invaluable treasure, and which,

still the deeper it is dug into, discovers more and more riches, and an infinite variety of rarities and curious things, as well natural as artificial; so the further these men of application searched into the arcana, or concealed treasures of wisdom, and the further and greater experiments they made, the more they found the search answer their utmost ambition; the more they knew, the more they discovered yet to know; and all their inquiries made good the modern distich made upon a like subject:

What's yet discover'd only serves to show
How little's known, to what there's left to know.

This was not only an encouragement to the wise men of the ages we speak of to go on in their studies, and in their making new discoveries in the hidden and most retired parts of nature, but it showed that they were still able to maintain the characters they bore in the world, and to make good the distinction which was formerly made between them and the common people; so that they still passed for magicians, wise men, and astrologers, as they really at last were, and for men qualified to instruct the ignorant world in a superior knowledge.

Take them, then, in this new situation, that is to say, pushing on in the commendable search after wisdom and knowledge, till, as Solomon says, they dug for it as for hid treasures; yet the common people followed them close at their heels; the nations grew wiser and wiser, as well as the magi; till, in short, art began to fail, or rather the numbers of the men of art began to increase, that so wise men were not such rarities, or so high-prized as they had been, and grew daily less and less in the ordinary rate and esteem of the world.

Thus, in short, the wise men and the improving world seemed like men running a race in the pur-

suit after knowledge ; the magi, or southsayers, or what you please to call them, had gotten the start, and were a great way ahead, a great way before the rest, but the people followed and advanced at a great rate.

And this brings me down to the point.

The men of wit and learning, being hard put to it in their new discoveries, had but three ways to preserve the dignity of their profession, and keep up their credit as wise men, that is, as philosophers, magi, and the like.

1. The first was, to pursue vigorously the study of philosophy, that is to say, of nature, the several branches of astronomy, astrology, geometry, and the like.

2. The second was, to push into the study of art, that is to say, experimental philosophy.

3. The last was the study of reason, viz., natural homage, and the worship of the gods.

In the first of these they went on with great success ; nor were they to be followed by the common people, whose understandings could never come up to any uncommon degrees of science, or indeed to make any pretensions to it ; and therefore those that applied to this study kept up their credit longer than any of the rest.

Thus the three wise men of the East are said to come into Judea from a far country by observing an unusual and surprising phenomenon, viz., a star at noonday, moving in a particular orbit, and pointing to them in a very particular manner, by which they were, as it seems, directed to follow it, in order to make an extraordinary discovery of some great birth, and of some wonderful prince, whom therefore they ought to come and pay homage to. Some authors tell us, these three wise men, or magi, were three of the posterity of Abraham, by Keturah, his last wife ; that they dwelt in Arabia Felix ; and

that they had it revealed to them that they should see this star, and that they should be guided by it to see the great Messiah, who was to come into the world to unite the posterity of Abraham, and to establish them in one kingdom which should rule over the whole world. But I take this as it is, viz., a chimney-corner tale, fit for a legend, and not capable of any manner of improvement.

But thus far it is to my purpose, namely, that the credit of the wise men of the East was not yet quite sunk in the world; that they maintained a correspondence with the stars; that they pored upon the heavenly motions, and knew more of that kind than all that ever went before them.

As the astronomers, and star-gazing magi kept up the dignity of their characters, and outdid all the rest of mankind in those ages; so the second sort too applied themselves to the study of lower life, observing the mechanism of nature, and introducing the helps of art, even to perform things surprising. Among these, some studied the microcosm of human bodies, and searched both distemper and medicine; and these, that is to say, the physicians and naturalists, obtained a noble ascendant in the esteem of the vulgar, being able by the knowledge of drugs and plants, and their virtues, to apply proper remedies in cases of the greatest distress and disaster; and this indeed could not but obtain for them a fixed and large esteem in the minds of the people, whom on so many occasions they relieved. Thus the first searched into the curiosities of nature, the second into the art of physic.

But the third were a very particular kind indeed, and these applied themselves to the arcana of things divine; and at this door came in all the wicked things, which have since, with so much justice too, given a black character to the very name of a magician; for under the shelter of religion, the worst and

most diabolical things were practised ; and in a few ages more, we find that all the magicians were priests in Egypt, or according to some, all the priests were magicians. Some have offered at drawing a parallel from this to our times, and in some sense it may be true, but in others doubtful. For if by magicians we are to understand philosophers and wise men, I shall never be brought to acknowledge that all our priests are magicians, for I abhor all slander. But to go back to the case as it is before me, certain it is, that the wise men finding, as above, that they must take new measures, that they must have recourse to some new art, if they would keep up the reputation of their wisdom ; I say, finding it thus, they applied themselves to three sorts of study.

The first was to innocent art, secret and cunning contrivances to delude the sight ; this we call juggling, legerdemain, or philosophical delusion, such as I shall mention in its place ; but this would go but a little way.

A second sort, as above, applied to religious frauds, and set up for celestial delusions, mixing their magical performances with religious rites ; so deceiving the people with the opinion of sanctity, and with the belief that they had the assistance of the gods.

In nomine Domini incipit omne malum.

These last studied indeed divinity, such as it was ; and how unhappily did they pursue the mysteries they professed ! for first we find they invoked the gods, and not finding that would do, they changed hands and invoked the devil.

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

From hence it is that I suppose our wise describers of the magic of the ancients tell us there were three sorts of magic : 1. Natural, which con-

sisted of the parts already mentioned, namely, the knowledge of the stars, the motions of the heavenly bodies, and their revolutions and influences ; that is to say, the study of nature, of philosophy, and astronomy. 2. Artificial or rational magic, in which they included the knowledge of all judicial astrology, the casting or calculating nativities, curing diseases by charms, by particular figures placed in this or that position ; by herbs gathered at this or that particular crisis of time, and by saying such and such words over the patient, repeated so many times, and by such and such gestures, stroking the flesh in such and such a manner, and innumerable such-like pieces of mimicry ; working not upon the disease itself, but upon the imagination of the dis-tempered people, and so effecting the cures by the power of nature, though that nature were set on work by the weakest and simplest methods imaginable. But, thirdly, the last is truly called diabolical and hellish magic, which was operated by and with the concurrence of the devil, carried on by a correspondence with evil spirits, with their help, presence, and personal assistance, and chiefly practised by their priests. And thus you have the general system of magic, according to my title : but I must enter a little into the particulars.

The first sort of this magic I have already described ; and I am still of this opinion, that in all the first ages of the world, there was very little other magic than this known among men ; that all the diabolical practices of the third sort, or the art and legerdemain of the second sort of magic, was perfectly unknown to the magicians of Egypt or Arabia, or afterwards of Chaldea, at least for a great while.

As for the magicians of Chaldea, I have named them already, and we find nothing diabolical among them : as to those of Egypt, especially such as were ordinarily called so, it is evident also they were ge-

nerally the same; for when Pharaoh king of Egypt dreamed his first dream of the seven fat, and the seven lean kine, Gen. xli. the words are express, ver. 8; *He sent for all the magicians and all the wise men of Egypt; and what followed? there was none that could interpret his dream.* Upon which, Joseph was sent for; where, by the way, you may observe the difference between Joseph and the wise men or magicians, let them be what they will. The wise men came when they were sent for, and they put the king to the trouble of telling them his dream, and, as we may believe, went away to consult and consider of an answer. If they could have amused the king with any sham answer, so as to have quieted his thoughts, which were disturbed with the oddness of the appearance, they would certainly have done it; whence I conclude they were not either of the second sort of magicians, who by trick and charm, muttering of words, drawing figures, and such empty and simple formalities, did their work; if they had, they would certainly have cheated the king with some of their impostures and legerdemain, and have made him accept of this or that wild story for an interpretation.

Nor were they diabolical magicians, such as by a real and immediate conversation with the Devil, or some of his invisible agents, which we call evil spirits, wrought their usual wonders, or delusions like wonders; and such as perhaps those afterwards made use of by another Pharaoh king of Egypt really were, who mimicked the miracles of Moses in the sight of the king and his court: if they had been such, the Devil would not have suffered them to be so disgraced before their lord, as to go away and say they could make nothing of it, nor give him the interpretation; the Devil would certainly have furnished them with some kind of interpretation,

true or false, at least such as should have satisfied the king for the present.

N. B. It is very reasonable to suggest here, that these magicians and wise men of Egypt, and so those afterwards at Babylon, had been usually called together before, upon such occasions as those; that they had often interpreted dreams, perhaps for the king himself, as well as for other people; that sometimes they did perhaps make such interpretations as came to pass, by which they maintained much of their reputation among the people, as wise men and as magicians: the same we see practised among us to this day by many an ignorant old woman, without the least claim to the venerable name of magician, much less of wise; also we cannot doubt but that the kings of Egypt and of Babylon did expect and believe those magicians could interpret if they would; it had been else a preposterous piece of cruelty in Nebuchadnezzar to put all the magicians and wise men to death, because they did not tell him his dream and the interpretation, if he did really believe they were not able to do it; for it is certain they did not pretend to be able to tell the dream, though they did pretend to tell the interpretation; but he certainly believed they were able to do both.

But when Pharaoh comes to talk with Joseph, he honestly tells the king it was not in him; modestly divesting himself of all claim to the honour which he foresaw was going to be put upon him, and giving up the praise to the supreme agent, to whom it was due, v. 16; *It is not in me, but God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace*; and then he goes on to interpret the dream.

I give you this as an evidence of the difference in the kinds of magic practised in those times; the first sort, it is plain, were, as has been described, mere men of learning, masters of science, namely,

the knowledge of nature, studying philosophy, astronomy, and the like ; some practising one way, some another ; some looking up among the stars, others down among the plants ; some into the microcosm of man, and practising medicine for the cure of diseases ; some judging of dreams and omens, others of signs and appearances, and all according to their several studies, and the several branches of science which they applied themselves to ; but not any sorcery or devil-work among them at that time, or for some hundreds of years after.

But come now to the same country, viz., Egypt ; for here, it seems, the Devil began first to converse with mankind, or mankind with him rather, in this familiar manner ; I say, come to the same country at the distance of less than two hundred years, or thereabout, and there you find the magicians turned into another sort of people, or rather another sort of people mixed with them ; for when Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh to demand the liberty of the Israelites, and show miracles or signs before him, it is said Pharaoh sent for the magicians, &c., and they did the like.

But then let us see how the text distinguishes the kinds, and you will find it is exactly according to my present distinction : before, it is said Pharaoh, sent for the magicians and wise men of Egypt. See Gen xli. 8. But now the style is changed, as the people were also, Exod. vii. 11. Pharaoh called the sorcerers and magicians of Egypt ; and see then how they acted, ver. 22 ; *And the magicians did the same with their enchantments* ; and the like in several other places : so that here the magicians and wise men were of another sort, for they acted by a diabolical practice, as sorcerers, and dealers with the Devil ; besides, it is everywhere said, they did it by their enchantments, which we never find so much as mentioned before ; no, nor afterwards

among the Chaldeans and the magicians of Persia and Assyria ; but they acted by the mere force of their wisdom and learning, viz., the study of nature ; and when that failed them, they acknowledged they had no other power, and could go no further.

Now, as I said before, having passed through the best of the art, and the first and only honest part of the practice, it follows, that we consider the subsequent progressions of the people called magicians, what they have been understood to be, what they now are in the world, and what we are to understand by the word when we say magic, or a magician ; and this is,

First, A juggler, or shower of tricks by legerdemain and sleight of hand ; which I call only a sham magic, and which the world has been indeed deluded with for many ages.

Secondly, A real sorcerer or wizard, that deals with the Devil, who converses familiarly with the old gentleman, has him at his call, fetches him, sends him of errands, raises him, lays him, uses him, upon all occasions and in all disguises, as he finds occasion.

That there have been such as these in the world, must be true, or history must be one universal legend of lies, and we must have been deluded and imposed upon by all the writers and register-keepers that ever have been, were, or are in being ; nay, even the sacred writings confirm it, and therefore, with the pardon of all our modern unbelievers, who deny there is such a thing as a devil or evil spirit in being, either in the world or out of it, I say with their good leave, I must take it for granted.

Now though I could bring many examples among the moderns, where it is most certain that some walking gentlemen among us, who have looked as if they had nothing in them more than other people, have really been a cage of devils, and as the text

calls them *unclean spirits* yet I must at present look a little higher, because I am resolved to bring such evidence as cannot be denied.

First, The Scripture says of Judas, that with or after the sop, the Devil entered into him, John xiii. 27 ; *And after the sop, Satan entered into him*, that is, into Judas ; and in the same chap. ver. 2, *the Devil having put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him* : and again, St. Paul speaking to Elymas, whom the text calls *in totidem verbis* the sorcerer, calls him *thou child of the Devil*. This, and all the testimonies of the Devil's being miraculously dispossessed by our Saviour, and by his disciples and apostles, will put it out of question, not only that there is such a thing as a Devil, but also that he has possession of several of his servants in human shape.

But this is not the case at all, for I am not now upon the proof of the reality and existence of the Devil ; that has been worthily undertaken, and historically, mathematically, and enthusiastically enough performed by a late writer in another place : but I am now talking of a set of people who were not possessed by, but rather, as it may be called, are possessed of the devil ; have him in their keeping and custody ; where, by the way, I do not find but that the Devil seems to be very much in subjection to them ; whether it be voluntarily, and so perhaps, like an obsequious dog, that fawns for what he can get ; he (the Devil) creeps and cringes, in order the better to carry on his own designs, which, indeed, is not at all improbable ; or whether there were ways and means which these ancient people had found out, by what superior power I know not, to subject the Devil to their orders, and make him their humble servant upon all occasions, to run and go, fetch and carry, at their whistle : all these critical inquiries may perhaps come in my way, when I come to talk

more particularly of the magic of our present times, and the management of our modern cunning men, who pretend to have the Devil in a string, make him jump over a broomstick, dance, and show tricks, as the mountebanks and merryandrews do with a bear and a monkey.

I must confess, if I can but, in my further search after those things, find out the method the ancient magicians had to manage the Devil thus, and bring him to their hand, and can convey the art to posterity, or at least set up a scheme for the present improvement of it, I shall not doubt but I shall meet with encouragement; and if the eminent Mr. Wh—on will but stoop to join in with my design, (as I doubt not he will, if there be but money to be got by it,) we may publish our readings, and set up lectures for the instruction of young magicians, and that with extraordinary good success; nor do I think the reverend Mr. Em—in would stick out; for why should we doubt but they who have already levelled their Saviour with a class infinitely below the Devil, and made a mere devil or apparition of the great Teacher and Sanctifier of the world, would willingly set up lectures in favour of the Devil himself, if they can find their account in it?

Besides, when we are thus engaged in Satan's service, and in conjunction with his friends and favourites, we cannot doubt but the Devil himself will be so much obliged, that he may come frankly and volunteer, and let us into the secret, bind himself apprentice to us for a term of years, and enable us to play the devil with him for the time to come, as he had played the devil with us for so many years past. Nor, if he be a grateful devil, can he do less; for no men in the world seem better qualified to advance his interest in the main, however, for the present, we may seem to keep him in a little subjection.

On the other hand, if he should prove an ungrateful spirit, and hang an a——, as the modest call it, being unwilling to come into bondage ; then, I say, we must try if we cannot find the way to do it without him, and, by our black art, play the devil with him, and force him to come when he is called, go when he is sent, and do as he is bid ; as our predecessors the ancient magicians of Egypt did before us, who made him assist Moses and Aaron, and make frogs and snakes, just as they directed him : though it seems, when they commanded him to make lice, the least and lousiest creature of them all, the honest Devil confessed it was out of his power, that God was above the Devil, and that, in a word, he could not do it ; by which, however, he lost a great deal of his credit with his employers, and perhaps with the king himself.

That the Devil assisted the magicians of Egypt to do those things, or, in short, that they made use of him as their instrument, is plain from the text, viz., that they did it by their enchantments : what manner of conjurings or enchantments they were that they made use of, we have no particular light into from the sacred text, but perhaps some guess may be made at it, from what happened frequently in those countries in after-ages.

Also we find that whatever the magicians in Persia, and in Media, and in those Eastern countries were, (for their credit continued many ages,) yet in Egypt they were, after that, chiefly sorcerers and dealers with the Devil ; and in a word, Egypt seemed to be the nursery of human devils for all the world. Hence Balaam is called a witch, and hence in the Roman times the Egyptian sorcerers were brought to Antioch for the assistance of Julian the Apostate, to utter predictions, and to flatter the emperor with their good omens and their prognostications ; in which he was so superstitious, that they put the

grossest delusions upon him, until the citizens of Antioch made a jest of him, and exposed his enchantments to ridicule; for which, had he lived to come back from the war in Persia, he had vowed a severe revenge.

Hence also the Egyptians are to this day, the common strollers of the world, and are succeeded by a race of vagabonds who pretend to the art, without the real wickedness of it, and would be thought to deal with the Devil, when the truth is, they know little or nothing of him.

I suppose I need not tell you that the word gipsey is derived from these strolling magicians, which really came out of Egypt, and wandering over the world, got money by their pretending to magic, telling fortunes, predicting events, and mountebanking the world with their enchantments, until at last, having tired the Devil with following them, and the drudgery of their service being not worth his while, Satan left them, and they have been since that, for some time, in the class of the well-known cardinal —, who pretending to an acquaintance with the Devil, and to have three inferior demons appointed to wait on him, the Devil sent those three demons to tell his neighbours it was all a cheat, and that he, Satan, had nothing to do with him.

It is very strange men should be so fond of being thought wickeder than they are; that they cannot forbear, but that they must abuse the very Devil, and claim kindred of him, whether he has any knowledge of them or no; but thus it is, and we need not go to Egypt for examples, when we have so many pieces of dull witchcraft among ourselves.

It is true the Devil does not often decline an acquaintance where he can find his account in it; and therefore the eminent doctor — may hope, that after a little further application to heresy and blasphemy, he may be thought worthy of admittance

into Satan's favour, at least so much as to settle a correspondence, that so they may act in concert for the future.

I am told some have thought it a particular reputation to them to have it supposed they maintain a correspondence of this kind, which must be upon the foot of Satan's credit, supposing that he knows who is fit for his business, and who not, and that they must be all capable heads that he thinks fit to be concerned with in this manner; for as wise princes always choose wise councillors, the Devil understands the capacities of his friends so well, that he is never mistaken in his choice; but they that are concerned with him must at least be of the cunning class, for he has no inclination at all to fools.

This brought some just reflections into my thought upon the conduct of our times, and immediately cleared up the characters of some of the greatest politicians of our age, at least in my opinion, seeing it is evident they either have too much brains, or too little, for the infernal correspondence; let the world judge which of the two is their case.

I say it cleared up the character of some great men to me, and I concluded they were no magicians, that they neither practised magic in the first sense, as philosophers, or in the last sense, as conjurers; what they might do in the middle sense, as jugglers, that remains to be inquired into as opportunity may present.

Indeed, I run over in my reflections the present situation of most of the public affairs in Europe, the prime ministers, grand viziers, the statesmen, the councillors, generals, admirals; the clergy, whether popish or protestant, Greek church or Roman church, Christian or Mahometan; and I must speak it to their honour, that except, as a late writer taught me to except, our own people, our own coun-

try, and country worthies, I can see no reason to think any of the present managers to be magicians; whether, as above, we consider the magicians to be philosophers, or as Jannes and Jambres, enchanters and conjurers.

But having spoken of the two several sorts of magic, 1. Honest magic, which I have proved to be only the study of natural philosophy and astronomy, and such useful parts of knowledge, which the learned call natural magic; and, 2ndly, Diabolical or infernal magic, which is a practising by the help of demons or evil spirits.

It remains then, that I should at least mention the third, or which before I placed as second in order, which is artificial magic, that is to say, a mere legerdemain, or juggling with nature: this is managed by the wit and dexterity of man, with the advantages of concealed, occult powers, known in nature, but unknown and unseen by vulgar heads and eyes; and such, fame tells us, have been carried to extraordinary heights, such as

1. The glass sphere of Archimedes.
2. The wooden pigeon of Architas.
3. The golden birds of the emperor Leo, which sung.
4. The brazen birds of Boetius, which did both sing and fly; and his brazen serpent, which could hiss.

To which we may add, Friar Bacon's brazen head, which spoke.

These were all impositions upon the sight or hearing of the people; as no doubt the phosphorus would have been, which makes fire burn without heat, and without consuming the matter; and had a man in those days of invention found out a load-stone, what wonders might he not have performed by it! what would have been said, to see him make a piece of iron dance round a table, while the agent

held the magnet underneath; make another piece of iron touched with it, suspend a third in the air, and the like; make it draw one end of a needle to it, and then drive it from it again, as the poles of the magnet were turned and directed! Will any man believe but he that first showed these unaccountable things, would have passed for a magician, a dealer with the Devil, nay, or rather for a real devil in human shape?

Whoever had first brought such a wonderful stone into view as our ordinary chalk stone, calcined and turned into lime, supposing it never to have been heard of before, and shown with it the rarity of its operation, viz., that if you threw it into the fire, it would put the fire out, and if you put it into water, it would burn?

These are some of the delusions of artificial magicians, and such as these the world has been full of, till now we begin to be too wise to be cheated any longer that way; but as to state-jugglers, the magic of the party-mongers, religious-jugglers, and the magic of the pulpit, with divers other less fatal kinds, I believe they are at this time in the meridian of their practice and success, or near it; what height they may go further we do not indeed certainly know, it must be left to time.

And thus you have an honest system of the science called magic, according to the title of this undertaking.

CHAP. III.

Of the reason and occasion which brought the ancient honest magi, whose original study was philosophy, astronomy, and the works of nature, to turn sorcerers and wizards, and deal with the Devil; and how their conversation began.

HAVING thus stated the fact, and given you what I call a system of magic, it is necessary now, that in pursuance of my title, I should insist more particularly upon the third and last sort of magic I mentioned, and which is called diabolical, or according to the vulgar acceptation, the black art, and bring it out to you from its very foundation.

This must be deduced historically from the other two, or else I cannot lead you regularly into its original, or give you its true description; besides, a great many useful and agreeable speculations offer themselves in the rise and progress of the thing itself, which will be most necessary to speak to, as we go along.

Magic did not jump at once into being, as to the thing itself; it was not a revelation from hell, made at once to mankind, to tell them what they might do: the Devil did not come and offer his service gratis to us, and representing how useful a slave he would be, solicit us to take him into pay, and this at once, without ceremony or introduction.

No, no, it was a long progression of studies and improvement in wicked and mischievous schemes, that brought mankind to have recourse to the infernals, to seek the aid of the dark agents below, and to solicit a commerce of that kind: nor was

this done till after finding many difficulties in their other way, they saw evidently they could not do without him, could not accomplish their mischievous desires by other methods, and that this way it was to be done.

Not but that the Devil was very ready, when he found himself made necessary; I say, he was very ready to come into the schemes when proposed, and to serve us in our occasion, and that with a willingness which was extremely obliging; which showed him to be a person of abundance of complaisance, and mighty willing to engage us, whatever it cost him; as much as to say, he was glad he could serve us, was ready to do his utmost for us, and the like.

Now to go back briefly to the occasion which brought the magicians to the necessity of seeking to him for assistance, and to take him into the management of their affairs; the case was, in short, this: the world, as I have said already, began to be wiser than the ages before them; the ordinary magic of the former ages would not pass any longer for wisdom; and if the wise men, as they were called, did not daily produce some new discoveries, it was evident the price and rate of southsaying would come down to nothing.

If this put them upon stratagem and art, in order to keep up their credit, and maintain the distance between them and the inferior rank of men, it is not to be wondered at; and these stratagems were of several kinds, as the occasion and the wit of the undertakers presented; for you are to suppose the inquiring temper of the common people to be arrived to such a height, that nothing could pass with them for true, at least nothing which had any novelty in it, unless it was confirmed by some strange thing, some sign, some miracle to be wrought, by which the mind receiving a due im-

pression, entertained the rest of the proposed wonder with the more satisfaction.

At first the magicians satisfied the curiosity of the people by juggle and trick, by framing artificial voices and noises; foretelling strange events, by mechanical appearances, and all the cheats which we find put upon the ignorant people to this day; and it would be tedious to enumerate the particulars by which they imposed upon one another. You may guess at them by such as are mentioned before; but principally those who studied the heavenly motions, had great opportunities of recommending themselves for men of craft, pretending to tell fortunes, calculate nativities, resolve doubts, read the lines of nature drawn in the face, palms of the hand, symmetry of the body, moles and marks on the flesh, and the like.

These things they carried to a due length, and we find the success was so much to their advantage, that the whole world, or great part of it, has been gipsey-ridden by them, even to this day.

It would fill a volume larger than I propose this shall be, to give an account of the several stratagems those people had recourse to, in the early days of sorcery and magic, in order to maintain their character in the world as extraordinary. For I must do them so much justice as I go, to observe, that they did not immediately run to the Devil for help; or at least, if some among them dealt in the dark, and corresponded below, they did not all do so; perhaps they were not hardened enough at first for the carrying on such a traffick. It was a new commerce, and had something a little shocking at first, till the necessity of their south-saying circumstances brought them to comply with anything rather than lose their trade.

The Egyptians, you must know, were a people

originally attended with two things, which naturally made way for these magical studies.

1. Most impertinently inquisitive, grossly ignorant in the main, (as ignorance would be called now, but mighty wise, as things were rated at that time,) and prying into everything with an irresistible passion for what they called knowledge; on this account they passed for the wisest nation on earth, and Egypt was esteemed the centre of learning and knowledge. Hence Moses was said to be learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. It is true, and they are upbraided with it by the Ethiopians of Arabia Felix, which they call the south; and who, though Arabians, are called Ethiopians in Scripture; I say, it is true, that the Egyptians learned all their magic, that is, their astronomy and astrology, from the Arabians; and they tell us that Abraham instructed his son Ishmael, in all the superior knowledge in which his posterity afterwards grew so famous.

2. With this inquisitive temper of the Egyptians, they were also most ridiculously superstitious; I say, most ridiculously, because it showed itself in that sordid and most simple idolatry which they had among them, in which they sunk below the common notions of worship practised by the most ignorant nations in the world; for they worshipped, or made a god of, almost everything that came in their way; as the ox, the calf, the water of Nile, nay, the river itself, the sand, the crocodiles, and numberless things as senseless as those.

As these things were peculiar to them as a nation, so they particularly qualified them to be imposed upon by their southsayers and magicians, with all manner of delusions; nor did the subtle magicians fail to make their advantage, upon all occasions, of this superstitious and inquiring hu-

mour of the people, but used all possible stratagem and art to delude and impose upon them.

To this purpose, they soon mixed their religion and their magic together; their philosophy and their idolatry were made assistant to the general fraud, and to raise a due veneration in the minds of the people: to this or that particular tale advanced by their priests, they brought always along with them some extraordinary revelation from the gods, some wonderful discovery in nature, or something strange and miraculous.

How strangely does religious enthusiasm keep its hold of mankind, and how exactly do past things and present correspond! As the end is the same, so are the means: pious frauds got ground from the beginning, and pious frauds get ground to the end. As no cheats are so fatal as those which come prefaced with introductions of religion, so no cheats are so easy to prevail, so soon make impressions upon the people, or stamp those impressions deeper.

The priests among the Egyptians, when they turned magicians, (or rather, I should have said, the magicians, when they turned priests,) set up for revelation, inspiration, and a conversation with their gods; and for this purpose they withdrew into the deserts and wastes, of which the country is known to be full; and where to their glory (shame) be it spoken, the religious of the Romish church played the same game over again, some ages afterward.

Hither the Egyptian priests, I say, retired for conversation with their gods, from whence they were sure to come back inspired, that is to say, filled with some new delusion to impose upon the people. Here they cut sacred marks upon the trees, and then brought them back as the lan-

guage taught them from the gods; and by which they pretended, after muttering over them some unsignifying significations, to utter some answers to any difficulties proposed to them; and then sending their votaries into the wilderness, they would set them to search for the same divine characters; which after long looking for, they would find upon some stone, or post, or tree, and come home in raptures for the discovery.

Others of these divine magicians, or diviners rather, would clamber up to the top of the pyramids, whose immense height we have such certain accounts of, as may make the climbing up seem incredible, whatever else may not be so. Yet here they went to make observations, and calculations of the heavenly motions, some say; but according to others, to make their conjurations, their sacred retreats, and to carry on the delusion of conversing with the gods.

Here also they cut their diabolical marks, which the Egyptians call the sacred characters, which they left behind them, indeed, in the stone upon the upper flat of the pyramid; for according to the learned Greaves, the summit of the pyramid was not a point, as the top of a spire, or as representing a flame, and which by its great height it seemed to be; but the uppermost parts formed a plain, which Stephanus in his comment, supplying the defect in Herodotus, makes to be eight orgyæ, which again, according to Suidas, is a fathom, or six foot; so that the plain on the top of the pyramid must be eight fathom square; others report it to be nine foot only, though I think the former more probable.

But be that as it will, here, it is certain, they made, or found made by others, certain dark, mystic, and, as they pretended, sacred characters, whose significations were represented by the priests

just as they pleased ; for we have reason to believe they had not then the use of letters ; and, as some think, these mystic characters were the original of all the hieroglyphic writing which was afterwards the ordinary practice of the Egyptians, till the Hebrew characters were handed to them by Moses, from the writing of God delivered him at mount Sinai.

It is very well observed by the learned author just now named, that had not the priests stood in need of something extraordinary to make their celestial converse seem more weighty and important, all their astronomical observations might as well have been made from the plain of the rock upon which those pyramids are built, and which support the foundation ; which, as he takes notice, is itself so elevated, that, in a country which is all a low, flat, and level surface for near fifty miles every way, and affords a fair horizon, is as well suited for all such observations as require a large extended prospect as it would be if it were seven or eight hundred foot higher, which is supposed to be the height of the pyramid.

But the reason is evident ; the mounting the steps or degrees of the pyramid on the outside was a work of vast labour, and some hazard ; every head could not bear the elevation ; every mind could not have resolution to undertake it ; few would venture up to examine the truth of the characters, or bring down copies of them, much less examine into the nature of them. And if they had gone up it was enough, the cunning priests had impressed them there, and left the originals upon the top stone of the wonderful building, magical and awful in itself ; and as it was really so, that there the characters were to be seen, it was no hard matter to persuade the credulous, superstitious people,

1. That they were written there by the finger of the gods :

2. That the interpretation of them was given by inspiration to the same priests, or wise men, who first discovered and brought down the characters themselves.

How far these delusions have prevailed, and do to this day prevail among the Egyptians, I need not tell you; it is enough to say it has gone such a length, as has encouraged enthusiastic pretenders, and made Egypt the nursery of witchcraft to the whole world.

But why should we think it strange to have divinity and magic thus blended together in a country so superstitious as Egypt? Has there not been a stranger mixture of magic and witchcraft, not omitting priestcraft, in all kinds of religions ever since; and is it less among the politer religions now in vogue than it was in those days?

To begin at the very pinnacle of the church, and to leave judaical magic all behind us, though they had the Devil almost in every synagogue; I say, to begin at the pinnacle of the church, how many popes, in particular, does history give us an account of, who have been sorcerers and conjurers, and who have dealt with the Devil in the most open and avowed manner! How has the Romish church been established upon the artificial magic of the clergy! and how justly may we say to her, as Jehu to the king of Israel, *What peace, while the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?*

But not to make our inquiries a satire upon ourselves in falling upon popery, where we are equally guilty, let us recommend it to our Most Reverend and Right Reverend to put our own ecclesiastic affairs into such a good posture, that we may have no magic among us; that while we pull down the formal magicians, we may not set up the cunning

men upon the fall of the wise men, and erect heresy in the room of schism.

Some people pretend our modern divinity is so magical in its own nature, that it is not easy to separate them ; that is, in a word, the Devil has so far encroached upon the church, that it is impossible to cast him out: the truth is, if it was not so, we should hardly have such a struggle as has now been among us to keep the true Lord in possession. And since the church has but one true and rightful king and sovereign, there would never have been such a bold attempt to depose him, if the Devil, the ancient usurper of his throne, had not been at work again to step up in his room. But we shall have occasion to speak of this part more plainly by and by.

It was with great success that the Egyptian priests went on in the manner as above, and their artificial magic went a great way in all the Eastern world ; they were counted the best and wisest men, who, mountebank like, could show most tricks, and invent the most surprising things to take with the vulgar, so as to give their words the force of an oracle, and entitle them to the character of divine and prophetic. And thus we may suppose the world going on for many ages, till at length, to come nearer our own times, and indeed nearer to the practice of our own times too, their mimickry was exhausted, they had no more tricks to play, the juggling trade grew stale and dull, the world began to look beyond them, and expected something more ; and so the last, I do not say the church jugglers, went to the Devil for help. I had rather tell you that another generation, who had always been true magicians, true practisers of the diabolical part, came in play of course, and succeeded the first, who gradually deposed themselves by their mere impotency ; and, just as darkness is a deprivation of light, and

succeeds it by the mere consequence of things, so the honest ignorance of the innocent magician, being unable to keep the expectation of the people up, and answer the importunities of the age, dealing with the Devil succeeded, even by the mere consequence of things.

The new magic coming thus in play, let us see how it made its first entrance in the world, and in what shapes it began to appear; in which search we shall find, in short, that religion still opened the door. For, as the Devil aspired at nothing more from the beginning, than to be set up for a god, so he always built his chapel close by God's church; it was in the consequence of this, that the priests were always his more immediate correspondents. How long they continued so, but especially when the correspondence ceased, would be a discovery worth making to the world: but O how difficult!

It is indeed to be observed, and the Devil has done us Christians that justice, that Satan has discovered his attachment to the pagan rites in distinction from, and opposition to, the Christian worship on many occasions, and that particularly as perhaps the latter is more fitted to introduce devil-worship in the world; we have some instances of his making this distinction, particularly when the emperor Julian, while he was only Cæsar, and had not declared himself apostate, (nay, was perhaps more inclined to be a Christian than a pagan, for he was educated a Christian,) I say, it was observed, that he was perverted from Christianity, and confirmed a pagan, by Maximus a magician.

N. B. This Maximus was a magician, when the word magician signified no more a wise man, or a southsayer, but a downright conjurer, a master of the black art, or one who dealt with the Devil.

Nor was it that the magicians were favourers of paganism only, but such was the subtlety of the

Devil, that indeed the pagan worship consisted much in sorcery and magic, conjurings, invocation of devils, and raising evil spirits: by these the rites and ceremonies of paganism were supported. It is said of the famous champion of the Christian religion, Athanasius, that he understood all the mysteries of the pagan theology; but we are not come to that length in our inquiries yet.

The Devil had a great many good reasons to befriend the pagan worship, rather than the Christian; for that indeed the substance of paganism was a diabolical system in itself, and to worship the heathen gods, was essentially to worship the Devil, as we shall see in its place.

We must observe here, that the curiosity of man in the most early times was never fully gratified but when his understanding was as it were confounded, when he was under some astonishment and surprise, at seeing or hearing some strange thing. The Pharisees, when they were attacking our Saviour, as they almost were always, and when as they thought, they insulted him, asked him, *What sign dost thou shew, that thou doest such things as these?*

And in other places it is said, when he did perform some miraculous things, *they were astonished at him*; astonishment introduces silence; men are first amazed, and have nothing to say, and then nature dictates credulity as the consequence, viz., that when they are thus surprised with wonder, they should consequently believe the person who so astonished them with his miracles; though, by the way, it was not always so with the Jews, for they were amazed, and yet did not believe neither; in which they were something of kin to an unbelieving Christian in our town, of ecclesiastic fame too, who says he wonders and is astonished at the majesty of the Scripture style, and yet does not believe a word

they say. A bolder infidel I have not met with since I was last at the pagan circle, near old Charing, where God was owned, sworn by, imprecated, blasphemed, and denied, all in a breath.

But to go on: the curiosity of mankind, I say, was never fully satisfied but when something wonderful was offered; and therefore miracle was immediately called for, when any new system was offered, or anything difficult proposed.

Thus when God sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh, he supposes the very case; Moses and Aaron were to assure Pharaoh that God sent them, and they were in his name to demand liberty for the children of Israel. The demand was surprising: it was an insolent thing indeed, for a couple of slaves to come and ask the king to release six hundred thousand men, slaves like themselves, from their captivity, and from the king's service, whose subjects, or rather servants, they were; and Pharaoh, it is to be supposed, began to resent it; nay, we may suppose, without any presumption, that Pharaoh's courtiers made game at them, and his ministers of state perhaps proposed to punish them for their impudence, and for putting such notions into the people's heads, which might be dangerous, and might excite tumults and rebellion; and therefore it was prudence to suppress the insolence, and make examples of the two pretended ambassadors.

But hold! says Moses, we do not come to affront your majesty, nor are the people we come to speak for, inclined to revolt or rebel; but we come from God; the people of Israel whom we represent, are God's chosen favourite nation, though they are your servants, and they are commanded to go three days' journey into the wilderness, to perform a great sacrifice, and make a great feast to him; and therefore we come to desire your leave, that we may go peaceably, and do the duty of our worship; assur-

ing your majesty, that God himself, who has thus commanded us out, has sent me to you to demand your assent.

God sent you! says the king: a fine story for you to put into the people's heads, to make them idle, and hinder my business; go, get you gone to your work, and to your task, or I shall find a way to drive these whimseys out of your heads again.

But still Moses and Aaron, with other the heads of the Israelites, (for there were many more with them,) insisted that they were sent by the immediate direction of God himself. And how do you prove that? says the king; what sign do you give me that you come with such an authority?

With this Moses replies to Pharaoh, I shall soon convince your majesty that I am sent by the great king, and God of heaven and earth: and with that, turning to Aaron, he says to him, Brother, throw down the staff, or rod, that is in your hand, upon the ground before the king.

Aaron does so, throws down his white staff, and immediately it was turned into a serpent.

The learned have spent some thought upon what kind of serpent this should be; but that is not to my purpose; nor are their conjectures of any weight, especially that foolish notion, that it was the same kind of serpent as appeared and talked to Eve in Paradise, and that it walked erect in Pharaoh's presence, so that it frightened the king.

But Pharaoh recovering the surprise, tells them, What does this signify? you shall see I have people of my own can do as much as this. Upon which his two chief conjurers or magicians were called in; it is supposed they were at hand, for the devil is seldom out of call when he is wanted for any mischief.

Upon this comes Jannes and Jambres, so St. Paul called them, and the text says they were two magicians, and perhaps there might be a great many

more of that sort; for it seems the king's court was not then without a sufficient number of clergy in daily waiting. And the text adds, *Pharaoh called the wise men and the sorcerers*; and the next word calls them magicians, and not only magicians in common, as the word was used personally, but as it was used nationally, the magicians of Egypt: whence it is inferred, that there were some magicians not only more eminent than others, but such as were in public office there; as the eminent Dr. H—— may be called the king's astronomer, or as the more eminent Mr. Flamstead usually called himself, the king's star-gazer; and if it was not so that these men were in ordinary attendance, and in pay, how should they be brought in so soon, while Moses and Aaron were in the presence?

Well, these men being called in, Pharaoh, in contempt of Moses and Aaron, and the sign or miracle they had shown, asked them if they could not do that as well as Aaron?

They readily answer, Yes, and fall to paw-wawing, as the Americans call it, and using their enchantments, invoking or whispering their demons, or what other diabolical arts they might use, we know not; but upon this, and their staves or rods being cast down, they were turned into serpents too.

This was enough to make Pharaoh triumph over Moses and Aaron, and their company, and deriding their miracle, tell them insultingly, this did not at all testify their mission from God, for they might see his wise men could turn rods into serpents as well as they. Nor did the distinction which God was pleased to show, by suffering Aaron's serpent to devour or swallow up the serpents of the Egyptian sorcerers, alter the case with Pharaoh; for that, as an accident, did not import anything at all in the case. And thus he sent them, or rather drove them away, with contempt, and immediately sent taskmasters among the

people to double their afflictions, increase their labours, and force them to make brick without straw.

Well, Moses and Aaron come again with the same message, and it had the same event, they are bantered and ridiculed: as if the king had called to them thus; Well, you are come again, and you say God has sent you; pray has he furnished you with any better testimony than you had before; have you any other miracle to show?

The sacred ambassadors gravely tell him they had, and if he would still refuse to grant their demands, he should see it; nay, they tell him beforehand what it should be, namely, that they would turn the waters of Nile, the great river of their country, into blood.

Pharaoh, as may be supposed, not believing they could do it, treats them still in the same manner, and refuses still to receive them as messengers from God; upon which, Moses calls to Aaron, and bids him stretch out his rod and smite the waters of the river, and they were immediately turned into blood, and all the waters, ponds, and pools besides; for Egypt is full of pits and ponds, wherein they preserve the water of Nile after the annual inundation.

The king, frightened at this sudden change of the water, is a little calmer than he was before; but considering the matter, he calls his magicians to see if they could not do this also, as well as Moses; when they came, they did the same, by which still the blinded mind of the prince continued obstinate.

I might run through the rest of the miracles wrought there, and show you how the magicians brought frogs, but could not bring lice; but this is not to the case; the story is known.

Only one thing I must note for your direction in the reading this part of the story, viz., that the magicians could bring plagues, at least some of them, as well as Moses and Aaron; but the magicians

could not remove them again, as Moses did ; so that the king might have perceived that which the magicians themselves acknowledged in the plague of the lice, that it was the finger of God which only could remove the plagues he brought.

The whole design of this remark is to show that it was always the temper of mankind to demand a sign or a miracle, to confirm any new advanced doctrine, or any extraordinary mission, and to take those miracles, when produced, for a full confirmation.

This temper of the people, as it drove the magicians to their shifts how to supply miracles to obtain credit with the people, so it drove them beyond their shifts too at last, and brought them to a confederacy with the Devil for a supply of wonderfals to delude the people. They tell us of a certain sorcerer at Antioch, who, for the confirmation of some particular thing which he had affirmed to the people, to keep up his credit with them, told them, that such an evening he would cause fire to come down from heaven, and that it should rest on the top of such a certain hill in the sight of all the city.

Whether the cunning artist had found out any composition by which to make artificial fireworks, agreeable to what is done at this time or not, is not certain ; though it is most certain the art of making gunpowder was not then known, nor for above a thousand years afterwards : but for certain he caused such a machine to mount in the air, unseen in the dark of the evening, which then bursting, came down again in a shower of fire, like the stars, as we call them, which spread themselves and fall down, upon the bursting of the tail of a rocket ; and this so amazed the people, that they believed afterwards everything he said.

Thus Simon the sorcerer is said, by his diabolical enchantments, to fly up in the air, and perform so

many surprising things, that it is said the people called him the great power of God, or the appearance of the great power of God, Acts viii. 10.

Indeed the description the Scripture gives there of this Simon is very remarkable to the case in hand; first it is said, ver. 9, *That he used sorcery and bewitched the people*, that is, the people of Samaria; then it is added, *all the people gave heed to him*, and said, *This man is the great power of God*; the meaning is evident, this man has done such great and strange things, showed such miracles, such wonders, that none but the great power of God could enable him to do; and therefore it is certain that he is aided and assisted by the great power of God; and this he held a long time, ver. 11; *To him they had regard, because for a long time he had bewitched them with his sorceries*.

The case of Simon and the people at Samaria was just as it was with Pharaoh and his magicians, when Moses and Aaron came to him. Pharaoh and all his courtiers gave heed to Jannes and Jambres, for that of a long time they had bewitched them with their sorceries.

It remains a question here, by what power and by whose hand it must be, that the magicians of Egypt turned their rods into serpents, smote the waters, and turned them into blood, brought up frogs, &c.; that is, in short, mimicked or imitated the miracles of Moses and Aaron. If I am asked by whose permission it was done, I know how to answer; but if you ask who was the instrument, I must say it was the Devil; for the text says expressly, *they did it by their enchantments*.

On the other hand, when they were baffled in their paw-wawing for lice, and could not perform it, it is said expressly, *they acknowledged that they could not do it, for that it was the finger of God*, Exod. viii. 19.

Now whether the magicians meant, it is the finger of God that hinders us from doing now as we did before, so that we cannot bring up lice as we did frogs; or whether they seemed to acknowledge that the plague of lice was the finger of God, though they did not grant that the blood and the frogs were so, because the Devil could do it also; this, I say, is a doubt which commentators do not resolve, or at least do not agree about.

But take it which way you will, it is an acknowledgment that what they did by their sorcery and enchantments, was not done by the finger of God; and also that when the finger of God was in the work, their sorcery and enchantments were impotent, and could do nothing.

It is not to be questioned but as this correspondence began between these magicians and the infernal spirits, they did also upon all occasions, and with the utmost of their power, as well as with the greatest artifice and cunning, endeavour to make the people believe that what they did was by the great power of God, by the finger of heaven; for this alone answered the end, which was deluding, and imposing upon mankind. It was the unhappiness of that age, as it is of ours, when a more modern and indeed more fatal kind of magic is practised in the world; I say, it was their unhappiness that the minds of the people seemed prepared for their delusions, by being more easily imposed upon than usual.

The Eastern world had for many ages been led and guided by the juggles and legerdemain of their southsayers and wise men, as they were called; and when they, by the degeneracy of the times, were, as I have said, brought so low as to submit to sorcery and enchantment, they had a vast advantage over the people, by the good opinion which the people had of their sincerity and honesty, and that they

would not by any means cheat and impose upon them.

Thus when errors and damnable doctrines in religion are broached and set on foot among us by men of apparent sanctity in conversation, men of severe morals, of rigid and austere lives, blameless and mortified manners, strictly practising the good things which they preach, and who by that strictness of conversation have obtained a reputation in the world, as men that do not willingly deceive the people, or that at least have not a wicked design to deceive; in such case, I say, error comes armed with a fatal and double power, and its influence is much more likely to do mischief, the hypocrisy is the more dangerous, and the people more easily abused.

Who could, in our days, expect that men of morals, men of unspotted lives, and whose characters would be such as never to suffer any reproach, should blemish all their reputation, which that commendable rectitude of life had obtained for them, with harbouring a horrid and detestable blasphemy against the Holy Ghost itself, robbing the Son of God of the equality which he thought it no robbery to assume, and denying the Godhead of him who is *God blessed for ever?*

But this is still too solemn, and I am not also come on far enough in order of time to talk of those people; we shall meet with them again in our way: for the present I must be content to go back to the South and to the East, visit the primitive times of sorcery and witchcraft, and see if we can find it out, how the Devil and mankind came to be so well acquainted as we find they have been; for certainly it was not all done at once. Satan, whose region is the air, and whose business is in the dark, was not immediately corresponded with in an open, public, and avowed manner; he did not walk about in per-

son, undisguised and open, clothed in the shapes and figures of a devil, and acting like himself; he certainly made his court to mankind by some particular applications, or they to him; for the learned are not fully agreed who made the first advances towards the new acquaintance, and whether the devil made love first, or how mankind found him out. I must confess it is an inquiry of moment, and the history of it would take up some room in our speculations, perhaps very much to your satisfaction; I mean, if we could give a true and particular account how the Devil and mankind came first acquainted.

And first, it would be particularly improving to our understandings, if we could tell where the first occasion of the correspondence lay; that is to say, 1. Whether the Devil, in the administration of his affairs, found it absolutely necessary to settle a correspondence among mankind, and therefore, as Mr. Milton has it, travelled to this globe upon the foot of new discoveries, and improved upon those discoveries afterwards by the dexterity of his management, making his acquaintance with mankind his own way, and as he found proper for his occasions: or,

2. Whether mankind, finding their desires to be wicked, infinitely greater than their capacities, and being under an absolute necessity of some exotic helps, some assistances further and other than they found natural powers would supply, made their application to him; according to the laudable example of my old friend and good patron in every wicked contrivance, the late honourable Mr. M—g M—, who (saving that I cannot say I believed him) told me, that being in an extraordinary strait, and wanting an infallible agent in a particular piece of revenge where a certain female had jilted and insulted him, went out into his garden, three nights

together, just at the moment of twelve, (that, it seems, was the critical time for Satan to be spoke with,) and called him aloud by his name, telling him he wanted his immediate attendance in an affair of the utmost importance.

Now, I say, which of these two was the case at the beginning of the intercourse between man and his master, is hard to determine, and would be a most admirable discovery if the certainty could be come at, in a manner agreeable to the nature of the thing, so as it might be depended upon. For my own part, if I might give my opinion, I should determine it in favour of the Devil, and that mankind were the aggressors, first sought the acquaintance, implored his infernal majesty's assistance, proposed a league or confederacy with him, offensive and defensive, and vowed themselves to be his faithful allies, and to serve him to the utmost of their power; upon which application, Satan, as powerful princes often do, yielded to their importunities, granted their petition, took them into his protection, and has been their constant friend and confederate, on all wicked occasions, ever since.

But there is one difficulty in the way of this opinion, which indeed gives me a shock in the faith of it, and seems to intimate that it cannot be so, at least that it cannot be absolutely and fully so in the largest sense; and that is, How did mankind come first to know that there was such a creature as a Devil in being? that he was capable of giving them assistance in the agency of such black designs as they really wanted his help in? that he was a spirit qualified for his correspondence, and that he would, upon application, give him the assistance he wanted? And again, if he did know, or that any traditional memoirs remained with him from the records of past ages, of the agency of the Devil with old Eve,

or with any of the antediluvian race, and how Satan had managed things in those times, yet it does not appear how he found the way to correspond, whether he had any instructions for his application, and in a word, how he knew where to find the Devil out, and to come to the speech of him. These difficulties indeed lie in the way of my last hypothesis; and until they can be solved to the general satisfaction, I doubt I must quit the supposed application of man to the Devil, and allow that Satan himself first picked acquaintance with him, that the correspondence began that way, that the Devil offered his service to him, and let him know beforehand how ready he would be to come at his call, and to assist him upon all occasions.

I must confess this supposition lays the Devil a little low in your thoughts, depreciates his character, and places him beneath the dignity of his seraphic original: but it cannot be helped; if the Devil will make himself a slave, he must; and if he will be, according to the happy title of the chief of his confederates, *servus servorum*, who can help it? The thing explains itself: whatever he was at first, he certainly has been, is, and is like to be, the most obsequious, humble, diligent devil that ever mankind could have had to do with.

I must acknowledge that I did not inquire of my friend just now named, whether the Devil gave his attendance immediately, and with his usual alacrity, upon his calling out so audibly to him; not that I ever doubted but that the Devil did wait upon him, because it is visible that he has acted as if the Devil had been in him ever since; but, I say, I should have inquired whether he came at the first call, for without doubt he called loud enough for him to hear; for, as voice always ascends, the vibration moving most naturally upward, and that Satan's particular residence is said to lie that way, there is

no room to question but he could hear him ; unless, as Elijah said to the priests of Baal, he might be busy, or asleep, or gone a journey ; which seldom happens to him, so as to be out of the way of mischief.

N. B. Here indeed I ought to make some small apology for what I happened to say of the honourable person I just now mentioned, and who I seemed to suggest was not to be believed ; which expression (he being a person of honour) I ought to explain, as I do by these presents, and in manner and form following ; that is to say, that he is always to be believed, in all cases, and relating to all persons, but himself ; but he claiming a right and privilege of slandering himself, and being exceeding fond of being thought wickeder than he is, I ventured, by way of observation, to suspect his veracity, when he talks of his father's only son ; knowing that as he has so constantly boasted of sins he was never able to commit, and that everything must be false which cannot be true, so there is no credit to be given to him in that particular.

But in all other cases you must understand me to acknowledge him for a man of as nice a taste, and as strict an observer of truth and decency, as ever Satan corresponded with ; which public acknowledgment I hope he will take for ample satisfaction.

Now, with pardon for the needful digression above, I go on with repeating in substance what I concluded before, viz., that this difficulty is so great that I cannot easily get over it, viz., to resolve who began the acquaintance between Satan and our ancestors of the East, for there it seems they first corresponded.

Nor can I proceed historically in my present undertaking, without coming to a certainty in this point, and until it is determined one way or other ; and for that reason, I think I must for the present,

until the Devil thinks fit to clear himself of the charge, leave it at his door, and grant that he found the correspondence so much to his advantage, that is to say, so much for the interest of his present undertakings of another kind, that he made no scruple of being first in the application; that he stooped without ceremony to make the first visit, and so began the treaty afterwards in his own name.

Nor has the Devil been very nice in his subsequent intimacies, or in the management of the correspondence after it was begun; but has on so many occasions testified his resolution to cultivate the friendship so (happily for him) begun, that they found him ever after at their elbow when they had occasion for him, and sometimes whether they had occasion for him or no; whether he is less kind to their posterity, let his friends and confederates of the present age testify.

It is true that sometimes we find, or at least they tell us so, that he is too cunning for his correspondents; and that when he has drawn them into bargains, he is not so just to his word as he should be, or as they expected; and this brings some scandal upon the acquaintance, as if he was not a faithful confederate, and that he leaves his friends often in the lurch, as he did the late famous Cartouch in France, Jonathan Wild in England, and as he has done the poor trooper lately at Dresden, who, they say, he ought to have secured from the officers of justice; and that when he had killed monsieur Halm, the Lutheran minister, the Devil should have given him an invisible cloak to have carried him off, and not have left him to the mercy of the protestants, after he had done him such an eminent piece of service.

But let us bring things to a right understanding, do Satan justice, and set the saddle upon the right devil. In these cases, the question is not, whether

the Devil, after having made bargains with these people, did not perform, and was not so just to his word as they expected ; but whether he was not as just to his word as they ought to have expected ? For example, perhaps in making their bargains with the Devil, they expect things to be performed which it is not in his power to perform ; the mistake lies not in Satan himself, but in them who make a god of him, and will have him be able to do everything.

Now it is true that Satan, as he is a spirit, is magnipotent, but he never was omnipotent ; and therefore there may be, and are, abundance of fine things which such people expect of him which he really not only never promises, but is not in any condition to perform ; and if people will have him do what he is not able to do, that's their fault, not his ; all they can blame him for in that case is, that he does not tell them how far he can, or cannot serve them ; and that truly, to give him his due, seems to be none of his business ; but like a cunning artificer, who is loath to tell you what he cannot do, but enlarges and expatiates upon his real abilities, so the Devil, if you are willing to believe he can do thus and thus for you, it is enough if he does but equivocate, and tacitly grant it, without engaging to perform ; but he is not bound to confess his impotence, and own he cannot do it : so these people pretend to blame him, whereas in truth they ought only to blame themselves for expecting things of him that even the Devil himself is not able to perform.

Thus our late friend Jonathan, while he kept within bounds, had, no doubt, a faithful and friendly correspondence with him. But, said the Devil, what would Jonathan have me do ? did he expect I could save him when he committed a felony even with his fetters on, and while he was in Newgate ? I had been his protector in a thousand rogueries ; things,

which if I had not stood by him, he could never have got over : I had hanged a hundred and fifty honest rogues to save him ; every one of which, if I had not helped him to be too cunning for them, and stopt their mouths till it was too late to open them, could have hanged him and saved themselves ; but he was come to such a pitch at last, and pushed his fate so far, that not I, no, not the Devil himself, could save him.

The like plea the Devil made for himself, no doubt, in the case of his French favourite Cartouch ; had he thought fit, after a thousand audacious villainies successfully committed, and an infinite stock of treasure amassed, (for he was grown rich by the trade,) had he thought fit to have left Paris, and marched off, either out of the kingdom, or at least out of the city where he was so well known, and so diligently pursued, I had carried him safe off. But he was obstinately and inconsiderately bold ; and the Devil is not bound to save those that resolve they will be hanged. Nay, if I am not misinformed, the Devil himself told him he would be taken if he stayed in Paris ; and added, that the search after him was so hot, and such rewards promised, and he so well known, that if he, Satan himself, was so perfectly described, and so hotly pursued, he should certainly be discovered. Though by the way, I would have you take that part only *ad referendum*, as the men of business call it.

Now it is an unreasonable thing that men should make a bargain with either man or devil for more than they are able to perform, and then pretend to blame them for non-performance ; and therefore a certain noble lord, now in exile, (whom they charge with contracting with Satan for some particular, in favour of his late Dumblane enterprise, and which the Devil has, it seems, failed him in,) ought not, as

they say he does, to blame the Devil, who really could do no more for him than he did.

Having then brought it to this conclusion, that the Devil has been really first in the confederacy, that Satan made the acquaintance, and that man neither knew how to come at the Devil, nor so much as knew originally that there was any such thing as a devil in being, it would add to our more perfect understanding of the whole matter, if we could be informed in what manner the acquaintance begun.

The first attack the Devil made upon our mother Eve, we have had fully described. Sacred history relates the fact; and honest, grave Mr. Milton has given us the particulars as distinctly, and in as lively colours, as if he had been at the conference, heard the courtship, and how cunningly the Devil managed; with what address he insinuated into her weakest part, and how entirely he conquered her virtue, her obedience, her sense of religion, brought her to forget the command that she had but just learned to remember; and to sacrifice her soul and all her posterity, to her appetite: I say, Mr. Milton has done it in so lively a manner, that it seems plain, that though Solomon could not understand the way of a man with a maid, but placed it among the things that were too wonderful for him, Milton seems not to be at a loss to describe the way of the Devil with a woman.

Now, I say, we have a distinct account how the Devil made the first attack upon Eve in Paradise; but how he picked acquaintance with the sons of Noah after the deluge, and in what manner, or upon what occasion that was begun, we are utterly at a loss about.

Nor have we any historical account who were the persons who entertained the first correspondence

with him, or upon what occasion; nothing appears upon record to give us the least light into it, other than this, that we find the effects of an invisible devil in Ham or Cham, one of Noah's sons, and in Canaan his grandson; but it is not the invisible devil that I am inquiring after, but an appearing conversible demon or evil spirit, who assuming human shape, or at least voice, and intelligible operations, could supply the office of the Devil in assisting mankind in the several exigences of their affairs, when any kind of infernal work was upon their hands.

This, I say, is the devil I am inquiring after; and as I would fain bring mankind and him to be acquainted together in a decent and regular manner, I must confess I am at a great loss for want of the particulars, as well of persons, as of the circumstances in which those persons were concerned.

However, since that part cannot be entered any further into, or at least not so far as to make a full discovery, we must take up with so much as we find upon record, and this may perhaps be enough to satisfy us that so it was.

The story of Job, according to the sacred chronology, and by comparing it with other accounts of things, appears to be very ancient; even so old as to be in a very few years after Abraham; for Eliphaz the Temanite could not, by calculation, be many removes from Esau and Ishmael; and Job being at that time an old man, no less than a hundred years old, he might probably be alive within the time of Japhet, one of the sons of Noah; for it is thought Job was above a hundred years old when his first sorrows came upon him.

Now in the time of Job, it is evident the Devil had made his visible appearances upon earth, and among the sons of God too; for he appeared before the Lord at the time, as is supposed, of a solemn

service or sacrifice. What his business was there, and on what occasion he came, does not lie before me on the present occasion.

In the next place, the Devil not only had personally appeared, but it seems plain from the text, when God had given Job into his hands, that is to say, had given him commission to fall upon and afflict him, and that he was gone out from the presence of God, that he immediately set his human as well as elementary instruments at work; that he raised a storm of wind, from or in the wilderness, and blew the house down upon Job's sons and daughters; that he brought thunder and lightning upon the flocks, and burnt up the poor sheep, and the servants that looked after them: this was nothing but what, as a devil and a prince of the air, might be expected from him; but that was not all; he raised war upon him; the Chaldeans from one side, (the North,) and the Sabeans from another side, (the East,) made out their armies and came upon him, and plundered him; the first carried away the camels, and the other the oxen.

It is certain those nations were at peace with Job before, and his servants fed unmolested by them, and in their neighbourhood, till the Devil took upon him to break the peace, and excite them to insult Job and fall upon his substance. How came this to pass? and what had Job done to any of them, to move them to use violence with him? I make no question but the Devil went to them, and told them God had sent him to order them in his name to ravage the lands and carry away the goods of Job; that God had destined him to misery and poverty, and had given his estate to them, and therefore it was lawful for them to fall upon and destroy him and his family; and to give them a sign, as I said before, and that they might know he came with a commission, they should see he would go and send

down fire from heaven and destroy his sheep; and if they would not carry off the camels and the oxen, he would do the like by those also.

This, and the bait of plunder, was enough to animate those nations against poor Job, and so they came immediately and did as the Devil directed.

This seems to me to be the first visible appearance of the Devil among the sons of Noah, in the postdiluvian ages. I will not say his acquaintance begun here, though if I should suppose it did, I do not see that I could be contradicted by any authentic vouchers from history. Indeed it was a plausible occasion enough, for it was apparently a favour bestowed on the Sabeans and on the Chaldeans, to give them Job's goods merely for fetching: and this, for ought we know, may be the reason that the first magicians that we read of anywhere, were among those two nations, viz., Chaldeans and (Arabians) Sabeans; nor can I doubt but that the Devil having made his acquaintance first here, kept his hold and interest amongst them upon account of the good offices he had done them, and perhaps might do them on many other occasions.

Now, though I would not be positive where there is the least uncertainty, being mighty cautious (as I am at present acting in the capacity of an historian) of doing the Devil any wrong or injury; so I enter my caveat too against an objection here, viz., that if this be not the first time that any man gives an account of Satan's appearance, and that this was not the first of his pranks which he played upon mankind after the flood, let them show us another before it, if they can; nay, I believe the Devil himself cannot tell us any one time or place, or any other occasion, on which he ever showed himself, or perhaps durst show himself, in a visible appearance in the world, I mean after the deluge.

Nor is it easy to be determined, what shape,

what case of flesh and blood, or (as I might say with more propriety) what seeming flesh and blood, he appeared dressed in at that time ; nor will I take upon me to guess what figure he made, when he appeared among the sons of God, and whether they knew him or not ; that is to say, knew who he was, and on what occasion he appeared there ; whether Job was among them or not, (for he was doubtless one of the sons of God, and the text owns him as such ; *my servant Job* ; for son and servant I take there to have the same signification ;) and whether the short discourse which it is said there the Lord held with the arch-enemy of his servant, was audible and articulate, and whether the rest heard it or no ; all these difficulties I leave, as the learned say, to another opportunity, that is to say, because I am not able to say one word to them at this.

CHAP. IV.

Of what shapes the Devil assumed in his first appearances to the magicians, and others, in the first ages of the world; and whether he is or has been allowed to assume a human shape, or no.

As I have ingenuously acknowledged in my last chapter, that I can give you no account of what dress or shape the Devil appeared in, when he presented himself among the sons of God, as noted in the first chapter of Job, or whether he was visible to any else but his Maker; so I am equally uncertain in what figure he made his first appearances afterwards, among his own acquaintance and servants, when he was introduced.

It must therefore suffice to tell you, that however it was managed, we find there was certainly an intelligence carried on, a correspondence maintained, and what was not performed personally, was done by enchantments, which we call sorcery; by voices and by dreams, or by apparition in such shapes and postures, as Satan, for reasons of state, thought fit to take upon himself for the occasion.

Some have doubted whether the Devil is empowered to take up any human shape, or to appear in the figure of a man; and they argue that it does not seem consistent with the goodness of the great father of mankind, to suffer the arch-enemy of his creatures to go about in such a disguise, so dangerous, and that might be so fatal to him; for that he would be always in danger of being deceived to his hurt, that he could never be safe; but that as the Scripture directs us to be courteous to strangers,

because some by being so had entertained angels, so it would make us be shy, and afraid of strangers, for that we should be always afraid we might receive the Devil into our houses, and especially into our friendship and familiarity. And hence I believe came the foolish empty notion, though such as it is impossible to root out of the fancies of men, viz., that the Devil cannot appear without his cloven foot; of which I shall say nothing here, but that it is a thing so ridiculous as to merit no notice, either now or at any other time.

Though there may be many things said for this opinion, and particularly to that part which relates to the safety of mankind, in case of the several disguises that the Devil may appear in, yet I cannot exclude the Devil from the privilege of putting on our clothes sometimes, and that too perhaps oftener than we may think he does; and that he appears in such a shape too, oftener than we may believe he does. As to the danger of it, I may speak of that by itself.

I have taken it for granted in my last chapter, that in the first acquaintance between mankind and the evil spirit, after the deluge, Satan was the aggressor; that he made his application to them first, made his proposals of assistance and help, in the cases wherein he knew they wanted his correspondence; and I shall add, that he perhaps raised difficult perplexed cases in the world, on purpose to prepare the way for his rendering himself useful.

We are come now to the manner, I mean how and in what way the cunning manager made his first address to mankind. It is true, we are something deficient in the history of this first transaction, because we do not yet know, nor can easily find out, who was his first correspondent in the world; but if you will take what has been, by what is, and

judge of his first method, by his subsequent practice, I think I may give you room to make a fair judgment. Nor do I think it is an improper way of determining the point, since as Satan found the first step successful, it is probable he found no occasion to alter his measures; and though differing circumstances of place and persons may make him vary a little as he sees occasion, yet I have, I think, a great deal of reason to suppose that the general rule of his practice is much the same, and that he proceeds upon the same foot with mankind in all ages, and on all occasions, *mutatis mutandis*, as he finds the circumstances of the people the same, or not the same.

Take, then, the Devil's first method with mankind to be grounded upon his own experience in his antediluvian practices with their ancestors; upon his knowledge of their present circumstances, I mean present at the time after the flood, you must allow Satan to have so much cunning in him, as to be able, without the least hesitation, to know what was the best method to come about the man, and how to compass him; and for that reason, I say, I do not allow him to have made any change in his measures.

The first method then, that I suppose the Devil took to make his acquaintance with mankind, was by the way of dreams; and here I shall go back so far as to suggest, that he put Canaan, Noah's grandson, upon intoxicating the good patriarch his grandfather with wine, for I join with a late opinion, that it was Canaan, not Ham, that was the occasion of it; though Ham was guilty of triumphing over the old man, when he was overcome, and exposing him, as far as lay in him, to his modester brethren.

Suppose then young Canaan very busy, helping and assisting his grandfather, in planting and dressing the vines after the flood, and in gathering the

fruit; take then the following observations upon those circumstances in particular.

First, I cannot come into that foolish notion, that Noah did not understand the nature of the vine, or the strength of the juice, when the grapes were pressed, and the wine ran out, and that he drank it ignorantly; I say, I cannot come into that opinion, for Noah, who had no doubt preached against the vices of the antediluvian world, and against drunkenness among the rest, must certainly know the use of the vine, and the abuse of it too; how else did he come to plant it at all, and to press the juice out for drinking it at all?

Gen. ix. 20. *Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard.*

21. *And he drank of the wine, and was drunken.*

Secondly, It does not seem, that the time of Noah's drunkenness was upon the pressing of the grapes, or the pressing the first grapes of his new plantation; it must certainly be a considerable time after his planting them, and after his first making of wine. For though it is very probable that he planted the vines immediately after the flood, and the text seems to intimate as much, yet it is evident it must be many years after that, when he fell into the snare of drunkenness. For Canaan, who was then a man grown, was not born at the coming out of the ark, and there must be at least twenty or thirty years between that time and the fact. For if Canaan had not been major, had not been at man's estate, he would not in probability have been cursed by his grandfather, as a principal in the crime, as it is evident he was: for it does not seem that he was cursed so particularly, as an accessory only, or for the mere offence of his father, nor would it have been righteous in Noah to have done so. But as he is so warmly fallen upon, and

so particularly, by the old patriarch, in his anathema, it is very probable he was a principal in the fact of abusing him.

Suppose then, I say, young Canaan busy in assisting his grandfather in planting and dressing the vines, and in pressing the fruit; the Devil takes this for a handle, and subtly makes Canaan dream, (for I will grant with Mr. Milton, that the Devil had, from the beginning, the art of whispering to him in his sleep, as that author makes him do to Eve in Paradise, and thereby making him dream of anything he pleased). Take him then whispering to Canaan, that he should make his grandfather drunk with the wine, and that he should be able to do what he pleased with him ever after; insinuating, that the effect of it would be to make his grandfather have a greater affection to him than to any of the rest of his grandchildren. This is not improbable, because the Devil always tempts with the expectation of some apparent good.

Others suggest, that Noah having reproved and reproached Canaan for some crime, and perhaps caused him to be corrected for it, the Devil took hold of his resentment, (which, by the way, is not much unlike a devil,) and proposed this method of revenge to him in a dream, as if he had dreamed that he had prevailed over his grandfather, by persuading him to drink himself drunk, and had thereby made him expose himself in a beastly manner, until he became the ridicule and jest of the whole family, which by that time was very numerous; and that Canaan, pleased with the lively representation of his grandfather's shame, resolved (the Devil prompting him to it in other subsequent dreams), if possible, to give himself the satisfaction of bringing it to pass, and to persuade the old man to drink himself drunk, the next time he came to assist him in the

business ; and that accordingly he did so, and prevailed.

Whether Satan did it thus, or by any other method of insinuation, we are not sure, but it is very probable it was by a dream : nor is it clear to me, that the Devil had ever any other way, but by dream or apparition, to come at the intelligent faculties of man. It is evident he does suggest evil ; now he must do it sleeping or waking ; if sleeping, it must be by a dream, in which he does but imitate the good spirit, which, as the Scripture says plainly, and gives a multitude of instances of it, opens the understandings of men in the night visions, and seals their instructions ; nor is it a new practice of Satan to mimick and imitate his Maker, in the measures and operations of his wisdom with mankind.

But be that as it will, we are sure the Devil does communicate his malicious proposals of mischief to mankind ; you have two eminent examples of it in Scripture, which are too plain, and too direct to my purpose here, to admit any dispute ; first, in the case of David, and his project of numbering the people, it is said expressly, 1 Chron. xxi. 1, *Satan moved David to number the people.* Where, by the way, though it was his sin, yet by it we gain a piece of information, how prodigiously populous the tribes were at that time, viz., that there were fifteen hundred and seventy thousand fighting men in only ten of the tribes, an incredible number to inhabit so small a spot of ground as the land of Canaan, besides women and children ; but that by the way.

The second example, which renders it out of all doubt, that Satan has access to the thoughts of men, is that of Judas, John xiii. 2 ; *Satan put it into the heart of Judas to betray Christ.* Now, I say, as above, this must be done sleeping, or waking ; if sleeping, it must be by dreams ; if waking, it must

be by voice, possession, or apparition. We shall consider them all in their place.

It is probable that the first method the Devil took in the world was by dream; as for possession, we do not meet with it very early; as to voice and apparition, we take them to be all subsequent, and the effect of a long acquaintance; as among men there are several degrees of communication with one another, after men have a personal knowledge and acquaintance, before it comes up to intimacy and friendship.

Dream, then, being the first way of access, or by which the Devil found the way into the man, there is no room to doubt but by this method he found means also to infuse into his mind an infinite variety of corrupt imaginations, wicked desires, and abhorred conclusions and resolutions, with some ridiculous, foolish, and absurd things at the same time.

Thus I cannot think but the Devil first put it into the hearts of the men of the old world to go about that ridiculous piece of work (as I observed it to be before) of building of Babel; first by filling their thoughts with daily terrors and apprehensions of another inundation, thronging their sleeping imaginations with fancies of new rains to overflow them; by which, every time they had any hasty showers which raised the water of the rivers or brooks to what we call a land-flood, they would be immediately alarmed as if another deluge was a coming upon them, and that they were immediately to be drowned.

Thus raising the vapours in their hypocondrias, they were every night dreaming that they heard it thunder, that they saw heavy rains, and that the brooks and rivers swelled, or as we say in our common discourse on such occasions, the waters were out; in consequence of this, he puts them upon considering of means for their own security, and then they dream every night of methods; one while

they are for building another ark, another time for building a thousand, that is to say, an ark for every family, or patriarchate, or tribe; one time this foolish thing, and another time that; and perhaps many men dreaming on many several methods, till at last they bring their sleeping cogitations to a waking consultation; and there they resolve upon the meanest, emptiest, and most inconsistent project, that ever any body of men formed in their heads; and which, if the Devil had not been in them, and drawn them into it, as I say, merely to impose upon, and expose them even to their own ridicule, could never have come into their heads, I mean the building of Babel.

If the Devil did excite that foolish imagination, he must do it, as he was a mere devil, to show his malice, to put them upon doing something extremely ridiculous, and which should at last expose them to their own resentments on the madness and folly of it; or, which I rather think, he bewildered their imaginations, without any immediate prospect, other than this, that he knew it would end in some ridiculous undertaking, either very foolish, or very wicked; not knowing which it would be, and perhaps not much caring, so it would be put provoking to their Maker, and what might any way bring his displeasure upon them.

And here, by the way, I cannot but observe, that the method God in his providence was pleased to take with mankind, upon their entering upon that foolish piece of work, was the mildest and kindest that could be imagined, and the most to their interest, calculated for their good, evidently issuing so; and that much more than letting them go on in their madness would have been.

Had Heaven thought fit to have winked at the audacious attempt, and to have let them go on with it as far as their own ignorance and obstinacy would

have guided them, till by the immense circle of the first stages of the building they had formed an ascent higher than anything of its kind could be supposed to stand ; yet they must have stopped at last, it must have ended somewhere ; the time would have come at length, that as they had called a council about the first building of it, they would have called another, with a ' Go to now, shall we leave off this mad piece of work ? ' that as they had advised with one another saying *Go to, let us build*, Gen. xi. 4. so they would have said, *Go to, let us leave off building*.

Suppose them to have found the way up to the regions above the atmosphere, or where else you can imagine ; and that they then found themselves as much remote from heaven, whither they had proposed the tower should reach, as they were at first ; and that among the other mischiefs they had met with, such as the difficulty of carrying materials so high, and the difficulty of breathing, &c., they had also begun to discover that their work was fruitless, and would be endless, as must have been the case ; they would certainly have given it over at last, and with indignation at themselves, perhaps at one another, have laid it aside.

What a piece of folly would the fruitless toil have been, how would they have reproached themselves, and perhaps falling out, and going together by the ears about it, the victors would have made the vanquished pull it down, and carry away the materials, that the monument of their shame might be removed out of their sight. The first, that is, leaving off the work, I say, must have happened at last ; the other, it was very likely would have happened ; so that it is out of doubt Heaven acted the kindest part for them, by confounding their speech, to make the going on with it impracticable, so bringing them to a necessity of laying it aside, before they had carried it on too far.

Having thus, with a rational prospect, proposed the first method of Satan's making his acquaintance with mankind, and so brought him to a scene of action; it is very rational to suggest, that he began the method very early; and therefore those two experiments of Canaan, and the builders of Babel, are not improper to mention, as they seem to be things which mankind had never attempted, if the Devil had not put them upon it; nor had the Devil at that time any other way to bring it to pass but by dreams, at least not as we know of.

It may also be observed, that the first converse of mankind with the invisible world, whether with the evil spirit or with the good, or even with their Maker himself, was by dreams; and therefore it is not improbable that Satan made his application to them the same way: we have it very early mentioned, Gen. xv. 1, *The word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision*, that is, a dream; and again, *A deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him. And he said unto him—* ver. 12, 13.

It is in some particular texts said, *the Lord appeared to Abram*, which if interpreted by other places, must be understood to be in a dream; for in those places, when God conversed by apparition with Abram, or called to him by voice, it is distinguished expressly in so many words, that *God said*; and *God went up from talking with Abram*; and *the Lord appeared to him in the door of his tent*; and the like.

As God himself took this method with Abram, and so with Moses, and so with many others, both before and since; so the Devil found means to make his address to mankind by the same way. Hence we find a mighty great stress laid upon some of the dreams of the ancients in those days; and much ado was made about the interpretation of them: for when once a man of note had dreamed any important dream, any dream which seemed to have something

extraordinary in it, away they went to their cunning men, their southsayers and magicians, to inquire of them the meaning and interpretation of these dreams.

Now bring all these circumstances together, and you will find the Devil subtilely insinuating dreams into the heads of princes and great men, and then, by like dreams, communicating to his correspondents those very dreams, and what interpretations they should make of them.

This was a particular favour done in aid of those magicians who were more than ordinarily in his good graces ; and no doubt it gave them a particular reputation at court, and in the opinion of the people ; as having a more than ordinary understanding in hidden matters, or having a very particular intelligence in the secret and reserved part of nature, or a correspondence in the world of spirits.

Ali Albrahazen, a Persian wizard, had doubtless this intercourse with the Devil, if what I have to say of him is true. He was, it seems, a Sabian by birth, and had obtained a wonderful reputation for his witchcraft ; the same which I suppose the Scripture calls enchantments, in the case of the magicians of Egypt, when Moses and Aaron came to work miracles before Pharaoh ; he, you may suppose, was sent for by the king of Persia upon some extraordinary occasion, such as the interpretation of a dream, or of some apparition like that of Belshazzar's handwriting, or some meteor or eclipse, and he never failed to give them great satisfaction on such occasions. For whether his accounts were true or false, he always delivered them in such ambiguous terms, that something of what he predicted might be sure to be deduced from his words, and so seem to import that he had effectually revealed it, whether he had really done so or not.

This Ali, (so fame tells you,) being in the desert wandering by himself, and musing much upon the

appearance of a certain fiery meteor, which had, to the great terror of all the country, been seen every night for twenty or thirty nights successively, was mighty desirous to understand the meaning of it, and what it should portend to the world ; but being utterly incapable to make the least probable guess at the thing, the reason or nature of it, much less its import or meaning, he sat him down under a palm-tree, weary with his travelling, and his mind also tired and wearied with fruitless and unperforming imaginations : here he vehemently wished that some attending spirit would be so assisting to his fancy, that he might at least make some probable conjectures at the true meaning of that strange phenomenon, and also at what might probably be the issue and event of it to the world.

With this very warm and importuning desire, he fell asleep, and being in a deep sleep he dreamed that a tall man came to him, of a venerable majestic aspect, but with a pleasing and cheerful smile on his face ; and calling him by his name, told him, that he was come at his request to answer his importunities, and that he would tell him the signification of the great and terrible fire in the air, which was seen in his city, and in all Arabia and Persia.

And now, says he, you shall understand that these fiery appearances are nothing but certain collections of matter exhaled by the influence of the sun from the earth or sea, or perhaps from other solid bodies in the compass of the solar system, such as the planets and other bodies, which you in this earth know nothing of.

These being set on fire in their wandering motion appear like stars or comets for a time, being driven about in the expanse by the impetuosity of their own motion, and become visible in this hemisphere to the infinite terror of the people, as thou seest it now is ; though those apprehensions and

that amazement of the people are very groundless, and raised only from their own folly and ignorance.

For as to the importance of them to human affairs, the truth is, Ali, and you are to be undeceived in that point, they have no import or signification at all, other than that sometimes, by their near approach to the earth, and by their attraction, or by their dissipation of moist vapours, they occasion sometimes great drought, and insupportable heat; and at other times, distilling great and unusual rains, by condensing, in an extraordinary manner, the vapours which by their acquired heat they have exhaled.

Ali was surprised at this account; and being encouraged to speak, he replied, But what shall I answer to my people, who expect great things from me? I have often satisfied them in like difficulties, but when I shall come to tell them that it signifies nothing at all, that it is only the effect of a natural cause, and is of no import more than an ordinary star, they will stone me, and say that Heaven never hangs out such signals without some signification; that I only impose upon them, because I am ignorant, and do not understand the motions and intimations of the heavenly bodies, or how the affairs of this world are influenced by them.

O Ali, O Albrahazen, highly favoured! said the apparition; I will instruct thee then how to prevent thy being despised by the elders of thy people, on condition that thou wilt now, and on all occasions, give ear to my instructions, and follow those rules that I shall set thee.

To this he readily assented, and made such assurances as were satisfactory to the spectre. Go then, says the vision, and warn thy nation that this fiery meteor portends an excessive drought and famine; for know thou, that by the strong exhaling the va-

pours of the earth, which is occasioned by the meteor's unusual nearness to this hemisphere, the necessary rains will be withheld, and by a long drought thou knowest famine and scarcity of corn succeeds of course. Thus by judging according to the rules of natural causes, thou shalt predict what shall certainly come to pass, and shalt obtain the reputation which thou so earnestly desirest, to wit, of a sage magician and wise man.

But, says Ali, and what shall I say to the lords of the Persian court, who have sent for me, to inquire of me on the same phenomenon? what shall it portend to that nation? will the same fate be the consequence to their country, as is portended to this?

To this the subtle Devil answers: This inquiry is to thee of the utmost consequence. Fiery meteors sometimes from the same natural causes produce just contrary events; and whereas these bodies, as I said, exhale an infinite quantity and bulk of vapours, which they rarify by their heat, and so cause immoderate drought and heat in such and such climates, and particular countries, where they approach too near; so, on the other hand, they are in themselves vast collections of humid and watery vapours, which, if hastily condensed, would be sufficient to deluge the world, and drown mankind; and sometimes they condense in so considerable quantities, as to descend upon the earth, and cause excessive rains and floods, and great desolations of the country. Go then, fearless, says he, to the Persian court, and predict to them excessive rains and floods, which shall greatly hurt the fruits of the earth, and occasion great dearth also. Thus, if either of these succeed, as it is most probable, thou shalt be assuredly received as a sage magician in one country, if not in the other: also to both these thou mayest suggest, as a probability only, the consequence of these to be a plague or infection among

the people, which is ordinarily the effect as well of excessive wet, as of excessive heat ; if this happens, thou shalt gain the reputation thou desirest ; and if not, seeing thou didst not positively foretell it, thou shalt not incur the ignominy of a false predictor.

This was very obliging in the Devil, it must be confessed, if the story be true ; and Ali was very sensible of the help it was to him, and failed not to ask the vision how he should obtain his promised assistance in the like cases of difficulty. Upon which the vision told him, that whenever he wanted his help, he should come again to the palm-tree, and that, surrounding the tree fifteen times, he should call him aloud by his name three times, every time he went round the tree ; and at the end of the fifteenth time he should find sleepiness come upon him, when he should lay himself down as he did now, with his face to the south ; and if he fell asleep, he should be sure to receive a visit from him in vision : and with this he gives him the magic name which he was to call him by.

Ali was infinitely exalted with the thoughts of this information, which let him so much into the secret of nature, as to enable him to speak in a dialect infinitely superior to the common understanding, and in particular to make a judgment of things out of the reach of the most pretending of the rest of his fellow-magicians. When he went home among the people, he failed not to give his judgment of the terrible appearance in the air, and told them positively it portended a great drought and heat in the approaching summer ; to which he added, as a suggestion only, that he had great reason to believe it would be attended with a famine, and perhaps the famine might be followed with a plague ; insinuating, that if the famine was not attended with a plague among his own countrymen, as he had said it would, it was then likely it would appear first in

Persia, their neighbouring kingdom, and perhaps it might afterwards spread among them.

This terrible prediction, delivered with the authority of one whom they had the venerable opinion of before as a magician, and one that could foretell events of things, gave the people an alarm, and also their king with them, to whom the news of the prediction was soon carried; but the magician concealed entirely from their knowledge the manner of his obtaining his information, so that it came to them on the single authority of his own judgment.

It happened as a confirmation of his prediction, that after the meteor ceased to appear, and the spring season advanced, an extreme hot season came on, with a long drought following for several weeks, which began very much to burn up the fruits of the earth; immediately the people remembering the words of the magician, and finding so much of what he had said prove true, it put them in a great consternation from the apprehension of what, according to his account, was yet to follow.

It happened some time after this, that the king of the country dreamed a dream, which much perplexed him, and all the magicians and astrologers were sent for, to interpret the said dream; but Ali was not sent for, which grieved him much, thinking that he was not esteemed enough among the princes of the country, and that he feared his having foretold the portentous events of the late meteor, which were not yet determined by the time that he predicted, he was neglected as a person that would not give any good interpretation of the king's dream. However, when Ali saw that the magicians and southsayers, who were sent for, gave the king no satisfaction, for they were confounded in their accounts, and differed one from another, and the king was so angry, that he was about to com-

mand them all to be put to death ; with this he was comforted again, and resolved to apply himself to the palm-tree, to see if he could furnish himself with any intelligence suitable to what he desired ; in which case he would soon let the king know, that though the rest of the magicians could not answer his desire, he could supply that defect ; and so he should gain more reputation than if he had been sent for with the rest.

Upon this, he retires himself as usual into the desert as before, and comes to the spot where he had the first vision. Here he surrounds the tree fifteen times, and every time calls the spectre by his appointed name three times over, and as loud as his utmost extended voice would admit ; when, according to direction, he laid himself down with his face to the south, shut his eyes, and obsequiously waited till he fell asleep, which was not long : no sooner had his senses forsaken him, whether dozed with any infernal charm or otherwise, the account does not specify ; but, I say, no sooner was he asleep, but the vision appeared to his fancy, and asked him what was the occasion of his coming.

He answered, that the king had dreamed a dream, and had told it to the magicians, whom he sent for in order to have them interpret his dream, but that he had not been sent for, which was at first very grieving to him ; but that upon further inquiry he found that the magicians had given the king no satisfaction, and that it had highly provoked him, so that he was going once to have killed them all, and that now he was glad he was not called ; but that if he could now put him into a condition to interpret the king's dream, it would establish his reputation for ever, not with the king only, but with the whole country, for that he was sure to be exalted to the highest pitch of honour that the king

could give ; and besides, all the people would adore him as one that had intelligence among the gods ; so that he should be had in the highest reverence imaginable.

The vision assured him that he could not only qualify him to interpret the king's dream, but that he had made the king dream it on set purpose to give him occasion to interpret and explain it ; and so he let him into the particulars of what it was the king had dreamed ; and that the dream being thus directed by him, he likewise could direct him to such an interpretation as none but himself could put upon it ; and so he at once told him both what the king dreamed, and what interpretation he should give of it ; adding, that he would yet do greater things for him than those ; for that if he had occasion to recommend himself to the king, or to any other person of note, he would put it into his power at any time, not only to tell the king what his dream signified, but should make the king dream anything that he thought fit ; so that he should be able to say to the king, To-morrow night a deep sleep shall come upon you, and you shall dream so and so, which dream shall portend such and such things to you and your people.

Ali was exceedingly raised in his thoughts upon such a motion as this, and you will not wonder that he expressed, though in his sleep or vision, his high satisfaction at such a favour ; and from that time he entertained a constant correspondence with this vision or apparition, not being aware, or perhaps not concerned, that he was all this while conversing with the Devil, and that the new friendship he had engaged in, was neither less or more than an immediate correspondence with hell.

We have a parallel story to this, and almost of the same kind, of the Devil and an old Arabian in the

court of a Pharaoh, king of Egypt, upon the appearance of a comet or blazing star, and of which I shall give an account in its place.

Nor was this anything extraordinary in those times; it was natural to Satan's way of conversing with mankind, who had frequently midnight thoughts injected to them by a supernatural power, that is, by the evil spirit, without their knowing by what hand they were injected, and the Devil was able most certainly to give the interpretation of those thoughts which he had been the occasion of.

This whole affair, though remote in time, I give this account of, to suggest from it the probable method which Satan has taken from the beginning to insinuate himself into mankind, and, as I said before, to begin the acquaintance, which, when once begun, he took particular care to cultivate to all the degrees of intimacy possible, so that in few years such people have been as intimate with the Devil, though perhaps not thoroughly knowing who it was they conversed with, as they could desire to be.

By this method, he found opportunities, upon all occasions, to bring men to converse freely and fully with him; and as he often furnished them with materials and subjects to amuse the rest of the world with, he was always able to oblige them in the utmost manner, seeing nothing could be more to the satisfaction of such people than the raising their reputation in their profession, and giving a sanction or confirmation to their predictions.

I know it is doubted by many among the learned, whether the Devil has himself any knowledge of futurity, and whether he can predict or foretell events, or anything future and to come; and this very vision or apparition, supposing it to be true, verifies the opinion, for he put the alternative several times upon him, that so if he missed giving a right interpretation in one thing, he might be sure

in another ; and if one conjecture should miss, another might hit, as you see in the construction of the appearing body of fire.

But the question is needless here ; for if it be in the Devil's power to inject the subject of a dream, and put thoughts into the heads of those that are asleep, it is then most certainly so far in his power to give the interpretation of those thoughts to whom he pleases to grant such a favour ; seeing the whole scheme may be a mere cheat and delusion of the evil spirit, on purpose to form another delusion, namely, that of bringing in a conjurer or dreamer of dreams to interpret it. This is indeed a true piece of the legerdemain of hell, and it may be called, the Devil turned juggler ; for it is so in the very abstract, and nothing else.

All this is no great matter for Satan to do, if we grant him only the power of infusing midnight thoughts into the mind, which we have good reason to believe he is able enough to perform, and yet have no great matter of craft in him neither, not so much as we are ordinarily willing to suppose the Devil is master of. The variety is infinite that I might suppose the Devil is capable to act among his disciples by this piece of cunning, if we do but allow him so much ; and I cannot but say it is very clear to me, that the Devil has a secret power to inject innumerable things into our heads by dream, and to make us dream almost what, and when he pleases, so as may best serve his occasions, and ours too.

And his advantages are very great by this fraud, for he gives his instrument such an undoubted reputation for a revealer of secrets and an interpreter of dreams, that nothing can be like it. Not Daniel himself, who they said had an excellent spirit, and that the spirit of the holy gods was in him, could do more ; for by this means, the southsayer would

be able to tell the dreamer what it was he dreamed of, as well as what it signified.

If any man doubt that the Devil can, as I say, infuse midnight thoughts, and whisper suggestions by dream of any kind to the mind, I refer him to Mr. Milton, who shows us the Devil in the shape of a toad crept close to Eve's ear in her deepest slumbers, and injecting lustful or loose and wandering thoughts into her chaste mind, (I say chaste, for such it was without doubt before,) and making her dream with pleasure of the sin which he resolved to allure her to commit the next day, and so prepare her for the crime, which till then her very soul abhorred.

This granted, and the Devil being allowed such an advantage over mankind, whether good or bad; I cannot wonder either that he makes use of it at all, or that he makes use of it in such a frequent and extraordinary manner as to bewitch and inspire his friends and favourites, nor that those friends or favourites of his, whom he does thus assist, make such corrupt uses of it as we find they do, for insinuating an opinion of themselves into the world; for we find presently, when this familiarity is once obtained with the evil spirit, and they begin to act by his instruction, the first thing they do is, to put a fraud upon mankind, and make the world believe that all they did was from heaven; that they spoke by inspiration and revelation, and that their intelligence was immediately from the gods; to speak in the language of those times.

Thus Balaam tells the king of Moab, he can speak nothing but as God shall command him; whereas it is plain, had not the Devil been restrained from directing him at that time, he would as heartily have cursed Israel as he blessed them, and so have gained the rewards of his office, which was the wages of divination; but he confesses the impo-

tency of his art, when he found a lock put upon his tongue, and the key in the hand of a supreme power; I say, he confesses the goodwill he had to the reward, but the weakness of his black art where Heaven interposed its power, Numb. xxiii. 23, *Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel*: intimating that he had tried the utmost of his skill, but could do nothing; and in verse 20, *Behold I have received commandment to bless, and he hath blessed, and I cannot reverse it*: nothing can be plainer; he would, but the Devil and he together were not able to reverse the blessing. The only thing strange in this story of Balaam is, that God should thus suffer a sorcerer and enchanter, a witch, or dealer with the Devil, to receive commands from himself, and to bid him go and do thus and thus, and to meet him, and put into his mouth what he should say on that occasion, from whence some might insinuate, that the wizards and magicians of those days had a mutual or alternate converse, sometimes really with God himself, and at other times with the Devil; as if the wretch were to-day a man of God, and to-morrow a sorcerer, conjurer, and an instrument of the Devil; and as if God would stoop to employ those who had so far stooped below the dignity of reasonable creatures, as to converse with the Devil.

By this means the people also were the more easily subjected to the abuse of the conjurer, and exposed to the delusions of an evil spirit, not being able to know when he spoke from one, or from the other; no doubt the deluder would always pretend he spoke by the immediate illumination of Heaven; as he had sometimes really done so, it would not be difficult to obtain the opinion that he did always so.

Now it is most certain that nothing can more

assist the delusions of the Devil in such cases as these, than to have it entertained among the people, that all the inspiration is from heaven; even the Devil himself cannot desire a stronger auxiliar; it is an assistance so natural to the delusions which he is carrying on among men, that all his infernal art cannot form an equivalent to it. And hence it came to pass, at least I believe so, that the Devil chose always that way of coming at the senses of mankind, I mean by vision and dream, by voices in the night, and by injections of midnight thoughts; because God himself had made use of the same means to inspire the minds of men with divine ideas; and the Devil, by imitating the superior revelations, could not only enable his magicians and southsayers, and such other instruments of delusion, to impose their cheats upon the people, but could even delude and impose upon those dreamers themselves too, persuading them to believe their inspirations were from heaven, and that they had such and such things revealed to them from the immediate spirit of God, when it was only a flatus from hell, throwing them into ecstacies, and as Balaam said, *being in a trance, but with his eyes open*, that is to say, possessed with the witchcraft of an evil spirit, as is said of the maid in the Acts, xvi. 16, who had a spirit of divination, and brought to her master great gain by southsaying, that is to say, by speaking as the Devil dictated to her; nay, and the text is plain in acknowledging that it was the Devil that possessed her, for in the original you have his name, what devil it was; and if you want a further explanation of him, you may have it too; his name is called Python, and some of your Bibles (supposing for once that you read any) have it in their margins what particular devil Python was, whether an avaricious, a treacherous, a deceiving devil; but some think it was the first, because she

hired out herself, and her devil with her, to a master; and what she got by her devil, her master was to make the best of; the terms much the same as a late Irish mar—s married two wives for, then let them out again at so much a year, and took the income of both their devils for his jointure. A rare bargain indeed, and something akin, I believe, to the devil Python!

How much were it to be wished, that some of our southsaying wits, who are really neither wise men or southsayers, magicians or conjurers, and who will have us, in spite of our senses, believe that they are really inspired, could but tell us too, with any moderate certainty, whether those inspirations are from God or the Devil; whether the flights of their insipids are ecstasies of the adored, or of the horrid; whether when they rail at heaven, and burlesque their Maker, we may not really believe they are overruled by a divine influence, to do it with so ill a grace, and so little common sense, that it may be directed to exalt the All-wise, by the very means used to expose him, and to make them mix impudence with so much ignorance, that others equally wicked, but of better judgment, may grow sick of the crime for the mere deficiency of the wit.

Doubtless, he that knows how to serve the best ends by the worst means, can leave the meanest heads and the most brainless wits to be thus wicked, to intimate to others the weakness of the crime, and the gross absurdity of atheism. I do not therefore think it at all profane, at least, if not so intended, to say such a fellow is one of God-a-mighty's simple ones; by which I would be always understood, that he is one to whom Heaven has denied the gift of brains, and suffered the Devil to fill up the empty spaces in his head with a share of glaring impudence, such as will pass for wit with

those that have none, and for the worst of folly with all the rest of mankind.

This sort of wise men, of whom the age is plentifully stored at this time, are doubtless placed up and down in proper stations by the allowance of Providence, for the conviction of mankind in their particular spheres; just as the Devil himself has, in many cases, been a preacher of truth, and will be so to the end of the world, though sore against his will.

Of so much force is ironical righteousness, that the blackest agents are fittest to be made the brightest examples of it; since also the greatest and best principles are often illustrated by their most infamous, and consequently, by their completest contraries.

But to go back where I left off. The Devil, who has always had the impudence to mimic his Maker, and sometimes to personate him too, in his applications to mankind, has made, I say, his first acquaintance with him by this method of dream and midnight vision, for that very reason, viz., because it is the method by which God himself often used to reveal himself to the prophets and other his most eminent servants of old, as instanced before in Abraham, and of which the Scripture has many examples. (I hope that book, when it is taken as a history only, may obtain credit enough to be brought in evidence.) I have mentioned Abraham already, and perhaps it may be offered that this is not sufficient, because God conversed, as the text says in another place, face to face with Abraham; but take it then with his grandson Jacob: God appeared to Jacob, Gen. xxviii. 13, in his dream of the ladder reaching up to heaven; *And, behold, the Lord stood above it, and said, I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father.* But if this will not do neither, then take it with one who it

might be as likely should have the Devil appear to him as God himself, but still it was the same thing, Gen. xx. 3, *God came to Abimelech in a dream*; so might the Devil too, for Abimelech was an idolater: and again, ver. 6, *And God said unto him in a dream*. Now Abimelech was a Philistine of the cursed race, destined to destruction by the posterity of Abraham, and yet God appeared to him, or came to him in a dream, and spoke to him in a dream.

From hence the Devil, who is cunning enough to imitate all those methods of access to the minds of man, which it is possible for him to come at him by, and which his Maker has used for the like communications, has always made use of this method; and when he has designed the delusion, or the perplexing of mankind, or any other of his infernal infatuations, he has brought them to pass by the injection of evil thoughts or other dark means, moving his passions and affections, instilling all the hellish imaginations that are requisite to the mischiefs he designs. And thus you have the circumstances, and the reason too, of the Devil's way of working with mankind.

It remains a question, though of no extraordinary importance, what shape or form the Devil made use of in his first acquainting himself with mankind. It is Satan's misfortune, to say no worse of him, that he cannot appear in his own figure, clothed with any of his native beauties; but that it would render him so frightful to his emissaries, and even his best friends and most useful servants would be terrified, and would run away from him instead of conversing with him; and the most accurate magician or southsayer in Arabia would, instead of going into the deserts and wilderness to meet him, abhor the very place, and tremble at the thought of seeing him.

Hence, to whisper to them in the night, and only talk in vision and appearance, is the kindest thing the Devil can do to them, as well as the wisest way for himself; for was he ever to appear, I say, in his own clothes, none of his friends would ever come to receive his second visit. Now his coming in the night, or in dream, as is hinted in the story of the magician above, is certainly needful; for as in a dream the voice without the vision is sufficient, so if a shape is represented to the imagination in the sleep, it sooner wears off, and the impressions are sooner razed out of the mind, than if the apparition was visible with open eyes, and in the light of the day; there is a great deal of difference between what we really see, and what we only dream we did see.

We have indeed some of Balaam's dreamers, that is to say, who dream with their eyes open; indeed some of them may be said to be always in a dream, they are scarce anything but apparition themselves; their whole lives are a kind of moral delusion; and as they live in a dream, so we must dream too, to make anything of them, for they never are what they seem to be, or seem to be what they are. But as I may perhaps endeavour to discover those people to the world, a little plainer than I can discover them to themselves, I say no more of them in this place, leaving the Devil and them to act in concert awhile, that they may illustrate, and be foils to one another.

It is true that by this way of dealing in dreams, the Devil has infinite advantage for the making conjurers, that is to say, magicians and southsayers, in the world: whether that sort of people have been of any use to him for the propagating his interest in the world, is a question by itself.

That the Devil took this method for the first establishing himself in the world, and as I called it,

making his acquaintance with mankind, I have taken notice of already: how useful he has found his new-made friends, and how apt to carry on his business, and especially for the further extending his power, and propagating the delusions of others, history will inform us; and we cannot doubt but he has found his advantage in it: but it remains a question of importance still undecided, whether are best pleased in these nocturnal operations, the Devil or the magician; my opinion is for the first. I believe, indeed, the Devil has got the better of them in the main, and whereas he at first was mighty eager to make his acquaintance among them, and glad of the means, he seems now to have overreached them, and to have worked them up to a desire after the correspondence in such a manner, that the subtle manager is not so cheap to be had since, but makes bargains, nay, brings them up to his own terms, and sometimes tells them plainly, he has no occasion for them; but on the other hand, if they want him, they must give him his own price, and do what he conditions with them for, or else he has no more to say to them; though he is a cheat in that too.

Thus, like a cunning chap, he turns his back and is gone, knowing very well that they will call him again, and give him his price, yield to his demand, and rather sell themselves to him soul and body, as we are told is now very frequent, than go without his assistance. This is all owing to his subtlety, and mankind's folly and fondness; for had they stood as they did at first, he must have come to their conditions; but he found the way to make himself necessary to them, and to please them, and he managed accordingly.

It is indeed an evidence how shrewdly the Devil overreached mankind in the most early ages of the world: for, 1st. as I mentioned before, this was to

come to them with some authority, and with the magnificence of a god, and it always gave them an awe and kind of reverence of his appearance; 2ndly, it really so far prevailed with them, that we have a great deal of reason to believe they did not always know whether their intelligence was from above or from below, and whether they were conversing with God or with the Devil; if this is true, as I have no reason to question, I have less reason to doubt that he often deluded them to think the former. And thus perhaps many false prophets in former times came to the poor people, and began their predictions with the usual preface, *Thus saith the Lord*; when in justice they ought to have begun with, *Thus saith the Devil*, as they might easily have seen afterwards, by the consequence of it, and by the nature of their prediction; for I believe that way it is most easily discovered.

The discovery seems indeed to be directed by this very method, where the Scripture says, *If a prophet comes, shews signs and wonders*, and then adds, *Go serve other gods*, his very doctrine proves him to be an impostor, and on that very account he is to be rejected: God's prophets will always teach God's truths, a false prophet is easily known by his teachings; the Devil may deceive for awhile, but even the Devil himself cannot hold it long, the cloven principle will appear, which I suppose the fable of the cloven foot to be an emblem of, and no more.

But to come back to the example of the magician going into the desert; why, the very place was a branch of that complication of fraud which constituted all the rest: the man went thither first casually, fell asleep by the natural consequence of his weariness, and under the palm-tree, as customary, to preserve him by its shade; the rest was all a cheat; the Devil could as well have made him

dream and see the vision in his chamber at Susa, or where else he dwelt in Persia, or Arabia, as in the wilderness; but he caught him there, and took that advantage, to introduce the ceremony of his future corresponding; and therefore he appoints him to come again to the same place, and there gives him the formality of measures to be observed; he must make his tour fifteen times round the tree; he must call him by what infernal title he was pleased to give himself; and this to be done three times every circuit he made about the tree; and when all this was done, as he might well be inclined to do, he was to lie down and go to sleep. And what need all this cookery, but to dish up the delusion with a due form, give a sanction to the vision itself, and command a suitable regard to the audience which he had the honour to be admitted to?

If this had not been the case, it might as well have all been transacted anywhere else; but Satan finds his account in these things: for during many ages after this, and perhaps in other places, the southsayers and magicians of Arabia went out in the night, and into the wilderness, and solitary places, to meet with their inspirations, and to dream dreams, and then came back, stored and qualified to make their predictions; as much as to say, they go to their palm-trees, to meet visions; there they met their devil, and then came back, and spread their delusions, as their instructor had furnished them.

Semiramis, it seems, and we may suppose her successors in the Babylonian monarchy, kept several sets of these people; and as they had their several denominations, so they had their several offices and employments under her: as particularly her wise men or magicians; these were to explain to her the aspect of the heavens, the probable effects of all surprising phenomena in nature; her astrologers

and southsayers; and these were employed to consult their private devils, and were revealers of secrets, interpreters of dreams, &c.; and then they had wizards, and sorcerers, and such as used enchantments; and these foretold the success of her military enterprises, expounded omens, the signs and circumstances of creatures, the flying of birds, voices, apparitions, and all such things as were particularly uneasy or disturbing to the queen, or to her court, and wanted their explaining: the first of these I have voted already to be honest men, but the last two I make no doubt consulted with the Devil, and the Devil with them, upon all occasions. Nor do I doubt at all but that they made prodigies, and then explained their meaning, as I said before; that they appointed dreams on purpose, and for the sake of interpreting them; of which I shall give you another account hereafter.

Sometimes, it seems, these conjuring, enchanting people, were so far from explaining things to the queen's mind, or interpreting things after the manner that she expected, that her majesty was pleased to despatch them out of her way, and hang them by dozens. And thus Nebuchadnezzar commanded all the wise men of Babylon to be put to death, though it does not appear that his commands were executed, nor are we certain they were not; but it is evident it was very much the custom to do so.

Hence I suppose they were generally inclined, like the prophets in the case of king Ahab, to take care and prophesy nothing but what should please the king. And when Micaiah, a true prophet, or prophet of God, came to tell the king what really came to pass, we see what his fate had been if the king had outlived the battle.

Nor to this day do the princes of the East make any scruple to truss up their conjurers and southsayers, when they find them juggle with them, and

find they cheat and impose upon them; an admirable method to deal with the broachers of atheistical, deistical, and enthusiastic whimseys in our age, where we have a more sure word of prophecy, which we are commanded to take heed to, and which the modern agents of the Devil are only employed to counteract, and drive out of the world, if possible, that the old oracles of devil-worship, and other delusions, might be again introduced.

But I am loath to seem vindictive in my notions, nor would I set up fire and fagot; no, not against the Devil and his agents; they may have enough of that hereafter, with the Devil and his angels: and besides, such a persecution must necessarily at this time be so bloody, that I know not what city, or town, inns of court, palace, college, or university, (our own excepted,) which it would not almost lay waste, desolate, and make void of inhabitants. Mercy on us! persecute and punish men for being atheists and deists; for dividing the Trinity, and unsanctifying the Holy Ghost, who is the sanctifier of the world, and such difficult trifles as these! where would it end! and what would become of all the religious part of the world! what a schism, in the most literal sense, would this make among us! and where is there a church, chapel, meeting-house or congregation, that would not be divided against itself, and set up a new body of dissenters? Truly so, as dissenting not from this or that opinion of religion, but from all religion, and all opinions in religion whatsoever.

Well, let the Church of Rome send protestants to heaven by the rack and the gibbet, I would not be instrumental to send all the atheists and Arians to the Devil; no, not for the sake of my native country, for fear of laying waste the glebe, and leaving posterity nobody to instruct them better.

CHAP. V.

A further account of the Devil's conduct in imitating divine inspirations; something of the difference between them; and particularly of signs and wonders, false as well as true, and the cheats of the former.

HAVING observed how the Devil, in the infancy of his correspondence with mankind, came to him, and made his acquaintance by the same method that God was pleased to reveal himself on occasions of the greatest importance; it would be very much to the advantage of our present inquiry, if we could come at some more particulars in the respective appearances, and know something of the difference in them; that so for the future we might distinguish our modern inspirations, and not oblige the Devil so much, or his favourites either, as to flatter their vanity with thinking they are divinely inspired, when, as I said before, they are only deluded with the enthusiasms of hell, and imposed upon by mother Eve's toad at their ears, that is to say, by the whispers of the Devil.

That God was pleased to reveal himself to his servants of old by vision and dream, is evident, besides the examples mentioned before, from his own declaration, that this was the way he resolved to transact with them, Numb. xii. 6: *If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known to him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so, (that is to say, was more than so,) with him will I speak*

mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches, &c.

This is a noted declaration of the manner how God would discover himself to his servants; and we cannot doubt but the Devil, who knew it very well, did quickly imitate the like method, and bring in a thousand delusions at the same door: it being in his power, as I have said, to inject midnight thoughts and amusements, and make his appearances in vision and dream, as he pleased: how near he might come to imitate the visions and revelations of God, is what I cannot undertake to determine: I am sure it is more than probable that he might do so in a manner as might deceive those unguarded persons to whom he often thus appeared, and whose ends in seeking him out might be almost as wicked as his that appeared to them.

It may be something too much in the favour of the pretenders to new light and prophecies, and to the ancient revelations and discoveries made by false prophets, properly so called in the holy sacred writings; but I cannot answer it to my own reason, if I should say that I believe they all knew, and every time too, when they said, *Thus saith the Lord*, that it was false, that they told a wilful premeditated lie, and that they ought to have said, *Thus saith our sovereign lord the Devil*.

Nor will I venture to say, that all the modern heathens, the druids among the Britons, the priests of the heathen temples, who uttered the oracles of the Devil, however they came by them, or the Brahmins and strictest recluses of the Indians, the dervises of Mahomet, and the like, do all actually know, that is to say, by immediate communications from hell, and the instrumentality of its agents, that they really are confederate with the great enemy of man-

kind, and carrying on a correspondence with the Devil. I have so much opinion of the power of common sense in man, as a human creature, and so much charity for the good meaning of those who we do not find immediately vile, profligate, and immoral, as to think they would not act with Satan upon that foot.

I have much more reason to think the four ecclesiastics of Switzerland, in the story of Jetzer, acted with Satan open-eyed, and open-faced, when they proposed to the poor foolish creature to renounce God and Jesus Christ, and so to carry on the fraud they had begun, with a kind of sanction instead of an oath of secrecy; and it appeared indeed to be so at last.

But certainly, as in other cases, abundant parallels might be brought. The Devil, who generally acts in disguise, has carried those disguises so artfully, that I doubt not but many of his false prophets, long before our times, have said, *Thus saith the Lord*, with a good grace; that is, with a real belief that God had spoken to them, or, as was the language of the Scripture times, had spoken by them, when really it was the voice of the Devil, and of nobody else: and let not our modern enthusiasts take this to be said only in favour of themselves; I am not come so far down in the course of my work, so much as to think of them, no not of St. Dunstan, St. Francis, or of the more eminent deceiver St. Ignatius, the greatest enthusiastic of the last ten centuries: when I come to them we shall reckon as we meet.

But I am yet talking of the specific difference between the inspirations of false prophets, the dreams whispered and suggested by the Devil; and those, on the other hand, from the contrary appearances of the good Spirit, that is to say, of God himself. I am in the first place to intimate, that they

are not always to be discerned, no, nor easy to be discerned; if they were, there would not be so many delusions in the world as have been; for the men are not all devils before they come to him, they do not come to him resolving to be deceived, and intending to deceive everybody they are concerned with. I must own, I do not think that all the four hundred priests of Baal, whom Elijah summoned together to the great sacrifice at Mount Carmel, would have showed so many antic tricks, leaping upon the altar, cutting themselves with knives, and crying, *O Baal hear us!* if they had believed they were under a delusion of the Devil all the while, and that Baal was nobody but a dead stock, a lifeless image, without sense to hear, much more without power to answer. They must certainly believe that Baal was a something, or a somebody, whom it was their duty to pay a homage and reverence to; or that they paid that homage to the true God through the medium of an image, a sort of a model of that meaner and more ignorant idolatry called popery.

But to look forward beyond this image of idol-worship, we have the old false prophets coming much nearer to the true, and the inspirations bearing an affinity in a more significant point; and that is, in signs and wonders, or what we call miracles, which yet may be all from the Devil; so hard it is for the deceived false prophet to know when he is right and when he is wrong; and so easy is it for him to be imposed upon himself, and consequently to delude the people he converses with.

The Devil, as far as his agency of this kind will reach, must certainly be mightily pleased with it; for by thus inspiring his tools, not only to the degree of false prophets, but to an ability of working miracles, showing signs and wonders, whether real or imaginary, he not only the more effectually im-

poses upon his false prophets, but gives or deposes so much of devil to them, as to make them able to delude and deceive others, nay, to deceive the whole world; or, as the text expresses it, Matt. xxiv. 24, *to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect.*

It is remarkable in this same text, that it is predicted there shall come false Christs, and false prophets, (devils or devils' agents,) and shall show great signs and wonders.

There is also another text, which gives us a caution against such, though I do confess I cannot see how it can be made use of till the delusion has gone some length; and that is in Deut. xiii. 1, 2; *If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign, or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass.* Now this, I say, requires so much time, as to the fulfilling the token or prediction of the false prophets, till when, and till the false doctrine which he preaches shall detect him, the people are manifestly in danger of the delusion; for as in all such cases in those ancient times, every novelty was confirmed by signs and wonders, what could be more deluding, and more apt to impose upon the people, than to have the shower of those signs and wonders confirm his teachings by a miracle, and that the miracle should come to pass? Yet all this may attend the lying wonders of a magician, a false prophet, nay, of a devil; that such wonders may be wrought as are justly termed false and lying wonders, we have again predicted, 2 Thess. ii. 9, which text I doubt touches a little our holy father the pope, whose coming is said to be after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders; intimating that there are wonders which are delusive; said to be wrought, but not wrought; *a la mode* the Legend, the Fables of Monkery, the Devil of Loudon, and the like. Wonders indeed can scarce be called

lying upon any other foundation : for if they were real, and actually performed, how can they then be lying ? but if promised to be performed, and not done ; or said to be really performed and done, but were not, then they are indeed lies, or lying wonders ; and take them which way we will, I doubt as before, and leave my masters, the Jesuits, to bring his holiness off their own way.

But I come on upon modern time too fast ; history demands that we advance by just degrees, and to that purpose I must look a little more particularly into the antiquity of these things. Satan, to give the Devil his due, did not manage with so little dexterity his first acquaintances with mankind, as to suffer his secret methods to be discovered and detected, or his instruments to be exposed : on the contrary, he put innumerable wonders upon mankind, acted with inextricable stratagem and art ; from which dexterity, and the difficulty of explaining his management, the common operations of his favourites obtained the sanction of devilish ; and the art they used, obtained the honourable title of Black ; and this, according to my title, is what I am now to describe.

The world was now so much improved in knowledge, that, as I hinted above, nothing new could be started, but a miracle was presently inquired after to confirm it ; and he that could do the most eminent things of that kind, was the most famous in their opinion. Mopsus was a southsayer, and said to be the son of Apollo : he was in such credit and esteem in his time, that it grew into a proverb, to be as infallible as Mopsus.

This Mopsus meeting one Chalchas, a man likewise eminent in the same devilish profession, they fell into dispute about some things relating to their art. Mopsus asked Chalchas how many figs such a wild fig-tree, as he pointed out to him, had upon it ;

the southsayer Chalchas would not answer him, but alleged that it was not a fair question. Upon which Mopsus told him the number, and upon counting them up it was found true to a fig; upon which Chalchas was so confounded, not being able to conceive how it was performed, that though the thing was trifling, he died for grief.

It seems Chalchas had his fortune told him by the oracle, viz., that he should die when he found out a better southsayer than himself; all which I can resolve into nothing but this, that Mopsus had more favour with the Devil than Chalchas, at least at that time, and that he whispered the number of the figs in his ear; or to clear up the juggle, Mopsus had counted them before, and so the question was a juggle in itself; which indeed was the most likely of the two.

The humour of the times being, as I said, to require miracles and wonders, the southsayers and dreamers of dreams bestirred themselves, and sought out (every man his own way) for secret inspirations and illuminations, and the Devil was very useful to them on many occasions, till at last he found the work increased upon his hands, and he was obliged to set up delusion-offices, as I may call them, and give out answers at the shrines of the people's idols, and in the names of their gods.

These were so far from crying down the office or dignity of a southsayer in the world, that it rather increased their fame. For as the number of those oracles were but few, not above twelve or fourteen, great and small, so the wise men, the magicians and southsayers, were often sent by their respective princes, whose favourites they were, to those oracles on extraordinary occasions, and to be resolved in their doubts; whence they frequently brought such answers as they knew would please and oblige the prince that sent them; perhaps as best suited the

circumstances of those princes, and which those so sent best knew whether the oracle gave such answers or no, the latter being not always necessary.

This working by miracle seldom or never failed ; it confounded the understandings of men ; and when any of their southsayers had once obtained an esteem by such a performance, he never wanted anything more to continue his character, and to gain him admittance into the favour and court of the greatest princes. Hence Joseph's telling Pharaoh's chief butler and chief baker their dreams, and those dreams exactly coming to pass, opened the doors of the prison for him ; as his adding to it that of telling the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream advanced him to the second chariot, and to the crying *Abrek* before him, that is, Bow the knee.

It is the opinion of some, learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians, that Joseph continued the art of southsaying (for in that the wisdom of the Egyptians chiefly consisted) for a great while after ; and I acknowledge myself to be of that opinion, whether I am learned in the wisdom of the Egyptians or no, and that he had never been continued in such a high post so long, if he had not.

For this reason those words he used afterwards to his brethren, *Wot you not that such a man as I can divine ?* are a kind of admiration ; that is to say, Are you so ignorant in the customs of this country, as not to know that a man in my post must be able certainly to divine ? Gen. xliv. 15.

And indeed, without putting any strained or constrained meaning upon the sacred text, I cannot doubt but that the people of Egypt took Joseph to be what they called the prince of the magicians of the East ; that is to say, one of the chief of them, and extraordinarily qualified by the gods for the understanding deep mysteries, for diving into hard

questions, interpreting dreams, and resolving doubts. In a word, in the same sense that Daniel, almost a thousand years after, was esteemed at Babylon, viz., that the spirit of the holy gods was in him; whether they meant by their gods, the crocodile, or the river Nile, or the great calf at the Egyptian Thebes, or Isis, or Osyris, that I shall not inquire into here, but they doubted not that some of the best and brightest of their deities inspired Joseph with an excellent spirit.

Nor was it unreasonable for the poor people, under the dark circumstances of that age, to believe so of him; for how else should he have the foreknowledge of the dreadful famine seven years before it came? how that sagacity to gather such immense quantities of corn in the plentiful years before it? and lay it up in such places, and in such proportions, and so secured, as to supply suitably the whole country of Egypt, so vastly extended, and so populous as it was at that time?

How Joseph came by all this knowledge and wisdom, they (as we have like reason to believe) were as ignorant of, as they were positive that it was so, by some means or other; and therefore it was no absurdity for them to suggest that he did all by divination, that is to say, by enchantment, or secret converse with the spirits of another world; or as we call it, with more propriety, at least in our opinion, that he dealt with the Devil; and that this was done by the charm of the silver cup which was put in the mouth of Benjamin's sack.

That they believed so is evident from the words of the same chapter, Gen. xlv. 5; *Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and whereby he divineth?* The words are fully explained by the customs and usage of the magicians and devil-hunters in those days, who used strange gestures, and clanging sounds, such, or not much unlike such, as our old

women now use to hive their bees; by these they called the familiar devils, the Pythons and Apollyons of their acquaintance, about them, whatever occasions made it necessary for them to speak with them.

That Joseph knew better, and that he certainly neither used such methods, or conversed with any such kind of foreigners or infernals, was most certain, but his steward was directed to speak in the language of the country; nor would he have talked to have been understood, if he had not: and this confirms the conjecture as above, and makes it most reasonable; namely, that all Egypt took him (Joseph) to be a southsayer or wise man, and that certainly he could divine.

This part of Joseph's story is useful to explain by what manner of communication the diviners of those days used to maintain their acquaintance with the infernals, and how mean and scandalous methods the Devil contrived to settle his correspondence; that in short, by the clanging of an old kettle, or brass pot, the whole hive of devils should be alarmed, be told that some of their masters on earth had occasion for them, or as we call it, wanted to speak with them, and that they should immediately fly to hand, and mount to the place to know the business.

This will be a very material point to discuss more fully, and to explain the philosophy of, if we should come to examine the most accurate and polite methods of that particular art, which we call raising the Devil, of which so many valiant old women have been completely mistresses; and that so eminently, that Satan durst no more refuse to attend the call, or fail of his duty when he heard the summons, than a schoolboy that has been well lashed for playing truant, dares do it again, before his backside has done smarting: for doubtless, the scolding of an old woman, and upon such a disap-

pointment too, would be enough to terrify the Devil himself, if he has any sense of that outrageous animal, called an old witch, upon his mind.

But I leave that part to a particular dissertation upon the species, when I shall learnedly and politely examine, and, if practicable, determine for the good of mankind, the two following weighty and important difficulties.

First, Whether upon an immergent and sudden occasion, the music also being the same, old mother Anthony of ——, in the county of ——, could not be as effectual with her voice to hive a swarm of bees, as any brass kettle or warming-pan in all the village; and so both frugally save her neighbours from the risk of bruising their household-stuff, and the said mother Anthony, instead of being liable to the ducking-stool for a common disturber, become a useful servant to her king and country, and enjoy a pension for her good offices.

Secondly, Whether the same mother Anthony, according to the hypothesis of Joseph's cup of divination, might not be also made useful in her generation upon like extraordinary occasions, to lay the Devil, and that too by the same rules that others raise him; since the bees in their greatest hurries and tumults are quieted, as above, by the same noise which at another time would fret and disorder them; the philosophy of which is not yet understood, nor can the reason of it be discovered in all the philosophical transactions or transactors who have so long studied it. From whence they say, the tinkers beating their pans when they publish their occupations, or as we call it vulgarly in England, cry their trades, are extremely uneasy to all the old women above their ninth climacteric, and unsufferable to those who are engaged in the article of circle-making, and paw-wawing; insomuch that if a tinker should have stopped in a village and

beat his kettle above a certain limited time, at, or within hearing of the town of Ipswich, in mother Lackland's time, she would have been obliged to have raised the Devil for her assistance. But this I leave to experiment.

As, I say, these two important questions may take up a large tract by themselves, and as they must needs be of vast consequence to the readers, I doubt not the booksellers, who are generally public-spirited gentlemen, will embrace the opportunity of publishing such a valuable piece for the good of the nation ; so I shall adjourn it for the present.

Come we next in order, according to the contents of this chapter, to the particular question in what shape the Devil appeared to the first magicians, or the enchanters of the most early times ; and the answer is, as far as we can yet learn, that he did not assume any shape or visible appearance at all : whether it was his modesty or his policy is a question has been a little, though not fully discussed, and those that speak most favourably of Satan, think it was the first ; for in the early times of his intimacy he might be loath perhaps to expose himself to his new acquaintance ; whereas afterwards, when he became really a familiar spirit, in the literal sense of the word, he made no difficulty to converse with his favourites more openly, see and be seen ; of which in its place.

But if this was not the case, it seems to me, that at first, and while being only a night visiter, he communicated himself by vision and dream only, there was no manner of occasion for the locality of his person, and for a real appearance ; nor, if his business was done, was it material whether he delivered it by his own mouth, or by the voice of any of his trusty and well-beloved angels and agents, who are certainly as capable to officiate in his place as if he was there in person.

Besides, as much a spirit as the Devil is, we have reason to believe he is so far from being omnipresent, that he would not be able to despatch a thousandth part of the business he has upon his hands, if he had not an innumerable number of deputy representative devils always at his hand, to execute his commissions, and make their appearance for him, when and as often as the meanest of the south-saying enchanting race calls him.

And for this reason it might be, that Ali Albrahazen, as is said above, in the first intimacies betwixt him and the favourite spirit who spoke to him in dream, had a name given, by which he was to be called three times at every round of the palm-tree circle; which when he had rehearsed, the Devil (that is to say, that particular deputy devil which was appointed to wait upon him) was always to attend and be ready. Whether that said particular spirit was bound to his due and daily attendance for that one occasion, history has not yet determined: I have only to say, that if it was so, friend Ali must be a magician of some quality, that had a whole devil to attend him personally and singly, who was allowed to do no other business but just wait to receive his orders, and give back the instructions which Ali might stand in need of, unless perhaps now and then he might go upon some other errands, where the occasion was extraordinary.

We are told, that in America, and in some nations in Africa, the magicians or wizards and paw-waws found ways and means to converse with Satan face to face, as particular occasions required; and that from the beginning of time: for perhaps his conversation in those remote countries might be as ancient as it was anywhere, Egypt and Arabia excepted.

It is said also, that he does appear in those countries, and upon certain times or occasions, in human

shape, sometimes in one posture, sometimes in another, as circumstances may vary ; as sometimes he appears angry and frightful, surrounded with fire, preceded with tempest, and the like terrifying objects, to let the people know that he can hurt them ; sometimes in smiles, and sweet spicy perfumes, and preceded by music and melody in the air, to let them know he is pleased.

It is true, it was late in the world, before we, in these parts, knew anything of it ; and it might be so also before he begun those practices there : they were too gross to go down with the first ages, when the knowledge of God was not so entirely obliterated from the minds of men as it was afterwards ; but idolatry had prevailed to such a degree in America, that the Devil was perhaps the only god they had heard anything of for some thousands of years. But I return to my subject.

Except in those and such-like remote and unacquainted parts of the world, we do not find much evidence of the magicians' seeing or conversing with evil spirits, of whatever kind or quality, in the shapes of men or women : God's angels indeed, who are in sacred text called the *heavenly host*, are and have been frequently allowed to make their appearance, and have been sent hither on immediate and special business, as to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses, to the father of John the Baptist, to the Virgin Mary, to the shepherds at the birth, to our Saviour himself on divers occasions, and to the women at the sepulchre, at the resurrection, and at the ascension.

Perhaps this may be the reason why the Devil has kept his distance ; he remembers, no doubt, his former rencounters with Uriel and with Gabriel, or other angels, no matter who, mentioned by name in Mr. Milton, and how they drove him about from one part of the waste to another, out of heaven, out of

paradise, and everywhere else, where they and he happened to meet ; and doubtless he does not much care to rencounter them.

What shape or figure he appeared in when he came to tempt his Maker and our Saviour, at that time himself in a state of personality as flesh and blood, as it is not expressed, so I will not pretend to make a guess at it : it is plain when he was at any time cast out of the poor distempered people by our Saviour, or by his disciples, though he came evidently out of the demoniac or possessed, yet he did not come out visibly and in shape, but walking off like a detected thief in the dark, and imperceptible, he always played out of sight.

The same method I believe he took with all sorts of people in the world for some ages, especially at the beginning of time ; and would all our possessed or professed dealers with this cunning manager act in the dark, and keep him to themselves, that we might not see their instructor, or be acquainted with the instructions, their witchery and craft of hell would, I believe, be much less hurtful to the world than it is.

But now it seems as if our modern magicians acted upon another foot ; that they do not go to the Devil, but the Devil comes to them ; they do not go to him in the deserts and retreats of the dark for directions and instructions, but he acts with them in concert, and there is a kind of mutual cohabitation, they go on hand in hand, and are fellow-agents, both principals and both accessaries, only with this usual difference on the Devil's side, viz., if they happen to do any capital mischief, so as to bring them to the gallows, he always leaves the hanging part to them ; there he, as we say, slips his neck out of the collar, and is gone.

This subtle agreement in mischief between the magician and the spirit that acts with him, is not at

all for the advantage of mankind ; and the magicians of the former mould seem to have been much the less hurtful kind, for they generally were known to be what they pretended, and were only made use of by people when they wanted them, and for what was required of them ; so they had their pay and wages of unrighteousness, and you had done with them.

But here we converse with the men, knowing nothing of what they are, and do not see the Devil that is within them ; so we deal with the Devil at second-hand, as we may call it, that is, we talk to him in disguise, make bargains and contracts with him, and that some of the worst kind, by the agency of these magicians, and see not the evil spirit who is all the while both director and principal in all the affair. Thus far for those magicians who really deal in secret with him, and this is that magic which we call the black art, that is to say, a secret undiscovered conspiracy between Satan and those agents of his which apply to him for direction, and then their acting again by those directions, to abuse, impose upon, and deceive mankind.

CHAP. VI.

Of who were the first practisers of magic, as a diabolical art, and how it was handed on to the Egyptians and Phœnicians, where it was first openly encouraged.

THE writers upon this subject before me seem to have all been at a loss to fix the original of magic as an art diabolical, and they would fain have us believe it was in practise in the antediluvian world. This I have not denied, nor shall I deny it still; but granting the Devil to have a conquest upon the first woman, and by her weakness and treachery drawing her husband into the same snare, we may give up all their race for as black as hell could make them: and indeed the sacred text describes them in terms as black as can well be expressed, Gen. vi. 12; *God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth:* and ver. 13, *The earth is filled with violence;* and ver. 5. speaking of man, *the imagination of the thought of his heart was only evil continually; and the wickedness of man was great upon the earth.* Upon this account, I say, I gave up all that race in the beginning of this work; and be it so, or be it only supposed to be so, it is much the same, nor is it worth disputing with anybody; if the Devil had the management of them, as it is evident he had, much less could not be expected, let that part go.

But my question has been all along, not what was done before, but since the deluge, and how did Satan introduce himself to the postdiluvian ages? when and where, with whom, and in what manner, did he

make his first acquaintance and breaking in upon mankind for a second possession, or management of art?

I mentioned Zoroaster slain in battle by Semiramis, and Prometheus and others, and very early they were; and I stand by my account of them, that they were the first magicians, as the word or term magician implied a man of learning, of wit, and more than common understanding, searching after knowledge, studying the rudiments and first precepts and principles of philosophy. But we are now in search after another sort of people, who, though they were searchers into knowledge too, yet looked into it in another manner, and for other purposes, namely, who searched deeper into things, and into deeper things, I mean searching into hell itself; who began first to enter upon diabolical inquiries into the infernal mysteries and arts of the Devil; and where those begun it is not so easy to find out.

Some authors, as Serenus, and Cassianus from him, and the learned sir Walter Raleigh from both, hand down this fabulous original for our speculation, viz., that Ham or Cham the son of Noah having practised those superstitious and sacrilegious arts (I take their own words) before the flood, and knowing that he could bring no book or memorial of that nature into the holy vessel where his life was to be secured by the goodness of his Maker, and wherein he was to remain with his righteous and godly father, caused the rules and precepts to be graved in metal, and in hard stone, which should receive no impression from the water.

But this is such an evident fiction, and full of so many absurdities and contradictions, as well as falsehoods, that it is not only unlikely it should, but impossible it can be true.

For first, Where were those plates left? If they were to be preserved in the ark, it is certain Noah,

who had the superintendency of the whole building, and of everything that was brought into it, or to be admitted, would much less have admitted copper-plates to be brought in there, or tables of stone with such abominations engraven on them, than he would have taken in written books, if such had been then in use.

Secondly, Had Cham been such a person, so far engaged in a correspondence with hell, we may reasonably suppose God, who, for the reasons taken from the sins of the rest of mankind, destroyed the whole world, would never have spared him, and so by him laid the foundation of the Devil's second kingdom, and of his debauching the world with sorcery and witchcraft : nor do we read that Cham or Ham was cursed by his father on any such account, but for sins actually committed after the deluge, and after their coming out of the ark ; but to charge Ham with sorcery and diabolical practices before the flood is a gross begging the question, and by no means to be admitted without good evidence.

And again, the writing and graving upon hard stones, metal, &c., requires a proof that there was any such thing as the knowledge and use of letters among men before the flood ; which, after the strictest inquiry, is not yet ascertained, much less agreed upon by men of learning ; the same having not been preserved to mankind after the deluge, which it is highly probable would have been, if such a thing had been in use, the knowledge having been both innocent and useful.

Thirdly, If such writing or engravement were made by Cham, or any one else, where were they laid, and how found again ? when, by the universal convulsions suffered during the flood, not the least vestiges, ruins, or remains of cities or towns were to be seen upon the surface of the earth, but all was

huddled together in the general confusion of the parts, and either buried and overwhelmed in the body of the earth, or driven down by the rapid currents which followed at the going off of the flood ; and it seems strange that these stones or plates could be found when everything else was lost and overthrown ; when the surface being perfectly new, no one part of the world could be known from another, much less any place be known by the situation which it had before.

There are many more absurdities in the case as it is proposed ; but I must not dwell too long in a place, that have so long a journey to go.

Zoroaster is the next to whom they would ascribe the magic art ; but I have proved him to be a very honest man, and a wise man, properly speaking, in my former chapters, and that he was employed in a much better and honester study, such as in discovering the nature of herbs and plants, metals and minerals, precious stones and jewels ; that he invented the doctrines and first principles of natural and moral philosophy ; and many useful and beneficial parts of knowledge for the good of mankind ; the power of sympathies and antipathies, and their various workings and objects ; in all which I take Abraham also, who was still before him, to have been especially famous ; and that it is probable Abraham was particularly instructed by Noah himself, for it is evident that Abraham was upwards of fifty years old when Noah died.

To come off of all this, there are others who make another Zoroaster, a real and diabolical magician, who was not slain by Semiramis, as that wise prince Zoroaster was ; but, on the other hand, having been teaching his disciples the art of raising and conversing with spirits, was by one of them taken away out of his school, all his scholars looking on ; or, if you will have it in a modern style, he raised the

Devil, to show his disciples a test of his art; and the Devil carried him away in the face of them all, to give them a test of his power: which, by the way, was but poor encouragement at that time, for any one of them to turn magician; and for that reason, and knowing the Devil to be no fool, makes me give the less heed to that part of the story.

Other writers, of whom Josephus is one, (whose credit, I must always premise, goes but a very little way with me,) tells us that Seth, the son of Adam, first discovered the planets or wandering stars, with their motions, influences, revolutions, &c.; that those, with several other useful branches of astronomic knowledge, were handed down by tradition to Noah, and by him to the new world, and that then coming from Noah immediately to Abraham, to Zoroaster, and others, they were handed from them to posterity, as we find it at this day.

But all this is nothing to the purpose, that is to say, nothing to our diabolic magic, nor does it give any light into the grand question, Who was the first author of that kind of study? who was Satan's first correspondent in the new world, or first dealt with the Devil after the flood? I cannot think, indeed, that the Devil suffered mankind to live long unmolested by him, or that mankind could go on long without some business between them: they would be both eager to renew the acquaintance, and restore the ancient familiarity; and it could not be long before they found some means or other to bring it to pass; for lovers, you know, will meet, whatever are the difficulties which first obstruct: and especially the great artist, on his side, had many dark designs in view, and new foundations to lay for the overthrow of a rising generation, which required to be laid deep and strong; and the sooner they were begun, the better for him.

As to Cham being the author of magic in the

new world, that indeed I cannot grant, that is to say, not as the ancients bring in the story ; namely, that he invented the seven liberal sciences, and wrote them in fourteen pillars of brass or stone, &c., as above ; that Cham, as he was, notwithstanding the curse he incurred by his ill behaviour to his father, one of the immediate progenitors of the new race, and particularly of those great and mighty nations the Egyptians, Arabians, Africans, and Phœnicians, among whom all human wisdom and learning first flourished, and indeed first began ; so I doubt not but he was capable to instruct them in much of the antediluvian knowledge, and that of even the best things, and did so : that he reigned afterward in Egypt a very long while, is confirmed by all the ancient writers ; particularly in the catalogue of the Egyptian kings, of which Cham was certainly the first, they are said to reign and succeed one another thus :

Cham peopled Egypt the year of the world, 1847, 191 years after the flood.

Osyris or Mizraim, the son of Cham, 2008, 352 years after the flood.

N. B. This was the king who elevated Joseph, and who built the pyramids, not for tombs and monuments only, but for magic, that is, astronomic observations, as Semiramis did the great tower of Babylon.

From hence it appears that Cham came to Egypt when he was near three hundred years old ; suppose him to be an hundred years old when he came out of the ark, which was the most, for his elder brother Sem was no more, and that he reigned in Egypt one hundred and sixty-one years, in which time he made the Egyptians and the Arabians, and also the Phœnicians, for they were all his offspring, very polite nations.

The Arabians were his posterity by his son Chus.

The Phœnicians by his son Canaan whom Noah cursed.

The Egyptians by his son Mizraim, which was the king Osyris above.

The Libyans and Ethiopians by his sons Phut and Lud.

So that, in short, Cham was so exceeding fruitful, that he peopled all Africa, and since that, from Africa all America, and those particularly populous parts of Asia called Arabia and Syria.

I expect my light-headed readers, whose wits are too volatile for this remote story, will call this a dry subject, though to me I confess it is just the contrary; but as it is too grave for them, I will endeavour it shall not be too long for them; so to oblige folly, and I am sure to the dislike of the truly wise and solid heads, I leave off before I have done, that I may not abate that most fashionable custom of writing most of that which is pleasant, and least of that which is profitable; so willing is your humble servant to be a man of mode, and such a weight does he put on those who have really no weight in themselves.

In favour, then, of the usage of the times, and especially of the genius and temper I mention above, I am to leave off those grave though useful digressions, and come back to the progress of magic, the particular subject before me.

That the Devil was the aggressor in his new correspondence with mankind is not to be doubted, but that is not so much our business, as to know when this correspondence began, who was the first among men that carried on the clandestine dealing, and how it was managed on both sides.

We have cleared Cham of the charge, as far as probabilities will go in his favour; and the truth is, Cham grew quickly too great, was above the occasion for it, and being the first, and perhaps the

greatest monarch upon earth, even before Ninus or Bell (Baal) he had no need of turning conjurer and magician, which became presently the work of a meaner race of men than Cham ; for the magicians, especially speaking of them now as witches and enchanters, were not kings and emperors, but the servants of kings and emperors ; kept and maintained for the wicked works and services which they did for them.

Indeed the magicians which I mentioned at first, were worshippers of the divine Being, or eminent examples of the homage men owed to the true God ; nay, and even after some time, were teachers of divine things too, though under the mistaken mediums of idols and images. These magi, or magicians, as I have observed, were at first so revered and honoured by the nations they served, as often to be made governors of the commonwealth ; public benefactors, having the most right to the public honours and advancements in those countries where they had been accepted for their merits.

Hence it seems most natural, that all kings should be patriots, seeing the very name and dignity, much more the office, began in the thing ; but that by the way ; how far the patriot and the royalty go together in these days, how the name and the dignity correspond, let the kings of the earth examine, whose business it is to mend it where it is not so, and to let it be more known where it is.

It is, then, pretty hard to find out who were the first magicians, taking the word magic as I now understand it, viz., in the worst sense ; and yet it does not seem to be very long after the flood before we shall find some of them at work ; for in the immediate reign after Cham, that is, in the reign of Mizraim or Osyris, which history makes to be the Pharaoh whose dream Joseph interpreted, and who reigned two hundred and sixty-one years ; in his

reign it is evident there were such people. See the place, Gen. xli. 8, *He sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof.*

It is true it does not appear positively that these were magicians of the worst sort, but it seems to be so, because Heaven reserved from them the revealing to Pharaoh the interpretation of his dreams; which, however, might be to preserve the honour to Joseph, and to make way for all the great events which followed; but still, I say, we do not know that here were none of the present kind of wicked magicians, and we have much reason to believe there were.

But within the space of about two hundred years after, we are sure to find them; nay, the text is plain, they were there when Moses and Aaron stood before the last Pharaoh who held the people in captivity; for then they imitated the miracles of Moses and Aaron by their enchantments, that is, by sorcery and witchcraft; now even this was but a little above eight hundred years from the flood; and thus much may suffice for the chronology of witchcraft and sorcery.

Being thus come to a tolerable certainty as to time, when this art was first practised, we shall be led more directly to the persons, by entering a little into an inquiry after the practice, that is, the manner made use of in those early times of the art; for by discovering what they did, we shall discover also who did it. They acted certainly from the beginning, by certain mystic or concealed conjurations, such as uncouth noises and sounds, strange gestures, postures, and barbarous magic noises, of which we shall say more in their place.

But what, say our inquirers, were those things called enchantments, which constitute what is called the black art, or the craft magical? The text says the magicians did so and so, by their enchantments;

that is, whatever wonders or miracles the two prophets of God wrought by the finger and power of God, these men imitated by the power of the Devil.

Those enchantments I take to consist of certain agreed gestures and noises, certain barbarous names and words, and such inexplicable terms of hellish art, which upon concert between hell and the hellish agent, are to be so and so understood between them; on expressing of which, and making such circles and figures on the ground as is agreed, the evil spirit with whom they have concerted the affair beforehand, shall appear, and appear too in such and such form as they appoint to bring him out in; and this I give as a brief definition of what they call enchantment.

And here, not to preach upon the point, or to insist that even what is thus acted must be by the power of Heaven concurring, for this is what all that are not atheists acknowledge; but, I say, not to dwell on this part, I make so free with our fellow-conjurers as to say, they put a great deal of cheat upon the world, in pretending to act by supernatural powers in those enchantments, let them be of what sort they will, whereas they really acted much by cheat and trick, legerdemain or sleight of hand, and pretended the prince of the air, when he had nothing to do in it; that however some of those things were certainly by his, the Devil's aid and assistance, as it was with Ali Albrahazen, and has been with others to this day, which we shall not and cannot deny, yet it is apparent much of it has been, as I said, mere juggling and deceiving.

As the Devil has not tied himself up to methods in his acting with mankind, so neither have the magicians of the world kept to any certain methods, as to a stated rule in their actings among us, but have, on many occasions, made use of differing methods; I mean as to their management between the

Devil and them ; and also as to their apparent putting the belief of it upon us.

How we shall do to know and distinguish when the magician puts the Devil upon us, and when he only acts the juggler, would be worth while to find out ; and did either the Devil or the magician act by any stated rules and methods, we might make some judgment about it ; but on the other hand, they are so much and so often both devils and both jugglers, that it is very difficult to fix them.

For example, in their coming to audience, obtaining admittance, or call it what you will, the great question is, how do they let the Devil know they want to speak with him ? either he is always at their elbow, and can hear them whenever they call, wherever they are, and on whatever occasion ; and that would be to ascribe either great things to him, as a person, or a great number to him, as an host.

Be that as it will, it is certain these people have certain concerted terms agreed, as I said above, upon repeating which he is to appear to them, and act for them as they shall agree ; and those I call enchantments. There are also other agreed signals, upon making which, the Devil, according to the terms agreed on between them, shall act in such and such a manner without appearing ; and those I call charms.

Thus, it seems, the Devil and Dr. Boreman agreed the matter ; the good doctor having a mind to pay home an old jest upon a young gentleman that had abused a poor girl a client of his ; the doctor, it seems, told her, that if she could persuade him to get into her smock upon their next intimacy, he would certainly agree to marry her ; upon which the poor girl makes herself a new one, and very large for the purpose, and getting the young fellow into it, the doctor, as was said, laid such a charm

upon it, or the Devil by his order, that the fellow could never get out of it till he gave the girl a note under his hand to marry her the next morning, and accordingly did it.

If the story be fact, as is loudly affirmed, the Devil acted upon the honest side it seems; which I do not however charge upon him as a thing that he is often guilty of; but now and then, for the credit of his employers, he may be allowed to go out of his way a little.

What those things called charms are, and how made use of, may occasion some speculation as we go on, and when we come to speak of charms as they are used between the magicians and the people; but I am now upon the subject of charms and enchantments, as they relate to the proper intercourse between the magician and the Devil, or the spirit whom he acts with, or by or for whom he acts, for it is not easy to express it right.

I say, it is not easy to say in what capacity the magician is to be understood to act. 1. Whether with, that is, in concert and agreement, or, 2. As we might say, in partnership with the Devil; or whether in a superior orb, as a magician of quality making use of an attendant, obsequious, commanded devil, always at his call, to do what he bids him, jump over his stick, run and go, fetch and carry like a dog, as some eminent magicians of state have been said to act; or as St. Dunstan, St. Francis, the abbot of Crowland, and others, did by him, who, they tell us, set him to work, sent him of errands, made him ring the bell to vespers, sweep the church, and a thousand good things the serviceable devil did for them, if his good humour is not belied by the priests' knavery, and Satan charged with more complaisance for them, than ever he was guilty of: or, 3. Whether the Devil is master, which I must own is more likely, and the magician servant; and then

he does not act the Devil, but the Devil acts him, and makes him do everything he bids him; I say all these are doubtful points, and not yet fully understood by us, or at least not easily.

But be it which of these it will, there must be some concerted terms of come and call between the Devil and his correspondents; like ships at sea, they must converse by signals, they must know when to meet, and when to summons for a meeting; when to appear, and when to disappear; and to do this, is one of the constituting parts of magic; for without it the magician is as good as nobody, and the Devil, in short, would appear of no use to him.

In some parts of India they allege to this day, that he is talked with in the apparent shape of a man, and in the habit of their priests; but that is not the business; they add, that whenever they want to speak with him, they go up to such and such mountains in troops or assemblies; such as ours at New Hall perhaps, only with some specific differences, which I might mention, but that they are too trifling to trouble you with. When they are all together, they call him with a little kettledrum, just as I told you the good old wives hive their bees, save that they beat it on the wrong side; then they pronounce some words which they call charms, and the Devil comes without fail.

It is hard to find out in history, what words those were that were used for charms in Egypt and Arabia, between the Devil and the magicians, for so many ages; it is certain they differed in differing countries, and it is as certain they differed as the several persons acted together or apart; but I am as much at a loss to find out what the Devil should mean by suffering those words, or any words at all, to charm, call, awaken or alarm him, as I am to

know what the words were; but at present let us think of the words.

The Greeks have left us a word which was used by the magicians of antiquity among them, upon these and many more such occasions. This is that famous trine, or triangular word called Abracadabra, which, drawn out in its equilateral sides, stands thus:

ABRACADABRA
 ABRACADABR
 ABRACADAB
 ABRACADA
 ABRACAD
 ABRACA
 ABRAC
 ABRA
 ABR
 AB
 A

There is abundance of learned puzzle among the ancients to find out the signification of this word; the subtle position of the letters gave a kind of reverence to them, because they read it as it were every way, upwards and downwards, backwards and forwards, and many will have it still that the Devil put them together: nay, they began at last to think it was old Legion's surname, and whenever he was called by that name, he used to come very readily; for which reason the old women in their chimney-corners would be horribly afraid of saying it often over together, for if they should say it a certain number of times, they had a notion it would certainly raise the Devil.

They say, on the contrary, that it was invented by one Basilides, a learned Greek, that it contained the great and awful name of the Divinity, and that

it was used for many years for the opposing the spells and charms of the pagans ; that is, the diabolical spells and charms of the pagan magicians.

But be this as it will, it fell into contempt in after-ages, and was used by the magicians themselves ; so that its containing, or being intended to contain the name of God, seems to me to be a pretence only, to add a kind of veneration to the word ; whereas it is now dropped, only that some of our old women, and quack magicians, use it for a spell or charm, as they would have it called, to cure agues, being written on a piece of parchment, and hanged about the neck of the afflicted person.

It would be nothing but crowding our work with old stories, to collect together what they call spells and charms, which our people here make use of (wherever they had them) to cure distempers. I know an old book-ridden Bunyanist, that is to say, a baptist preacher in Bedfordshire, who cured agues, by only saying some words, while he gave the patient a piece of paper to put into his pocket ; others I have known cured by saying some words only, and giving them nothing at all. I could give you many examples, and you will find many more in the learned collections of Mr. Aubery, and others, where in particular there is the question answered, why saying some words which have no signification, and which neither the person to whom they are said, or the person himself who says them, can understand, should work a cure ; and the answer is, because the gods understood what the person meant who first implored their aid in those words, and to which they have still regard.

This shows a little, what I am bringing all these things to ; namely, that this was the remains of the old pagan magic, and is all derived from it, though perhaps it is practised with less criminal correspondence than it was then, the people that now do

these things not knowing what they say, or to whom they say it; yet certainly the thing is the same.

And this too gives us a light into the ancient practices of the magicians in Arabia and Egypt, and the nature of those things which the Scripture calls enchantments; and how, and to what uses, those enchantments were obtained and applied. Take the whole in this summary account, which I gather from the exactest observation of the usage of those times, and of the behaviour of the people in the following ages.

Of the nature and original of enchantments.

The story of the Devil and Ali Albrahazen the Sabean or Persian, stands as a good foundation; we have another without a name, an Egyptian, I will not add a name by way of invention, because I will not put my sanction to the truth of all the particulars, but the story is of the same use, whether one word of the fact be true or no. And so, though I might take up some time with vouchers for the relation, I leave it upon your hands as a current tradition, for those things are too ancient for quotation of any sort.

N. B. There is no room to question, but that in Arabia, Egypt, Syria, and those countries, where so much magic was at first practised, and where the Devil's correspondence with mankind was begun, where magic was in its perfection for so many ages, and practised with such apparent success, there are a great many strange stories current to this day, and the mouths of the people are still filled with traditional accounts of the wonders of the ancients, their strange performances, and the effects of their magical skill; the people are full of

them, and even our Europeans, when they travel into those countries, bring away innumerable tales of this kind, which lose little in the coming, as perhaps this among the rest.

The account I am now going to give, relates to a magician of great note it seems, though, as I have said, I have not his name, whom the Devil, if it was the Devil, managed much in the same way as the other, and it is of like use in the case before us. For as it confirms the Devil's conduct to be much the same with mankind, though in different places, so it shows us that the same occasions suit him to make use of: before, he frightened the Sabeans with a meteor or ball of fire in the air; now, he alarms Egypt with a comet; either of them things of no signification in themselves, and which we in these days can look on without running to conjurers for their interpretation. But in those younger days they were surprising and terrifying, and therefore very proper to amuse the world with, and to make even kings, as well as people, send for their magicians, to inquire after the events of them.

In like manner we find in both these accounts, the Devil not only making use of dreams for disturbing the fancies of the people, as well their kings as others; but we find him in both using that power peculiar to him as a spirit, namely, of causing people to dream of this or that, (whatever he pleases,) on purpose to furnish a counterfeit interpretation to his favourite southsayer, and raise his reputation at court, in order to serve his (Satan's) interest in other subsequent delusions: but I refer to the story.

An Arabian of ancient fame, and eminent in the Egyptian court for his great skill in southsaying, having long studied the knowledge of hidden and secret things, and arrived to great skill in the motions and revolutions of the stars and planets,

had made himself famous on that account : having also much studied the appearances and nature of the planets, vapours, meteors, and other the phenomena of the upper regions, from whence he made great and accurate improvements in natural and experimental philosophy ; he also studied and understood the nature of plants, flowers, drugs, gums, &c., and the influences of the heavenly bodies upon them, giving them virtue, colour, aromatic flavour, and most healing and comforting powers ; and by this knowledge, our learned Arabian obtained the fame of a most excellent physician, as well as of a wise man and southsayer, and was had in universal esteem, but especially, I say, in the court of Pharaoh, king of Egypt.

N. B. They do not tell us which Pharaoh this was, so that the chronology of this Arabian is something defective in that part ; but neither is this very material, because much of it will be discovered by the other circumstances.

Unwearied in his diligence and studies, and eaten up with the desire of knowledge, this Arabian doctor (for such we shall now call him) not at all abating his search after wisdom by the fame already obtained ; but seeing daily that there was an abyss of knowledge yet behind, and that all he knew was as nothing, compared to what he was still ignorant of, he pursued his search into nature with the utmost application : all night, yea, many nights together, he continued upon the hills, and in the deserts, whither he wandered ; for Egypt is a plain country for many leagues together, from Memphis where he resided ; I say, all night he spent in looking up into heaven, and all day in poring upon the earth, searching into the secrets of nature, and trying and proving the virtues of the plants and fruits, and other rarities, the product of that rich and fertile soil : and thus he wasted and exhausted his vital and animal strength

to feed and nourish the strength of his mind, and fill his head and heart with divine wisdom and understanding. Thus far it must be acknowledged he was a true original magician, and a man of merit as well as fame.

It happened, in his wandering through the desert, to the station where he usually fixed his place of astronomic observations, that he saw rise up out of the sea, northward from his situation, a body of fire, which at first seemed to him one plain flame, making an oblong square, of an immense length and breadth. But as it ascended with the ordinary motion of the heavens, or rather, according to the new systems, the ordinary motion of the earth, it lessened in its apparent dimensions, and also came to bear a more regular form than before; till coming to its full height, it appeared after some time to be a comet or blazing star, which was visible above the horizon, as is usual in such bodies, for about twenty-six days (or nights rather) successively, and then was seen no more.

This appearance being entirely new, surmounted all the powers of his understanding, and extremely perplexed him; and being one night more than ordinarily afflicted about it, he broke out into words to this purpose, though not directed to any of the gods, not knowing, it seems, which of them were able to inform him, and which not: O! that some of the blessed inhabitants of the unseen world would assist me in searching out the mystery of this strange phenomenon.

He was the more anxious about it, because, at his return to his own house at Memphis, he had an account, that Pharaoh had summoned all the magicians and wise men of Egypt, to give him their several opinions of the meaning of this strange appearance; for the king had either seen it, or heard of it from others. The appearance of it, as I have said, being

constant for about twenty-six days after the Arabian had first discovered it, and the wise men differing very much in their accounts of it, their judgment had increased the king's curiosity very much; besides, the Arabian southsayer had notice given him, that he would receive a summons or order to come to the king's palace upon the same occasion.

Being thus, as is said, extremely puzzled with this affair, and believing perhaps that he should do no more when he came to the king, than discover his ignorance, as the rest of the southsayers and the magicians had done, he was very uneasy, and resolved to retire into Ethiopia for some time, till the inquiry might be over; and as he was not sent for to the king when the rest of the magicians were, it would be no impeachment of his fame, that he was gone abroad for some time.

One day, while this public uneasiness lasted, as he was walking towards his usual observatory as above, there joined him a grave and venerable old man, who saluting him with the usual blessing of the times, and in the Arabic tongue, falls into discourse with him upon divers subjects, such as seemed to show that the stranger was, like himself, an inquirer after knowledge. Among the rest of their discourse, the Arabian particularly gave the stranger an account of the late appearance which he had seen, as above.

They walked together till they came to the foot of a gently rising mount, on the top of which the Arabian had erected for himself a little hut, or bower of palm-tree leaves; here the stranger seeing him ready to go up to the hill, offered to take his leave, but he entreated him to go up to his observatory, as he called it, with him, and to stay with him that night, that he might show him the said appearance, and that in the morning he should go whither he pleased.

When they were come up to the ascent of the hill, the day being shut in, and the time for observation of the stars come on, the heavens being clear, and the moon absent under the horizon, leaving them a fair view of the stars, perfectly bright and clear; the stranger asked him in what part of the hemisphere he had seen the comet rise and set, and what was the particular sphere of its motion; all which he showed him most exactly, and at last the comet itself, not forgetting at the same time to let the stranger know, how anxious and concerned he had been to understand the nature and reason, as well as the import of the appearance of such a body, and to what particular nation it had a reference; and at last told him how vehemently he had called out to the gods, to give him some wise interpreter, to instruct him in the nature of such appearances, and of that in particular.

The stranger took no notice of his knowing that he had done so, but began with a philosophical discourse of comets; as of stars, which, in their ordinary revolutions, are but seldom visible; and therefore when they do appear, says he, it is generally supposed that they import great changes and troubles among men, which, says he, may in one sense be true, because they frequently are very much the occasion of them.

But, says the Arabian, how shall we know when they have important significations, and when not, and to what nations and countries their significations are directed, and which are not concerned in them?

Says the stranger, There are methods to know these things also; and the gods, when they are minded to communicate these things, do it their own way. But father, says the Arabian, if you can relieve my thought in the signification of the present difficulty, pray be so kind; for I acknowledge

my ignorance, and that which perplexes me the more about it, is, that I expect to be called before Pharaoh to-morrow, whom I reverence in the highest manner. I beseech you inform me what I am to call this strange new appearance, and what are its consequences to the world.

Here the stranger, looking upon him with a smiling aspect, replied; I have great regard for your being esteemed by Pharaoh, and shall let you into the knowledge of what you desire, for your further good fortune. Know then, added he, with an aspect all shining and pleasant, the appearance we now see, is a comet or blazing star, the like of which has not been seen in Egypt in the memory of the most ancient man in the kingdom, which makes the wise men entirely at a loss about it; neither have they received any traditional account of such a phenomenon from their fathers.

Comets, continued he, are not, as fixed stars, bodies of fire, burning in the same manner as the sun; but bodies of a different nature, composed either of prepared created matter, suited from the beginning for inflammation, or of vast collections of exhaled and condensed matter, subject to inflammation, and more or less inflamed according to the position of their orbits and motion; and therefore the eruption of their flame is but on one side, or on one side chiefly, (as we see this burning,) with a continued and vehement eruption: they move in the utmost extent of the waste or expanse of space, which you call the ether or air, and their distance is so great, and their revolutions so tedious, that they sometimes do not come so near this globe as to be visible, no, not in five hundred or a thousand years; and this is the second that was ever seen in this hemisphere since the great deluge of the earth in the years of Pharaoh's great-grandfather's father, being now above eight hundred years past.

The long tail or extended flame which you see at one side of the star, is the eruption of flame, which, as I say, continually burns with great violence, and is sometimes extended to an immense and unmeasurable length, even to that of many hundred thousand millions of stadia, and blazes out for ever.

The Arabian heard this with a surprise of pleasure, and was even ready to kneel down and worship him, which, you will say, it is much the Devil should refuse: but when he was just going to inquire of him what import this appearance was to the world, and to Egypt more especially, and above all to the king in particular, he was not only disappointed to the last degree, but most miserably afflicted and surprised; for that turning his head casually from him, or rather his head being turned, or his eyes turned from him, he in that very moment disappeared, and was gone.

It was in vain that the Arabian doctor ran out of the hut or bower, and down the hill after him, to his two servants, who always attended him at the foot of the hill, inquiring of them if the father, the venerable stranger, came not to them; they constantly and faithfully affirmed that they had watched, as was their duty, against wild beasts, for his security, and that nothing had passed by them.

It was in vain also that he went back lamenting, and calling aloud upon the stranger, whom he styled father, to return. How is it, said he, that you could thus far illuminate my understanding, and reveal the secret of wisdom but in part; promising to me a clear and perfect knowledge, and then leave me uninstructed, and in the dark, in the main and grand inquiry? But no voice, no appearance returned, which afflicted him sore; and the day appearing, he resolved to continue there the next night, in hopes he might see him again in the evening, as he had done before. After resolving on this, and

having been waking, as is said, all night, he laid him down to sleep. He was no sooner fallen into a deep sleep, but he dreamed that he saw, or, to speak it in the language of the East, the ancient father, the venerable stranger, appeared to him again in a dream.

He was most agreeably surprised with the sight of him, and according to the Eastern custom fell at his feet, embracing his knees, and with all the passionate expressions which he had used before, expostulated with him, that he should leave him so in the dark, and half informed, after having assured him that he would fully let him into the knowledge of that most important secret.

The vision, on the contrary, seemed displeased, and looked at him with a less smiling and pleasant countenance than he had done before, when he was awake; and with a stern voice asked him wherefore he called after him so importunately, when he had stayed so long with him, and had so fully informed him of all things he could desire.

O my father! says the Arabian, (though himself a hundred and fifty years old,) did not you put me in expectation that you would likewise inform me of what mighty importance this frightful comet should be to Pharaoh, and to his kingdom, and to the country where we are, that I might obtain the favour of the king, and be accepted for my extraordinary wisdom and knowledge among the people?

Thou fool! says the vision harshly: O thou of weak and empty judgment! was it not sufficient to thee, that I had let thee know it was no new thing, nothing out of the course of nature, but a comet or star of a different kind from, and remoter position than the rest; that it came to be visible here only in the course of its ordinary revolution, and may perhaps appear just in the same manner, and in the

same place again, about seven or eight hundred years hence?

Can anything be more natural than that when I had told thee this, thou shouldst know also that there are no extraordinary things portended in nature's common and ordinary events; no portentous threatening; no ill omens or bodings in the common appearances of the heavens; no more in one star than in another? When I had therefore told thee that it was only an ordinary revolution of a comet, I in effect told thee that it imported nothing, either to Pharaoh or to thee, or to any person or place whatever.

The Arabian, surprised, and yet informed by this discourse, stood justly reprov'd, and for awhile answered not a word; which the vision as it were observing, spoke again as follows:

Though I have given thee sufficient light whereby to expose the ignorance of the wise men who have been called before Pharaoh, yet there are many things which thou mayest say to the king, which are of great importance to him and his kingdom to know, which thou shalt be enabled by me to give him the knowledge of, and which, if thou diligently listen to my instructions, shall set thee at the right hand of the king in all his councils, and cause thee to be esteemed the wisest man in his kingdom: but then thou must be very careful to observe all the rules which I shall give thee, and to act in exact obedience to them.

The doctor awaking, and the vision being ended, he now began to understand who it was he had been conversing with, namely, an angel of the invisible world, (I suppose the word 'devil' was not known among them at that time,) and that for the future he had a fair opportunity of good intelligence from the other world, upon all necessary occasions, and upon the most important inquiries.

Comforted exceedingly with this intelligence, he hastens back to the city, and being sent for to appear before the king, as he expected, Pharaoh told him the occasion of his sending for him, and how the southsayers and wise men were puzzled and perplexed about it, but could give him no rational account of it.

Upon this the Arabian told the king that he was sorry to find him, Pharaoh, made so uneasy by the apprehensions of a thing, which though above the reach and understanding of the magicians, had yet in it nothing extraordinary, nothing out of the course of nature; that there was nothing in it more than the necessity of its own motion occasioned, and that it had therefore no portentous import or signification to Pharaoh, or to any of his people, or of his dominions; and that this he might be assured of.

Then he went on, and gave the king an account of the nature of the thing, as a comet or blazing star; and that word for word as the ancient stranger or spirit had delivered it; and this he did too in the audience not of Pharaoh only, but of his whole court; and that with such a general applause, that all the other magicians and southsayers acknowledged the justice and reason of what he said, and the king was made perfectly easy upon that account. From whence they tell us, that the Egyptians, though in other cases the most superstitious people in the world, and that used formerly to be the most concerned upon all new phenomena in the heavens, or upon any unusual appearances, flying immediately to the divinations, and to their southsayers, and magicians, to interpret and account for such things to them, are yet, ever since this discovery by the Arabian southsayer so long ago, under no concern at all upon the appearance of comets or blazing stars, on any account whatsoever.

But I return to the Arabian. It was no small

fame which he gained by the solution he had given of this appearance of a comet; Pharaoh preferred him before all the magicians of Egypt, and exalted him to divers honours, but particularly to that of being near his person, to counsel and advise him upon all extraordinary occasions, as well in matters of state and politics, as matters of difficulty: nor did the rest of the magicians envy him the honours he enjoyed, for they were convinced he merited all the king had done for him; and which was more, they did not find they could come at any part of the extraordinary intelligence or understanding in things which he was master of.

In the mean time, as he was too wise to communicate to anybody the source of his information, so he was too well satisfied with his new intelligence, to neglect the part he was directed to act, which was, frequently to meet with the vision which had once been so favourable to him: in a word, he followed with the greatest assiduity the begun intimacy, and failed not to attend the very next night in particular, after he had made his speech concerning the comet before the king.

On that occasion, going towards his observatory as usual, he was encountered by a man in the habit of an Ethiopian, riding upon a mule, and having a bow hanging over his shoulder, a sheaf of arrows at his side, and a lance in his hand; the man seemed to shun him, and offered to go forward, but presently turned back, and with a kind of compliment to the Arabian doctor, inquired of him if there were any way for him to ford through the river Nilus, which at that time of the year was so low, as to be in some places almost dry, and easily passable on horseback. The Arabian courteously answered him, that there was not any place near the road or track which he was going in, and that he being as he perceived a stranger and alone, it would be hazardous

for him to venture ; but that if he would be pleased to stay, and go with him to a little hut which he had hard by, for his retreat in the night, he would guide him in the morning to a place where he should pass the river with safety.

The traveller thanked him for the kind offer, but seemed rather inclined to go on ; Sir, says the Arabian, the night approaches, and you may meet with other dangers in the way, from crocodiles, lions, &c., pressing him again to stay ; but he declined it again, and as to the dangers, he laughed at and despised them ; Well then, says the kind hospitable Arabian, let me send one of my servants with you to guide you. He seemed at first inclined to accept so kind an offer as that was, but falling a little further into discourse, the Arabian perceived the stranger began to look pleased, and fancying he would accept the first offer, viz., of staying all night, moved it again, and with a little additional entreat- ing, the stranger consented to that part, and turned back with them.

The Arabian, though with two servants with him, was always on foot ; he had himself no weapons, being without fear but of wild beasts, against which his two servants were his security, who were armed with swords and lances ; but the stranger, well armed as above, turning back, they went on fearless together towards the hill, which was about the distance of two miles.

In the way, the Arabian was a little shocked with the unusual civility which a great overgrown crocodile showed them ; who rushing out of a marshy kind of bog near the way, came forward towards them, but on a sudden turned back, and very obsequiously crept into the lurking-place where it had just before come out from, and lay still there, as quiet as if it had been hushed by its own fears, as perhaps it was.

At a small distance further they met two she lions, or, as some call them, lionesses ; and as they heard them growling at some distance, before they were seen, they, that is, the Arabian and his two servants, began to show some concern about it ; but behold, when the lions appeared, they immediately turned about, and fled with the utmost precipitation.

After a little further walking, the Arabian turning to his guest, told him, There, pointing to the hill, which was close at hand, was his little retreat, to which he had invited him, and desired him to leave his mule with his servants, and to walk up the little mount with him ; which the traveller very readily did, bidding his new landlord go before to show him the way, and he would follow him, as also he did ; but what a surprise think you was the poor Arabian in between joy and fright, when turning about at the top of the ascent to receive his guest, he saw nobody but the ancient venerable stranger, who had at first appeared to him, and from whom he had received so much kind instruction and assistance before.

The apparition (for such I suppose it should be now called) perceiving him in some confusion, bid him not be surprised, for he was still his friend, and in the same disposition to serve him as before, and asked him whether he came that night in expectation of meeting him or not ; to which the Arabian replied, He did, hoping to see him in person or in vision, having something to offer, which he hoped he would be so kind as to comply with him in.

Upon asking what it was, he told him that Pharaoh had a great difficulty upon him, and had asked him his opinion therein, and he knew not what answer to give.

What is this difficulty ? says the apparition.

Why, says the Arabian, he has a private account from his spies, that Thermesbus, the general of the armies of Ethiopia, designs to invade him in the

beginning of the year, with an infinite number of troops; and as the king is in greater readiness to begin the war, than the other, he wants my opinion whether he shall make war upon Ethiopia forthwith, or stay till he is obliged to do it in his own defence.

Go you back, says the spectre to him, and wait till the king sends for you to interpret his dream or dreams.

What dream? says the Arabian.

Why to-morrow night, says the spectre, the king shall dream that a black elephant came up to the gates of his palace, and that with his mighty tusks or teeth, he broke down the gates, and was entering in to make further spoil; when the gates being, as I say, broken down first, the tower which was over the gates being shaken with the fall, fell down soon after upon the elephant, and well-nigh crushed him to death; but that, though by his great strength he bore up the weight, yet he was so terrified with the fall of the tower upon him, that he withdrew into the desert and went quite away.

And what interpretation shall I give of this dream? says the Arabian.

You shall tell him, says the spectre, that the black elephant is the king of Ethiopia; that he shall send his general to invade him, even to the gates of his frontier city of Zaba, and shall enter the gates thereof; but that the Egyptians in garrison within shall break out and fall upon him, and though by the great power of their troops they shall escape, yet that they shall retire and go back into the deserts of Ethiopia, and not dare to look upon him any more.

But what then shall I advise to be done? says the Arabian.

You will find it most rational, says the spectre, to advise him to begin the war; and may promise him success, without fear; but if not, let him place

very great garrisons in all the frontier towns of his dominions, south, and especially in Zaba, or Zabda; and let him wait in a good posture of defence, till the Ethiopian army advances to the siege of that place; and so his dream will come to pass.

This was all wonderful; the Arab was surprised with being thus furnished for ingratiating himself with his master the king of Egypt; he knew well enough, that to be able to make Pharaoh dream what he pleased, and then to interpret it how he pleased, must needs make him pass for a great man, in a country too so superstitiously addicted to dreams, and so uneasy to have those dreams interpreted, as the people of Egypt were.

Thus furnished, he goes back to the city, where he heard nothing till the third day in the morning, when the whole court was in disorder, all faces seemed cloudy, and every mind disturbed: the news was soon spread into all parts of the city, that the king had had a frightful and terrible dream, which had so distracted his mind, (it is supposed they did not call him his majesty,) that he could not rest.

The wise men and the southsayers, magicians and astrologers, were immediately sent for in a great hurry to give their opinion, and interpret Pharaoh's dream: the circumstances of the dream were much the same with those already mentioned, with this addition, that at the beginning, Pharaoh being in a deep sleep, heard, as he thought, a sudden great noise, that it alarmed the whole city, and that his guards, as we call them, or soldiers which were about him, were awakened, but all fled away, and that the city was even left without defence, only that the gates were shut.

That in the midst of this hurry, a monstrous black elephant, breaking down all before him, and even overthrowing the houses and buildings which

were without the city, came on, no one resisting him, to the gates of the city or castle where Pharaoh slept; that with the force of his mighty tusks, or teeth, he beat down the gates thereof; but that the tower being shaken also, part of the building fell down upon the back of the elephant, and, as the king thought at first, had crushed him to death.

But that notwithstanding the weight of the building which fell down was very great, yet that the elephant by his mighty strength bore itself up and received no injury by it; but being made afraid by the great blow it received, it withdrew, and retired into the desert towards the south.

None of the magicians could interpret this dream, or rather, they could not agree in their interpretations of it; some said one thing, some another, so that Pharaoh received no satisfaction from their interpretations; whereupon the Arab, who appeared at court purposely to be called in, was summoned, the king being told that he was there.

He came, without any hesitation, at the first call; and the king, with great appearance of disturbance, tells him what a strange dream he had had, how it had disturbed him, and the like, and added, that none of the interpretations which the wise men had given of it, were satisfactory to him, or agreeing with one another. The Arab having then demanded a particular of the king's dream, had it related to him as above; then he desired to know what account the magicians had given of it, and how they had interpreted it; which when he was told, he expressed some wonder that they should all amuse the king in such a manner, and should say nothing but what was perfectly remote from the case.

But turning to the king, Let not Pharaoh, says he, be any more disturbed about the interpretation

of his dream, seeing the event shall redound to the honour of the king, and prosperity of his dominions; for that the dream being interpreted, is a representation of what shall immediately come to pass: and then he went on to interpret boldly the dream thus.

The noise, O king, says he, which thou wast alarmed with in the city, and which thy soldiers were intimidated with, so as to run out of the city, this is nothing else but a rumour of war from the South, and a certain alarm upon the approach of an army upon the borders, at whose approach all the inhabitants of the country shall fly into the mountains and cities for fear of the invaders.

The black elephant assaulting the gates of the king's palace is the general of the armies of Ethiopia, who shall make war upon Pharaoh, and shall invade his kingdoms with a great army, and shall break down the gates of his strong cities; but let not the king be dismayed at the strength of this enemy which is so great, for the power of Pharaoh shall fall upon him, and shall strike him with terror and amazement; so that he shall flee away with all his army into the wilderness, and into the desert country, and shall be seen no more.

He had no sooner delivered his interpretation, but Pharaoh embraced him with joy, and told him that he had indeed given him a right interpretation of the dream; and that he fully believed it would come to pass in the same manner: whereupon Pharaoh forthwith caused preparations of war to be made, and sent ambassadors into Ethiopia to denounce war.

The same year that the Arabian had given this interpretation of the king's dream, the Ethiopians with a great army invaded the coasts of Egypt, wasting the country, and slaying the people, even to the gates of Zaba, or Zabda, a fortified city on

the frontiers of the country, which they besieged, but in vain; and the king of Egypt marching against them with all his chariots and horses, at their approach the Ethiopians fled, and retired into the desert country, and were seen no more.

This story, supposing it, or the substance of it, to be true, lets us into the manner and method in and by which the Devil first introduced a correspondence with mankind, and how he transacted the same with the magicians of Egypt, which was certainly continued by him for many ages afterwards, in the very same manner, and by which the magicians of Egypt obtained so much in the opinion of mankind, that they passed for the wisest men in the world; whereas all this knowledge, if we may believe tradition, was neither more or less than a mere dealing with the Devil, a plain downright hellish correspondence, managed by a magical scheme, dictated by the Devil himself, and observed by the magicians with but too much exactness on all occasions.

By this diabolical magic the Devil conversed freely with the magicians, and they with him; and whatever some may pretend, that the Devil cannot assume a human shape for his correspondence with mankind, it is most certain that he did appear in divers shapes, and on many occasions, or else all the accounts of such things which tradition has handed down to the succeeding ages must be false and fabulous, made up by the invention of the ages in which they were written.

But that this was not so, is apparent from the Scripture, as also from the first writers of the Egyptian and Phœnician histories, by all which we read of the wickedness of the magicians; as particularly in the story of the wonders wrought by Aaron and Moses in the presence of Pharaoh, where it is allowed that the magicians wrought by enchant-

ment, which I always understood to mean by invoking the assistance of the evil spirit, and by receiving help and secret powers as well as intelligence from those evil spirits; and besides the working by enchantment or sorcery, so taken notice of there, we see it mentioned again in the Book of Wisdom, chap. xvii.; speaking of the plague of darkness, he says, *They were scattered under a dark veil of forgetfulness, being horribly astonished, and troubled with [strange] apparitions. Noises [as of waters] falling down, sounded about them, and sad visions appeared unto them with heavy countenances.* Verse 6; *Only there appeared unto them a fire kindled of itself, very dreadful: for being much terrified, they thought the things which they saw to be worse than the sight they saw not.*

Verse 7; *As for the illusions of art magick, they were put down, and their vaunting in wisdom was reprov'd with disgrace. For they, that promised to drive away terrors and troubles from a sick soul, were sick themselves of fear, worthy to be laughed at.*

This whole quotation is a description of the darkness of Egypt, in which, according to this text, there were strange apparitions, being evidently the Devil and evil spirits with human shapes, horrible appearances, and heavy countenances.

I think this is so plain as to need no confirmation from other opinions: magic was reprov'd, that is to say, disgrac'd, because the Devil could not assist the magician, so as to make any abatement of the darkness, which was wrought by Heaven; for even the fire could not be made to give any light, so the power of art, nay, even of magic itself, was at an end.

In this terrible case, the Devil, or rather devils, were, it seems, permitted to appear in horrible and frightful shapes, with heavy countenances, &c.

In like manner I cannot doubt but he appeared

to the magicians when he and they had occasion to meet and converse, and carry on their hellish combinations and confederacies for doing mischief; and this brings me of course to speak of the manner of the magicians conversing with the Devil, for hitherto we have only spoken of his conversing with them.

The case is this: whenever the Devil had an occasion to speak with the old Arab, or in ages after that (for the Arab was first) with Ali Albrahazen the magician of Saba in Arabia, he knew well how to find them out, and could go to them, meet them in apparition, or speak to them in vision; but what was to be done when they wanted his assistance upon any emergency?

The story of Ali, mentioned already, stated the matter for him, namely, that he was to go into the desert to a certain palm-tree, surround it so many times, call the Devil so many times in every circle by such and such a name, and then he would come.

Here was indeed a great deal of ceremony, before his worship would be spoken with; and I cannot but think our friend Roger M—— (Accepted Free Mason, &c.) speaks with him sometimes upon much easier terms; for the world is grown much nicer of late, than they were then, and the Devil is obliged to treat with them on terms of less ceremony.

But the rest of the story of the old Arabian will state this matter much clearer, and to the understanding of every reader; and will let us see a little what methods they took to raise the Devil in king Pharaoh's time, and before our modern experiments were in use.

The Arab was now a great person, all Egypt received him as a wonderful man; his words were the oracle of the day, for whatever he said came to pass; he was sent to far and wide, and messengers

came from Persia, from Phœnicia, nay, from Ethiopia, for him to come thither, and give the interpretation of their visions, and explain to them every doubtful case ; but he would not leave the court of Pharaoh, and he was in the right, for the king highly honoured him.

All this while his reputation wholly depended upon the constant intelligence which he kept up with his familiar spirit, (so I may now call it,) I mean the apparition which came to him in the desert ; but as this appearing was arbitrary, and when it pleased, and might not be at hand when he might have a more than ordinary occasion for it, it occurred to him one night to propose methods of a more constant and less difficult correspondence, and that the apparition might be brought to a greater familiarity, so as that when any exigence was upon him, he might be sure of his aid, might be able to call him to his assistance, and that he would not fail to appear.

Story does not record what condition the Devil might make with the old Arab ; as for selling souls, signing contracts, and the like, it seems to me there was little need of these things in those days ; if there had, and the Devil had insisted on it, I doubt not the Arabian would have made no more scruple of it, than our brother of the trowel, who adorns so often his blue ribband with the most honourable badge of the leather apron ; and being first incorporated, as above, in the ancient society of free Th——s, may, for aught we know, build two or three churches abroad, seeing the Devil and he are known to be upon their travels together.

You have thus a sketch of Satan's professed correspondence with his agents in the first and most early days of the magic art ; if by those subtleties he brought them into great reputation among the people, and in the courts of princes, you are not to

doubt but he found his account in it ; for by gaining a reputation to his agents, and at the same time keeping them at his command, for the sake of the illuminations which they gained from him, he had them always at his hand, ready to do or undertake anything, however black, which, in the course of their witchcrafts, came in their way. We shall find some flaming examples of this kind very quickly.

But for the present let us keep to our Arab as a sample or instance of the ordinary way of such people in their future correspondences ; hitherto you see the Devil very assistant, and, in his way, obliging to the last degree, to his new acquaintance the Arab. I will, for the present, suppose he had no other correspondent, at least not in Pharaoh's court, nor was there any need of another ; but you are to suppose he had more such, or such like, in other places.

He had, it seems, found out the way to make himself necessary to the Arab, so that the doctor could not bear the thoughts of wanting his constant assistance : the sense of this puts the Arab upon proposing to him, that for the future the Devil should be so favourable to him as always to come to him whenever he had occasion, and this without obliging him to go into the desert and up the hill, in search of him, which many times the extraordinary demands of the court would not admit, nor allow him time for.

If the Devil did concede this favour, which was more than he granted to Ali Albrahazen (for he obliged him to come to the palm-tree, walk so many times about it, call aloud so many times upon him every circle he made) before he would come ; I say, if he yielded to this at the desire of his acquaintance the Arab, it was certainly for the great ends which were to follow.

Upon his new proposal, measures were stated between them that upon such and such formal ma-

naging, (for there was some reason, it seems, to make it a piece of great formality,) the Devil should always, that is, some of the innumerable legions should always appear; whether Satan himself, or some of his messengers, servants, or gentlemen in waiting, history indeed is not so particular as that I should be able to give you the names of them, whether Christian name or surname, as in other cases might be expected.

The forms of his appearing, the occasion, the conditions, &c., being thus left to the Arab to determine as should be for his occasion, let us see how near we can come to the particulars.

Circles and figures visible to others, with some needful cant or hard words which might be made use of audibly, as there might be occasion; these seem to have been appointed as the pomp and ceremony of the thing called conjuring and magic, and might be found necessary for many reasons; and in several ages these were varied and changed, as the magician and the Devil might agree about it between themselves.

It was no doubt a great condescension that the Devil would stoop to be always at hand, and to come when he was called; but he found his account in it: the Arab now had him at his beck, and whenever Pharaoh had any difficult thing to propose, the old Arab could, as they call it, raise the Devil when he pleased, to assist in it.

This is what after-times called having a familiar, and a familiar spirit, and is acknowledged to this time to be frequently practised by witches and warlocks, and what we find mentioned in Scripture. Manasseh, in particular, though one of the kings of Judah, the Scripture is express in it, *That he used enchantments and dealt with familiar spirits and wizards*, 2 Kings xxi. 6.

Several hundred years before this, it is apparent, by the laws against such as these, that such were ; and that, doubtless, while they were in Egypt, nay, it must be there ; the law is very express, and reckons up several sorts, Deut. xviii. 10, 11 ; *There shall not be found among you* (mark the kinds),

1. One that uses divination.
2. An observer of times.
3. An enchanter.
4. A witch.
5. A charmer.
6. A consulter with familiar spirits.
7. A wizard.
8. A necromancer.

Then follows the just character of those practices, ver. 12 ; *For all that do such things are an abomination to the Lord.*

Now from the same text we shall prove that these were practices in the nations of that part of the world, even long before the children of Israel came into the land of Canaan. See the same chapter, verse 12 ; *And because of those abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.* And again, ver. 14 ; *For these nations which thou shalt possess hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners.*

Now such a one was this Arab ; let him act as he did, and be that how it will, it is evident he had a familiar ; the meaning is, he was in or under a covenant with the Devil ; he had made an agreement with the apparition for continuing the correspondence, and for attending him constantly, to furnish him for his predictions, foretelling events, and acquainting them with secret and hidden things.

These are the known interpretations of these several expressions, having a familiar, using divination, enchantments, &c. All imply a correspond-

ence with the Devil, to help them in such extraordinary cases.

Such a sort of people, it seems, there was among the Canaanites, that is to say, the Phœnicians ; and the abomination was come to such a height, and God had borne with it so many ages, that now he was resolved to drive out those nations, for this very crime. Now, as there were such people among the Phœnicians, no doubt but there were such among the Egyptians too, from whom these people of Israel came out, and who, though with the first-born of their children slain in Egypt, the loss of their army and king in the waters of the Red Sea, and other calamities, they were reduced low enough at the time that we read of them, yet were a strong and powerful nation, even from the time of Mizraim, their greatest monarch after Cham.

As they were a powerful and great people, so they were a wise and learned nation, as wisdom and knowledge went then in the world ; and therefore we find, that however the Chaldeans and Arabians boast that they were the first searchers into the mysteries of wisdom and knowledge, and that the first rudiments of the celestial studies were conceived among them, which yet does not appear other than in their pretences ; yet suppose it, or suppose we were to grant it, we still find that they went to Egypt for their practice and encouragement ; that perhaps in Arabia they might drink in the first knowledge and principles of things ; but Arabia, a country always poor, and not able to give encouragement to learning, as we say of a neighbouring country, afforded nothing but the dry study, they must go further for the improvement of it ; in short, they might stay at home and get knowledge, but they must go abroad if they would get money.

This was the reason that, as it is at this time somewhere else, as soon as the poor wretches had

got a little smattering of Arabian, mountain wit, and a little star-gazing knowledge, away they went to Egypt, and there they set up immediately for wise men and conjurers, and we scarce know what of philosophers.

The Egyptians, a wealthy, but, from the very beginning, a superstitious kind of people, always hunting after secret interpretations, and hidden, reserved events, poring upon, rather than understanding, mysterious things, and loving to have strange stories told them by any one, especially foreigners, gaped eagerly after the fine tales of these second-sighted Arabians, drank in their magic as it was then called, and freely parted with their money to have their fortunes told them, and the lines in their palms explained to them by the crafty, wandering Arabs.

On the contrary, the cunning artists, that, though they knew nothing of the matter at first, yet seeing plainly that even that little was esteemed a great deal, while the people they talked with knew less, and finding the Egyptians easy to be imposed upon, willing to be cheated, and particularly contented to have their pockets picked for the satisfying their simple curiosity; I say, the cunning wandering strangers made a good market of them, grew rich and famous among them, and kept up the reputation of their craft by all the subtleties of wit and invention.

This success encouraging their studies, we may easily suppose they pushed into all manner of natural inquiries, and, as far as they were able, improved themselves, and furnished their heads with the knowledge of human things, such as reason, philosophy, and natural experiments, might supply; and at length pushing at everything, they found the way, or he found it out for them, as I have already observed, to deal with the Devil. And thus

we are come at the original of magic, as we now understand the word, that is to say, of diabolical practices, or a certain spreading of delusions by the assistance of the Devil.

CHAP. VII.

Of the practice and progress of magic, as it is now explained to be a diabolical art; how it spread itself in the world, and by what degrees it grew up to the height which it has since arrived to.

WE have pitched upon Egypt to be the spot where the first hellish artists studied this that I now call diabolical magic. I shall not keep you long upon the cold scent. It was practised there very early, and very long, before we heard much of it anywhere else; but when it took a run, when it started from thence, we shall soon hear of it abroad: for however secret the black art may be, and however private the magicians and their great master the Devil managed their correspondence, yet the practice of it, and the game they played upon mankind by it, was always public and open, as we shall have reason to say, among other nations, as well as among our own.

As to the chronology of it, and when it began, in what ages of the world those Arabians began to practise as above, when they first dealt in this craft, when the Egyptians began to be their scholars, and they the Devil's, it is not (however ancient) so difficult to come at the knowledge of in general, as some other things in the world, which yet we think ourselves very certain of.

The Scripture, whether our good friends that read books in this age will bear with our quoting it in matters of religion or no, yet is generally allowed to be a tolerable good history. Nay, if we may believe some good authors, it must be allowed to be

the most ancient history, and the writing from which all other authorities take their rise; that Moses was long before Berosus, Homer, Hesiod, or in a word, any of the writers on earth. Nor could it be well otherwise, if what is lately advanced is true, that the first knowledge of letters to write by, and to read upon, was dictated to Moses from mount Sinai, by the immediate revelation of Heaven. I say it could not be otherwise. For how should they write before they had letters, and knew how to form the sound of words upon the tables, where they were impressed?

As Moses had the first knowledge of letters, so he had the first knowledge of things too, and was therefore the best qualified to be a collector of antiquities; nor was it so difficult a matter for Moses to write a history of the creation, and of all the material events of things that had happened before his time, as some may imagine: since by the calculations of time, Moses might easily have an account of those things by a successive supply of oral tradition from Noah himself, as you may gather from the times wherein he lived, and the persons with whom he had conversed; of which take the following short sketch, as a leading thread or chain of things directly confirming my argument.

If Moses, then, had the most early knowledge of things by a short succession of the persons relating them, and that even from Adam and Noah in a right line; and if Moses had the first knowledge of letters, even immediately from a superior hand, then at least you must allow me, that Moses was certainly the best qualified to form a history of the first things transacted in the world; and was the first man, or at least the man best able to write that history down. For who could form a history of things they did not know? and who could write before they had letters to form the words he was to

write by? and who could read what was written, unless those letters had been known, and made public in the world?

Hence I infer that Moses was the first historian, and the Books of Moses are the first history in the world; and if the first, consequently most likely to be the best authority; at least, as I have said above (and that my readers may not be pushed upon too hard, to believe those books which they have so ill a relish of), I say at least, they will allow that the Scripture or Pentateuch is a tolerable good history, and that is all I ask of them as a favour.

Now to begin with the chronology of things: the law given to the Jews from the mouth of the oracle upon mount Sinai, of which Moses gives us the history, was, according to sir Walter Raleigh, published *anno mundi*

-	-	-	-	-	2514.
Joseph died	-	-	-	-	2370.
Moses was born	-	-	-	-	2433.

The children of Israel came out of Egypt 2513.

But we find in the history of Joseph, and we find by the commands to extirpate witches and sorcerers, mentioned in the first law given the Israelites; I say, we find the practice of diabolical magic was much more ancient than Moses, nay, than Joseph, and that it was practised so long ago, not only in Egypt, but in Phœnicia also; and perhaps in the last as soon as in the first.

First, It seems that God resolved to drive out the Phœnicians, that is, the Canaanites, before the children of Israel, even for this very offence among others; and I cannot come up to the modern rate of scepticism, as to believe God would have driven them out of their country for a crime which they were not guilty of; and especially too, that he would have assigned that for a reason of it which the poor people could have stood up and cleared

themselves of, and have said they did not understand what it was.

This goes far to a suggestion that the Canaanites were guilty of it even four hundred years before, and before God's promise to Abram to give him that country; or else we must suppose the Canaanites condemned to an expulsion before the crime for which they were to be expelled was committed; and I can no more come into that than the other.

Certainly, God's promise to turn out the inhabitants for Abram's posterity must be allowed to be a sentence of condemnation upon the Canaanites, even at that time; and he would not have condemned them to banishment, I mean as a nation, for crimes which they were not even then guilty of; especially that very crime being assigned as the cause of their said condemnation and sentence.

If this argument is just, as I think it must be, then I have gained the point as to the antiquity; for then this crime of diabolical magic is as ancient as Abram; and it is evident Abram was born above fifty-six years before Noah died. How long this wicked trade was known before Abram, we cannot determine, but may grant it might be some considerable time.

It is certain, however, that in the reign of Mizraim, who was but the grandson of Noah, they were grown very considerable, I mean as to their reputation, in the Egyptian court; and I am willing to suppose my old Arab was one of the chief, if not one of the first of them in Mizraim's reign, and perhaps near the beginning of it; for as the Devil introduced himself as it were volunteer to him, it should seem that he had no correspondents of that kind there before, and took that method to begin his acquaintance; perhaps allowing his correspondents to convey the same method of intelligence

from one to another, and perhaps to renew the contract as often as he their instructor thought fit.

But be that how it will, it is certain the Devil must be aggressor, in all ages of this art. He knew well enough how to break in upon them, how to show himself, and make his appearances to them as often as he thought fit; and could begin it, or renew it, how, and whenever he pleased. But the case was quite different on their side, for nobody knew how to come at him, they did not so much as know him when they saw him, or know where he lived, where he kept his residence; how to go to him, or send to him; or, in a word, to have any correspondence with him, but just as he thought fit to enter into a familiarity with them, and give them methods and rules by which they should obtain audience of him, when, and as often as they had occasion.

This being the case, it is not to be wondered that the Devil, and those men of craft, became acquainted very soon in the world; for the Devil is too diligent to neglect his own affairs any longer than till they were ripe for his agitation.

Having then brought all the southsaying and magic of the first ages as it were within his own management, and established a correspondence with the wise men of the most early times, we are next to examine how it proceeded, and what progress it made: and in making this inquiry, it comes directly in my way to tell you a very unhappy truth; namely, that the clergy of those times seem to me to be the first conjurers, and dealers with the Devil; and so in all the subsequent times, and in all or most of the distant nations of the world; I mean next immediately after those Egyptian proficients.

I hope our most reverend and right reverend of the sacerdotal order in these days, and in this wise

magical age, will take no offence at me for this, at least till I have further and fully explained myself. Far be it from us (and sad would be our circumstances should I venture) to suggest that any of our clergy should be conjurers, and deal in magic : no, no ; plenty of grace, and paucity of brains, I hope, is our established protection from such a dismal eruption as that would be upon us.

In order therefore to explain myself fully upon this subject, I must go back to the early ages of the world, even just where I was before. The Devil, after the flood, observing the world begin to fill, and that the people, spreading themselves over it, began to people it again, and form themselves into nations and governments ; one of his first cares was to debauch their principles as to religion, to dictate false notions of homage and worship to them, and, in a word, to introduce idolatry.

As he knew perfectly well the end he aimed at, so he was not at a loss to find out the means. It would be too long a story to tell you in what manner he found out gods for them to worship, and how he canonized their heroes for them. The tale of Ninus or Nimrod appearing to the wise men in a flame of fire, and telling them he was going just then up into heaven, from whence he would always shine upon them in the shape of a star, and that they should build a temple to the glory of his memory ; that he should be called Baal or Bell, which is as much as to say, a great god, and that he would be always ready to help them against their enemies, as he was to fight for them while he was alive ;

I say, this tale, suppose it but a tale, was not at all unlikely to take with the people, who had the memory of their dead hero-king fresh in their thought, and who were ready to idolize the very empty sound of his name. Suppose the wise men, as they called them, only feigned or forged this story,

and reported it to the people as a vision which they had really seen, though they had not seen it at all, yet it was not unlikely to make impressions upon them, in their first ignorance of things.

But suppose, on the other hand, the Devil, who is always awake, should have really shown himself in such an appearance, and then have drawn in the wise magicians of that age, upon seeing such a sight, frightful and horrid like the Devil, that formed it, to relate (as they might with truth) the fact to the people: it was not at all strange that the wise men mentioned should go to the king with that story also; and that he the king, bigoted by the magicians, and terrified as they were, should immediately order a temple to be erected, sacrifices to be appointed, and a formal worship set on foot, to the honour of this great god Bell, whose memory was so high in their esteem before.

History is very full of the first fury of idolatrous zeal, and of the extravagant branches of their devotion, I mean in their princes. Ninus built a house for the worship of Bell, the walls and towers are a prodigy in themselves; what the manner of worship was we do not read, though afterwards we have the description of their abominable rites, as the sacrifices to Moloch, viz., making their children to pass through the fire; whether they were burned to death, or horribly scorched, authors do not yet resolve us. The king of Moab sacrificed his son, the heir apparent of his throne, upon the walls of the city, only to obtain deliverance from the siege by the help of his idol, at the price of his son's blood.

As those idols were introduced by the art of the Devil, so it must be that the direction came from him; I mean as to the manner of the idol-worship, and that he certainly held an immediate correspondence with the institutors and managers of the idol rites.

These were the magicians and astrologers, who, by his directions, were instructed what ceremonies, what rites, what manner of worship to offer to their gods; and as they consulted the magicians for the institution of their worship, so, in a few ages after, the magicians or southsayers were their priests, and their priests were all magicians and southsayers. Hence the aruspices, the sacrificers, and the priests of the several temples, where answers were given to questions, events predicted, and the like, were the givers of those answers from the oracle; that is, in plain English, the priests were magicians, and the magicians were the priests, and the Devil brought witchcraft and idolatry to be at last but one science.

As he corresponded personally with Ali Albrahazen, and the old Arab, in the infancy of time, and when his kingdom was, as it were, but just erecting and setting up in the world, so when that personal correspondence appeared successful in setting up idolatry, he made it equally useful for the propagating it, and the magicians became priests in the temples of their gods.

Nothing could be more agreeable to the priests of their idols, than this intimacy with the infernal spirits; for the Devil, who was always his craft's master, failed not as well to delude the priests themselves, as by them to impose upon the world; nor could he have carried on his game upon mankind without it. For if the priests had not believed that they conversed with the gods, when really they conversed with the Devil; if they had been all let into the secret, and made to propagate their religion as a cheat upon the world, to which they were to have been privy; if it had all been known to be, as it really was, a conspiracy against heaven in favour of the Devil, and with real design to impose upon and damn the world, they would never have been

brought universally to have kept the Devil's counsel, and have come into the plot, at the price of their eternal felicity, and the souls of all their friends.

The Devil's plot would certainly have been blown long before it was, and the priests of the oracles would most certainly have, first or last, have betrayed their master, and exposed the whole cheat. But the case was evidently this, the Devil found the way to delude and impose upon the very priests themselves; and not only suggested to them, but made them really believe, that the gods conversed with them, that the voices they heard, the answers dictated by their oracles, the apparitions, &c., were all the real appearances of their gods, those in particular whose servants and priests they were; when in truth it was no more than a gross delusion, and an appearance of the Devil.

I make no doubt but that the tumult raised by the silversmiths at Ephesus, though they in particular were touched with the sense of their interest, and the loss of their craft and trade, yet was carried on in the sincerity of their ignorance by those who called her the great goddess Diana, whom they and all the world worshipped; that they who cried *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*, believed her to be so, and had not the least notion of their worshipping the Devil.

I doubt not but the priests of Apollo at Delphos, who waited there to give out the answers to the several inquirers that came with their gifts to the oracle, believed that the said oracles were issued by the gods, and especially by Apollo himself; and little thought that they (the priests) were tools of the Devil, to cheat and amuse the world, and propagate idolatry; for which the true God, who was highly affronted in the fraud, would one day put them all to silence.

Thus far, I think the clergy are beholden to me

very much, for establishing their honesty at the expense of their heads, and telling you they were all fools, rather than knaves. At the same time it holds still, and this part can never be denied, that as the Devil carried on his kingdom by the art magic, or what we call the Black Art, so the priests were the instruments both of the witchcraft and the idolatry.

How far the two infernal juggles are still carried on, and whether the priests in most parts of the world (our own, God bless us! always excepted) are not magicians, and dealers with the Devil, even in their sacreds, and by the mere consequence of their office, let the padres and men of the tonsure tell us, and give us satisfaction if they can.

We have now brought the magicians of Egypt and the priests of the pagan temples to be something akin; at least we may say, I have brought them to be all of a trade; and I believe it is not very difficult to show you, that as they served the same master, so they had their instructions by the very same channel, and from the same original: in a word, that the worship of the gods, which was indeed the worship of the Devil, was dictated in the very same way, namely, by an immediate correspondence with the Devil, and with all the circumstances mentioned in the text before quoted; viz., divination, enchantment, conjuration, apparition, vision, dream, familiar spirits, observing times, observing seasons and flying of birds, entrails of beasts, and the like.

It may seem a little difficult to bring all the schemes of idol or pagan worship down to a level with witchcraft and diabolical magic; and some will tell us, that several parts of the pagan worship, or even paganism in general, was established upon pure and just principles, an exact and regular virtue, the height of morals, principles of truth, and of

natural religion, of good government, and of dedication to the public welfare of mankind; nay, even upon principles of piety, and a homage to be paid to the Divine Being, as the first moving cause of life, and as a debt due to that Being, for all the good attending human life; that nothing has been wanting in some pagans but a revelation from heaven, and an opening in the eyes of the soul by divine inspiration, to know the only true God.

Those that are of this opinion, support it by the example of Numa Pompilius, the founder of the Roman rites, and to whom the establishing the greater part of the pagan ceremonies is justly assigned; who, they tell us, acted upon the highest principles of morality and virtue, and even of piety; that he went even to the utmost length that nature and reason could go; that he not only acknowledged a supreme Power, to whom mankind owed his homage for the good received, and who would not fail, in a life to come, to distribute rewards and punishments, agreeable to the life and conduct of every man here: but owned also that worship as a natural debt, to be paid by all mankind; hence upon the door of the temple of the several gods he caused to be written, as a direction to all mankind, this short precept, *à Jove principium*; intimating that every action of man's life should be begun with application to the gods. They add, that Numa had a profound, sincere veneration for the Creator of all things, as the Author of life, and the supreme God of heaven and earth, and that he wanted nothing to be a sincere worshipper of the true God, but a true revelation from heaven, enlightening his mind, and guiding him to know what way of worship that God would be pleased to accept.

They give us several other examples of great and illustrious men, who though professed heathens in the manner of worship, and the immediate object,

yet formed their notions upon just and noble principles, strictly adhering to the natural principles of religion, closely pursuing justice in government, impartiality in matters of right, preserving virtue and honour in the people, and making wholesome laws for their better government, upon all occasions ; such are Lycurgus the Lacedæmonian, Confucius the Chinese, Solon the wise philosopher, and sundry others.

They also name to us the books of the Sibyls, which, so far as they are discovered, they say are filled with summary rules for well-governing mankind, and directing a due homage to the great God.

But let us look through all this. God, for wise ends, did not think fit to accept these little emanations of natural light, or to reveal himself to the persons ; however sincere they may be said to be in the pursuit of divine light, as then they were left to the dim and dusky shadows of natural reasonings only, so it appeared that those natural reasonings were not sufficient to inform the mind of man concerning God ; but that when they had done all, for want of further illuminations, the Devil was suffered to chop in, and confound all their brightest ideas of worship, with a horrid rhapsody of complicated idolatry.

This very observation is sufficient, or at least it might be expected that it should be sufficient, to crush the notions which our more polite gentlemen now advance, in favour of the study of magic, as an art or science only ; they contend that the word magic is greatly mistaken, and that we do not understand what we speak of ; that magic is nothing else but a received well-guided way of thinking and acting ; that it is truly the science of reflection, and the art of making a right judgment of things, by giving every object, however distant, its due weight ; thinking of things according to the true

rate of them ; that the human judgment is in itself infallible, and therefore in some manner equal to the Divine Being ; a light issued from heaven, and darted by emanation into the souls of men ; which, if rightly cultivated and improved, and especially if sincerely followed, adhered to, and obeyed, guides the soul to understand things in a superior way ; this, they say, is magic : the very word which intimates a superior and divine knowledge, leads to understand what it means ; and this, say they, duly followed, would from the beginning have made men be, as the serpent told them they should be, viz., like gods, knowing good and evil.

Now these fine-spun notions or imaginations, I say, are fully answered, by taking notice that there is apparently no such infallibility in man's judgment, unless assisted by a yet higher and superior degree of illumination ; that is to say, unless God, the author of all perfect and complete illumination, should add to it the revelation of himself, and of his mind and will, giving the man rules and laws for his further illumination, and for the direction of himself.

This appears in the particular mentioned above, namely, that notwithstanding man's infallible judgment led him to the knowledge of a divine being, and that there was a great first cause, infinite, eternal, and superior, because prior to all being, and that this first being had a right to the homage and obedience of his creatures ; yet, till God by revelation directed it, all the perfection of human judgment could never lead mankind to a right knowledge of the worship and homage this great being required. But they sunk down into idolatry, worshipping many gods, and images, the representations of gods ; and in a word, into the grossest and dullest conceptions of things relating to their deities, such as one would think it was impossible human

judgment, under any manner of improvement, could fall into; things unworthy of God, nay, unworthy of men. Hence they made their Jupiter, though they called him the father of gods and men, a horrid picture of ungoverned lust, a ravager of the world, ravishing innocence and virtue, transforming himself into divers shapes, to obtain his vicious desires; as into a white bull, to carry away Europa; into a golden shower, to fall into the lap of Danae, and the like. Here is the picture of infallible human judgment! Wonder no more that at last it carried them all headlong into the arms of the Devil, and not only to be ignorant of the worship of the true God, but to pay the homage they owed to their Maker, to him who was their destroyer and enemy.

Thus Numa, with all his sincerity and piety, resolved all his ideas into a confused mass of idolatrous ceremonies, adorning the priests, forming new orders and degrees of his clergy; and, in a word, drawing a scheme of pompous paganism; establishing games, and inhuman fightings of gladiators, races and exercises for sport, in honour of the gods: besides crowding the city with temples and altars, to innumerable and unknown deities; so that, in a word, after he had acknowledged that there was a supreme power, a God of all the earth, a great first cause of life, and to whom all homage was due, I say, after all these sublime ideas, he yet sunk down into the grossest of all idolatries, the worshipping imaginary gods, deifying the stars of heaven, and offering sacrifices, building temples, dedicating priests, and making vows to stocks and stones, the work of their own fingers, and the idols of their own brain.

Will any one think we wrong the pagan institutions, much less the institutors, to say, that the Devil had a finger in all this? Does not Satan in

policy suffer an appearance of virtue and piety to be set up, to mock the world into true devil-worship? How could he set himself up to be worshipped as a god, and how could he make himself truly the god of this world, if he did not enjoin to his worshippers, at least seemingly, some forms of life, and appearing principles, agreeable to the rules of virtue and honour? It is by this that in general he has carried on the delusion, and this, as I may say, has been the magic of his art, as well as the art of his magic.

The Romans were the most civilized heathens that the world ever saw; their government had in it all the appearance of justice and moderation; they honoured and rewarded virtue and honour, love to our country, courage, gallantry: how did they crown those that saved a citizen, give triumphs to those that had conquered their enemies, give prizes to those who excelled in the most commendable things! How did they honour chastity in their vestal virgins; temperance, eloquence, learning and philosophy, in the persons of those that excelled, and erect statues to their memory when dead!

Yet all this while their religion was devil-worship; their augurs and southsayers, and the priests of their temples and oracles, were diviners, magicians, wizards, and, in the very letter of it, dealers with the Devil, and that in the worst sense; all their sacrifices, and their institution of games, for appeasing the angry gods, were the most horrid and barbarous pieces of ignorance, or hellish cruelty and brutality, that could be imagined, even sometimes to human sacrifices; and in all those excesses of their devotion, the Devil led them on blinded by strong delusions to such performances, (in order to appease the wrath of Heaven,) as were unworthy of God, inconsistent with his nature, as a bountiful beneficent

being, as a fountain of goodness and mercy, infinitely compassionate to his creatures; and who could not take pleasure in those things which were injurious to mankind, in order to be reconciled to them, or be pacified by destroying those whom it was his glory to save and protect.

All the while that they erected temples to justice, to honour, to virtue, and to peace, they studied all possible ways, by war and blood, to amass treasures, and enlarge their empire, until, as the Roman histories confess, they left no nation unsubdued, except such as they found it not in their power, or worth their while, to conquer; that is to say, such as the Parthians, who were too powerful for them to conquer, and so poor when conquered, as not to be worth the attempt; or the Indians and Ethiopians, who though rich, yet were so remote, and fenced by wide unpassable deserts, and protected by the excessive heat of the climate, so that it was not in their power to assault them. Their armies were not able to endure the march through the Libyan sands, or over the mountains and vast waters of India, under or near the equinox, and where there was nothing to shelter or relieve them under the excessive and violent force of the sun.

All the rest of the world, as I have said, they continually invaded and subdued, and mattered not the reason and justice of the war, if the reward of their treasures, and the advantage of governing them, was apparent.

Thus Cæsar invaded the Gauls, the Helvetians, the Germans, without any just pretence of making war, except only that of conquest, plunder, and dominion. What pretence of war had the Romans against a quiet, a remote, an inoffensive nation, as the Britons certainly were? They neither offered to disturb the Roman government, or were in condition to do it; having no knowledge of arms

equal to any such attempt, no alliances or correspondence with any of the Romans' enemies, no ships to traverse the ocean, and make them terrible.

Nothing called Cæsar over hither to invade the innocent Britons, but thirst of glory, and enlarging dominion; a principle imbibed from the tyrannic nature of the Devil; to raise human glory, not by deeds truly great, not by virtuous actions, but by destroying and insulting the weak in presumption of strength, and by shedding blood to triumph over the wrongs and oppression of their fellow-creatures.

And what was the reward of Cæsar's ambition and thirst of glory? a conquest indeed he gained; but of what, and for whom? a conquest of innocence, and a conquest for the Devil; the fruit of which was thus to be summed up: They, first and last, destroyed two millions, some think five or six millions, of the inhabitants; they spilt also an ocean of Roman blood; eighty thousand Romans were killed at one time by the gallant queen Boadicea at Camalodunum, now Malden, in Essex; and after a possession of above six hundred years, they were forced to abandon it with infamy and scandal, and so ended just where they began.

Whence was all this, but from the Devil? whose government of the world had this magic indeed always in it, that it spread cruelty and tyranny in all parts, founded dominion in blood, and made the world a theatre of rapine and violence.

This was the secret magic of his government, and yet this was always carried on under the mask of justice, peace, and religion; that is to say, avarice was justice, and to gain the plunder of a nation was a sufficient pretence to quarrel with and subdue it: conquest then brought peace; that is to say, when rapine or slaughter had impoverished or

extirpated a people, then the Romans gave them peace, and protected the remnant; and as to religion, the substance of it was, as above, cruelty and superstition.

This is the sum of the Roman polity, and of the methods taken in a government and by a people who, as above, are said to be the most civilized of all the pagan nations and governments in the world; and this, in a word, serves to open the eyes of posterity, and betrays the Devil's conspiracy against mankind in the openest manner possible. The magic of hell discovers itself here, that under the specious pretence of just government, and under the fame of a civilized nation, governing themselves and the world by the rules of justice and virtue, a loose was given to all manner of barbarisms, cruelty, blood, and oppression.

It is clear in so many examples, that I need say no more to explain it, that the Roman government and the Roman religion was all founded on a diabolical regimen, and was maintained by the magic and artifice of the Devil and his instruments; which instruments were chiefly the priests of the idol temples and worship, who by the subtlety of their arts (religious art, the worst sort of magic) made such deep impressions on the minds of the deluded world, that not the common sort only, not the vulgar, or as we say the canaille, the mob and rabble of the people, came into it, and believed the lying wonders; but the learned world, the philosophers, the poets, men of the most exquisite parts, and the most polite knowledge, nay, of the noblest principles of virtue, and who had the most refined ideas of justice and honour, even these all came into the delusions of this black art, believed, and, as I may say, relished the witchcraft and delusions of the magicians and sorcerers, and were taken with their lying wonders; even the Cato's,

the Tully's, the great and the greatest heroes, philosophers, scholars, it was all one, they were swallowed up by the arts of the magicians and south-sayers; nay, their kings stooped to deal in this black art themselves. Romulus, the founder of the city of Rome, and the first father even of the Roman name, was himself a southsayer; that is to say, a magician, a diviner or enchanter; in plain English, a dealer with the Devil, and the great propagator of the infernal art; I say, the great propagator of it, for he was the first that instituted the augurs in the pagan worship, and, as I said, hooked in the magicians into their religion, making all the wizards and conjurers priests; though I must insist upon it, not Romulus, Numa, or the Devil himself, could make all the priests conjurers, no, not to this day.

Some have been of opinion that Numa Pompilius, who I have said was sincerely inclined to religion, as it was simply understood to be a mere homage due from man a creature, to God the Creator; that he acted from a sincere principle, and that he went further towards establishing the true religion, than any pagan in the world ever did before him.

But they add, he was lost for want of revealed light: that having determined by the light of his reason that there was a God, and that he was to be worshipped, but not knowing how or in what manner that worship was to be directed, and not being able to find out by his utmost search what worship would be acceptable, he sunk into idolatry and polytheism, as the only pattern that was before him; with this addition, that having thus taken his rise from a wrong beginning, his devout temper hurried him on into all the extremes of idolatry and paganism, until at length he came into this very mischief I am speaking of, I mean, magic, sorcery, and dealing with familiar spirits, that is, the Devil.

This is just what I had said already; but it is

most certain, that though at first they acted upon some foundation of natural principles, or if you please, principles of natural religion, yet they afterwards run further into this sorcery and southsaying, and that with such an universal gust of inclination, that it became a chief part of their religion; and there were very few of their great men, nay, even of their kings and emperors, but what were magicians themselves; and some of them, if not all of them, took it for a part of their imperial titles, and a badge of their honour, to be called Pontifex Maximus, and sometimes appeared in the robes of a sacrificer, and of this or that order of the priests, as they thought fit; until at length unsufferable pride and insolence led them to accept of divine honours themselves, to lay aside the priest, and assume that of a god; placing themselves so above the sacrificer, as to suffer themselves to be sacrificed to: but this went but a little way.

At length the Christian religion, in spite of persecution and obstinate resistance, both from the Jews as well as the pagans, began to spread itself in the world; and as Christ himself says, that he came to destroy the works of the Devil, so it appeared; for immediately the glories of the pagan superstition began to fade, their oracles ceased, the priests became dumb; and the Devil, not able to carry on the cheat any further, threw it up; the augurs and southsayers fled from the face of the Christian doctrine, and from the preaching of the apostles and their successors, as not able to exercise their sorceries and divinations, no, not so much as in the presence of the Christian ministers.

We have two remarkable instances of this in the sacred text; one is Acts xiii. 7, when being at the isle of Cyprus, Elymas the sorcerer ventured to withstand St. Paul, when he preached the word of God to Sergius Paulus the governor, but for the

audacious attempt was struck blind by the miraculous word of the blessed apostle, so being made an instrument to confirm the governor in his faith, and complete the conversion which the conjuring wretch sought to oppose; ver. 12, *The deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the Lord.*

The other instance is in Acts xix. 19, where indeed there is a double evidence; first, of the power of the Christian doctrine prevailing over the magic and diabolic arts then in practice; and, secondly, of the prodigious increase of those magical delusions among the Romans, however wise and polite a people they were. The story is short, and fully to the purpose: St. Paul, preaching at Ephesus, made a wonderful progress in converting the pagans of that great city, to the Christian faith. Some histories tell us he converted one hundred thousand people there and in the country adjacent; but that by the way: in a word, the text says, ver. 17, *the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.* And how, but by this eminent victory over the Devil? For (besides the conquest of the exorcists who went about to cast out a devil by their conjurings and spells) the magicians themselves were converted by Paul's preaching, and that to a prodigious number of them; ver. 19, *Many also of them which used curious arts, brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.* What a height must the black art of the Devil be come to at that time, that the books which were to be found in that one city should amount to such a sum of money! I give this account, as I have said, to let you see to what an extravagant height the Devil had carried this matter; and how and in what manner he supported his interest in the world. But I must go back to the beginning of things, where I left off,

viz., at the institution of the augurs, who were for some ages the engrossers of all these delusions in the Roman empire.

The augurs were a sort of Roman priests, who pretended to foretell events by omens, by the chattering of birds, howling of dogs, and other uncouth noises of any kind in the air: they were erected into a society, and formed in a college or hall by the king's special order; the number at first was but three, one being taken from every Roman tribe; and while they were thus few, the dignity was very valuable, and it was highly esteemed among even the patricii and nobility. Servius Tullius increased their number to four, and caused them to be taken only from the nobility: afterwards Quintus and Cæneus Agellinus obtained that five more should be added to their number, and should be chosen out of the plebeii or common people. So ambitious were the Romans of this diabolical preferment, and so much honour had the Devil's immediate servants in the world; nay, upon this increase of their number to nine, the government was so resolute against lowering the price of that reverence and esteem they had among the people, that they passed a decree against increasing their number any more.

However, Sylla, one of the most bloody and cruel tyrants of his time, that he might, according to custom, join his care of religion to his thirst of blood, added six more; so that now their number was fifteen. The eldest, whether in years of longest standing in order, (I am not positive which) was made father or president of the college, and had the immediate direction of all the rest.

Their privileges, like their institution, were exorbitant; for they were never to be deposed or expelled, no, not for any crime, how great soever, nor their places filled up by another.

N. B. Crime did not render the Devil's agents

scandalous in their profession, but rather, the wickeder they were, the fitter for the priesthood or augurate. How far the same maxim may hold in some of the sacred order in the world at this time, if I was of their number, I should not vote to have it examined.

And now for the ceremonies of the augur's trade; for we must note, that the art magic had always abundance of dark and uncouth usages attending it, as it has to this day; raising the Devil was not done with a whistle, like calling a dog; or with a beck of the head or hand, as we beckon to servants when we call them silently to come near us; the Devil knew very well that his affair must be clothed with ceremony, or it would not take with the world, or at least, would not hold long in it.

The pagan rites were indeed loaded with burdensome ceremonies; all the Devil's worship was filled with conjurings and mutterings, strange gestures, agitations, ecstasies, and I know not how many distortings of the limbs and countenances, wild practices and frightful noises, that filled the people with terror, and with a kind of awful horror at the majesty of their gods.

The augur's observations were attended with a great variety of those things, as the apparatus to their visions, or whatever else they were to be called. The augur first placed himself upon a high tower like one of our observatories, and perhaps the tower erected upon a high hill, as upon the Mons Palatinus in Rome: here he seated himself in the clearest day, or in a starlight night, to observe what came by him, or in his sight, by day, or what he might hear or see by night.

He held in his hand a *lituus*, that is, a crooked staff, with which he used a great many wild gestures and motions; and he had on his grave *læna*, that is, his southsaying gown or mantle: he

placed himself always with his face to the east, and at his first fixing his station he uttered certain sentences and exotic barbarous words, which none knew the meaning of but the Devil and himself.

Being thus seated and fixed, as I have said, he quarters out the heavens, or hemisphere rather, into four parts or regions, each quarter having beforehand such and such predictions assigned to it: if it was day, then he was to mark every bird that rose up, or came flying by, or towards him; which of the said four quarters he first appeared in, and then killing his sacrifices, and muttering over certain sentences, joining some petitionary speeches to such or such a deity, or demon rather, (which speeches were called *effata*,) he then proceeded to divination.

If it was in the night, he observed in the like manner any fiery meteor, any flying or shooting fires, any sudden vapour, (as the nights are full of such things,) or any cloud eclipsing the light of any particular planet or star of the first magnitude; and then he proceeded in the same manner, only with some particular words and mutterings, as regarded the several appearances respectively.

In the night, it was said, they had the company of several spirits assisting them, and communicating to them the knowledge of the things they desired. Their divinations were arbitrary and positive, nor durst any man ask or inquire of them the reason of what they predicted, or how they came to know that it would or should be so and so. A provision, I must confess, very prudent in the priests, and which, as the case has stood with some of them, would be very much to their convenience to this day, as I shall show in its place.

By this taking such a kind of state upon them, they politicly preserved the reverence and esteem of their order, and imprinted a kind of awe in the

minds of the people, concerning not the holiness of their persons only, (though that went a great way,) but concerning the divine mysteries, as they were called, which were put into their hands; and they were looked upon as persons to whom the gods had committed the most secret things, that were otherwise known only to themselves, and were communicated to the augurs, favourites of the gods, for the good of mankind.

A learned author, speaking of this mystery of southsaying, says, it came first from the Chaldeans, who taught it to the Greeks, of whom Amphiaraus was an eminent proficient; but he mentions nothing of who taught it the Chaldeans, in which I believe my account is the most authentic; namely, that the Devil taught it to the Arab I have mentioned, or to some other, if any was before him; that these gave it to the Egyptians, and Chaldeans, and Phœnicians, much about the same time; and that the Phœnicians taught it the Greeks; their prince Cadmus being an eminent southsayer: and so you see its blessed original.

In a word, as it is a particular familiarity with the Devil, and depends entirely upon his assistance, so nobody can contend that he was not the first introducer of it as an art; since, as I observed, he might easily begin a correspondence with man, but it was utterly impossible that men should begin a correspondence with him, or know where to find him, and how to call him to their assistance, whatever the occasion might be, without his direction, assistance, and consent.

As to the introducing it from one nation to another, it may indeed be something difficult to assign the manner; but as to the mere divining upon the flying of birds, upon noises, and appearances in the air, the chattering of pies, the croaking of frogs and ravens, and the like, I take much of that to be

mere juggle and legerdemain of the priests and augurs; and they have carried on the juggling trade to a great perfection in the same country to this day; (stand clear, Dominicans:) of which hereafter.

But, now, for a downright converse with the Devil, I don't understand that Satan ever tied himself down by articles, that not only such and such a man as my Arab, or Ali Albrahazen, of whom I have spoken, should be able to call him up when they pleased, by such and such forms, ceremonies, voices and sounds; but that to whomsoever they should communicate the same tokens, or watch-words, they should have the same power, and that the very words should call him or his agents up to an appearance, whoever made use of them.

This would have been to have the Devil bind himself prentice to them and their heirs for ever; and to have chained himself down, galley-slave like, to the sound of the words, which I take to be quite wide of the case; nor would it serve his designs, for the Devil loves to know his agents, and not be at the call of every boy, because perhaps his grandmother told him the words which she used to raise the Devil with, or because the Devil and she had agreed upon the matter. But no doubt Satan, who is certainly the author of all this kind of magic, and which therefore and for that very reason is called by his name, 'diabolic;' I say, no doubt, as he is the only teacher of the art, so he teaches it immediately by himself; that is, he makes men magicians, and wizards, and makes old women witches, (ay, and young too,) by an immediate converse and contract with them only, and between them and himself. Nor does he stick at the pains of beginning anew with every person, and in every country; and this is the reason why the black art, as we righteously entitle it, is not the same in all countries, nor is

the Devil talked to in the same words, for then all the witches and magicians of every nation must learn the same language; but on the contrary, as the Devil talks all languages when he pleases, so he talks to every one of his disciples in their own mother tongue, and directs them to do the same to him; so that a Roman wizard calls him up in Latin; a Tuscan conjurer in Italian; a High German doctor makes his circles, and casts his figures, and talks magic to him in the suitable tongue called High Dutch; the second-sighted Highlander in Irish, and the Lancashire lady in English.

So propitious, so civil, so well-mannered is Satan to all his drudges and devotees, that he, to put them to as little trouble as possible, stoops to harken to their summons, as they think fit to express themselves in their own, or any language. Nay, though the magicians sometimes form a cant of their own, by which they amuse their clients, yet their familiar friend takes it in good part, and converses with them in their own way.

Even the poor Indians paw-waw with him in the language of the most northern America, the Banians in the language of the East Indians, the islanders of Amboyna in the language of the Celebes and Moluccas, and the Chinese in that of Grand Tartary.

The magicians seem to act in this part, as if the Devil condescended to them, not they to him; but then this makes it evident, that he converses personally with them all, that he makes his bargains and agreements with them always separately, in all places, and in all languages; whereas, if he gave them a general commission to empower others to divine, enchant, and raise the Devil, or evil spirits, they must all understand one universal language.

The sum of the matter is this; the Devil, as a learned author says, has three ways by which he carries on his kingdom in the world, and by which

he works all his wonders, which amuse and deceive them.

1. By moving the affections and thoughts of men, whether sleeping or waking ; and this, as it respects his causing them to dream on any occasion as he thinks fit, is one very considerable branch of his power.

2. By his exquisite knowledge of nature, by which he turns the causes of things to his own purposes, and often brings to pass such events as suit with his particular occasions.

3. By illusion and fraud, imposing upon the senses, binding and blinding the understanding and the eyes, both of the body and of the minds of willingly-deceived men.

N. B. And I may add a fourth, which perhaps he was not acquainted with in former times ; namely, by familiar agreement, compact and contract with the bright men of the times, who he brings over to converse and correspond with him, and who he acts by, and allows them to play their game and his own together ; and this is magic.

Having then established a correspondence with man, we are not to wonder if, to gratify his new correspondents, he empowers them to act abundance of strange and unaccountable things in the world, that they may by that means obtain a reputation of being wiser and craftier than their neighbours, and may also be admired and esteemed first, and consequently believed.

These wonders they work by his immediate hand, by his power and assistance, as well as direction ; and this I call magic, and it is so in the worst sense.

To this he subjoins a power, as it may be called, over himself ; authorizing the magicians or conjurers to summon him in to their aid whenever they have occasion for him, to demand his presence and assistance whenever they please. It was said of

Hamed, an Egyptian sorcerer, that he had the Devil so at his command, that if he did but draw a circle upon the ground, and stamp with his foot in the middle of it, the Devil would appear, and bring as many devils with him, as the magician stamped several times on the ground; and that upon their so appearing, he could again send them of such errands, and for the despatch of such business as he required, whether to do good or evil, to bring on mischief, or to prevent mischief, as he that so called him up pleased to direct; but I do not vouch the truth of the Devil's complaisance in this particular, nor see the reason of it.

If the magicians in those ancient days had such influence upon him, it is undoubtedly true that they did him great and signal services, for, and by it; or else Satan, who does not use to dispense his favours gratis, must have some secret view in it, which they or we have not yet discovered.

This great use which the Devil makes of magicians and conjurers, is a certain discovery that he is confined by a superior hand in his workings, and that he can only act by stratagem, by cunning and craft, not by force and power.

It is reported of a sorcerer in Rome, that he could call for lightning and thunder whenever he pleased, and that the Devil would produce it for him; but that calling him up once to procure thunder, that should burn a house, and do great mischief, to gratify the wicked design of the conjurer, he told him no, he could not gratify his revenge so far, at least not at that time; and that the same sorcerer did at last confess, that the spirit which he conversed with, could show his power many ways in a miraculous manner, but could not do any mischief by it.

It may be true, and no doubt is so, that the magicians, were they fully empowered, and at liberty,

would really do more mischief than the Devil himself, had he the same power; not that their malice can be greater, but their policy is certainly less; and as they do not see so far before them as he does, so they do not always see into the reason of things, and whether it would be for the common interest or no: for example; were the Devil empowered to fire houses, destroy families, lay waste kingdoms, he might incline to do it; but his pruden- tials and politics might sometimes tell him, that it would be more for his interest to let it alone; and so the magicians likewise find it, I say, for their common interest, to act by craft and subtlety as their master the Devil has done before them, rather than by open rage and fury; I mean, for their common interest as magicians. The Devil could, without doubt, in the ordinary exercise of his power as a spirit, burn, kill, destroy, and in some sense put an end to God's creation: but this would not answer his end; he knows his Maker is his governor, and could if he pleased punish him immediately, even, as he expresses it in the Scripture, before his time: and he knows likewise, that when he had destroyed and made havoc of mankind, God could, with the breath of his mouth, form a new species, and that such a kind as he should have no power over; and therefore it is not, in short, the Devil's interest to make that spoil in the world, which as an angel, as a powerful spirit, he might do; and especially if we suppose him not to be chained and fettered down to superior limitations, which, however, we know to our infinite satisfaction that he is.

In a word, the Devil's business, and all his aim, is not to destroy, but to damn mankind; not to cut him off, and put his Maker to the trouble of a new creation, but to make him a rebel, like himself; and even this he is fain to bring to pass by subtlety and art, making use of man against man, arming

flesh against spirit, and setting nature in defiance of the God of nature ; and this by secretly corresponding with some of the worst and vilest abandoned wretches that he can find ; instructing them, and teaching them his own methods, and so making them traitors to their own kind ; drawing them in to engage with him in ruining the souls and bodies of others, and concerting measures with these corrupted instruments, whose principles he has first debauched, that they may act and do for him, and in his name, all the mischief which he finds it is not for his purpose to do himself.

While he thus lies behind the curtain himself, and is not seen, or at least not publicly, he corresponds most punctually with these agents, empowering and directing them, by a great variety of hellish arts and contrivances, to work wonders, amuse and impose upon mankind, and carry on all his affairs for him. And this is that we call the black art, and so I am come back to my text.

If it be true that the Devil is the prince of the air, then he can form tempests in it, can poison and infect it so, as that all creatures, human as well as sensitive and vegetable, should perish in it ; but as he is yet a prince under limitations and restrictions, so he can exert no more power than he has ; and when his human agents, who are therein worse devils than himself, would be for conflagrations, and general destruction, he wisely, or rather cunningly, puts them off, and diverts them, without telling them, or giving them room to think, that he really has not power himself to enable them.

It is impossible to close this article of the magicians' power being limited, without an agreeable reflection upon the modern furies of our age, your party leaders, and politic scheme-makers ; what merry work they would make in the world, if the Devil, their head engineer, was not limited, and

not in condition to trust them with the power of doing mischief as they desire it.

Perhaps the sense of this limitation in the power of their chief correspondent is one reason, that however studious they are to do mischief, yet they have not so much studied the diabolical art as they would otherwise have done ; in a word, they are not complete magicians, because they see the black art is not wicked enough for them, and they cannot obtain a power by it to out-sin the Devil.

But I come back to the art itself. The artists are certainly very helpful to the Devil, as well as the Devil to them : for as he is obliged to work by stratagem, not by force, all his cunning is employed to carry on his kingdom and government in the world ; and this brings me to the reason why the Devil does not care to act in person, in most cases of his administration ; but to employ those people whom we call magicians, that they may act with his full directions, and though with art, yet with power also sufficient to stand his ground against all human opposition.

Under the cover of these agents he acts with infinite success, by their influence he carries on all his affairs, and especially those of kingdom and dominion, in which it is not for want of impudence if he does not rival or indeed dethrone his Maker. By his secret correspondence with them it is that he fills the world with sham wonders, and false stories, which being detected and exposed, reflects upon the magicians, not upon the Devil ; neither indeed ought it to affect him, for that it is not for want of his assistance if any of them miscarry, but from their expecting more from him than it is fit he should grant, or than perhaps it is in his power to grant. No wonder then he is so officious, and so willing, that he runs and goes, and dances attendance upon a set of ignorant magicians ; I say igno-

rant, except only as he instructs them; it is evidently because he makes his advantage of them, and they act for his account.

It is then apparent, that the magicians are instruments by which the Devil carries on his politic affairs in the world. It is time then, in the next place, to inquire in what manner they perform it, and from what principles they act; and then we shall come to some historical account of their merry proceedings in the world.

A SYSTEM OF MAGIC.

PART II.

INTRODUCTION.

Of the black art itself; what it really is, why there are several differing practices of it in the several parts of the world, and what those practices are; as also, what is contained in it in general.

I HAVE all along, till now, spoken of the general correspondence of the Devil with mankind, under the head of diabolic magic, as a mere intimacy only; I have represented it as a method which the Devil first took, to form his interest and acquaintance with mankind, when he was drowned out of his kingdom in the old world by the flood.

It is too certain that the Devil acted by this method at first, for the propagation of his own designs only, and to set on foot a new administration of his affairs; it being for many reasons not his business to act openly and barefacedly in the world as a Devil; but now it is also as apparent, that after the Devil had thus established a correspondence, he soon found man as forward as himself, as willing to embark with him and engage, as he could desire; nay, so forward in the new trade, so eager for mischief, so glad of being vested with power (though infernal) to do it, and to gratify those vilest of his passions, envy, revenge, malice and strife, that the Devil himself, as is observed in the last chapter, is

forced to restrain him, and gently to divert his thoughts to some less violent and less destructive methods; not being willing, and sometimes indeed not being able, to act so much the Devil as these new hell-fire agents would have him act it.

The correspondence being thus settled between the Devil and the magician, and the treaties between them signed, ratified, and exchanged in form, the instrument (man) is immediately furnished by the employer (Satan) with all necessary qualifications for his business, and is completely qualified for an infernal mountebank; and so he falls to his juggling-box and to showing his tricks, his paw-wawing and conjuring, and in a word, exercising his new acquirements and hellish talents upon mankind; and this we call, and that with a great propriety of speech, the black art.

The brief definition of what we call the black art, that is to say, as I would have it be understood in the rest of my discourse, is, that it is a new general term for all the branches of that correspondence which mankind has maintained, or does, or can carry on, between himself and the Devil, between this and the infernal world; comprising all the eight particulars which I mentioned before, as they are taken from the prohibition of them, and the declaration against them, in the law of Moses, viz.,

Divining, the same as southsaying.

Observing of times.

Using enchantment.

Witchcraft.

Charming, or setting of spells.

Dealing with familiar spirits.

Wizardising, or sorcery, thought to be the same as witchcraft, but mistaken.

Necromancing.

The practice of these, or of any of them, or of all of them, is what we are to understand by this general

term, the black art ; and as these several parts are expressed after a differing manner, and perhaps practised in a differing form in several and remote parts of the world, it may be necessary to give a brief description of them one by one ; that so when we name them apart, I may yet be rightly understood, and may need no more digressions for explanation of terms as I go on.

1. Divining. A diviner I understand to be the same as was anciently called a southsayer ; this is expressly confirmed in Scripture, if you will take its authority for anything ; Acts xvi. 16: *A certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying* : so that divination and southsaying is the same thing.

N. B. Observe that this divination is here called a spirit, that is to say, the Devil, or a devil ; and he was really in her, for it is said, Paul cast him out of her.

This southsaying also, as we are to understand it, contained all those lesser pieces of low-prized art, called, telling fortunes, resolving difficulties, finding out and discovering secret things ; and perhaps all the juggling part practised at this time ; and that without any correspondence with the spirit Python that Paul cast out, or any other spirit but that of fraud and legerdemain, which the divining or southsaying is only made a cover to.

2. Observers of times. These I take to be some, who, by correspondence with an evil spirit, declared such and such days or times to have a particular fatality, so that no business which was undertaken on that day could prosper ; and this part of the black art may take in such as carrying on the study of judicial astrology to the extreme, and to the gates of hell, ascribe events of things to the government and influence of the stars, and that influence to be

so or so directed for good or evil, according to the particular position, opposition, conjunction or situation of those stars or planets in differing houses; as if these could be the directors of the fate of persons, families and nations; and that the events of things were directed by them, and by the seasons and times of their stations here or there in the course of their ordinary motion, whether direct or retrograde: in a word, the practice of judicial astrology, though not a dealing with, or by the help of the Devil, is condemned here, as being a plain robbing divine Providence of its known glory, in directing and disposing both causes and events in all things relating to the government of mankind, or indeed of the whole world, and ascribing that to the poor innocent unconcerned stars or planets which is singly in the disposition of him that made them. The stars and planets are no intelligent beings; they have indeed a vegetative or active life, but as to knowledge or acquaintance of or with human affairs, they are entirely lifeless bodies, utterly incapable of influencing or directing anything, or of any motion or action, other than by the direction of the same power and providence which made and guides them in common with the rest of the world.

3. Using enchantments. These are variously described by the ancients; but to explain it by our modern terms of art, this is what we call conjuring; and this is certainly performed by the immediate agency and assistance of the evil spirit, when the magician using these enchantments, works by the secret aid of the Devil some wonderful thing, so as to surprise the beholders, and make them think the operator is vested with supernatural power, and consequently is some extraordinary man. Thus when St. Paul healed the lame man at Lystra, the people, surprised with the miracle, cried out presently, *The gods are come down to us, in the likeness*

of men. Thus the magicians in Pharaoh's court made frogs, turned the water into blood, and the rods into serpents, by their enchantments, that is to say, by the immediate hand of the Devil; who was permitted, it seems, to increase the plagues of Egypt, doing mischief being his particular talent: but I do not read that whenever Aaron and Moses denounced any of those plagues, the magicians could stop or prevent them; if they could have done that indeed, they had been worth notice, but it was quite otherwise; for, lest they should boast too much of their power, they were restrained, and not able to make lice, though they had made frogs and serpents; but they were obliged to acknowledge in public, that they were unable to do it, that it was the finger of God, and that he had put a stop to their enchantments; in a word, it made them acknowledge that, according to an old proverb which, for aught I know, is derived from thence, God is above the Devil.

4. Witchcraft. This is indeed the blackest part of the black art itself: I need not describe it any further than this, that it is a power received immediately from the Devil to do mischief; to gratify rage, envy, malice, revenge, and the vilest passions of men, giving it into their hands to bewitch men, cattle, places, and things; to burn and destroy, though limited, as hinted before in many particulars: the effects of this witchcraft we often see, and shall say more to it in its place.

This includes persons being immediately agitated by an evil spirit, carried often violently into the air by the help of the Devil, and being able to carry away others in the air also; and not to insist upon all the improbable things said of them, and said to be done by them, yet that the Devil certainly plays his pranks by those tools sometimes in a most extravagant manner, I must grant. Why it is gene-

rally practised by old women only, is a point to be considered by itself.

In this article of witchcraft is included what we call an evil tongue, an evil eye, cursing, blasting, bewitching, and abundance of hellish things which those creatures are permitted to practise, to the hurt of those that they point their malice against.

5. Charming. This is certainly a piece of the black art, and consists of divers branches, such as setting spells, drawing circles, within which, if the person to be operated upon sets his feet, he shall not be able to stir out of the compass of it without leave from the charmer; likewise dozings, giving philters, potions, and hellish contrivances to cause barrenness, impotence, idiotism, lunacy, love, hatred, and abundance more nameless wickednesses, which nothing but the Devil and father of mischief could empower them to do.

6. Dealing with familiar spirits. This is what was more immediately proper to a magician; I mean such a diabolical magician as I have been describing; and as the title expresses it, is an immediate conversing with a devil, who always attends him at his call, to come and go as he pleases, to consult with, be advised and directed by, and, in a word, to do for him whatever he, the magician, desires.

Thus we read that king Manasseh dealt with the Devil: the text says expressly, *He used witchcraft and enchantments, and dealt with a familiar spirit.* And who could doubt it, from what followed? Nothing but a man abandoned to hell, and that had the Devil at his elbow, could have been prevailed with to do what he did, which at that time was the most dangerous piece of impudence that ever had been heard of, viz., to set a carved image in the very temple, the house of God.

7. Wizards. This some take to be nothing but

what they call a man witch ; but in the practice it hath been carried further, namely, to be one that consults with the Devil, to give answers to difficult questions, to reveal and discover conspiracies, and to govern the greater things of life ; as to blast or succeed the enterprises of princes and people ; to tell and foretell the success of such and such undertakings ; and even to influence the undertakers. Such a one as this was Baalam, who being famed for a wizard, was sent for a long way by the king of Moab to curse the camp and army of the Hebrews.

The northern word used in our own country for this kind is a warlock, the ancient import of which was one that could give good or bad speed to any undertaking, or at least could foretell whether the thing inquired about should succeed or no.

We have abundance of merry tales scattered abroad in the oral tradition of ancient times, and among those ancient things called old women, concerning wizards : how the kings and princes used to consult with them before they undertook any great enterprise. They tell you in the north, how an old wizard warned king James IV. of Scotland, who was killed at Flodden Field, not to pass the Tweed with his army, but encamp on the northern bank of the river, and that if the English passed the water of Tweed to attack him, he should certainly defeat and overthrow them ; but that if he fought on English ground, he should lose both his army and his life ; which accordingly happened. They relate the same of old mother Shipton in England, who, though so many fables are made of her, was a real and known person, and was not a witch or a prophetess, but a warlock or wizard ; and it is certain she did foretell to cardinal Wolsey his falling into disgrace at court, his loss of the king's favour, and his death, all which accordingly happened.

8. The last of these is a necromancer, a word

very ancient, and containing indeed the black art in its full perfection ; this being one who, not like the wizard, foretold or predicted, but who, when the people came to him, would carry them to his originals, that is to say, would go to work, and bring the Devil up by his art to talk with and do their business for them himself ; and this indeed might properly be said to be a teacher of the black art, that is to say, not that he could tie the Devil down to appear to the person, whoever it was, that he took a fee of, and be at his summons as he was before at his the necromancer's own ; but if ever any person had a mind to come into the wicked class, and have a personal conference with the Devil in order to make a bargain with him, the necromancer's business was to raise the Devil, present the stranger, bring them acquainted, and then leave the Devil and the man to agree the matter among themselves.

In a word, the necromancer (like the famous Mr. Whiston, of good, lying, merry memory) was the Devil's broker, neither more or less ; he brings grist to the Devil's mill, customers to his shop, and furthers his trade and his own gain by the ordinary method of his employment.

It is true these blackest of the black art men have a great many other things in their practice, besides that of brokering for the Devil ; they were used to raise storms, whirlwinds, and hurricanes, by which they made themselves very terrible to the people, as if it was in their power to do all the mischievous things in the world : by this they brought in their customers, for the people usually bribed them, as the Indians worship the Devil that he may do them no harm. The strong opinion the common people had of these men in time past was such, that they would go to them for rain in drought, and for fair weather in harvest, for abatement of

floods, and for protecting their cattle in lightning and thunder.

To sum them up all, the diviner and southsayer, the judicial astrologer and conjurer, the enchanter and charmer, the witch and the wizard, the necromancer and dealer with a familiar spirit all put together and practised in their fullest extent, make up this one black art, which I am speaking of, in its perfection; and in this sense I am to be understood in the following part of this work.

Only take a few hints by way of observation, on this occasion, viz., that the Devil has some little outliers and sculking operators in the world, and which he makes great use of, which may not be said to come under any of those denominations; as particularly our second-sight men in Scotland; the wind merchants in Norway, who sell fair and foul weather, storms and calms, as the Devil and you can agree upon a price, and as your occasions require: also in Lapland, Muscovy, Siberia, and other northern parts of the world, he is said to act by differing methods, and govern his dominions by a more open and arbitrary method, not prescribed and limited to art and craft as he does here.

We have also some new practitioners in magic among ourselves, who deal with the Devil in a more exalted sublime way, and who, for aught I know, are able to teach the Devil some new and more accurate ways of managing them, and the rest of the world too, than ever he knew before. In a word, instead of inquiring at the Devil's oracle, and learning from him, I think the Devil must even come to school to them; for as Alphonsus of Castile said, If God Almighty had consulted with him when he made the world, he could have showed him how to mend it: so certainly, if the Devil had consulted these gentlemen in his first rebellion, they might as well tell us, they would have shown him

how to have marshalled his army better, and perhaps not have lost the day as he did; at least they would take upon them to give him new measures for his present and future conduct, that so he may rebel against heaven again whenever he pleases, and shall be sure to carry on the war (at least defensively) with better success than ever he did before.

We have also some modern sects of hellish divinity not formerly known, no, not to the Devil himself; which seem to partake of the black art in a peculiar manner, and which, though not contained under any of the eight heads already mentioned, yet the professors claim to be incorporated among the Devil's graduates, and may be justly esteemed members of the society of deceivers; and that they have practised the black art in a more exquisite method than any that ever went before them; of whom, and of their art and management, if I may obtain a freedom of thinking in an article of such importance as this, I may give you a very profitable description in the process of this history.

There remains a vacancy too for our friends of the legend and calendar, among whom we shall find certain red letter black art men who deal with the Devil under the sanctified vizard of the red hat, the cowl, and the tonsure; among whom, I say, many have been, and many still may be, agents of hell in the most abstracted sense, and therefore cannot be denied to be practitioners in the black art, as effectually, and, to all intents and purposes, as fully as ever the monks of Loudon, or the patrons of father Jetzer, and the maid of Kent; of all which in their order.

CHAP. I.

Of modern magic, or the black art as now in its practice and perfection.

THE ancient magic having by a long succession of art and time been handed down to the Grecians, and from them to the Romans, we cannot but acknowledge that they went a great way to the improving it, for they mingled the black art so entirely among their religious worship that it is not to this day possible to distinguish between the rites and ceremonies of their gods, and the enchantments and charms, conjurations and divinations, immediately directed by the Devil.

I have mentioned something of this already in their augurs, and the several institutions of Romulus, Numa Pompilius, and others; but nothing so effectually discovered the black art to be blended with their religious rites, and the craft of the Devil with the worship of their gods, as the setting up oracles, giving responses, and solving doubts, as if by inquiry of the gods: whereas indeed it was all managed by the craft of the Devil, and the agency of those solemn knaves the priests; and this I call ecclesiastic magic.

There was not a little knavery in the setting up the augurs, in the divinations and predictions from the flying and chattering of birds; and before that, in the priests poring upon the entrails of the beasts sacrificed to their gods: here this art went such a length, that the truth is, the Devil saw himself outdone by the priests, and the witchcraft of superstition went beyond all that Satan himself

ever pretended to in the first institution : so far did the crafty and avaricious priests engross the Devil's business, that they really seemed to take the very trade out of his hand, or as we say of an invading tradesman that sets up under his master's nose, he takes the bread out of his mouth.

The Greeks were the most superstitious of all the devil-worshippers in the world, worse than the Persians and Chaldeans, from whom they borrowed all the fundamentals of their idolatry; and far worse than the Romans, who were afterwards their scholars; image and idol worship were essentials in all their temples, which the Romans at first rejected with disdain; even Numa Pompilius, the most devout and superstitious of all the Romans, despised it; and many of the most learned of the Roman authors exclaim against it as absurd and ridiculous; however, they came into it afterwards also.

But the Greeks, I say, from their particular love to superstition, were the first that worshipped the images of their gods: thus you read of the Ephesians having the image of Jupiter which came down from heaven; in like manner they had particular images in every temple, and temples almost in every corner; and being the fittest people to be thus imposed upon and deluded, the priests, who were equally subtle there as in other places, invented (or the Devil directed them to) that grossest of all cheats, the oracles of their gods, to whose temples they constantly repaired for answers in the most difficult and doubtful cases; and the Romans took it from them.

These oracles were indeed the Devil's masterpiece, for here the priests and himself juggled together in so notorious a manner, that no contrivance for putting a public cheat upon the world ever met with the like success: the Devil assisting

the priests gave answers in the most subtle, doubtful and ambiguous terms imaginable, so that they frequently possessed the people with a belief of the things predicted being come to pass; whereas it was all owing to the double entendre of the answers, which left things to be understood any way the priests thought fit, and left the priests room to suggest a correspondence between the oracle and the event, when indeed there was no manner of similitude, no coherence, or anything like it.

History gives several examples of the ambiguous doubtful answers of the oracles, and yet so bigoted were the Greeks to their notions of them, that on the day of the great battle at Plataea with the Persians they would not give battle, though the enemy was upon them, and began to trample down their infantry with the horse, till they knew the will of the gods, as they expressed it, and had a full answer from the oracle; the soldiers sitting still upon the ground, and letting the enemies cut them in pieces. But as soon as they had understood that the oracle had given its answer, and that their sacrifices for victory were favourable, their commanders assuring them that the gods were propitious, and that they had a promise of victory, they immediately roused up from their seats, formed their battalia or phalanx, and fell on with such fury, that the Persians and the other Greeks that were confederate with them, were utterly overthrown, and cut in pieces.

It will not be amiss, in order to show the world how great the powers of religious infatuations were, and how far mankind may be imposed upon, to give a short account of but that one day's action between the Grecian army under their general Pausanias, and Mardonius leader of the army of Xerxes the king of Persia.

The Persian army consisted of three hundred

thousand Persians, the flower of Xerxes' army; and fifty thousand Greeks; Thebans, Macedonians and Thessalians, auxiliaries or confederates with Xerxes. The Athenians and Lacedemonians consisted of no more than forty thousand Grecians, but old soldiers, and well armed, commanded by Pausanias, to whom they had joined indeed seventy thousand auxiliar militia, but these were only raw and unexperienced people; nor had they any dependence on them for their valour or discipline, only for making excursions, plundering, and the like.

The Greeks had sent to inquire of the oracle at Delphos, to know the success of the war, and were answered, that they should certainly have the victory, provided they fought the battle upon Athenian ground, or in the plains of Ceres and Proserpina, and made their prayers to such and such gods, demi-gods and nymphs; (excellent conjuring and magic to patch up religion with!)

This answer of the oracle was an apparent cheat, for nobody knew where this piece of ground could be: the plain of Ceres was indeed on Athenian ground, but then it was not near where the armies lay, and they being inferior in force, could not choose their ground, or fight where they pleased; but there was an old temple of Ceres and Proserpina, near their camp, and likewise some dedicated places sacred to those nymphs and demi-gods spoken of upon mount Cithæron; but then the land belonged to the citizens of Platæa, and not to the Athenians, and this perplexed them much.

While they were in this uneasiness, the Platæans, to show their goodwill, and encourage the army, bestowed all the lands which those temples and dedicated places stood on, and for a large space round, by deed of gift on the Athenians, so to cause them to fight on Athenian ground.

All things being thus cleared up, and the armies just ready to engage, the Grecian general caused sacrifices to the gods for victory to be brought to the head of the troops; nor would the Athenians stir, or strike a stroke, till they were ended, and that the priests gave signals of the fortunate omens. The Persian army advanced, the horsemen charged in upon the foremost troops, the arrows flew in clouds, and many were slain; but it was all one, the soldiers sat upon the ground, and would not stir a foot.

But as soon as Pausanias had notice that the sacrifices were happily ended, and that he found those tokens in the entrails of the beasts, which the superstition of the age esteemed fortunate, and signals of success; he immediately caused the army to raise a shout, and gave the signal of battle: upon which the soldiers suddenly rise up upon their feet, with acclamations, and received the charge of the Barbarians in such excellent order, and with such undaunted bravery, that notwithstanding the enemy came pouring in upon them with their multitudes, expecting to bear all down before them, yet the Persians were repulsed, and utterly overthrown, and Mardonius with above three hundred thousand men killed upon the spot.

What ecclesiastic magic was this! what superstition, without ground! The sacrifices would have gone on, though the armies had engaged; or if not, why were they not brought sooner to the place, and how in a few moments more might the whole army have been cut in pieces without resistance, for want of the ceremony of a timely sacrifice! But such is the power of superstition, and to such a degree of possession or infatuation had the Devil, by the means of his instruments the magicians, brought mankind.

This I take to be the meridian of the Devil's in-

fluence, and when the magic diabolical was at its greatest height. The Romans were superstitious enough, but not so grossly given up; and yet the Grecians were a wise nation; the Athenians were famed for wisdom and knowledge; for philosophy; art and science flourished among them to a degree beyond all the rest of the world. Nay, they despised the wisdom of all the world in comparison of their own; yet swallowed up with the magic of superstition, they were, in short, bewitched by a religious sorcery, and run into superstition to an excess equal to madness and distraction.

The Romans, as I said above, followed them at the heels; and though at first the wisest of their leaders rejected the image worship of the Greeks, nay, stood out one hundred and seventy years from Numa Pompilius, esteeming it absurd and impious to represent things glorious, by things base or mean; yet Tarquinius Priscus following the usage of the Greeks, (who, I say, of all the nations of the world, were the most deluded by the Devil,) brought in the custom of setting up the images of their gods in their temples; and in some ages after, this use of images came up to such a height, and multiplied to such an infinite number, that it was next to impossible to know them one from another, but they were obliged to write their names over their statues and images; and the numbers of their gods, and demigods, grew up to such a multitude, that they were obliged to marshal them into regiments and classes, degrees and orders, and even of them too many to repeat. Such as *dii consentes selecti*, *dii patritii*, *dii medii insigniores*, *dii mediorum* or common gods, terrestrial and celestial heroes, gods and demigods, nymphs, and, in a word, an infinite throng of gods.

Happy art! however infernal and diabolic, that could furnish gods from the street to the Capitol;

nay, dunghill gods, door-keeping gods, and senate-house gods, *dii conscripti*, and above all the rest, as the learned Lactantius says, the rabble of gods beatified by men. Epimenides Cretensis erected in the Athenian plains the famous altar to the *dii ignatii*, the unknown gods, of which St. Paul took notice, for it remained there to his time, when he made that famed oration, inimitable for its eloquence and beauty of language, as well as excellence and strength of argument, when he stood upon Mars' hill at Athens, confuting the wisdom of the philosophers, and perhaps magicians.

And whence, now, came all this ignorance and superstition, but from the early delusions of the Devil, carried on among men by the help of this we call magic or black art, and in all its several compositions? that is to say, as above, divining, southsaying, enchantment, witchcraft, sorcery, and dealing with familiar spirits, necromancy, and the Devil.

These things introduced enthusiasm, enthusiasm brought up idolatry, and then witchcraft and magic brought down the minds of men to a meanness fit to be deluded by them.

It may not be improper to observe here, that the black art, as thus explained, may be less needful in those days, when the deluded world was more easy to be imposed upon and cheated, than now, when the world seem to have their eyes open, and require more artifice to impose upon them with.

In the Grecian and Roman times, the minds of men untaught, and without the assistance of divine illuminations, were easily imposed upon, given up to strong delusions, and to believe lies; they were bigoted by the priests, and by their own native superstitions, and were easily deluded to worship any gods, everybody's gods, and even as above, unknown gods. Happy ignorance! compared to our age, who

by their excess of knowledge and sense are arrived to a degree of liberty, from the slavery and bondage of all religion; that esteem themselves wise, in having found out a new happiness for mankind, freeing him from the chains of doctrine and principle, triumphing in a state of complete atheism and irreligion, and instead of worshipping many gods, save themselves the trouble of idolatry, and worship no god at all.

It must be confessed it has cost the Devil some pains, he has employed a world of agents, and bestowed a great deal of magic, to bring this to pass; nay, in my opinion it seems that he never was able to bring it to pass, no, not by all his agents, and whatever pains and expense he had been at; but on the contrary, it came into his management by an unforeseen, and, even to the Devil himself, an unexpected turn of his affairs: for first it seemed to be a new discovery in its very nature, and what Satan had no notion of for many thousands of years; and I do not find the most learned in these matters are agreed yet about it, as whether it is immediately from hell, a new invention of the place, and so introduced by the Devil as a favour and advantage to mankind; or whether the case is inverted, and as man has in this practice outsin'd the Devil, so he has been the Devil's instructor in it, and brought the thing to him, as a projector does a scheme to the person whom he would have to manage it for him.

Indeed I must do the Devil the justice to say I think it was the latter; that it never entered into Satan's head, as cunning as he is, to imagine anything so gross would go down with the world; that though it is true he had begun early in setting up himself in the place of God, and had gotten himself to be worshipp'd as a god, yet he never offer'd to suggest to mankind that there was no God to be

adored at all; no supreme Being existing, to whom the homage of the world was due, as to its creator and preserver.

The Devil knew the early principles, and whence they were infused; he knew that it was a fire kindled with the life, and that could not be extinguished but with the same life; that it was the work of nature in man, twisted with his reason, and, as he thought it impossible to be erased and obliterated, so he never attempted it. Not to believe a God! All hell acknowledged the mighty truth, and the Devil himself could never imagine mankind could be brought to question it.

Infernal spirits themselves have deified,
 But devils nor men the being of God denied;
 Till wiser ages found new ways to sin,
 And turn'd the Devil out, to let the Atheist in.

This attainment is indeed a new invention; but like our late South sea stock it is run up, and has gained upon mankind by a general infatuation, and may well be called magic in its very abstract. Nothing indeed but a kind of thinking, rightly called free, and founded on schemes of the most refined infidelity, could act upon such a system as this: what magic must there be to work up the mind of man to a possibility of receiving such a principle, without astonishment. No God! what a shock it gives to the soul, what a blow to the reasoning powers!

The secret trepidation racks the soul,
 And while he says No God, replies, Thou fool!

It must be a most exquisite piece of magical work, and magic in itself must be a most exquisite art, more refined and more superior in wickedness than the most superlative craft of hell ever arrived to, that should raze out the impressions of a God

from the soul of man, where they were first riveted by the very same hand of power that created him ; that could harden the soul against the terrors of his Maker, and blot out all the representations of God, which the light of nature and of reason had printed upon his mind.

It is beyond even the lofty theme I am upon, and as the power of magic cannot reach it, so it is also beyond me to conceive of it, either what power it is wrought by, or from what strange corrupted fountain it flows. I confess, I cannot find in my heart to charge Satan with it, for I would not slander the Devil ; nor do I find any footsteps of it in all the Devil's story, or in all the accounts of his management in the world : I leave it therefore to the learned searchers into the antiquity of these times, to find out, if it be possible, its original, and tell us from whence it proceeds ; promising in the mean time, that if they will but tell me where it begun, I'll take care to give them an account where it will end, and that from very good authority.

The bringing mankind to deny the being of their Maker, is a thing in itself so surprising, so shocking to nature and to common sense, that it cannot but raise our curiosity, if possible, to find out its original ; I acknowledge myself to have lost a great deal of labour in the search, nor have all the methods I have hitherto taken been able to give me any considerable light into the matter. I am loath, I confess, to go to Satan himself to inquire about it, and so deal with the Devil myself, while I am exploding the practice in others. Besides, I am very doubtful, whether, if I did, he could give me a true, or at least, a full account of it ; for I am under a full persuasion that it is beyond him, that the original was from the nature of man, arrived by his own improvement to a height beyond his first instructor. How the heart of man became receptive of wicked-

ness beyond the power of hell and devils to infuse, is a point too curious to dwell upon here, we may meet with it again in our way.

It may be true, and we have good reason to say we find it so, that the Devil greedily embraced the proposal; and like the king of Spain, when Columbus brought him the first news of a new world in America offered to his government, and adding a new empire to his dominion; he whose ambition had before grasped the whole world in imagination, yet greedily accepted the discovery, how mean soever the discoverer was. Thus Satan, however outwitted and outsinned by the dexterity of men, being showed a way of insulting his Maker (his darling sin, and the height of his ambition) which he never thought of before, though perhaps secretly disdain- ing to be outshot in his own bow, yet greedily embraced the discovery, embarks in the scheme, and prompts the wicked contrivers to go on with it, with the utmost application.

It may be asked of me, why I will insist upon this matter in a treatise of magic; that this relates to the atheists, not to magicians, and that by the same rule, all enthusiasms, heresies, and mysterious things in religion, as well as in science, may be rated in the same class, and be called by the same name, and so we shall make a magic of religion at last.

But let a short answer suffice to this weak objection; all errors in religion are not equally diabolic, no, nor equally mischievous; and as I have said above, that this seems to be of an original deeper than hell, and out of the reach of the Devil; so, as far as it is a crime which derives from the man as an independent, and acting the Devil by himself, I think it must have the height of human imagination and invention in it, and so may be called magical, as magic is a science or art of doing superlative evil.

If, then, it shall be allowed at least to be, as it really is, an extreme of human wickedness, it must have the essence of magic in it, as magic is now considered; and therefore when I mention it in the title of this chapter, I call it magic in its practice and perfection. What mysterious power must it be, or, as it is usual to express it, what magic must there be in it, that mankind can be hardened to a pitch capable of denying the power that made them, capable of arguing against the reality of that Being, which gave them being!

Nor does the magic consist in the fact, neither do I lay the stress of it there; or upon the sin against reason, against common sense, the ingratitude to their Maker, the open insult of Heaven, the venture of provoking that Being whose power it insults, and many other things of like importance; these are things the people I am talking to, and the age I am talking in, can ridicule, and make a jest of, and laugh at the mention of them; nor shall I dwell upon them, the divines are equal to this task, and their proper work it is. I leave it with them.

But my inquiry looks another way, and there the magic discovers itself; viz., by what strange influence, by what secret wonder in nature it is brought about that men who say they have souls, that have a capacity of reasoning and judging, and whose universal passion is to be vain of that judgment, proud of their reasoning powers, and of their being capable of censuring the defects of others, that these should ever be capable of being thus imposed upon, of receiving such a notion, and even of desiring it should be true. This is indeed astonishing! and here I confess there must be some magic, some secret prevailing artifice, whether of the Devil, or of what else, who can tell? Here must be some wheels and springs, able, when set agoing, to give a progression to the whole movement; and here must be some se-

cret hand turning those wheels and springs; be it internal, external, or infernal, I leave it as I find it; only I think, as I thought before, my judgment dictates to me, that the Devil is not in the plot, that he had no hand in it, at least not at first; what he may have done since, I know nothing of yet, and I do not see how I shall, at least not till I have made further inquiry.

In looking into this absurdity, which so many men of parts, and who scorn absurdities in other things, are pleased to come into, I cannot but observe how busy they are; how many arts and tricks truly magical, do they find out, to reason themselves into the belief of that horrid inconsistency! What subterfuges do they fly to, what arguments, weak as they are, do they use; and how do they cleave and cling about them, loading every word that can be offered against them with innumerable cavils, and with the most apparent sophistry!

One sort will have a God of one kind, one of another. The sceptic forms the notion of a God in his mind, but strips him of all his governing power, divests him of knowledge and wisdom, holiness and justice, and all those glorious attributes for which he is worthy to be adored, and which make him justly the object of our homage, and of our affection too.

The deist strips him of the very constituting part of the Deity, and brings him down to a level with our reasoning; divesting him of all governing, protecting and preserving providence, and particularly of all resentment against the vilest offences; robbing him of the power of rewards and punishments, and making him so good, so kind and gracious, that they do not leave him room to be just, or allow him any resentment, let the cases be what they will.

The atheist outgoes them all; and not able indeed to reconcile their notions to common sense, much less to reason himself into their opinions, audaciously

shuts his eyes against reason and sense also, and tells you there is no God at all.

Now magic puts an end to all this difficulty; for by consulting the dark oracle, and entering a little into the secrets of the sacred science, as they wickedly tell you it is, they come out transformed into a new kind of species, they tell you that they are arrived to a complete knowledge of the eternal mysteries; that God is nothing but the sum of human desires, the ecstasy of an exalted spirit, carried up into the regions of eternal calm and quiet, where the soul is in raptures of joy and love. This they resolve by the light of the refined sublime judgment to be the perfection of happiness, and that is God. *Amor Deus est Jupiter quodcunque cupis.*

They tell you, further, to descend to the personality of a God, is talking wildly and immethodically, and what is inconsistent with nature; that God is a quality, rather than a being, that cannot be described by words, any more than it can be limited by space; that the supreme essence is an inconceivable spirit of light and glory, and the soul receives an assimilating light and knowledge, even by the contemplation of it, by the rays of a communicable effulgence; so that having been once illuminated, it continues enjoying a full lustre of eminent glory for ever after.

This unintelligible stuff is all magic to me, and I believe we may truly say it is so to us all; it is some of the cant of the trade, the terms of art in that profession; and if this be the discovery that magic makes to the mind, the magicians will have small cause to boast of their improvement; I presume it shall leave the mind darker than it finds it.

Now that this makes room for atheism, or deism, or polytheism in the mind, it is very evident; for, next to the denying the divine Being, our entertaining false and corrupt notions unworthy of God, and of the reasoning human soul, are fatal to religion.

Yet, what impressions have these things made upon some of the politest men in this age, who pretending to extirpate all the notions of religion in their souls, begin it with denying the being of the God that evidently made them; if you pretend to argue from reason, from nature, from visible things to invisible, they reject it all, and call for demonstration; they will have heaven measured mathematically and geographically, as it were by scale and compass, and will judge of things invisible according to Gunter; they will allow of nothing but what they can see with their eyes, and feel with their hands, nor will they believe any such thing as an incomprehensible. They will have all heaven resolved into nature, all religion into reason, and all God into philosophy. They are not thus difficult in other things; less evidence will serve them in crime, and they will make shift with the weakest arguments in the world, to persuade themselves into the lawfulness and justice of the vilest things that they allow the practice of; so partial are they to their corrupt inclinations, so prejudiced against everything that looks like a superior and legal restraint to their vices. Is not this justly called magic? is it not with the utmost propriety brought into a system of magic? is it not really a black art, a piece of conjuration and witchcraft? is it not all necromancy and the Devil?

When human wit, in search of things divine,
Would reason's light with revelation join,
Expect to have Almighty being made known
By the same light by which we know our own;
Creating by created would explain,
And demonstration of first powers obtain;
How does the wild philosophy confess,
Its weakness, ignorance, and emptiness;
How do the naturalists and So So's dream,
When gravely they present the sacred scheme!

Lay down the draught, draw out the magic plan,
 A self-deriving world, a self-creating man ;
 And would a nature void of God explain !
 Strange ! how when men are once of crime possess'd,
 Their reasoning faculties are all suppress'd.
 If of religion they some hints desire,
 What proofs, what demonstrations they require !
 What difficulties, ere they can submit,
 What reasoning scruples raise, what turns of wit,
 To shift the strong conviction from the mind !
 As if religion, all to sense confin'd,
 Should every school distinction undergo,
 And rules of faith, to rules of reason bow.

But if to harden'd crime they but incline,
 In vain their reasoning light pretends to shine,
 The wildest notions blindly entertain ;
 Reason and nature struggle : but all in vain.
 Error, like mother's milk they swallow down,
 And by their choice, make every crime their own.
 The deadly poisonous draught drink freely in,
 And ask no reasoning questions when they sin.
 Take crime by lump, howe'er absurd and gross,
 And wed mistakes, for better or for worse.
 So peddling merchants, as their stocks increase,
 Turn wholesale-men, and only trade by th' piece.

The bringing mankind then into these absurdities, I say, is the height of magic ; it is making them capable of entertaining atheistic notions, and on pretence of reasoning, to receive principles inconsistent with reason ; and because things divine are in some particulars incomprehensible, they run into notions neither comprehensible or rational.

This is infinitely beyond all the enthusiasm and religious frenzy in the world ; it is brought about by a possession, a mere rapture of the imagination, which, in a word, forms in the mind a new scheme of nature, new notions of being, of life, of motion, of past, present, and future ; nay, they tell you as much ; they tell you the common conceptions of things are only calculated to keep the world blind

and dark, that, wrapped up in their own ignorance, they may be easy.

That if by a supernatural light, and by the study of sacred science, (that is to say of magic,) a few of the more enlightened part of mankind have attained to a clearer view of things, and that view or knowledge is communicated to the souls of those few, by a sublime influence; yet it is not so in the main, that the rest of the world understand nothing of it, and that mankind remain blind and ignorant, for want merely of application to, and study of a true knowledge.

These are the things which they tell us of themselves, and which they talk in a kind of cant, particular to their own sort; representing themselves as a kind of angelic people, that live above the rest of the world, and that act in a higher sphere, are endowed with superior light, that live beyond the ordinary rate of their fellow creatures. What reality there is in these things, what attainments they have, and how they have exercised them, we shall discover more plainly, when we look a little into the rest of it; when we see what angelic things they do, and in what manner they exercise their extraordinary faculties; whether they appear to be illuminations from heaven, or delusions of hell; whether emanations of the realms of light, or mists and vapours from the regions of darkness; in a word, whether they are revelations and inspiration from the good Spirit above, or enthusiasms, witchcraft, and sorcery, prompted and assisted by the Devil.

How low-prized are all their undertakings, how mean and contemptible the methods they take to exert these noble and superior faculties! How do they practise upon mankind by conjurations, spells and enchantments, by the most pitiful and scandalous delusions, pretending to divine and superior knowledge! One part of their performances con-

sists in juggling and sleight of hand, another part in fraud and falsehood, another in the most ignorant pretences ; and the last, and as I may say, the only real part, in a mere necromancy and dealing with familiar spirits.

In their operations, were their acquirements divine, was their power from Heaven, were the extraordinary accomplishments which they boast of, truly, and as they say seraphic and heavenly, it would appear in this, that like their heavenly original they would be exerted in doing good ; they would be shown in acts of charity, of beneficence to mankind, moving the world to reform, and in a word, in bringing a glory to religion, and to every laudable thing ; whereas on the contrary, we see, the magicians of the latter ages of the world are, and always have been, employed in the extreme of wickedness, in the blackest crimes, in protecting and encouraging the worst and most devilish practices in the world, prompting confederated mischiefs, joining in with murder, treason, assassination, and all manner of wicked things.

Thus they tell us of the magicians among the Germans, who fomented the rebellion of those enthusiasts called Anabaptists, which brought so many thousands to their grave by war and treason. Some will tell us that count Wallenstein, the great general under the emperor Ferdinand II., and who fought the great battle of Lutzen against the king of Sweden, used magic, and that several of the German officers had charms and spells about them, to render them invulnerable, so that no sword would cut them, no bullets wound them ; but that they were deluded by the magicians, for that many of them were found among the slain with charms hanging about their necks, and that Wallenstein himself, notwithstanding his magic art, was overthrown and shamefully beaten by the Swedes in that great battle, and was himself after-

wards assassinated and killed by an Irish captain in the castle of Egra in Bohemia, though surrounded with his guards.

Many instances have been given, and history is full of them, where the pretenders to this art have been abandoned to ruin, either deluded by the demon they trusted, or through the real deficiency of the art itself; the latter of which, I insist upon, has been chiefly the reason of it: for what operation could they expect from the help of magic to counteract the determinations of Providence? even Balaam himself could declare it thus: *Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel*; Numb. xxiii. 23.

CHAP. II.

The scene changed : that as the Devil acted at first with his black art without the magicians, so the magicians seem to carry it on now without the Devil.

HITHERTO I have made the Devil the aggressor in all the transactions between himself and mankind, but now we must turn the tables; for whether it be that, finding things go on currently, and to his mind, he only sits still and looks on, like an engineer who has, with infinite art and great fatigue, formed a new machine, then sets it at work, and seeing it perform according to expectation, sits down with satisfaction, and lets it go round of itself; or whether the nature of man, corrupt, and prompt to all the foolish and foul things the Devil could put into his head, does really run on faster than the Devil can drive him; this as a doubt, which either philosophy or divinity have not yet resolved, I must leave it to time and experience to explain.

That thus it is, the fact is plain; if the black or diabolic art was at first a machine of the Devil, or let it be whose it will, it works now of itself, it performs to the Devil's satisfaction; he has little to do but to sit still and see the wheels go round.

Nay, we may say, the scholars teach the master, the magician seems to guide, nay, to command the Devil, whose art it is that he professes, and according to the lines in my title,

The obsequious Devil attends the sorcerer's spell;
The mill turns round the horse who first turns round
the mill.

It is worth observing here, how remarkable the turn is that seems to be given to the working of these infernal machines. At first the Devil had some difficulty with mankind, was obliged to act with great craft and subtlety to make his acquaintance among them, as I have observed at large; after this, he got the ascendant to such a degree, that he (as the Devil, you know, is apt to encroach where he finds room for it) set himself up for a guide, then a governor, then a god: was first followed as a director or adviser; next obeyed and submitted to as a governor and commander; and then (for he never rests) worshipped as a god, which, no doubt, was his first, and of necessity must be his highest, aim and ambition.

But now, by we know not what fate, mankind seems to have got the better of him; instead of being waited upon in form, and humbly expected, as in his first appearances, instead of being paw-wawed, and great assemblies and ceremonies used to obtain an audience of him, he comes now at every old woman's call, and upon the most trifling occasion; instead of being a counsellor or an adviser, much less a governor, now he is a mere errand boy, runs and goes, will do any drudgery, work like a horse, fetch and carry like a dog, dig ditches, carry burdens, build churches, or anything the priests and the conjurers bid him do; witness Newmarket heath, Stonehenge, Crowland abbey, and a thousand more things, which, to be sure, the Devil did, because we don't know how else they could be done.

The magicians were formerly the Devil's servants, but now they are his masters, and that to such a degree, that it is but drawing a circle, casting a few figures, muttering a little Arabic, and up comes the Devil, as readily as the drawer at a tavern, with a D'ye call, sir? or like a Scotch caude, with What's your honour's wull, sir? nay, and, as the learned in

the art say, he must come, he can't help it: then as to tempting, he is quite out of doors. And I think, as the old parliament did by the bishops, we may e'en vote him useless. In a word, there is no manner of occasion for him: mankind are as forward as he can wish and desire of them; nay, some cunning men tell us we sin faster than the Devil can keep pace with us: as witness the late witty and moderately wicked lady ——, who blest her stars that the Devil never tempted her to anything, he understood himself better, for she knew well enough how to sin without him, and that it would be losing his time to talk to her.

Likewise our happy friend, the much-honoured sir H——, who values himself upon this particular accomplishment, that he is able to sin like a gentleman; nay, he merits much from Satan, in that, if he may be believed when he speaks the worst of himself, he is also able to teach him (the Devil) to be more refinedly wicked than he is. This sir H—— certainly gives the Devil very little trouble about him; and though I don't hear that the old gentleman is yet come to school to the baronet, yet as the baronet don't come to learn of him, so he (the Devil) need not come to teach him, for that he is certainly as well accomplished in the horrid art as the Devil can make him.

The age we live in, fruitful in black arts, (whether in that which by way of eminence we call black art or no is yet undetermined,) affords us many, I dare not say bright, examples of flaming wickedness; it is no new thing to hear the right honourable my lord ——, though his lordship is known to be no necromancer neither, rate himself above the low, mechanic, poor-headed rabble, as he justly calls them, who dare be devils, but don't understand it; have impudence enough, but not a genius to be truly flagrant. It is indeed a modern accomplish-

ment, and requires some additions of art and practice, to be able to sin like a lord. And though the great man just now mentioned may perhaps have reason to exalt his own acquirement, and to boast of accumulated crime, insomuch that he would take it for an affront if the Devil should pretend to prompt him; and that perhaps Satan, who understands good breeding, has had more manners than to disturb his lordship that way, seeing him go on so happily without him; yet it may be acknowledged the watchful seraph does find a little business sometimes among some of his lordship's imitators, being at some happy pains to form them, as the moderns express it, and make them as finished devils of quality as his lordship; so that we may be satisfied there is no great fear we shall want a succession of human infernals, no, not among men of rank.

Wonder not, then, that the Devil, growing so much out of business in the world, and men growing, as I said, such proficient in the science of the abominables, is in proportion humble as to his conduct, and allows himself to be the obedient servant of every star-gazer and figure-caster; that he comes when he is called, goes when he is sent, nay, sometimes comes before he is called, and is the most diligent devil imaginable. He would be very ungrateful, it must be allowed, if he should not, where the age is so obliging to him; but besides that, he finds it for his interest too, and he is too cunning not to push his game wherever it will go.

I have heard of a magician, that when the Devil and he had made a bargain that he should always come when he was called, that is to say, that whenever the magician drew such and such circles, and made such and such figures, and then called him by name, that then he should be sure to appear, had a mind to try whether the Devil would be honest to him or no; and for making this experiment, per-

formed all his exercises, as I may call them, by himself, and when he had no manner of occasion for it; however the punctual devil kept his word, and came to a tittle, which the necromancer was mightily pleased with. After this he thought he might make a little game with the Devil; so he calls him up again, and when he came, the spirit asked him what was the business; he told him he had no business, only called him for his company, and to be better acquainted. Very well, says Satan, or Beelzebub, or who you will call him, for I don't remember that he knew what his name was; but it seems the patient devil answered him, 'twas very well, and showed no manner of resentment, but after some conversation left him again very quietly.

The foolish fellow, it seems, went on with the sport, making a fool of the Devil so often and so long, till, at last, the Devil asking him, as before, what he called him up for, and he telling him he had no business, but only that he liked his conversation, and called him up for the sake of his company; Very well, says the Devil, not at all displeased, I am glad to hear it; then go along with me, and you shall have enough of my company, without giving me the trouble to come so far: and with that the conjurer felt himself lifted up in the air a little from the ground, which made him cry out horribly.

I don't know what argument and entreaties he used, so as to move compassion in him that is known not to be furnished with anything of that kind; but perhaps the Devil was not quite ready for him, and knew that he might do him more service in the station he was newly entered into; so it seems he did not take him quite away that time: however it was, the magician was effectually cured of trying experiments, and never offered to make a jest of the Devil any more.

If I should tell you the name of this bold spark of a conjurer, and that he lived not far off of one of our Temples, you would perhaps wonder at the man, who indeed nobody ever took to have wit enough to banter the Devil; but I must not bring my characters too near home; besides, who knows but the Devil may charge me with discovering his secrets and betraying conversation? so I say no more: if anybody finds me out, and guesses at the man by the story, I shall be only sorry for the person, not for the picture.

As I was musing of these things the other day, and having a great many merry stories of this sort in my budget, was considering which was fit to be told, and which not, it came into my thoughts, how, travelling some time since from Daventry towards Leicester, I met on the road with a countryman, of whom, being myself a stranger to the road, I asked the way to Northampton; the countryman told me, but with a tone of melancholy and dejection, that he was going to Northampton, and if I pleased, and I would not over-ride him, he would show me the way.

I was very glad of his offered service, and so suiting my pace to his, for he had but a very poor horse, we went on together; I still perceived the man to be pensive and sad, spoke little, and never but when I asked him some question which obliged him to an answer; often sighed and lifted up his hands, and sometimes his eyes, and minded his way so little, that if his horse had not been more sagacious than he, the man would have run against a post, or into a ditch; and two or three times he did get into a hole or some other ill place in the way, which he might have shunned. Countryman, says I, what's the matter with you? and so we began the short discourse as follows:

Countryman. Why, sir?

Author. Why, you don't seem to mind your feet, or your horse's feet; you may lead me to Northampton, but I think you want somebody to lead you too, or else you will be in a ditch.

C. I care not much, indeed, where I go, or what becomes of me.

A. So I think, truly; why, if you were in some roads that I know, you would have found a stable for your horse by this time.

C. A stable for my horse! what, in a ditch, I suppose?

A. Yes, I mean so, indeed; you'll be but an odd guide to me if you can't keep yourself out of harm's way.

C. As I said before, I care not what becomes of me; but, however, master, I'll guide you well enough the way to Northampton. And then——

(Here he stopped and fetched a sigh, and I thought I saw tears stand in his eyes.)

A. And then! what then? what will you do with yourself then?

C. Nay, I don't know, not I; hang myself, I think, I don't know anything I can do better.

A. Prythee, friend, what's the matter? is it such a secret you dare not tell it? I hope you have not committed murder.

C. No, no murder; I have committed neither murder nor robbery; 'tis no such great matter neither.

A. No great matter, and yet talk of hanging yourself!

C. It is a great matter to me, though, it may be, it would be nothing in the eyes of others.

A. Well, friend, if it be not too much a secret, let me ask you what it is; perhaps I may help you.

C. Ay, you or fifty more may ask me; but I am a fool if I tell you.

A. Well, countryman, if it be a secret, pray keep it to yourself; I don't desire to know any of your affairs.

C. Nay, 'tis no great secret neither; and yet 'tis a secret too, or else I should not have gone to Northampton to-day.

A. You're a merry fellow, countryman; what a secret and no secret! that's a secret indeed of itself. I don't understand you.

C. Why, master, if you must have it, you must; the matter is this: I am a cuckold, and my wife's a whore, that's no secret; but I can't tell you who does it for me; that's a secret, and that's what I want to find out; so there's the secret and no secret made out at once. An't I right now, master?

A. Poor man; I think thou hast made it out indeed; but why so melancholy at it? Sure you would not hang yourself to find it out?

C. No, master, not to find it out; but I am fit to hang myself because I can't find it out. Would not any man hang himself, to be a cuckold, and can't find out the man?

A. And what if you did find out the man? what would you be the better for that, unless you could prevent it?

C. O, I'd prevent it, I warrant ye; I would not hang myself, I assure you; but I'd hang the dog, I'd soon prevent their whoring.

A. Well, but countryman, that's wrong again, that has the gallows at the end of it; and that would be but poor work for you to bring yourself to the Devil, because your wife's a whore.

C. Nay, I don't care where I go, rather than be a cuckold.

A. Is that such a frightful thing to you! would you commit murder and be hanged, rather than be a cuckold?

C. Why, master, what must I do?

A. Do! Be contented, if you can't help it, as many an honest man is forced to do.

C. No, no, that won't do: I can't be contented; I must and will find it out.

A. Well, but do you think hanging yourself will discover it to you, or being hanged for murder about it; d'ye think you shall know the secret when you're hanged?

C. No doubt of it.

A. Well, but what if you did?

C. Did? why, d'ye think I could not get leave to come again and plague them?

A. Who do you think could give you leave? As for heaven, I suppose you don't think much about that, especially upon the foot you speak of, I mean murder; and as for the Devil, I don't think he would part with you, if he once had you fast; so I would not have you depend upon it too much.

C. Well, but the Devil, it may be, would tell me who 'tis.

A. And what would you be the better if he did?

C. Why I would get him to come and plague them a little, and that would do as well another way; for I am resolved they shall have no rest.

A. You are a terrible revengeful fellow, that you would be content to go to the Devil to be revenged of the man that cuckolds you.

C. And of the whore too; you should have put that in, master.

A. I wonder indeed you han't been revenged of her already, considering your furious spirit: why you are a madman, I should be afraid you should murder your wife.

C. Ay master, she's afraid o' that too; but she has been too cunning for me, for she is run for it, and got out of my clutches.

A. She's in the right of it: can you blame her?

C. Ay, but she has robbed me too.

A. Robbed you! ay, what could you expect? why if you would have murdered her, she must have been a fool to have stayed; and if she was forced to fly, you could not think she would go away empty, could you?

C. Well, I will find them out, if they are above ground.

A. If you can, you mean; but pray are they gone together?

C. Nay, if I knew that, then I should know who the rogue is, which is one of the main things I want to be informed of.

A. And which you would be content to go to the Devil to discover?

C. If I was sure he or any one else could but tell me, I didn't care where I went.

A. Why, do you think if the Devil did know, that he would tell you?

C. Why not, master?

A. Why do you think the Devil is more your friend than theirs? do you think he cares how many whores and cuckolds there are?

C. Nay, that's true indeed, I did not think of that; but however, I shall be informed where I am going, whether the Devil knows anything of it or no; and if he does ———

A. What then, what if he does?

C. Why then I believe I shall get it out of him.

A. What d'ye mean, out of the Devil? why, where are you going?

C. To one of his acquaintance, master, that will tell me, I dare say, for a piece of money; and though the jade han't left me a shirt to my back, I have borrowed a little money for this work, and I will have it out, if money will do it.

A. What do you mean, countryman, are you really going to the Devil?

C. Why to tell you the truth, I am going to a cunning man, master, hard by Northampton, that I am told will discover it all to me.

A. Well, but do you call that going to the Devil?

C. Yes certainly, for he deals with the Devil, or else he could never do such strange things.

A. What strange things does he do?

C. Why he can cast a figure, tell folks where their lost cattle are, tell who robs them, and oftentimes helps them to get their goods again.

A. And so you think he can tell who has cuckolded you, don't you?

C. To be sure he can, master; why should not he tell one thing as well as another?

A. He'll take your money to be sure, that's all you can be sure of. I tell thee countryman, 'tis all a cheat; they are only rogues and jugglers, they know nothing of the matter.

C. Why that can't be, master; they say he will show me the man's face in a looking-glass.

A. And what if he does show you a man's face, and you don't know him, where are you then?

C. Nay, that's none of his fault.

A. 'Twill be his fault to put a cheat upon you, and show you a face you don't know, pretending that's the man, and you ne'er the wiser.

C. Well, but he will make me dream of the man, and see him in my sleep.

A. Very well, and so if you chance to dream of an honest man, you will go and murder him will you, for making you a cuckold? I tell you your cunning man is a cheat; he no more deals with the Devil than you do.

C. Well then, I'll go to Oundle, there's a man that deals in magic, and he'll raise the Devil for me if I desire it, and I shall see him and talk with him myself.

A. And you believe it, do you?

C. I shall believe it sure when I see it, shan't I? why d'ye think I won't believe my own eyes?

A. Why, do you know the Devil when you see him? how will you be sure 'tis the Devil?

C. I shall know him by his cloven foot, shan't I, master?

A. I believe not; did you ever see the Devil in your life?

C. No, not I, but I have heard of a great many that have; why is that such a strange thing, master?

A. 'Tis such a strange thing, that I don't believe one word of it.

C. What, don't you believe that a magician can raise the Devil?

A. I do not know, countryman, but the Devil may be called up upon extraordinary occasions; but hardly by your three-half-penny conjurer, nor upon such a business as yours is.

C. Why, won't the Devil come when he is called? why, the magician at Oundle can make him come, they say, whether he will or no: if he does but draw a circle and turn round five times in it, the Devil can't help appearing, no more than if we said the Lord's prayer backward.

A. Why, will he come if we say our prayers backward?

C. Ay, certainly, master; why, you don't doubt that, d'ye?

A. Nay, I don't say I doubt it; but did you ever try it yourself?

C. No, I never tried it, that's true; but I have heard an old woman at Daventry used to raise the Devil that way very often.

A. I wonder you should not try it, when you have such occasion to talk with him.

C. Ay, I want to talk with him, that I do, but I dare not talk with him by myself neither.

A. Why not? you know well enough what to say to him.

C. Ay, that's true, but I don't know how to manage him as they do; they are used to him; 'tis their trade to deal between him and us.

A. But it would save you the charges, and I fancy the Devil and you are no strangers.

C. What d'ye mean, master? I never saw him in my life.

A. Well, if you ha'nt been in his company, I dare say he has been in yours.

C. Why so, master?

A. You would never talk of hanging yourself, and of being hanged for murder, so familiarly as you do, if he had not been at work with you.

C. Why, I am half mad, sir; what would you have me do? I must be revenged on 'em.

A. Ay, I told you the Devil had been with you, 'tis he makes you talk of revenge; that's all the Devil, and ends in damnation; for if he is a spirit which waits to devour, and that does all he can to destroy us, we may very well think all evil motions come from him.

C. I don't understand those things, master, not I; but I am sure the Devil has had nothing to do with me, either in that or anything else.

A. I tell thee, honest friend, thou doest not know when the Devil is working in thee, and when not; all such horrid thoughts as thou hast had about self-murder, revenge, and doing mischief to others, must be from the Devil.

C. Well, master, let's talk no more of that, my head runs another way at present.

A. Why, will you really go to inquire of the Devil about who has made you a cuckold?

C. No, not to the Devil, I only go to the cunning man.

A. Yes, and to the conjurer at Oundle, you say, and he can raise the Devil, it seems.

C. Well then, he deals with the Devil, not I.

A. And do you think, as I said before, the Devil would befriend you so far as to hinder your wife's wickedness? do you think he would not rather make her wickeder than she is?

C. Nay, that's true; but however, I'd try what I can do; I am resolved I'll go to him.

When I found he was so positive, I bade him e'en go and try the experiment; but depend upon it, said I, the Devil won't betray the secret to you; he is too much o' t'other side.

By this time we were come to Queen's Cross, a little of this side Northampton; and seeing the town from the hill, I offered to go on faster, seeing I knew the way was before me: but he bespoke me to keep him company; for, master, says he, if you lie in the town all night, I'll certainly come and tell you what the cunning man says to me.

I was not unwilling to hear the result of the story, but was particularly curious to hear what the magician at Oundle could do; so I resolved to stay at Northampton that night, and we kept company together to the town. When we came to the town, I put up at the George Inn, and thought he would have gone in with me; but when we came to the door, he bade me good bye for the present, for the cunning man, he said, lived two miles out of the town, and he would talk with him, and come to me at night.

I went into my inn and stayed there all night, but heard no more of my poor cuckold the countryman all that evening. The next morning I was indisposed, which made me stay longer at the inn than I intended, and indeed was obliged to stay there all that day and night too, but still I had no news of my countryman, which made me a little

chagreen ; but at last he came back again, and comes to me, but not till the next day about eleven o'clock.

Then as I had been waiting before very patiently, I began, and spoke a little angrily ; What's the business now, says I, what's the matter with you that you dodge about so ?

O sir, says he, let me come in, and I'll tell you the strangest things ——

Well, come in then, says I, and sit down ; I thought you had been lost, or had forgot your promise. So he came in, and we begun another short discourse, as follows :

C. O master, I have had a hard night's work on't.

A. What do you mean of a night's work, where have you been ?

C. Why first, master, I went to my cunning man, and gave him a shilling, which it seems he takes before he will speak a word.

A. Ay, ay, they are in the right, 'tis the only thing I can call them cunning men for.

C. Why are they cunning in that ?

A. Because they know if they did not take the money beforehand, nobody would give it them afterwards, because they can tell nothing, nor say anything to the purpose.

C. Well, I gave him the shilling ; he demanded half a crown, but I told him I was a poor man, and so he condescended in charity to take a shilling.

A. That is to say, he saw there was no more to be had, so he took what he could get ; and so they all do. But come, what did he do for it, what did he tell thee ?

C. O he examined me very strictly, I assure you.

A. Examine you about what ?

C. Why how long my wife had been gone, what she carried with her, what o'clock she went at, what

she said at parting; and took everything down in figures.

A. Very well, this was all grimace, to put a countenance upon things.

C. Then he bid me hold my tongue, and he fell to making figures and muttering to himself; and on a sudden he starts up; Well, says he, I find your wife is gone away, and that you beat her very severely before she went. Now, I could not deny that part, master, because I knew it was true; but how should he know that, master, if he wan't a cunning man?

A. Well enough: when he had examined you so strictly before in all the particulars, he might easily guess you had used her hardly, by the rage you were in when you came to him; and when you talked of hanging yourself and murdering her, he might easily judge that you had talked the same to her, which had frightened the woman, and she was run away for fear of you; there's no great cunning in all that. I was a going to say so to you myself once, for I really thought of it before.

C. Why then you are as much a cunning man as he.

A. Well, what else did he say to you?

C. Nothing to the purpose, only to vex me and make me mad.

A. Nay, that he could not do, for I verily think you were mad before; but what was it? come, tell me.

C. Why, master, he fell to scribbling and scrawling again upon a piece of paper, and then he rises, and walks up and down, and round and round, as I thought; he made circles three or four times, and talked to himself all the while.

A. Well, and that frightened you, I warrant you; did not you think he was going to raise the Devil?

C. Why you know everything, master, aforehand,

I think you are as cunning as he ; I was so frightened I trembled like an aspen leaf, master.

A. Why, didn't you say you wanted to see the Devil, to tell you all ?

C. Ay, that's true, master, but I was deadly afraid for all that, especially when I thought he was just a coming.

A. Well, and how then, what came of it ?

C. Came on it ! why, master, the man's a rogue, a mere cheat ; he had got my money, and when all come to all, he told me nothing, at least nothing that signified anything to me.

A. Well, but what was it ? for I find he told you something, though you don't like it : did he bid you go home and be quiet and easy, and not trouble yourself about it ?

C. Hang him, rogue ; when he had made all his turns and his circles, and said all his witchcraft over to himself, he sits down and calls me to him, and very civilly bade me sit down, and begun his ugly story.

A. I find he has not pleased ye : I really fancy the man has given thee good honest advice, and bid thee go home and mind thy business, and be easy ; did not I say the same to thee ?

C. I'll tell it you all, master, if you'll have patience ; he's a rogue ; a rogue, master. I told you he would have my money beforehand, and so he had, or he should never ha' had a farthing ; and he knew that well enough.

A. No, no, he knew folks never pay when they don't like the story ; but go on, what did he say ?

C. Why, as grave as a judge, he takes me by the hand, felt my pulse, holding his conjuring paper in t'other hand all the while ; Hark thee, friend, says he, I have calculated the times and the seasons, I have brought your names in a direct opposition, I have done everything to satisfy you that can be done,

and all my numbers and accounts agree, and this is the sum of your case ; you are a poor, honest, fretful, passionate fellow, that stands here on one side ; and then he showed me his damned figures, and crosses and circles, on one side ; and here is your poor wife a t'other side, says he ; and then he showed me his figures again ; she has angered you, and scolded at you for your ill usage of her, and you have fallen upon her and beaten her unmercifully, and threatened to murder her, and she is run away for fear of it ; and now you call her whore, and come to me to tell you who has made a cuckold of you.

A. And did the man say all this to you, friend ?

C. Yes, master, and a great deal more, like a rogue as he is. He a cunning man ! he is a block-head ; why, I knew all that before.

A. Ay, and he might easily gather it from your discourse.

C. No, master, that he could not, I am sure.

A. Well, then, you will make him a cunning man indeed, at the same time that you call him a block-head and a fool. I tell you I gathered as much before from you, and you can't help it ; you are too full of your own story. But go on, what did he say then ?

C. Why, then, he fell to preaching, and giving me advice ; Go home, friend, says the toad, and be easy and quiet, and tell your friends you are sorry you have been in such a heat, and that you hope your wife will come home again, for you won't do her any hurt ; and then your neighbours will tell her, and she'll come lovingly again to you ; for I tell thee friend, says he, thou art in the wrong, the poor woman is no whore, I can show it you in black and white here ; and then he pointed to his cursed conjuring paper ; she is a very honest woman, thou hast only a whimsey come in thy head because she

is gone; I tell thee thou art no cuckold, go home and be quiet.

A. And did he say all this to thee?

C. Yes, to be sure master, and a great deal more such stuff; what should I be in such a passion with him for else?

A. Upon my word, friend, whether he be a cunning man or no, that I have nothing to say to; he may make thee believe so, that's for his advantage; but o' my conscience I think he's a wise man, and an honest man, and I would advise thee to follow his counsel; for I do tell thee, I firmly believe 'tis thy case to a tittle, and I tell thee thy whole discourse discovered it; he might have said it all without his figures and circles; that was done to amuse you, but 'tis plain from all you have said, that's thy very case.

C. Ay, ay, master, it is no matter for that, let him be as cunning and as wise as he will, I have had another guess account of it, and better advice since; for I have been at Oundle, master, since that, and there I have met with a cunning man indeed.

A. Why, have you really been consulting with the Devil then?

C. I believe I have indeed.

A. Nay, then, 'tis like you have had good advice indeed; mayn't a body know what you have met with there too?

C. Truly master, I don't know whether I can tell it you or no, for I have been frightened out of my wits. I am sure if my hat had been on, my hair would have lifted it off, though I had had a good basket of apples upon my head.

A. Come, let me hear it however, as well as you can.

C. Why master, when I came to the man's house, 'tis wthin two mile of Oundle I think, or there-

about,) it was almost dark, and that made it the worse. I knocked at the door, and out came a tall, black, frightful old man. I begun to be frightened at the very first sight, for I thought it had been the Devil was come before I asked for him.

A. And are you sure it was not?

C. Yes, I think he was not the Devil, for he spoke very civilly to me; and when I asked him if he was the cunning man, he smiled, and bade me come in; so he carried me into a large room, which had but one dim-burning candle in it, and I trembled every inch of me, for I thought the candle burnt blue as soon as I looked at it.

A. Very well, so you thought you were come into good company, did not you?

C. Indeed, I wished myself out of the house, again, that I did; but the old gentleman whistled, and in came a young fellow that looked like a servant, and he bade him go snuff the candle, and bring in another, and that comforted me a little; then he sat him down in a great elbow-chair, with a little table before it, and upon the table was a great many books, and a pen and ink, and paper. Come friend, says he, let me know thy business, for though I am none of those ignorant fellows you call cunning men, yet perhaps I may tell you what you want to know, upon a better foot.

A. Well, he begun pretty high: what could he pretend to?

C. I replied, Sir, I was told you was one that dealt in secret things, that understood the black art, and those we call cunning men; if I am mistaken, I am very sorry; and so made as if I would go away again; but he stopped me, and said, Look you, friend, I am none of those fellows you call cunning men, I look upon them to be all cheats; my practice is all divine, of a superior nature, I study things in a

higher sphere, I deal in the mysteries of an invisible world, and converse with the world of spirits unembodied, who are beneficent and kind to us, who are spirits embodied, and not only converse with us below, but are helpful and serviceable to us on all occasions. I can't remember all his hard words, master, but he said a deal more to that purpose.

A. Well, did not he ask for your money beforehand too, as t'other did?

C. No indeed, but when he bade me tell him my case, I put my hand in my pocket, and pulled out two half crowns, and went to offer him the money, for I found he was not an ordinary fellow, and so I thought he would not be very low-priced.

A. But he took the money, I suppose?

C. No, he said he did not do these things for money, as he found I believed he did; but he said, You may put what you please in there, pointing to a box that stood upon the table; I shall dispose of it charitably, and to better uses, it may be, than you would do yourself; so I put the money into his box, which had a slit like a tradesman's till.

A. Very well, this looked great indeed.

C. Then he bade me tell him my case; for, says he, I perceive you are a man of a troubled countenance, your mind is oppressed, the passions of your soul have been in a perturbation, your spirits are fluttering still, and in a storm, though something abated of what they have been; pray be very free, and tell me your whole case, as fully and plainly as you can.

A. Well, I assure you he spoke in state, with a great deal of majesty.

C. Yes, and yet he spoke very courteously too, and I began to like him mightily; so I began, and told him my case at large, just as I did you, master.

A. That is to say, that you wanted to be revenged

of your wife, and to find out the man that had cuckolded you, and the like; so you expected presently he should tell you who it was.

C. Yes, so I did; but he brought me to understand things better, and I found he was in earnest, and that he was not to be cheated. He examined me too as t'other had done, and asked me abundance of questions.

A. And, I doubt not, gathered your case in every part of it from the weak inconsistent account you gave him of it.

C. I don't know that; but after he had done asking me all his questions, he took his pen and ink too, and wrote down a great many things upon his paper, and made lines with a short brass rule and a pencil, and then took out a pair of compasses, and drew several figures and marks, but I understood nothing of them, neither could I see them distinctly by the candle-light; then he asked me my Christian name, which I told him was Edward, and he set it down in great letters, but such as though I can read master, I am sure that I never saw such before. Then he asked my wife's Christian name too, which I told him was Abigail, and he set that down in the same kind of letters as before; then he asked my age, and my wife's age, and the age of my two children; of all which I gave him a full account.

A. I suppose you had told him that you had two children; he did not conjure out that, did he?

C. Yes, he had asked me that before, and I told him; so when he had done all, and I believe we had talked together above an hour, he rose up, and offered to go away, and I rose up too, but he laid his hand upon my arm, Do you sit still, says he, and I'll come to you again; at which I was a little frightened to be left alone, and he perceived it. Don't be afraid, says he, there shall nothing hurt you, nor speak to you; and if you hear any noise don't you

stir, but sit still here. So he took up one of the candles, and went into another room by a little door like a closet-door, and when he shut the door after him, I perceived a little window of one broad square of glass only, that looked into the room which he was gone into.

A. I warrant ye, you wanted to peep, did not ye?

C. Yes, I did, but I durst not stir for my life, because he had charged me I should not.

A. Well, but you was to hear some noises, was you not?

C. But I did not, except once that I heard a noise like the drawing of a chair upon the floor, which being nothing but what was ordinary, did not disturb me.

A. Well, how long did he stay?

C. About half an hour, and came in again, looking very well pleased, and asked me how I did, and then sat down as before. Well, says he, I have been consulting on your case, and I find things not so threatening to you as I expected; perhaps you may not be in so ill a case as you imagine; however, I am ordered to tell you, that some days after your return, your wife shall come to a house near you, and send to know if you will receive her again kindly; if the person she sends is a woman, you may conclude your wife has abused you; but if she sends a man, then she is innocent, and you are mistaken.

A. This was point blank, I assure you.

C. I did not like it, however, and that he might see well enough; for I can't allow any ifs or ands. Tell me of being mistaken! said I to him, I can't be mistaken. Well, says he, I'll go again, and consult further about you; and seeing me begin to get up too, he turns again, You are not afraid, says he, are you? No, not at all, said I; Well, nor you won't be afraid, will you, if you see nothing frightful?

No, not at all, said I again. But I lied, master, for I was almost frightened to death when he spoke of my seeing something; but as I had said No, twice, and spoke it pretty heartily too, he said, Well, then, come along with me into the next room.

A. I doubt you were afraid then, indeed.

C. Ay, so I was heartily, and he perceived it too, again; Well, says he, if you are afraid to go into my room of practice, I'll stay here with you; only, whatever you see or hear, sit you still, and neither speak or stir out of your chair.

A. Well, did you observe his direction?

C. No, indeed, master, my heart failed me; I durst neither go nor stay; but I'll tell you what I did, when he was gone into the next room, I went to the window and peeped.

A. And what did you see? 'tis odd peeping at the Devil, I must tell you.

C. I saw my old gentleman in a great chair, and two more in chairs at some distance, and three great candles, and a great sheet of white paper upon the floor between them; every one of them had a long white wand in their hands, the lower end of which touched the sheet of paper.

A. And were the candles upon the ground too?

C. Yes, all of them.

A. There was a great deal of ceremony about you, I assure you.

C. I think so too, but it is not done yet; immediately I heard the little door stir, as if it was opening, and away I skipped as softly as I could tread, and got into my chair again, and sat there as gravely as if I had never stirred out of it. I was no sooner set but the door opened indeed, and the old gentleman came out as before, and turning to me, said, Sit still, don't ye stir; and at that word the other two that were with him in the room walked out after him, one after another, across the room, as if

to go out at the other door where I came in ; but at the further end of the room they stopped, and turned their faces to one another, and talked ; but it was some devil's language of their own, for I could understand nothing of it.

A. And now, I suppose, you were frightened in earnest ?

C. Ay, so I was ; but it was worse yet, for they had not stood long together, but the great elbow-chair, which the old gentleman sat in at the little table just by me, began to stir of itself ; at which the old gentleman, knowing I should be afraid, came to me and said, Sit still, don't you stir, all will be well, you shall have no harm ; at which he gave his chair a kick with his foot, and said, Go, with some other words, and of other language, and away went the obedient chair, sliding, two of its legs on the ground, and the other two off, as if somebody had dragged it by that part.

A. And so, no doubt, they did, though you could not see it.

C. As soon as the chair was dragged or moved to the end of the room, where the three, I know not what to call 'em, were, two other chairs did the like from the other side of the room, and so they all sat down, and talked together a good while ; at last the door at that end of the room opened too, and they all were gone in a moment, without rising out of their chairs ; for I am sure they did not rise to go out, as other folks do.

A. What did you think of yourself, when you saw the chair stir so near you ?

C. Think ! nay, I did not think ; I was dead, to be sure I was dead, with the fright, and expected I should be carried away, chair and all, the next moment. Then it was, I say, that my hair would have lifted off my hat, if it had been on, I am sure it would.

A. Well, but when they were all gone you came to yourself again, I suppose?

C. To tell you the truth, master, I am not come to myself yet.

A. But go on, let me know how it ended.

C. Why, after a little while my old man came in again, called his man to set the chairs to rights, and then sat him down at the table, spoke cheerfully to me, and asked me if I would drink, which I refused, though I was a-dry indeed. I believe the fright had made me dry; but as I never had been used to drink with the Devil, I didn't know what to think of it, so I let it alone.

A. But you might e'en have ventured, for the old necromancer was but a man, whatever correspondence he might have, and his ale would not have hurt you. But what else did he say about your business?

C. Why, he told me the invisible agents were favourable in their answers, that there appeared nothing but well, that he was assured by the aspects which any way concerned me that I was more concerned about this matter than there was reason for, that I should go home and wait till, by the signals he had given me, I might judge for myself, and till I heard from my wife as before; and that if I could make any plain discovery that there was real guilt, I should come to him again, and he would endeavour to point out the man; but if I could not, I should rest satisfied that I had been wrong informed of things in my family, and might make myself easy.

A. This is an odd story: why, this man is only a cheat, like all the rest; he bids you go home, and if you can find out any real guilt, then come to him, and he will tell you what to do; that is to say, he knows nothing. Is this your necromancer! pray, where does he dwell?

C. Nay, master, the man has done me no wrong. I was directed to the house, but I can't find it again, if I was to be hanged for missing it; however, I won't betray him neither, let him be what he will.

A. Well; but it seems you are not fully satisfied yet, because he does not confirm your notion that your wife is a whore; I fancy you have a mind it should be so.

C. I don't care what she is, so I could but find it out.

A. But, you see, neither the honest man at Northampton, nor the Devil at Oundle, would give you any reason to think so. I would have you go home, as the first man advised you, and be quiet. I verily believe there's nothing at all in it; but you have been a cruel husband, have used your wife like a dog, and frightened her with worse, and she is fled from you, as a poor, naked, defenceless sheep would from a lion or wolf.

C. And you would have me go home and submit to my wife! no, I'll hang myself first.

A. I don't say submit to your wife; though if you have wronged your wife, as I doubt you have, I see no reason why you should not make a wife satisfaction for the injury done her character, as well as you would to a man that was able to cudgel you into it. But I say go home, and mend your wife's husband, and that will in all probability mend your wife, and you may live comfortably again together.

C. I can't promise, master, to take any of their advices, or your's either.

This story is not told so much to give an account of the man, who was nothing as I could understand by it all, but a base passionate fellow to an honest woman his wife; but it is a kind of a history of modern magic, or of the craft which is at this time in practice in the world. Nor is it a singular example,

for we have many more people among us, who are pretenders to the sacred sciences, as they call them; who yet do not level their knowledge of them to such mean uses, as to go mountebanking with them, to get a crown or two for petty discoveries, and set up for what they call cunning men; which is indeed the lowest step of this kind that a spirit of the invisible world could well be supposed to take.

It is true, it is something hard to describe what this thing we call magic is, and how it is to be understood now; what it was formerly we know something of, and yet even then no great things were performed by it; something they did, whether by the thing itself as an art, or by the Devil being present to assist them, we know not; that which would be called wonderful is, that they did then, as they pretend to do still, several things which the Devil really has no power to do; and particularly that of foretelling things to come, which we do not, generally speaking, grant the Devil to have in his power; he can indeed make better judgment of things than we can, but that the knowledge of futurity is given him, I deny.

For the augurs and southsayers, they did strange things formerly; by whose power, is not in my reach, nor any one's else to determine: for example; in the latter end of the life of Augustus Cæsar, while the ceremonies were performing in the Campus Martius, the emperor and a vast concourse of people being present, an eagle came into the place, and hovered over the emperor some time, flying round and round him in the air, and then flying towards a small temple or oratory, it settled upon a little pinnacle, just over the statue of Agrippa.

This was taken as a presage or omen to the emperor, whether of good or evil was hard to determine: but the augurs being consulted, they deter-

mined it to be evil, and that it betokened the death of the emperor in a short time.

Another accident happened the very next day, viz., a flash of lightning broke upon the statue of the emperor over the senate-house, and struck out the letter C, from the word Cæsar, in the inscription upon the capital of the work over the statue. The augurs were again consulted, and they again consulting with one another, and by the ordinary observations, declared the emperor would die within a hundred days; signified by the numeral letter C being struck out, and that he should then be reckoned among the gods, because the word ÆSAR in the Hetrurian tongue signifies a god.

Now it fell out according to this prediction; the emperor, and Tiberius his heir apparent, went as far as Beneventum, he was taken sick there of a diarrhoea, and causing himself to be carried to Nola near Capua, he expired ninety-nine days after the stroke of the thunderbolt or lightning as above. If then the Devil has no knowledge of futurity, but that the study of the intellectual world, or world of spirits, be a sacred science, as the professors of it contend; then those augurs who acted upon the foot of the ancient magic, were illuminated from those intellectual beings, and had converse with spirits of a differing kind from those which we call devils or diabolical.

Now, as it is hard to distinguish these illuminations otherwise than by the events and consequences of the intelligence they bring, so I think that if, first of all, the distinction be allowed between good and evil spirits, then it is a just way of determining, viz., that such intelligence as tends to the good of mankind, to the propagation of virtue, and preserving honour, chastity, property and religion, may be supposed to proceed from good spirits, whether

angels or other spirits unembodied ; on the contrary, where the correspondence has a general tendency to mischief, to encourage crime, to the hurt of mankind in general, to discourage virtue and religion, to insult Heaven, and in a word, where the tenor and bent of the illumination is to do evil, or to direct to the doing it, there we may, without injury to persons, or to the Devil himself, say it is from him, or by his agency, and that he (the Devil) is principally concerned in it ; for we know it is his nature and particular property to be propagating evil, and that he is apparently known to hate mankind, and abhor, envy, and malign the holy nature of the eternal Being.

It may be a very just distinction between the blessed eternal Being, and the cursed, exiled, condemned species of evil angels ; in a word, between God and the Devil, to say of them thus :

God is the perfection of good.

The Devil is the extreme of corruption.

God the perfection of purity and holiness.

The Devil a composition of the utmost impurity.

From these two contraries derive all the executive power of good and evil ; the Devil can no more be the genuine parent of good actions, than an evil tree can bring forth good fruit ; than darkness, which is a privation of the glorious light, can be a consequence or production of it.

God can no more be the author of evil, than he can annihilate himself, and cease to be ; and he cannot cease to be, because he that exists from eternity is eternal, and exists necessarily, as well as from himself.

If then the intelligence given, or the illuminations received by the art which these men pretend to, is found to have these essential qualifications of goodness ; viz., beneficent to mankind, directing men to the preserving virtue, honour, property and

piety ; then I should be tempted to think they have an acquaintance with the intellectual world, a converse with good spirits, and a prescience communicated from the good angels, those guardians of mankind, waking centinels, set to guard the world from evil, and to counteract the malice and rage of hell, but not else.

Here then is a test of the magicians' art, and let us not be amused and imposed upon by the pretences to the sacred sciences, and to the study of exalted mysteries, incantations divine and sublime, and many other lofty expressions ; significant in themselves, but not so in the case before us, unless testified by the virtue and just productions which appear in their practice. I say, let us not be amused with these to embrace hell in the disguise of heaven, and converse with a deceiver in the robes of an angel of light.

If there are such glorious things attained to by art, and by the study of these sacred sciences, where shall we find the practice of them ? I think we must be referred back to the augurs and diviners among the more honest heathens ; for we may almost answer for it, that nothing of this kind is seen among us ; or at least if it is found in theory, and there is in nature a reality of art, such as I have mentioned above ; that magic is a science laudable in its study, justifiable in its practice, sublime in its attainment ; it is yet so blended with the wicked part, by the corruption of its professors, that we scarce know where to find one, either in being or in story, in the whole Christian time, whose practice can be allowed to be sacred, whatever can be said of the science.

It is true, there was a famed magician in Kent, who pretended to this, and of whom I shall speak at large in the next chapters ; and he seemed to act wholly upon the principle of doing good, detecting

punishing, and exposing crime: but I shall give my exceptions to it when I come to his story.

At present therefore the world are to be excused the mistake, if they run into it even with a kind of general consent, taking the word magic and magician in the worst sense, understanding them all as practising the diabolical part of it, viz., a converse with evil spirits, and a dealing with the Devil; inclusive also of all those several classes into which I have distinguished it before.

Hence perhaps it is, that in our discoursing with even the most learned men upon this subject, a few, a very few excepted, it is very hard to bring them to any notions of a difference between magic and witchcraft, between a magician and a sorcerer, between a student in the exalted sciences, a converser with the intellectual world, and a wretch that has a familiar, a wizard or necromancer; but they will, though they may be wrong in it too, have them be reckoned all in a class, that they are all practitioners in the diabolical part, and in a word, that they all deal with the Devil. Indeed the difference is not easily perceptible, because of the pretences which the worst of them make to the high illumination, when they are really acting the vilest part, and that in the ordinary course of their practice; it is therefore by the consequences only, that they are to be known. Witchcraft and sorcery may in one respect be justly said to be all magic; but I must not allow that all magic is witchcraft, as I distinguished before between a witch and a wizard. But seeing it is so hard to know them asunder, and that the imposture is so great, the best method I can take is, where history or conversation will supply materials, to give you as many examples of the several practices and practisers in these last ages of the world, as we can meet with, as well for your diversion as instruction.

I must here enter a caution too against a weak, but vulgar mistake, which to the reproach of human understanding the world has been very much possessed with; and that is, to ascribe every difficult unaccountable performance to the art magic; and every superior genius, every man of a sublime thought, and more than ordinary capacity, to be a magician. Archimedes was a most accomplished genius, and an excellent mathematician, but we will have him be a magician too. Friar Bacon, who by his skill in the mathematics, and the doctrine of motion and of sounds, made a brazen head to speak; of which, by the way, there are many examples in history, more ancient than father Bacon, yet we will have this honest friar be a witch, a magician, a conjurer, only because the thing was beyond the ordinary conception.

Men of thought and head, who have a genius a little above their neighbours, have on all occasions been liable to be thus treated; even our Saviour himself, when he acted such wonders as the like had not been seen, and cast out devils, what said the amazed world? The more weak and admiring and innocent thoughts were amazed, the text says they were astonished; and at another time they were filled with wonder and the like; but the self-wise heads, the pretending Pharisees, having neither knowledge to reach the divine power by which he wrought, and too much pride to submit to faith, reproached him with dealing with the Devil: *He casteth out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils.* Matt. xii. 24.

This mistake may therefore take place in the case before me; and men who have studied, in the most exquisite manner, any of the sciences which are lawful and commendable, and are arrived to a degree of knowledge beyond others, may be suspected of magic, and of the diabolic magic too, which I have been speaking of.

I will not venture to state the bounds, critically speaking, between the lawful study of magic as a science, and the unlawful part of its practice as a diabolic or a black art, any more than between the noble study of astronomy, including the motions of the heavenly bodies, and that corrupt and horrid imposition, that worst of juggle, the most simple and scandalous of all cheats, called judicial astrology.

That magic may be a handle to witchcraft, that one may begin where the other ends, this I will not deny; but I must be allowed to say, that if there is an invisible world, a world of spirits, if there is a converse between the spirits unembodied, and our spirits embodied, which also I cannot deny, whatever lawful way there can be found, if such can be found, to form an intelligence between them, must be a sublime and heavenly attainment; at the same time, I will not venture to say such an intelligence can be formed.

Nor will I venture to say that there can be any settled method found out to call up any of those invisible inhabitants of the world of spirits, to a visible appearance in this world, and to an audible and vocal conversation, so as to receive intelligence of things present, or directions in things to come, to be advised, counselled or informed by them, or to any such purpose; it does not seem probable; if at any time they do or can appear, which yet I do not grant, it must be spontaneous and arbitrary, how, when, where, and on what occasion they think fit; but as to our calling them up by art, except it be by a diabolical magic, and by the immediate assistance of the Devil, and perhaps too it may be only a delusion of Satan's, who pretending to visit us by the good spirits we want to converse with, constitutes a missionary devil to personate the spirit expected, and so put a cheat upon the inquirer, as the witch

of Endor raised a spectre or sham Samuel in the room of the true prophet Samuel, who we may, without presumption, believe knew nothing of the matter.

To pretend by art to bring those good spirits from their state of felicity, wherever it is, to an appearance for our private concerns, seems to have no consistence in the nature of a future state; that there may be an invisible and imperceptible converse of spirits which we cannot describe, and appointed by Providence for ends which we do not fully understand, I believe is possible; but it is then done their own way, and we know nothing of the manner.

There is much said of guardian angels, and some seeming ground from Scripture, but not enough to be called an authority, from whence to ground an hypothesis of the manner; nor will the greatest magician that ever was, how much soever he pretends to the sacred science, take upon him to say he can call up or cause to appear one of those guardian angels; no, not by the utmost and most exquisite art that was ever attained to; so that all that part of calling up good spirits or guardian angels to a visible appearance, seems to be fictitious and groundless. As to calling up evil angels or evil spirits, that is to say, devils, as it is to be done by the assistance of the Devil, and that he has given his assistance to the doing it, and therefore can do it, I make no question; and therefore when the magicians do at any time bring up appearances and frightful apparitions by their art, I shall always suppose it to be the Devil, that is to say, the Devil raised by consent of the Devil; the Devil coming up at their call, who he had before consented should have leave to call him; for he must come volunteer too, nor can he be called up or disturbed without his consent; but he bargains with those wicked

people upon such conditions as they agree between them, that he shall obsequiously attend whenever they use such and such methods to call him; and this is witchcraft, and this is magic; this magic is witchcraft, and this witchcraft is magic: let any one distinguish between them if they can.

CHAP. III.

Of the present pretences of the magicians : how they defend themselves ; and some examples of their practice.

THE magicians, such as acknowledge themselves to be acquainted with the black art, as we call it, are not dumb and speechless in their own case ; on the contrary, they defend themselves with the utmost artifice, have their historical accounts of their practice, and give the most fair and plausible sketches of the art itself that can be imagined.

They insist that it is a general mistake, a vulgar error, and injurious to all the practisers of this science, to say they have a familiar, as we understand the word, that is, an evil spirit, or that they deal with the Devil ; they own they have access to, and an intercourse with superior beings, and converse with the world of spirits ; but that they are the good and well-disposed spirits, who are always beneficent, kind, and ready to do all possible offices of love to mankind ; that they are certainly influenced from above, and that consequently it is so far from being true that they are diabolic and wicked spirits, that on the contrary they are always employed in matters superior to the nature of the infernal spirits ; that they do not amuse the world with fictions, and deceive and abuse the people that come to them with their inquiries ; that they do not, like the Devil's oracles of old, give ambiguous and doubtful answers in the cases and inquiries that are brought before them, to cheat and delude the innocent inquirer ; but that they, on the

contrary, tell them the truth of everything, be it for good or evil to them; that they often detect criminals, expose vice, prevent mischief, and promote virtue; things nobody will pretend are in the intent and meaning of evil spirits; that they do not impose upon the ignorant to cheat and defraud them, or make unjust advantages of them.

In discoursing many years since upon this subject with a particular friend, a judicious and learned man, and one that was not easily imposed upon, I seemed to be doubtful of the reality of the thing in general, and whether there was indeed such a thing as that of men having intercourse with the world of spirits, and whether we might distinguish between that and witchcraft, insisting that I thought it was all witchcraft, sorcery, and the Devil.

He told me he was of my mind till some years before, that he had occasion to converse with the famous magician called Dr. Boreman, in Kent, who he assured me was a very grave judicious man, and, as he believed, a good man. I had once, said he, above all the rest, a long conference with him on a particular occasion; but 'tis too long to tell you the particulars. If 'tis not too long for you to tell, said I, it will not be too long for me to hear, for I am really impatient to know what is to be known of that kind; and the more, because I am at a loss to pass a judgment about it. Well, said he, if I tire you then with the length of it, tell me, and I will leave off. So he began his story thus: I had, said he, a friend, a young man, who desired me, upon an extraordinary occasion, to go with him (as he called it) to a cunning man.

I asked him what was the business.

He said it was business of consequence to him, and though he did not care to tell it just then, yet I should know it afterward.

I told him I had no faith at all in those sort of people whom they called cunning men.

Nay, says he, I believe they deal with the Devil, but I don't care for that, if I can but have satisfaction in what I go about.

I told him I differed from him in that too, for I neither believed that they dealt with the Devil, or the Devil with them; or that they could say anything to him that was to the purpose.

Why, they do tell strange things, says he.

I told him I believed nothing of it; but that it was all a cheat; and so I seemed loath to have him go to the cunning man at all.

N. B. You must understand here, that my friend was not so really doubtful as he made the young man believe he was; but, as he had told me before, he believed there was something in it, but he could never come at the speech of one of the pretenders to the art, and so was entirely ignorant of what they did, or how they proceeded, and therefore (as he told me) he was mighty willing to go with him, though he made some show of being backwards; so he went on with his discourse.

I was not only loath to let him go, says my friend, but I told him I did not care for it, and therefore desired he would excuse me going with him; but when he told me who the cunning man was, and that he would go to the famous Dr. Boreman, my curiosity prevailed with me, not only not to persuade him against going, but to resolve to go with him myself.

In a word, we appointed a day, and I went with him, for I had a great mind to talk with the doctor.

When we came to the house (it was in Kent, not far from Maidstone, where the doctor lived at that time; I don't remember the place exactly but), I say, when we came to the place, a servant came to

the door, and very civilly led us into the house, and bade us sit down; leaving us in a large hall, where we walked about, looking on his magical pictures, of which we saw a great many whose meaning I did not at all understand, and the servant went away, as I suppose, to call his master.

After a while the doctor came in with a staff in his hand, like a crutch, as I thought; and I thought also he was lame, having lately had the gout: he was a grave old man, with a long black velvet gown on, his beard long, and the upper lip of it trimmed into a kind of muscato, a cap on his head with a border of hair within it, as was the custom in those days.

After usual civilities, he began to inquire our business; and directing his speech to me, as the senior in appearance, I told him, that young man (pointing to him that came with me) my friend, had something of importance to communicate to him, and which he wanted his advice in; and so, says he, I bid the young man give the doctor an account of his business.

This young man had, it seems, a particular case which he went to him about; and though he had desired me to go with him, as I have said, yet he had not told me his case; so I was obliged to direct him to tell it himself.

Then the doctor desired the young man to give him his case in writing; but he told him he could not write well enough, or explain his case so intelligibly to him in writing.

Well then, says the doctor, tell it me in words at length, and I'll write it down from your own mouth: however, I persuaded him to write it down as well as he could; upon which, he desired a pen, ink and paper, which the doctor ordered his man to give him; and in the mean time, the doctor asked me to walk

into another room; Come, says he, we will leave him to do it, that we may not disturb him. So we went into the next room.

Then he began a discourse, by asking me if I knew anything of the young man's case; which I really did not, and therefore told him so; but if I had known it, I should hardly have given him any account, for I took that to be a piece of his art, to pick as much of the circumstance of the case out privately as he could, so to guide his answers; but I quite mistook the man. From that we fell into several other discourses, and among the rest, I asked the doctor, if it would be no offence to him, to let us talk a little about the study of those things which he was so famed for.

He said, no, not at all, if I was disposed to talk of them in a serious and friendly manner.

I told him I hoped he did not think I had any ill design, though a stranger; if he did, I would not desire to say any more; and that as I did not know what he might understand by the word friendly, I would not move it any further.

He said he did not apprehend anything dangerous; for he used no unlawful arts, but he said several persons made a jest of those things which he esteemed sacred, and that he did not care for those discourses or those people who buffooned things because they did not understand them.

I told him, that whatever I thought, he should find I would neither treat him, or the subject we might discourse of, with any disrespect.

He told me he would take my word for it; so we fell into several discourses about science in general, particularly of the study of magic, and the practice of it, and when first it was known in the world.

He told me I seemed ignorant in the thing itself; And to what purpose, says he, should I go to speak

of the original of a thing which you have not right notions of? so we discoursed a little further upon it, thus:

A. What notions would you have me entertain of it? I scarce know what you mean by the thing itself.

Dr. Why, sir, you seem neither to know what I mean, or what you mean yourself.

A. That is to say, I do not express myself perhaps right; then you may set me to rights, and it would be very kind to do so.

Dr. You speak of my practising as an art; now I practise no art, nor use any art; I am no juggler, sir; you don't see me show tricks.

A. I would not offend you, sir; will you tell me then what it is you do practise?

Dr. Neither will I be offended; but if you will give me leave to ask you a previous question or two, I shall be the better able to answer your other question afterwards.

A. Any question you please.

Dr. Why then, will you tell me what brought you hither to me?

A. Why really, sir, my answer must be, I cannot well tell; my friend who is writing there in the other room, will tell you that better than I.

Dr. Why then, shall I tell you what you come for? perhaps you'll think that something odd.

A. So indeed I should, if I did not consider you as a man of art.

Dr. No, no, not a man that deals with the Devil, as you fancy I do.

A. Nay, you must deal with somebody, if you tell me my business here, when I don't know it myself.

Dr. Why, I will tell you in few words then; your friend comes about business, you to satisfy your curiosity.

A. Upon my word I think you are in the right.

Dr. Well, I have used no great matter of art you see yet.

A. Nay, I don't know that; I suppose what you do is pretty much in the dark, and imperceptible; so you might use art, and I know nothing of it.

Dr. That's true, or else it would be no art.

A. But is my curiosity any offence to you, doctor? if it is, I'll ha' done and say no more, but leave you and my friend together, for I don't come to affront you, far from it, I assure you.

Dr. No, no, 'tis no offence at all to me; only since you seem to talk friendly and freely, give me leave to ask you some questions first, and then I'll state yours for you, and answer them directly, and I hope to your satisfaction.

A. With all my heart; ask me what you please.

Dr. What did you suppose me to be, or what did your friend tell you I was, before you came?

A. And you will promise me not to take it ill if I speak plain English?

Dr. Not in the least; I'll put it into your mouth, for I know what you took me for, as well as you do yourself.

A. I doubt you do, sir; and that looks as if we were in the right.

Dr. Not at all neither, but of that afterwards; you and your friend took me for a necromancer, a magician, one that deals with the Devil, can raise the Devil, converses with him, and by his help can resolve difficult questions, give answers in doubtful cases; and, in short, that I am a conjurer.

A. And so you must be, I think; or else how do you know all this?

Dr. How I know it, is not the question; but whether it is true or no.

A. Exactly true, to a tittle.

Dr. And if I am no such person, have I not then a great deal of wrong done me?

A. You know, sir, 'tis natural for people to say a man deals with the Devil when he tells people their thoughts, foretells to them what comes to pass, and resolves such doubts as nobody but the Devil could resolve.

Dr. And perhaps the Devil himself could not do those things if he was to appear and do his utmost, for he knows no more of things to come than you or I do, and perhaps not so much.

A. Nay, do not join me to yourself, pray, for you may know more than the Devil himself can tell you.

Dr. Or else I would burn my books, and pretend no more to the sacred sciences which I have so much veneration for, and which you call my practice.

A. If I was sure of that I should have another kind of notion of you and your practice than I have yet, I assure you.

Dr. If you was sure of what?

A. Why, that you do not perform these things by the help of a familiar spirit.

Dr. Nay, hold, I don't say that neither; but are there no spirits but what are devils?

A. I don't know, indeed, as to that; but we understand no other; when we talk of a familiar spirit we always understand by it the Devil.

Dr. Then you misunderstand it, sir, that's certain: unsufferable ignorance! why, are there no good spirits?

A. I can say nothing to that.

Dr. And perhaps are not desirous to be informed.

A. Nay, there you wrong me, and take me for a fool into the bargain; for there are none but fools that have no delight in understanding; I would be informed of everything that I do not know.

Dr. There would be no such things as fools, sir, if they were willing to be informed.

If fools could their own ignorance discern,
They'd be no longer fools, because they'd learn.

A. Well, I am very willing to learn, I assure you, and of you too, whatever you please to inform me; perhaps I may be in the wrong as to what you say of good spirits, but I never heard of any.

Dr. That's strange, indeed! you have been much out of their care, sure.

A. I don't know that, neither; I hope not. If they have any of us in charge for good, I may be under their care I hope, and yet know nothing of it myself.

Dr. At least it seems you have been out of their acquaintance; but that is not much to the case; the loss has been yours, to be sure, and the fault too.

A. The loss may have been mine; but how does it appear that the fault has been mine too?

Dr. It seems evident to me, and perhaps I may convince you of it, if you allow me to ask you a few more such innocent questions as these.

A. With all my heart, especially if they are innocent.

Dr. If you have any reason to suspect them, do not answer.

A. And you give me leave to use my liberty, sir, without offence?

Dr. Ay, your utmost liberty, sir; why should I be offended? I think you ought rather to be offended, if I ask anything that does not become me. The first question I would ask you is, whether you think there is an invisible world?

A. That's no unfair question at all; and you shall find, sir, I won't cavil, I'll answer directly: I make no doubt but there is.

Dr. But let my question be direct, too; by an invisible world I don't mean, as the astronomers sug-

gest, that there are planetary worlds, made invisible only to us by their distance.

A. No, no, I do not take you so; I believe there is a world of spirits, and that I suppose is what you mean by invisible; also that this world you speak of is inhabited by spirits only, and therefore justly called invisible.

Dr. You are kind, nay, generous in argument, for you grant faster than I ask.

A. I do that to save circumlocutions, and giving you trouble.

Dr. Well, sir, where do you suppose this world of spirits is? for there must be a locality for the dwelling even of spirits; how else do we call it a world? and heaven itself is a place, according to the common understanding of the word.

A. It is hard to say where it is, at least 'tis hard to me; so I cannot answer that question, at least not directly as I would do.

Dr. It is true, the infinite spaces above are not easily described, as they are not to be mathematically lined out; but we have reason to know the inhabitants of it are not very remote from us, and that brings on another question.

A. I know some people think the regions of the air, even within the compass of the atmosphere, are full of spirits, and that of divers kinds, some good and some evil.

Dr. I have nothing to say to that notion; I can't allow they inhabit promiscuously the same regions, and dwell together; as good and bad people live here among one another without distinction.

A. I don't pretend to resolve that question indeed.

Dr. Neither did I propose it, sir: but my question is this, As you grant a world of spirits, and that you do not know where it is, so that, for aught you know, it may be very near, as well as very re-

mote ; nor, to a spirit, is distance of place anything worth considering, if I may speak my opinion ; but my question, I say, is this : Do you believe that the spirits inhabiting the invisible world have any converse with us, or with our embodied spirits, in this world ?

A. Truly, it is a nice question, and what I have often considered very seriously ; I am of opinion there is a certain secret converse of spirits, though I cannot understand anything of the manner.

Dr. Well, sir, your conceptions are much the same with mine, only that you believe there is, and I am sure of it.

A. That's carrying it a great way ; and I think this brings me to turn the tables, and to demand leave to ask you some questions in my turn, if you have done, or when you have done.

Dr. With all my heart, sir ; pray ask what you please.

A. My first question will be, sir, how you can say you are sure there is such a converse with the spirits of the invisible world ?

Dr. Because I have actually conversed with them myself.

A. Now you come to the point indeed. But what then do you call conversing ?

Dr. Why, I call seeing them, speaking to them, and hearing them speak, conversing ; is not that as clear as the other ?

A. The expression is clear, but the thing expressed is not so, at least not to me : how do you reconcile seeing, and speaking, to the thing called spirits ?

Dr. Why, therein you and I differ in our circumstances, and this is the sublime quality of the sciences which we profess ; that being under the operation of a higher and exalted mind, the eyes of the soul, which is a spirit, can operate upon imma-

terial objects, and see what to common sight is called invisible.

A. This is all mysterious, and if you will allow me the freedom, we should call it all cant and unintelligible.

Dr. I know it very well; and we, on the other hand, call your discourse empty and insignificant; for that you neither understand what you say, nor say what you might easily be taught to understand; and if a man enlightened in this superior manner, comes to talk with you, and would instruct you a little, you presently fly out, and cry a magician, a conjurer, that he has a familiar, and deals with the Devil; this was not always so.

A. This brings me to my first question, sir, exactly, namely, whence is the original of what you call your sublime practice, and where and when did it begin?

Dr. I could run you back, sir, to its original, and give you the history of it, but 'twould be too long. I doubt your want of patience.

A. My curiosity is too great to let me want patience.

Dr. Well, I'll give you an abridgment then of it, thus; Before the deluge, when the antediluvians had the blessing of longevity, to the number of almost a thousand years, we have many testimonies of their conversing, not only with the spirits of the invisible world, but with the great life of spirit, the Being of beings; and if we can deduce anything from consequences, divine spirits daily illuminated the minds of mankind, and conveyed all useful science to them, and that to such a degree as has never been attained to since, by which all the most exalted parts of both natural and supernatural knowledge were conveyed into their understandings.

A. They had, without question, a superior genius in the antediluvian state, far above what we have

now, and your notions of that kind are very clear to me, I agree with you in that.

Dr. They had not so much a superior genius, as they had a superior illumination; what should you and I have, if we had lived three or four hundred years, and had conversed all that while in an angelic society, and with an invisible species of creatures, in whom complete knowledge was but mere nature, and who had the goodness to be always communicating the most perfect ideas, the most sublime images to our thoughts? what should we be capable of?

A. Nay, I think you might say, what should we not be capable of?

Dr. Then considering that at the end of that three or four hundred years we were but in the prime of our age, in full strength of judgment, and vigour of mind, capable to receive the most divine impressions of sacred knowledge, what should we not learn with such teachers?

A. But how do we know that they were thus blessed?

Dr. Why, does not all your accounts of those times bring in the people conversing thus? Nay, do you not say that God, or that inconceivable something (which you call so) the king, and governor, and maker of spirits, conversed among them, talked with and to them?

A. Yes, we believe God himself conversed with them, particularly with Adam, the first of them, and with Noah, the last of them, and no doubt with many others between.

Dr. Well, and did the great Being of beings converse with man, and not the smaller and lower degrees of spirit? do you think the servants did not converse, if the master did?

A. Why, that indeed I never considered before, I confess.

Dr. But where else had they the knowledge of some things, which nothing but spirit and spirituous converse could possibly convey?

A. What things were they? I do not rightly understand you.

Dr. Why, first, for example, music, that heavenly science, the doctrine of sounds; measured and divided so as by dissonance to make harmony, to be admired by every ear, to move the passions, and agitate the soul, to be read by notes, understood by the differing key of sounds, the only universal character in the world. Could the genius of man invent it? No: it came from the invisible world, and was certainly communicated from the fountain of knowledge, by the agency of the good spirits, with which they so freely conversed.

A. You advance boldly, doctor.

Dr. That may fairly be asserted, which is impossible to be otherwise.

A. I won't venture to say it is impossible.

Dr. But I dare say it, and with good reason; then there is the doctrine of numbers, which we call vulgarly arithmetic; this with music seem to be two infinites, the bounds of them and the variety is not to be measured, or conceived of, and how could human genius measure them out?

A. What do you infer from thence?

Dr. Nothing but this; that those good beneficent spirits, with whom mankind had then the blessing of a daily society, filled their minds and inspired their thoughts with these noble and useful discoveries, and qualified them daily to improve upon them.

A. You talk above me now indeed.

Dr. You cannot say but I talk plainly, and intelligible.

A. So you conclude that the good spirits instructed them in these sublimer parts of knowledge?

Pray, why did they not teach them astronomy, natural philosophy, and all the useful branches of the mathematics?

Dr. And so no doubt they did. There's the ark for example; you say, God spoke to Noah, and told him in general what kind of vessel it should be; by which I suppose you may understand, God told him that the world should be drowned, and that he should be saved in a ship, which he should build? But can you think Noah could do all this without the more particular direction of these good and beneficent spirits, instructing him how to perform the work? how the beams, and the timbers, the planks, and all the parts, were to be put together; how the bottom was to be shaped for swimming, the head and the stern for breaking off the force of the water, in that truly unbounded ocean the flood; all these things I make no question he was instructed in by the daily assistance of the good inhabitants of the invisible regions, who freely had at that time an intercourse with the embodied, that is, imprisoned, spirits of men; and these are the same that we converse with now: so that I have fairly brought it down to our own times.

A. Sir, your discourse is very well laid together, I confess; but you make a long leap, and some of it in the dark too; from Noah, and the year of the world 1576, or thereabouts, to our time, which is about three thousand years after. How is it that these good spirits left off their goodwill towards men, and seem to shun us as much now as they courted us before?

Dr. I do not find it so, I rather say they do and would converse with us still, if we either saw the blessing of it, or knew how to value it, and made it appear we desired it.

A. But when did it break off? what did the flood put an end to it?

Dr. It seems, that men, by a differing conduct, and a way of life too gross for so excellent and sublime a converse, have rendered themselves unworthy and unqualified since the flood; so that the angelic train seem to have forsaken the earth, and only communicate themselves to such as render themselves acceptable and worthy by a life of earnest application to the study of divine science, and who seek after the high illumination.

A. So that there are some who enjoy this extraordinary society still?

Dr. Why not, pray? the good spirits are the same; they change not, neither is their goodwill towards men abated; but the custom of the world has been, and still is, to be shy and afraid of them, take them to be evil spirits, and, as the world calls them, devils; so that a good spirit cannot now offer its assistance to man, or go about to do any good to mankind, but they are frightened and terrified, and cry out the Devil, fly from it, and refuse to accept the benefit offered.

A. But it seems all do not treat them so?

Dr. No. But how then are they treated who act after another manner?

A. Why, how are they treated?

Dr. Are we not treated as demoniacs, as magicians and conjurers, necromancers, and that deal with the Devil. Did not you take me for such?

A. It is very true, I did.

Dr. Ay, and are you not under some sort of fright, even all the while you are talking with me, as if you were talking with the Devil, and lest I should raise the Devil while you are here?

A. I cannot say but it is in some measure true.

Dr. And yet we know no more of the Devil than you do, nor converse any more with him than other folks do, nor so much neither.

Having carried on our conversation thus far, my

companion, who was all this while a writing his case, came to the door, and calling to the doctor, told him he had done; Well, says the doctor to him, pray give me the paper then, and let me read it over; so he gave him his paper, which was a long one indeed, and very close written, containing all his case, which it seems was very particular, and required abundance of better advice than I thought the grave doctor was able to give him, but I was really mistaken.

I was far from being tired with this account, and believe I shall not tire the reader with setting it down. Indeed I interrupted him here, with asking him if he did not yet know his man's case, and if he did not read the paper; but he told me he did not, so I desired him to let me have the rest of the story, and he went on thus:

My man, said he, who was with me, told me little or nothing of his case, as I hinted before, except that he said it was very difficult and intricate; and that if it could not be resolved, and brought to a conclusion, he was sure he should never get over it, but should be undone, and that therefore he came to this man.

Why, says I, what do you take the man to be?

Why, what should I take him for, says he?

Nay, I suppose, said I, you take him for a conjurer, and one that deals with the Devil.

I care not who he is, or who he deals with, says the man, so I do but get my business done by him, find out a man or two that I look for, and have some satisfaction in my other affairs.

I don't know who you look for, said I, and I doubt you don't know who 'tis you seek to.

Why, the Devil, says he; who d'ye think I seek to, when I come to a cunning man?

This discourse was before we came to the doctor's house, and was the occasion indeed that I was at

first so shy of him, and made so many roundabout cautions when I first spoke to him.

When he had written his case down, and given it to the magician, the doctor asked him if he could not leave the paper with him, and come again in two or three days? The inquirer seemed uneasy at that, though he did not directly say no; but the doctor perceived it; Well then, said he, are you willing to stay here with me about eleven or twelve hours, and sit up all night? The man looked earnestly at me, as if it had been to ask me whether he should venture to stay all night, but withal looked a little frightened too.

The doctor seeing him look at me, as if he would ask my advice, turned to me, smiling at the man's backwardness.

Sir, says he, I perceive you must decide it; he seems a little frightened, I don't know at what.

Sir, says I, smiling, I believe he is afraid the candles will burn blue.

Ay, says he, you see the reason why the good spirits have left off conversing with mankind; and you see how we that are men of art, and who have studied the sacred sciences, suffer by the errors of common fame; they take us all for devil-mongers, damned rogues, and conjurers.

It is very true, sir, said I, I see it now; he is afraid, in short, that you will raise the Devil. With that he turns to the man; Hark ye friend, says he, are you afraid to stay all night? speak honestly, if you are, and tell me so.

Why, sir, says the man, I can't say but I am a little uneasy about it, though I don't know at what, for I an't very apt to be afraid of sights, not I. With that I put in a word to my companion; Why cousin, says I, if you are uneasy about seeing any strange sight, or hearing anything uncommon, what did you come to this gentleman for? you know very well

what you told me you understood him to be, and what you expected of him.

Nay, says the conjurer, I must needs say, he that is afraid to see the Devil, should never come to see us.

Why, you don't always deal with the Devil, do ye? says the man.

Nay, says he, I han't told you yet that I deal with him at all; but I say, you should not be afraid of him, when you come of these errands; for it seems you suppose we talk with him for you.

Why, that's as much as to tell me, says the young man, you can raise the Devil for me, if you please.

Well, come, be plain with me, and tell me; have you a mind to see him or no? says the doctor, laughing.

No, not I, says he, not at all, and that made me uneasy.

Well, well, says he, you shall not see the Devil then.

But shall I see nothing else, sir? says he. I would see none of your spirits, whether they are devils or no.

I tell you, says the doctor, you shall see nothing to hurt you.

But, says the man again, I don't know what to say, you speak in generals; pray don't fright me, any more than hurt me.

I tell thee again, says the doctor, I'll neither hurt thee, nor fright thee; but if you will have nothing done for you, what do you give me your case for? and if you are afraid to see, or hear anything, why do you not care to leave your case with me, and come again?

This was such a reasonable proposal, that I could not but tell my young man that I thought he was playing the fool with the doctor; if you stay, you

must be content to see what is to be seen ; and if you don't care to venture that, can't you go, and come again ? so in a word, I advised him to leave his case with the doctor, and go away, and come for an answer when he should appoint him.

As we were going away, the doctor takes me by the hand, the young man being gone out of the door ; You see, sir, the notions the poor innocent well-meaning people have of all the good spirits of the invisible world ; and though in their distresses they will come to us, and we make some search for them, yet they give the Devil all the praise of it ; nay, though they receive good from it ; and yet they acknowledge the Devil to be the author of nothing but mischief.

But sir, said I, you could, I suppose, give this honest man what answer you shall purpose to give him, without letting him see any appearances to fright or terrify him ?

I have nothing about me, says he, or that converses with me, that need to fright or terrify any one, much less that will do him any hurt. I do not say, but as the good spirits are beneficent and kind, and may meet and converse upon any occasions, and in any place, from their own happy inclination to serve and assist the oppressed or indigent creatures, may come and go, pass and repass in or near my house, which would be to me the greatest felicity of life. On this occasion the man might have heard some little noises, and perhaps have seen some motions rather than bodies, which he might call spectres and apparitions, or devils, or what he would ; yet these, as they would take no notice of him, or do anything to terrify or disorder him, so he would have nothing to do but to sit still, and not offer to stir, or speak, and be under no concern at all.

Well, sir, said I, were the case mine, as it is not, I assure you I would have trusted you, for I do not

think, let the case be what it will, that it is your business to suffer your clients to receive any hurt in your house, or to be frightened, so as to bring any evil report upon you.

Sir, says the doctor, my business is to do good to all men, and to hurt none, as is the desire of those superior beings, which I have the happiness to converse with; and therefore it only is wanting to us, that the poor people were a little less afraid of us, and that they came to us for mere necessity only, and not merely to satisfy their curiosity, as is often their case. However, added he, as to the young man your friend, let him go home, to-morrow you will see he will come back to me in a great hurry, though I han't ordered him to come till Friday, as you heard; but I warrant ye he will dream some strange dream to-night, his very fright will make him do it, and then he will come and desire me to interpret his dream for him; and then you may hear further.

Well, sir, said I, I shall observe him, and perhaps he will ask me to come along with him; if he does, I shall venture to come.

No, says the doctor, I don't think he will ask you to come, I believe he will be in better heart to-morrow; and it may be he'll offer to stay all night with me, and all day too, if I desire him, let him see what he will.

I think, said I, he's a fool he don't stay now; indeed if it had been my case, I would have trusted you.

Well, sir, says he, if you have any occasion in which I can render you any service, I shall be always ready to answer your expectations in the best manner I am able; and in the mean time, I hope you will no more have those weak notions, as if all the intelligence mankind can attain to from the invisible world must be with the Devil, or the evil spirits. I hope you will see that there are

cases come before me, which the Devil would no more be a Devil if he should give any satisfaction in, or any relief to the inquirer.

I gave him an answer in as obliging terms as I could, and so we parted, and I came to the young man, who waited for me with the utmost impatience, and with some kind of terror; for I found he was in a sweat, though it was a cold evening too.

When I came up to him, I asked him how he did.

Pretty well, says he, but I'm glad I am got away.

Why so? said I. Nobody offered to detain you, I thought the doctor spoke very civilly to you; and I'm sure he did so to me.

Ay, says he, he did so, and I had a mind to have ventured once to stay all night, but I am heartily glad I didn't; I should have been frightened out of my wits, if I had seen the Devil.

Why, I can assure you, that he says positively he has nothing to do with the Devil, and if you had seen any appearance, it would not have been an evil spirit, or devil, but a good spirit; that it would have come to render you service, and do you good, rather than have hurt you, and that you would have had no need to be frightened.

No matter for that, says he, all spirits are devils to me; if I had seen a spirit, or an apparition, all he could have said to me would not have persuaded me to believe it had not been the Devil.

Why, would you not have believed the doctor, if he had told you so?

No, says he, nor a hundred conjuring doctors more, not I.

But what is it you go to him for then? said I. If you won't believe what he says, what signifies your going to him? you had better have kept it to yourself, and never have troubled him.

Nay, that's true, said he, and that was the reason I was loath to leave my case with him.

But you have left it with him, says I, han't you?

Yes, says he, and let him make the best of it and the worst of it, I never intend to go to him again.

What, says I, won't you go to him for an answer?

No, not I, said he, I have enough of him; come away. I am so frightened already, I am almost dead; don't you see what a sweat I am in? for all 'tis such cold weather, the sweat runs down my face in drops.

Why, what d'ye sweat for now? said I. You are far enough out of his way here, an't you?

No, no, says he. Why, if he has his Devil within doors, d'ye think he has not his Devil without doors too? Why, all the while I have stood here for you, I fancy every tree is a man, and every man a shadow, and every shadow a spirit.

You see, said I, 'tis evening, and the light begins to be dusky, and so you see double: why, sure you an't so frightened as you seem to be?

Indeed I am, says he, I don't know what's the matter, I don't use to be so; I used to laugh at people when they talked of seeing apparitions, and being frightened with spirits.

Well, well, you'll come again, for all that, said I, I warrant you.

No, if the Devil catches me there again, I'll forgive him, says he.

You don't know your own mind, said I. Why, he will answer all your questions.

Ay, so he shall, when I come again, says he.

I warrant you'll come again to him, says I, for an answer to-morrow.

Nay, says he, I am not appointed till Friday.

Ay, says I, 'tis no matter for that, I dare say you

won't have patience to stay so long. Why, you'll dream of it all night: I don't doubt but you'll be with him again also, for satisfaction to your inquiries; I know you han't the patience, though I don't know your case.

You may say what you will, says he, but I assure you I'll go near him no more.

This kind of discourse held us to a town hard by, where we lodged that night, for it was too late to go any further. And in the morning I happened to over-sleep myself; for, in short, my head ran so much upon the doctor, and his invisible world, that it kept me awake almost all night; so that in the morning, when I got up, 'twas near ten o'clock.

When I called for my young man, the master of the house told me he was gone. Gone! said I: what, and never stay for me, nor to speak to me?

Nay, sir, says the man of the house, I believe he is mad. Why, he has made such a noise, and a disturbance, he has frightened all the house; two of my people have been fain to sit up with him all night; he says he has seen the Devil.

Seen the Devil! says I: does he know the Devil when he sees him? I believe he never saw him in his life. I suppose it was some dream.

Nay, says the man, I don't know how he should see the Devil here, I'm sure my house is not haunted. I fancy he has been at Dr. Boreman's lately.

Dr. Boreman, says I, who's that?

O, sir, says my landlord, did you never hear of Dr. Boreman? Why, he's the most famous man in all this country, he does a thousand strange things.

What, says I, is he a conjurer, does he deal with the Devil?

I don't know for that, says my landlord, I can't fancy he deals with the Devil neither; for he is a very honest gentleman, and does a great many good

things. Folks that deal with the Devil don't use to do anything that's good.

Prythee, says I, what good does he do?

Why, master, says my landlord, they say he lays the Devil when other folks raise him; he can cure a house when it's haunted. Here was a house in our town so plagued with evil spirits, that nobody could lie in it; and when the doctor was sent for, he went and sat up all night in it; what he did there nobody knows, but he so frightened the Devil to be sure, that the house has never been haunted any more since; and the poor wenches are so afraid of him all round the country, that they dare not see him.

Why, says I, what does he do to them?

Why, sir, says he, a poor girl can't let a young fellow kiss her, but the doctor will tell; and if they prove with child, he'll tell the father of it presently; nay, he'll discover all the little whoring intrigues in the country. Now, master, adds he, this is not devil's work; you know the Devil didn't care if they were all whores, not he.

That's very true, indeed, says I; but what then must the doctor be called? is he a magician?

I suppose he is, master, says he, though I don't know what that means. But he charms folks, and sets spells, and a young fellow dares not come near an honest girl, for fear of him. Why they say he drew a circle the other day round a young lass's bed that was suspected; and when the fellow, that they thought had to do with her, came to her, truly he could not get away till the doctor was sent for to release him.

And do you believe all this? said I.

Believe it, sir! says he. Why, all the country believes it, and the young people are kept in such awe by it, that I don't think there will be one bastard got this year, no, not in twenty parishes

hereabout; and that's very hard, master, says he, this war time too, when the king is like to want soldiers.

This discourse was diverting, but still I wanted to hear of my man. I was loath to go back to the doctor to seek him there; so I was obliged to go away without him.

Thus far I have entertained you with my friend's relation, as I had it from him in a continued discourse, and this last part is merry enough; nor is it more than I have heard by many other hands, I mean of the doctor's exploits; and particularly it was certainly true of him, that he kept all the young people, I mean the wicked part of them, in awe; whether by spells or charms, and what those spells or charms were, that I could never come to a certainty about.

The story of his persuading a young fellow and his wench to get both into her smock, and that when he was in, the doctor set his spell upon him, so that he could never get out till the doctor was sent for to release him; and that he would not release him till the fellow obliged himself to marry the girl; this story, I say, is so firmly believed all over that part of the country, that nobody doubts of it.

But to come back a little to my friend, and the story of the young fellow that was with him, which I shall give you now in a more summary way, it being too long for my work; the short of the case was this: the fellow being heartily frightened, as you have heard, was no sooner got to bed, and fell fast asleep, but he dreamed that the doctor came into his chamber and to his bed-side, with two devils or spirits with him; that he was at first so terrified, that he was not able to speak; but that the doctor spoke kindly to him, and bade him not be afraid, for that here was a good angel come to him, to give him a full answer, happy, and for his satisfaction, to

all his difficulties ; and that he had nothing to do but to hear and receive his message, and be easy ; and that upon this, the spirit advanced close to the bedside : but that he cried out, and refused to hear him ; at which the doctor spoke angrily to him, and said, Well, since you refuse the advice and direction of a good spirit, we shall leave you to the same disturbing devil which possessed you before : and upon this the doctor and the good spirit vanished out of his sight, and an ugly frightful devil remained in the place, which grinned and threatened him in a terrible manner, but said nothing to him : that the horror of the last spectre frightened him so terribly that he waked out of his sleep, knocked up the people of the house, and told them the Devil was in the room, and, in a word, disturbed the whole family ; the hostler and a maid-servant sat up with him, but saw nothing ; and in the morning, as soon as it was light, he took his horse and went away.

As the doctor had told my friend, and as he said to the young man, so it was ; for being terrified to the last degree with this coarse appearance, away he went to the doctor's house in hurry enough. It happened that when he came to the house, the doctor was at his door, speaking to somebody that he was just dismissing, and the party went away just as the young man came up.

Well, says the doctor, what's the matter now ? why, I did not bid you come till Friday.

O sir, says the young man, but let me speak with you a little upon another occasion that has happened since, and I'll wait upon you again about t'other business on Friday, as you appointed.

Come, come in then, says the doctor, I believe I know your business ; I warrant ye you have been dreaming some frightful thing or other to-night :

what, have you seen the Devil in your sleep? you had e'en as good ha' let me have shown him you.

Why so you have, sir, says he, han't you? pray have not you been abroad to-night?

Abroad, says the doctor, what dost thou mean by that? I am but just out of bed.

Why, master, says he, han't you been at Wrootham to-night?

At Wrootham! why, thou art mad; I tell thee I am but just up.

It's no matter for that, says the man, still staring and wild; I am sure I saw you there, and spoke to you, and you to me.

Come friend, says the doctor, I see you are frightened, and you have dreamt waking; you have dreamt of the Devil, or of spirits, all night; why, thou art not come to thyself yet: come, let me know the whole story.

Nay, sir, says the young man, 'tis a plain case you know the whole story already, as well as I.

Not a word, not I, says the doctor, I assure you.

Why, sir, says he, han't you told me the very case? han't you told me I have been dreaming of the Devil, and seen the Devil? how can you say you know nothing of it?

Truly, says the doctor, any one that saw what a fright you were in last night, without the least reason, and sees how bewildered you look now, might guess you have been terrified in a dream, and that without any witchcraft or conjuring in the least: but, adds the doctor, what signifies telling me I know it already? If you think fit to tell me the case, well and good; if not, pr'ythee go about your business, I desire not to meddle with it.

With that he begged the doctor's pardon, and told him, if he did not know his case already, he hoped he would not be angry with him for what he

had said ; at least he was sure he would not, when he had told him. So he gave him the whole story at large as I have told it you, with a great many more particulars.

Well, says the doctor, you see there are good and beneficent spirits in being, who are willing to relieve and extricate us out of difficulties, at least by their good counsel and advice ; and if thou hadst had courage and patience to have heard it, no doubt you would have had all your doubts explained, and your questions answered, and would have had no need to come to me : but the Devil, who you say stood behind, and who afterwards appeared terrible and frightful to you, prevented your accepting the good counsel, and the answers which you would have had from the first appearance : and as for my appearing to you, depend upon it your imagination supplied that part, for I have not stirred out from home all night ; besides, a good spirit might assume a shape and appearance like me, that it might be more familiar to you.

But, sir, says the young man, what must I do now ? if I have rejected this good offer, it may be the same good spirit will not now resolve me, or do anything for me.

Perhaps it may, says the doctor, or perhaps I may obtain a resolution for you ; are you willing to stay with me now, by daylight ?

Ay sir, with all my heart ; I'll wait all day, and all night too now, if you please ; for I am satisfied now, that you will do me no hurt.

In short, the fellow's case was thus : (take it in my friend's own words again ;) He was desperately in love with a young gentlewoman in the country, had courted her a long time, and gained her goodwill so far at last, that they had agreed to be married ; but on a sudden, some other object had presented to her friends, who had a better estate than this

young man ; and he found his mistress was at first kept up from him ; and at last, that, though she was at liberty, she was grown cold and indifferent to him, and he was half mad with the disappointment: that after this she seemed a little kinder, and told him the reason of her coldness ; but after all that, another thing perplexed him, and that was, that three nights together he dreamt that he saw a neighbouring gentleman kissing his mistress, and, in downright English, lying with her.

This last tormented him, and he was so perplexed between his love and his jealousy, that he could not rest ; to this was to be added, that though his mistress was kinder to him than before, yet her father had given him a positive denial, and he knew not what to do ; and for a direction in this difficulty, he went to the cunning man.

Upon these things, the doctor, after all the intervening circumstances which have taken up your time, gave him this very good advice ; whether by his art, consulting of spirits, or by what other method, I know not, but he delivered it to him in this form, or to this purpose.

Friend, says the doctor, the intelligence which I have had relating to thy affairs from the invisible regions, and by the aid of those good spirits which thou art so afraid to receive it from, is very kind and favourable to thee, if thou art disposed to harken to good advice.

The young woman that thou art so deeply in love with, is not dishonest ; those dreams thou hadst in prejudice of thy affection are injurious, and proceed from the grinning, angry spirit, which, as thou saidst, appeared to thee in thy last night's disturbance: however, it would be wisely done, if thou wouldst withdraw thy affection from this object, for I am well assured her parents, who are resolved to dispose of her another way, will never favour thee ;

and if thou takest her against their consent, will neither give thee portion or blessing, nor will thy marriage be happy.

Ask me not by what rules I obtain this information ; quiet thy mind in the view of other offers which may present ; preserve thy virtue and temperance ; there seems something in view, though yet at a distance, which shall be more to thy satisfaction even than this, had it gone forward ; and I see a light of moderate happiness glancing towards thee from a remote part, intimating that thou shalt be very happy, and live comfortably, if the exercise of a patient and quiet temper prevail over rashness and passion ; but if the latter prevail, expect misery and distracted circumstances may be thy lot.

The youth went away better instructed than I should have expected from an art which I have so very bad an opinion of : but this Dr. Boreman was a strange man, according to all the reports of the country about him, and did abundance of things, even by the methods of his art, which carried a face of good with them, as is said before, page 303 ; if it was delusive, and came from the Devil, it was so much the more dangerous, as it came covered and coloured with a mist of virtue, and a religious character, and with a mouth always full of a lofty cant, as if talking from a divine oracle, and directed by spirits always employed for the good of mankind in general, and to do acts of charity and beneficence to afflicted or perplexed persons in particular.

Thus far from my friend who conversed with Dr. Boreman : he gave me several other accounts of him, which, notwithstanding all the good things pretended to, and the fine canting words of the doctor, convince me still that he must have had some unlawful conversation with such spirits or such beings as I should still call devils : that he used spells, and charms, and familiars ; that he did not disown the

appearance of spirits to him, assuming visible bodies, was, it seems, well known; and that he had several books of magical experiments I have heard it also well attested; whether there were any wicked magical performances in those books, or not, I cannot tell.

It is true, or else general report must lie most unusually, that he did perform several strange things; yet they say he was never known to do, or direct the doing, any mischief, or to encourage any injurious thing: it was usual, as they report of him, to set spells for the country people for the preserving their cherry-gardens from being plundered, and their orchards from being robbed: take some of the tales which pass for creditable, as follows:

That three young fellows being gotten into an orchard, which I suppose was under his particular care, he caused a large bell to hang to the heel of their shoes behind, like a heel-spur, by which they alarmed the house, and raised the people, who surrounding the orchard, took them all; when they were taken, the bells being to be pulled off, could not be seen, and yet the sound of them was heard all the way they went to the justice of the peace, till he committed them, and then ceased.

Another time, some boys being gotten into a cherry-garden, and one of them being up a cherry-tree, he made the boy see a great mastiff dog sitting at the bottom of the tree, waiting for his coming, looking him full in the face, and grinning and snarling at him if he offered to stir; so that the poor boy not daring to come down, was obliged to sit in the tree until he cried out for help; by which means, the people of the house came and found him in the tree; and as soon as they were come, he could see no more of the dog, neither could anybody see it but himself.

The methods he took with lewd people of those times, were, it seems, exceeding many, and such

that, as the landlord told my friend, the young wenches stood in awe of him, and were terrified with the very name of him.

No petty thefts but he would discover them, even after they were committed; and if we may believe common fame, if people's cattle were gone astray, he would tell them which way to look for them. Whether he could have told Saul how to find his father's asses, I cannot say; but I dare affirm he could not have told him of the kingdom, as Samuel did.

And yet this Dr. Boreman, as they say, would not suffer any such thing as a witch to live in the country, but exposed and detected them on all occasions; and the wicked spirits on all occasions fled from him, as was reported of the house which they said was haunted.

How to reconcile this to a correspondence of devils only, I cannot say; and yet that magic powers are communicated by good angels, and by divine appointment, I can see no reason to suggest; but the contrary seems to be evident by the people of Ephesus, coming and bringing their conjuring books, and burning them, upon receiving the Christian faith by the preaching of the apostle Paul, to the value of fifty thousand pieces of silver.

There are abundance of books upon this subject left by this Dr. Boreman; and some, as they say, with rules of art, as they are called; but they are kept so up in private hands, that I do not find they are to be come at, by any means. The works of the right famous enthusiast Jacob Behemen seem to be of the same kind, though something more refined, and less rational, being all in the clouds and confusion.

This Jacob Behemen took it very ill to be called a magician; but he was a kind of a visionist. He pretended to see things invisible, and hear things

unutterable; and I might add, he seemed to have some truth in it, for he published things unintelligible.

His writings are either magic or enthusiastic, or rather both, for I never met with many that would pretend to understand them, and never with one that was the better for them; except it was one very particular man among his admirers, who declared himself to be the better for them, only, and for that very reason, namely, because he did not understand them.

Now that I may not seem to pass my censure rashly, I desire that my more intelligent readers will please to reduce the following things into meaning, if they can, and favour us with the interpretation; being some particular account of the life of this famous religious engineer, for I know not what else to call him, and the titles of some of his books.

By the differences and controversies in religion which he knew not how to satisfy himself in, he was stirred up and moved to ask, seek, and knock, that he might know the truth.

Upon which, by the divine drawing and will he was in spirit wrapt up into the holy Sabbath, in which he remained seven whole days, by his own confession, in highest joy: after he came to himself, he laid aside the folly of youth, and was driven by divine zeal earnestly to reprehend impudent, scandalous, and blasphemous speeches, and did forbear in all his actions the least appearance of evil, and continued to get his living by the labour of his hands, until the beginning of the sixth seculum, which was the year 1600, when he was the second time possessed with a divine light, and by the sight of a sudden object was brought to the inward ground or centre of the hidden nature.

Yet somewhat doubting, he went out into an open field, and there beheld the miraculous works of the Creator in the signatures and figures of all created things manifestly laid open; whereupon he was taken with an exceeding joy, yet held his peace, in silence, praising God.

But ten years after, in the year 1610, through the over-shadowing of the Holy Spirit, he was a third time touched by God, and renewed, and became so enlightened, that lest so great grace bestowed upon him should slip out of his memory, and he resist his God, he wrote privately for himself (without the help of any books but the Holy Scriptures) many books, such as these :

A Book of the Signature of all Things.

A Consolatory Book of the Four Complexions.

A Misterium magnum upon Genesis.

A Book of 177 Theosophick Questions.

Certain Letters to divers Persons at certain times, with certain Keys for some hidden Words.

These learned labours of this right learned enthusiast may, for aught I know, be still extant; they are recommended here for their extraordinary titles, and I believe are much about as intelligible as the above rhapsody of his life; to all which I recommend the curious reader, if he has a mind to embarrass his understanding for an age or two, and come out as wise as he went in. The specimen I think to be much of a piece with the good Dr. Boreman, only with this specific difference, viz., that friend Jacob carries us up into the clouds to understand things there, if anybody there may be found to teach us; and Dr. Boreman was for bringing the clouds down to us, to teach us what we could understand nothing of, when we were taught.

Thus you have the two invisible and unintelli-

gible brothers together ; whether they have left any to carry on the unmeaning magic, I know not.

There have been some pretenders to the art who have succeeded the doctor, but we see nothing of their performance, at least not equal to his : let us look a little higher.

CHAP. IV.

Of the doctrine of spirits as it is understood by the magicians ; how far it may be supposed there may be an intercourse with superior beings, without any familiarity with the Devil, or evil spirits ; with a transition to the present times.

WHEN the seven sons of Scæva the Jew pretended to exorcism, and to cast the Devil out of a possessed person, the Devil taking it in scorn to be affronted by mere pretenders, and disdainng those that had no authority to make use of the names which he was subjected to the terror of, flew upon them, as the text says, in a rage, *Jesus I know, and Paul I know*, says he, *but who are ye ?* and he never left them till they fled away from him naked and wounded.

Now in what name or by what authority Dr. Boreman or any of these magicians dismissed the Devil from haunted houses, chased away spirits from the places where they had made any appearance, and kept the Devil in such awe as is reported, I cannot yet learn. Had the doctor really cast the Devil out of any demoniac or possessed person, and openly have exercised such an absolute power over him, and had it been well vouched by persons of known integrity and sound judgment, we must then have believed that there were some good spirits, some superior intelligent beings, whom the doctor was so favoured by, that knowing his good intentions, they would assist him with their aid against the evil spirits.

But there are innumerable difficulties in the way ; the words of our Saviour are express, that *this kind*

goeth not out but by prayer and fasting, and I do not read much of the doctor being a person so pious and so religious as to exercise himself that way at all; what he might do in private I know not, but by all I can learn, he acted as by the immediate deputation of those good spirits; intimating, that they brought him intelligence, that they acquainted him with the circumstances of every inquiring person; that they directed him what answers to give; that he was but, as it were, their messenger to evil spirits, ordering them to remove from such and such places; that they empowered him, by speaking such and such words, to charm and bind down such people as he was directed to operate upon, to such a limit, and within such a circle of ground.

But all this is still attended with this doubt, viz., that the fact is not proved; let us see therefore what it is likely these good spirits can do; and what they really are believed to do in any part of the world, for the general good of mankind.

That there are some appearances in the world, and that of such spirits as we may call good, I will not deny here, whether I grant it at present or no. The people in Norway tell you of a good spirit which at all times gives people notice of things fatal and destructive; that it appears in a flying ball of a yellowish green; and is seen in the air, and will knock at their doors before approaching tempests and deep snows, that they may save their fishing-boats by hauling them up upon the shores, or into narrow safe creeks where they will receive no damage, and that on shore they may bring home their cattle, and secure them from those deep snows and severe colds.

In Laponia we are told of several spirits which they converse with, not by way of witchcraft and sorcery, but which they call their good spirits, and whom they consult with upon every urgent occasion

for relief and assistance, and who never do any hurt to them or to their cattle. What the Lapland witches may do I know not, neither is it my present inquiry.

Whether these good spirits are not those, who at the request of some certain people on all the coasts of Norway, are said to procure fair winds for ships going to sea, I will not undertake to say; but this I have upon strict inquiry learnt:

First, That it really is so in fact; that upon going to certain people there, and upon paying them a small consideration (not above two dollars), they have been assured of a fair wind, exactly at such a time, from such a certain point of the compass, and to last so many hours, as has been agreed for.

Secondly, That this has been agreed for when the winds have been, as the seamen call it, set in to blow trade from a directly contrary point, and for a considerable time before; and that when they have gone away and declined the agreement, they have lain a long time without a fair wind, till complying; and again, that upon so complying they have never failed.

Thirdly, That if you offer to desire, or give money to them to raise a high wind, that is, a storm, they will be very angry, refuse your money with disdain, and ask you in their language, if you think they deal with the Devil? that their power comes from a good spirit, that never does any hurt in the world, but always does things kind and good, and for the benefit of mankind.

All our accounts, histories, and relations, concerning the northern parts of Britain are full of the appearance of spirits to the inhabitants on sundry occasions, and yet none of those spirits are hurtful to them, or join in any hurtful things.

Either these spirits inhabit in the regions of the air, and so are near us and take cognizance of our

persons and affairs, or they do not: if they do not, what do they appear for? if they take cognizance of us and of our affairs, and yet do none hurt, then they are not devils though spirits, for the Devil would certainly do the utmost mischief he could; on the contrary, those spirits do eminent good services on sundry occasions to mankind; they must therefore be supposed at least to be good and beneficent beings, inhabiting somewhere in the vast expanse of space which we call the habitation of spirits, or the invisible world.

And this leads us by the hand to that hitherto unintelligible thing called the second-sight; that is to say, that those good spirits make themselves visible to some particular persons, and represent to them the form or shadow of this or that person that they have a mind to have seen; and even those persons are represented not to do them hurt, but oftentimes to warn of approaching mischief, death, or danger.

To what purpose should the Devil, who is never guilty of doing good, except with design of evil, I say to what purpose should he foretell evils awaiting this or that man, who cares not what evil may or can befall him? to represent to him things in effigy, which shall yet come to pass in reality? to give him warnings of evils in time, that he may avoid it? This is not like the Devil, who is always seeking man's destruction. For example:

The second-sighted Highlander sees a young lady with three gentlemen standing at her right hand, intimating that they should every one of them in their turn, be her husband; and, however unlikely, this comes to pass: he sees the like number of women standing on the left hand of a man, and he is directed by this to know they shall all be his wives; the very faces and habits of them are described, and that so as to have them known; and

this, though seeming at first ridiculous, comes to pass. A second-sight man travelling on the road, sees a man on horseback at a great distance coming towards him; a great river being between them; he says to his friend that was with him, Ride forward to the river bank and you may chance save the man's life, for he will pass the ford, but will be driven away by the water, and you may chance assist him to get out.

The man to whom it was said, galloped up to the river's brink, and calls to the man on the other side, bidding him not come forward, for the river at the ford was newly risen, and the water or the current would be too strong for his horse, adding that he would be in danger: I know the ford, says he, better than you, mind your own affairs; and with that comes on and enters the river, and was accordingly driven away with the current, and in great danger; but the man sent to warn him was so careful, that, running on the other side of the river, he had an opportunity to throw a rope to him, which at last he took hold of, and with great difficulty is drawn to the shore: and in that manner his life was saved.

Now, though it is true that the intelligence which this man gave, was the saving the man's life, yet they will have it, that this man dealt with the Devil: how else, say they, should this man know that the other man, a stranger to him, should be in danger? But I answer, that the Devil has no knowledge of futurity, and therefore this could not be the Devil, or from the Devil.

Besides, why should the Devil tell the man, and warn him of the danger of passing the river? would he not much rather that the man should have been drowned, and as many more as he could?

It is evident that in witchcrafts and familiar spirits, where the Devil acts by the agency of the

witch or wizard, they are always famed for doing mischief, prompting to all manner of evil, tormenting the particular people they are empowered to act upon; murdering others; destroying cattle, setting fire to houses, ships, stacks of corn or hay; and in a word, everything hurtful, and everything hateful.

There is some reason, therefore, certainly, to distinguish between those spirits who are kind and careful, and assistant to mankind, and those that are mischievous, destructive, and declare themselves enemies to the common good: the last are evidently of hell, the very nature of the Devil appears in all their actions, and in the ends and aims of all the emissaries they employ. What contrary judgment is to be made from contrary effects, remains to be considered.

They both act, at least we understand them to act, by the assistance of some invisible spirit; or, as it may be more properly expressed, the invisible spirits act in them and by them.

As to witchcraft and possession, that I think is plain, and needs no discourse upon it; it is known to be all from an evil spirit, or in plain English, from the Devil. There is no room to dispute it; the wretches employed, acknowledge it, and the hellish things they do discover it; so we need say no more of that, nor is it the business before me.

But who is it that acts these other sorts of people? what spirits inform them? what secret power opens their eyes, to see things hid from the rest of mankind? I meet with many that have examined into this matter of the second-sight, and who have discoursed with the people who are, what shall I call it? I can hardly say, blessed with it; neither do they call it so themselves; and all that I have inquired of about it, seem only to hold up their hands with a kind of astonishment at the thing, but

can give no account of it ; they wonder at, but do not understand it.

To me it is more a wonder that it should not be understood ; for it seems to be nothing more or less than this : that supposing an invisible world, or world of spirits, as we have already been discoursing, and have in part granted ; I say, supposing there are such spirits, and that they inhabit the invisible regions (how near to or remote from us, we know not), and that the reality of their existence is certain, this second-sight then is accounted for thus :

Two ways those spirits find to converse with mankind ; be it for good or evil, that's a question by itself ; I say, they maintain an intercourse with mankind two ways.

First, By immediate, personal, and particular converse with this or that man, and by such particular methods as is only known to the person ; whether by the means of any science, or art, or otherwise, we know not ; this we call magic, and the man so conversing with them, we call a magician.

Secondly, Or these spirits, acting at a distance, render themselves visible, and their transactions perceptible to such and such particular persons, and on such occasions as they think fit, and as they find needful ; without any further concern or acquaintance with the person, or communicating to him or them anything of the reason or nature of the discovery, or any knowledge of the person so making the discovery ; and this is what we foolishly enough call the second-sight.

Nor is this notion in anything inconsistent either with reason or the nature of the thing ; the angel that stood with the flaming sword in his hand was seen by the ass of Balaam, and not seen by his master. Our Saviour, in his glorified state after

his resurrection, was seen and conversed with in the openest and freest manner imaginable by the two disciples going to Emmaus, and yet they knew not who it was; and as soon as they knew him he became invisible to them again.

Now, suppose one of these invisible inhabitants designs to make itself visible, either to discover such or such an evil at hand, to particular men, or to warn this or that person of mischief attending another; so that he may immediately go and prevent it: can we think it difficult for that spirit to make itself visible to this or that particular man, and not to another? I think there is nothing strange at all in it.

A second-sighted man going towards a gentleman's house in Bradalbin, sees the gentleman, towards whose house he was going, riding on the road with a neighbouring gentleman, whom he also knew, attended with three servants on foot and one on horseback, six in all; then he suddenly sees a troop of highland robbers, forty or fifty in number, rushing out of a wood or some other place where they lay in ambush, who surrounded the gentlemen, dismounted and robbed them, wounded the first gentleman in the arm, and killed one of the servants.

The man going forward to the gentleman's house, just in the court or entry before his house sees the gentleman, with the other gentleman his friend, mounting his horse to ride abroad, and the servants attending, just three in number, besides the gentleman's steward on horseback.

He immediately, speaking to one of the servants, inquires which way their master was travelling; they answer him, that he is going to Innerlochy, upon such and such business. Which way does the laird intend to take? says the man. Such a gat, says the servant. I beseech his honour, says

the man, that he go not by that gat, (that is to say, by that road,) for if he does, he will fall into bad hands.

The servant tells his master, and he calls the stranger, and asks him what he meant by telling him so. Sir, says he, I tell it for good, if your honour please to hearken to it. For if you go by that gat, (mentioning the road which his servant had named,) you will fall in with the robbers who haunt those hills, and will be overpowered and mischieved.

What, says the other gentleman that was to go with him, mocking at the second-sighted man, are ye one of those fool-bodies (a Scots expression) that they call seers? ha' ye been seeing a vision this morning? pr'ythee, how many were they, and what did they say to you?

An your honour will gang, says the man, gang your wa: but you will remember what I have told you, when ye find it true.

The first gentleman answered, Were they a troop, say you? Yes, and't please your honour, says the man.

Well, well, says the gentleman, I shall go an a troop of devils were in the way. So the man was flouted on all hands, and went his way back; the two gentlemen went on, as they said they would, and were attacked and robbed; one servant killed, and one of the gentlemen had his arm broke with a pistol-bullet, and was brought back the same day to his own house.

What spirit it must be, that could thus form an appearance of things that would come to pass, that we cannot determine; but supposing this story to be true in fact, as many such have been, this had certainly one token of a good spirit in it; namely, that it gave the gentleman fair warning to shun the danger that awaited him, and as it were, sent an

express to him from the invisible world, which, if he had not despised, he might have escaped, and avoided the danger.

Now, had this been the Devil, if I have any notion of the Devil, and of his nature, as well as designs, his part would rather have been to have sent an agent of his to the troop of robbers his friends, to give them notice, that such a gentleman, and such another with him, was coming upon the way, and that in such a place they should be sure to meet and surprise them. He would have been so far from warning the gentlemen of their danger, that he would have run them into it with all the artifice he was master of; and I will not say that he did not prompt the two gentlemen above, to scoff and flout at the poor second-sighted man, and make a jest of his intelligence, as you have heard; that so they might go on, and fall into the danger they were warned against, rather than go another way, and avoid it.

Some of these informing spirits think fit to appear themselves to these second-sighted people, and not to others; and if the author of the description of the western islands of Scotland may be credited, who also names not the circumstances only, but the persons, they have not only abundance of these second-sighted people there, but they have abundance of things discovered to them in this manner, and especially upon the approaching death or disasters of any person or family. It is true, the examples he brings are most of them trifling, but we have many relations in that country generally received for truth, which are considerable: and divers examples are to be had, which are new, and without precedent; nothing is more frequent among them than that of foretelling the death of any person, some examples of which I can give of my own knowledge.

I was at a gentleman's house in this town, near St. James's, and he happened to have some friends invited to his house that day upon an entertainment, the occasion of which I do not just now remember. Among the guests at his table was an ancient gentlewoman, and her daughter a fine beautiful young lady, and was I think to be married the next week, or within a very few days: there sat opposite to her another lady, of what country I do not remember, but she was a foreigner, and I think was a Dutchwoman, but appeared as a person of good figure.

This foreigner it seems came to the gentleman's house, not as invited to the entertainment, but upon some business of consequence; dinner being just ready, he asked her to stay, and told her they would despatch their business afterwards, and so led her in among the ladies.

After dinner, the gentleman and this foreign lady withdrew to despatch their affair, which was something relating to the Exchequer, where he had an employ; and in discourse, she said to him, pray Mr. ——— who is that elderly lady that sat opposite to me? so he told her the lady's name. And that young charming lady is her daughter, I suppose? says she. Yes, says the gentleman. Poor lady, says she, I am very sorry for her, for that her daughter is a most beautiful creature indeed, and I see she is very fond of her, 'tis a sad thing! What d'ye mean? says the gentleman. Why, says she, the young lady won't live above a fortnight, and the poor lady her mother will almost break her heart for her: I am very sorry.

The gentleman (who told me the story with his own mouth) was extremely surprised at what she said, and would fain have understood it as if she jested with him; but she affirmed it seriously, and showed so much concern at it, that he could not

carry it off for a jest; then he asked her how she knew it? I see it upon her, says she, I wish I could show it you, I tell you she is a dead woman, all the world can't save her, for her hour is come, ask me no more questions. My friend told me the story immediately; the concern about it had almost frightened him, and the event answered it all; in about three days the young lady was taken very ill, which turned to a vomiting, and that to a fever, and she died on the very fourteenth day afterward.

Another time, walking in a friend's garden near London, there was a young gentlewoman walking in the next garden, and there being but a low wall between, and a mount on that side where we were, we could see her walking with her father on one side of her, and a sister on the other; said one gentleman that was with me, Who is the middlemost person of those three? we told him she was the gentleman's daughter who walked by her.

Has she been sick? said he. Now it was true, that the lady had been very ill, and was come into the country for air, and we told him how it was. Well, says he, the air won't recover her, for she will die within a very few days. I earnestly pressed him to tell us how he knew it; he answered ambiguously a good while, but as I pressed him with great importunity, he told me seriously: said he, You cannot see it as I do, I wish I could not see things so as I do, but her face now at this instant is to me exactly what you call a death's head; that is, the skeleton of a head or scull, and no other.

The thing was right, and the young woman died within a week after.

But to return to the subject: as these spirits, we may suppose, can make any representations of things visible, and that to whom they please, so it may be supposed they can make themselves visible also,

when, and to whom they please ; and this is attested by many witnesses, and evidenced by several differing circumstances, of which I have, by inquiry, met with a great many in my time.

In the Highlands and Islands, they tell you of a spirit, which the poor ignorant country people call Brownny ; or Bronne, as it seems, was the more ancient name they gave it, as the Norwegians have another, whom they call Bielke.

Much pains has been taken to examine who this Brownny is, and whether he is a good spirit or a bad ; but most of the stories I meet with are so fabulous, or trifling, or ridiculous, that I rather take the appearance to be imaginary than real ; if it be real, it must be some low-prized spirit, employed among the meanest of people, and on the meanest occasions, scarce worth naming, and yet most of them rather for evil than good.

It is worth observing, that where these frequent appearances are, and these second-sighted visionists, we rarely hear of any paw-wawing or conjuring, no black-art-men, very little magic. I fancy it seems rather, that what business these invisible agents have to do, and what intercourse they carry on with this world, they generally do it themselves, they are not managed by art, or called in to the aid and assistance of the artists. But as they make things visible at pleasure, they want no agents, they do their own business their own way ; and in a word, they have no magicians among them, none of those they call cunning men, or that consult with the invisible world in behalf of others ; it seems they have no occasion of such men, they are not so fanciful, or overrun with vapours, as we are in this part of the world.

Yet they have some remains of sorcery among them too, and particularly they are strangely addicted to charms. In the isles of Orkney they use

a charm to stop bleeding, and they tell you it is as effectual as the strongest stiptic, be the bleeding outward, by a wound, or inward, by any breaking the vessels, wrench or strain, or by distemper ; and for this they have particular people, whom they call charmers. What part of the black art or magic these charmers practice, I know not, but it seems they perform it at a distance, and without seeing or knowing the persons ; only the person who is in distress by bleeding, sends his name to the charmer, and he sends the good spirit he talks of, and (as the magicians say) converses with, and the bleeding is stopped in a moment. This, the charmer, as they call him, does, by repeating the name of the person afflicted, to which he always adds some barbarous unintelligible language of his own ; upon repeating which he sends the messenger away, and the cure is perfected. Now this is much the same with the magic of other practisers ; for this they tell you is the charmer speaking to the good spirit he converses with, who immediately flies invisible to the poor distressed patient, and works the cure.

These charms are also of several kinds, and for several purposes ; some to cure human bodies, some to cure cattle, some to quiet great dogs, and prevent their falling upon people as they go along, and some, perhaps, to prevent their barking when a thief may attempt the house ; that part, I suppose they won't call the work of a good spirit. They have such a variety of those things in other parts, as well as in our own country, and especially in Ireland, in Norway, and in some parts of Germany, that it would be needless to give an account of them, and a little out of the way too in such a work as this.

But I must come a little nearer home. These

arts are used more on this side the world, as the rendering darker things visible, seems to be more the case on that side ; and as I am inquiring rather what our magicians practise without the Devil, than what the Devil or any other spirit practises without the magician, I come to bring all these things down to your immediate understanding.

We have been diving into mysteries long enough, and been serious till perhaps you are tired ; for a little grave doings wearies us at this time of day ; let us see if the subject will afford us any diversion. The age is witty beyond measure, and not a little wicked too ; but whence is it that we have no magic in our wit ? It is not many years ago, since the sprightly part of human wit relished with mankind, and men were bright by mere inspiration ; the good spirits, if such there are, dictated things of value to the minds of men, they conversed in the very confines of the mysterious world, but without raptures and agitations ; they had the sublime without the infernal, the humid without the horrid ; they had the fire without the brimstone ; they could laugh without bawdy, and jest without blasphemy ; talk without buffoonery, and vote without bribery ; write without pedantry, and read without party.

But now, bless us all ! how strangely is the course of things changed ; what with good spirits and bad spirits, we do everything without spirit ; we are all magic, and no witchcraft, the Devil without the Devil ; we laugh without a jest, and jest without wit ; we write without sense, and read without taste ; we are lewd beyond whoredom, and devout beyond religion ; we preach without doctrine, are religious without principles ; pray without doxology, and worship without a God.

Now, how shall we do to find out the magic of

all this? it is certainly brought about by some strange fascination, some devilism that we feel, and do not see. Here must be some intercourse between us and the invisible world, though I doubt it is some of the darker part of it. Every man seems to me to have his demon of a particular kind, proper and separate to himself, by which he either governs himself, or is governed, I know not well which to call it; and so he walks on in his own way, follows nobody, and leads nobody; but is a principle, a doctrine, a governor, nay, a god to himself.

Formerly, the broachers of errors and particular notions, had always their disciples and followers; and they judged pretty much of the goodness or badness of the doctrine, whether religious, philosophic, or moral, by the number and quality of the followers they had; even the Jews did thus of our Saviour, *Have any of the elders or of the rulers believed on him?*

But now, God save us! so many men, so many maggots, *tot homines, tot di—s*; every man broaches his own opinions, preaches them to himself, is his own convert; his soul is the disciple of his fancy, and his senses the pulpit of his humour; as for other people, as he teaches nobody, so he scorns to be taught by anybody, and bids God da— him, if he had not rather go to the Devil, than not go to heaven his own way.

Thus we live in a general disguise, and like the masquerades, every man dresses himself up in a particular habit, not two appear alike in the whole place; and that the simile may be perfect, the humour carries it on to the minutest part; as the habits are not alike, so they are always particularly remarkable for being directly opposite to the person they cover; the phlegmatic dresses *à la sanguine*, the sober mimics the drunkard, the chaste chooses

to dress *à la courtisane*, the atheist puts on the *religieuse*, the Christian has the vest and the turban, and the Quaker a habit from the theatre.

In the appearance of the superior part it is much the same: mimicry and opposite capacities engross conversation; the beau turns polemic, the atheist disputes principles, the actress practises modesty, and the pedant panegyrics upon wit: fools write satire, as clowns teach manners; the fops are the men of weight; and since, by accident, wit and sense appeared under the title of the Tatlers, the eternal clang of tea-table tattle has rung the changes upon scandal, and set up for the universal censors of conversation.

And need we go any further now for our inquiries after magic? could things take such a turn as this, without a general converse with the world of spirits? will any man tell me this could happen by the nature of things, or even by the things of nature? No, no: invisible operations are acted from an invisible world; the magicians are in the right, all the great things they do could never be done without an intercourse with a superior rank of beings, be they infernal, or what other Devils you please to call them.

Take a few bright doings for examples. Upon what foot does the bright lord —— sit every morning over his chocolate, talking upon all the works of the learned, himself unlearned to a scandal? And how good-natured and well-mannered is the age, that nobody laughs at him till he is gone, or forbears it afterwards? How wise are his remarks! how just his reflections! when he talks so much, and understands so little, that it may be truly said, no wise man talks like him. In which, however, his lordship had this happiness, that he chose to take it for a compliment, instead of a satire.

Sir Timothy Tittlepage is an admirable gentle-

man : his knowledge of the first leaf of everything, completely covers his ignorance of the inside of anything. His just character is so true a picture of the age, that you need go no further for a reason why nonsense bears such a price, and the booksellers' trade is so much improved; seeing they buy most books that read least, and that, according to the famous Dr. Salmon, the having a good library makes a man a doctor. However, sir Timothy, no doubt, understood the names of authors, and had as good a local memory as to the editions of books, as most men that could not read Latin. Nor was he ever out in his judgment, that I have heard of, till an unlucky linendraper asked him once concerning the learned author called Crocus upon Hinderlands^a, who the knight presently owned, but unluckily forgot that the impression was made in Germany, and that the books came over not in quires, but in rolls, from Bremen and Hamburg.

The happy, miserable, generous, cynical, good-natured, out of humour bart., sir ———, would be approved by somebody, if he was not laughed at by everybody; he might sometimes pass for pleasant, if he was not always surly, and to like something, only that he dislikes everything. He sets up for a critic, with this unhappy addition to his profession, that he alters everything, and mends nothing. How unanswerable a demonstration is this extraordinary genius of the influence of the invisible world upon the affairs of mortals here! seeing, if he had less than a hundred thousand devils in him, he could never carry on the practice of an universal pedant, without being whipped out of human society for a scandal to the very A, B, C; and, to turn the poet's words a little awry for him,

^a Crocus and Hinderlands are two particular sorts of coarse Germany linen, which are imported by the Hamburg merchants, and are known to every draper.

Fellows, that ne'er were heard or read of,
 Would long ere this have wrote his head off.
Roch. to Shadwel.

The ladies afford us an infinite variety, and to inspect their share in the magic of this age's management, would take up a volume by itself; in a word, they are all magicians, and I won't take upon me to say, that as witchcraft, generally speaking, has for some ages been engrossed by the sex, and the possession chiefly lay among the matrons; that is to say, that none but old women were witches: so now the same sex seem to have engrossed the sacred sciences, and the magic lies, in short, all among the ladies. Who shall enter into the description of it? The magic of their wit, O how subtle! the magic of their beauty, how exquisitely new-fashioned! and the magic of their tongues, how charmingly loud! not to say sonorous and musical.

To make these beauties of the sex the more diffusive in their brightest qualifications, and infinitely more so than was possible in former ages, we have three new-invented colleges of wit and good manners, where the ladies receive daily addition to their ordinary acquirements; and which give them infinite advantage over the past days of their ancestors (grandmothers), and in the frequent access to which they must necessarily excel all that went before them. These are the tea-table, the assembly, and the masquerade; at the first they learn to be light-headed, at the second to be light-hearted, and if at the third they don't learn to be light-heeled, the defect must lie somewhere else than in the laudable endeavours of those that set them up in so many parts of this newly-reformed nation; whose endeavours for the public good can never be enough commended, either in print or in manuscript.

I have had some thought to inquire among all the real magicians of the times, and especially of the

more eminent pretenders about Baldwin's-gardens, Whitecross-alley, Old-street, Whitechapel, &c., and to get intelligence from the invisible world concerning this important question; whether any of the good spirits or bad spirits, the white devils or black devils, or whatever spirits they were which formerly inspired the Rochesters, the Dorsets and Drydens of the last ages, are yet in being? and if they are, what has been the occasion that they have withdrawn the spirit of poetry from the English world? that not only the fire is extinguished, and the genial inspiration decayed, but that the relish of true poesy is lost? That as there is nothing performed that will bear reading, so no readers that can taste a performance! even the exalted merit of the greatest men is sung in notes without music, lines without meaning, words without energy, verse without poetry, and poetry without spirit.

I wonder sometimes that the great men, or man rather, who we see daily persecuted by the horrid jingle (I think I should say jangle) of their rhyming expectants and dependents, do not consider of paying their debts (I mean their poetical debts) in kind, and give the poor versifying Devils now and then a distich, at least, in balance of their voluminous labours: if they paid but after the rate of public interest, but three per cent., it would at least in time reduce the debt, and might in the meantime lay the foundation of a good sinking fund.

If they do not think of this or some other way, (for pensions will rather increase the number, and like sweatmeats draw the flies about them), I say, if they do not think of some such way, they may I think justly swear the peace against the assailants, and safely affirm that they go in danger of being panegyricked to death by them. For in short, such writing is little less in my opinion than a poetical assassination, and the ministers are in danger of

dying the death of Edward V., and being smothered with feather-beds.

Heavens deliver every honest statesman from the insupportable burden of panegyric, especially where it is attended with two negatives, want of money, and want of wit; the last makes the first lamentable, but the first makes the last unsufferable; the first is piteous, the last is pitiful; the first is afflicting, the last tormenting; the first importunate, but the last impertinent: and as a wise giver would give anything to be delivered from them, so a wise receiver would rather decently starve, than to receive at the price of being a plague to the bountiful hand, and of being relieved, as the unjust judge relieved the widow, to be rid of her.

As for the poetical gentlemen themselves, I think it may be said of them with respect to their magic, as was said of a late author of a quadruple performance with respect to his merit; namely, that there might be some in his poverty, but there was none at all in his poetry.

In my opinion, however, there is a great deal of magic or black art, or call it dealing with the Devil if you will, that poetical dregs should regale the age. If they were sent to the druggists, and sold there for emetics, or made up in lotions, and given for glisters, I should not doubt their effectual operation: but that they should be palmed upon us for wit, (by Jove, and all the hell-born clan of deities!) I think the authors, like coiners of counterfeit money, should be drawn, hanged, and quartered, for high-treason against the peace of their sovereign lord king Drama, his crown and dignity.

Where's the cadence, the propriety, the plot, the genius, not to say anything of the wit, in any one play, written for these two, or three, or four last reigns? The drums and trumpets of the war, the broadsides of the fleets at Barfleure and la Hogue,

together with the more terrible clamours of the street mobs, and all the *et ceteras* of parties, rabbles, riots and rebellions, quite silenced the muses, struck them dumb, and I am told they could never make any music since, no, not all nine of them put together.

Now we talk of the black art, of magic, of raising spirits, of having an intercourse with superior beings and the like; I think the art of our days, the magic of this age, has been exercised to lay the spirits, not raise them; to sink the Devil of wit, not lift him up; and if they have any intercourse with the invisible world, it must be among the inferior beings, not the superior, if they know any degrees among the seraphic train: certain it is, the impetuosity of our wit has for some years been all let off in squibs and crackers, and so like the lesser volcanoes of Lipary and Strombolo, have given vent to the subterraneans of sulphur and nitre, while the quantity was moderate. Whereas when the luxuriance of wit overpowered those smaller eruptions, then mount Gibello (*Ætna*) and Vesuvius roared aloud, and overrun all the country with a torrent of liquid fire. Where then is the fire which once flamed in this hemisphere? those comets in wit which blazed in their several orbits are disappeared, and when the revolution of their spirits shall be visible again, what astronomer, what calculator can inform us? not all the Newtons, the Whistons, or Halleys in the nation can solve this difficulty.

What magician now can bring us to an intercourse with those departed wits, or assist us in the bringing them to converse with us again? If there is an acquaintance with this world of spirits, let us call upon the sons of art to exert their utmost, and bring those good spirits again in play; and to restore the commonwealth of wit, that the new-fashioned ribaldry, which the world now relishes for wit, and the dogmatic, which, upon the strictest view of our

other performances, the utmost perfection of them, may receive their due censure, to the satisfaction of all the true masters of common sense, and the due mortification of the voluminous scribblers of the age.

Pardon me then, from the strange turn of affairs in these times of ours ; I say, pardon me to look back again a little to the conjurings and black art of the middle ages of time, especially among those of them who did not pretend to deal with the Devil, and it will presently bring us to an understanding of things among ourselves.

After the ancient magicians had tired the world with their tricks, and the Devil began to fail them, except to those who kept an immediate correspondence with him by way of familiar, there came up a new sort of magic, as well as a new sort of magicians ; the case was this :

The people it seems began to discover that the magicians having left off that useful and valuable study of science, called the knowledge of nature, the improvement of art, and the instruction of mankind in wisdom and virtue, had turned their hands to a new and inferior study ; that they consulted demons and evil spirits, that they qualified themselves, by hellish correspondences, to do mischief, instead of doing good ; and that in short they dealt with the Devil, making themselves the terror instead of the blessing of mankind.

When this came to be their character, no wonder the people began to be afraid of them, to shun and avoid them as a kind of devils themselves ; so that except a few, who kept up their reputation by a closer and cunninger manage, the people withdrew their reverence from the magicians, till at last the Devil was fain to shift hands too, and act by other instruments, or he would have endangered his kingdom in the world.

So monarchs, when their politics grow stale,
Change measures, and by novelty prevail.

Upon this change of the Devil's measures, he frequently found reasons to change some of his instruments too, and thus from the magi, he turned over to the clergy; and so, as I hinted in its place, the augurs, the aruspices, and the oracles came in play.

Now it happened to Satan, as it has frequently happened to other mighty princes and tyrants in the world; that finding his servants and statesmen cease to be popular, cease to be the darlings of the people, as they used formerly to be; he found also a necessity to shift hands, dismiss his tools and instruments, and take up with others. So Philip II. had, as was said, eleven new ministers and governors in the Netherlands; but no new management; if any of his agents and prime ministers grew odious to the people, he valued not disgracing them, recalling them, exposing them, and turning them out; but took care, that when another governor came, the government should be the same. And when the prince of Parma, who by his conduct recovered the whole Low-Country possessions to the crown of Spain, would have preserved them by his prudence, when he had gained them by his valour; the Spanish councils, which were all for tyranny and for cruelty, chose to discourage that gallant prince, rather than not carry on their old absolute dominion. So every governor there, if the people complained, was sure to be turned out, and yet the next was obliged to pursue the same tyranny, until they were petitioned out, as others had been before them.

When ministers of state
Cease to be popular, they know their fate.

The crafty tyrant has no more to do,
 But sacrifice a favourite or two.
 The mob are easily cajol'd, and then
 He changes not the mischiefs, but the men.

By this method, as I say, the Devil pursued his interest in the world ; when one generation grew out of use, out of fashion, and stale, he took to another ; when the augurs grew stale, when the cheats of the oracles were exposed, when the priests could no more predict by the entrails, he sets his wits to work to find out other ways and means, for the carrying on his game : as,

1. By a kind of astrological magic, in which he managed with a great deal of subtlety and art, bringing the stars and planetary influences into play ; and by an unpractised subtlety, the art was then carried on with spell and charm, by words cut in metals, and in stones, divining by the beryl, by the amethyst, by the lustre of the emerald, and the ruby, and by all the old superstitions brought into a new rule of practice. This was called the talismans ; or the sympathetic conjuring-stone.

It would be too tedious for this work, to give a long history of the delusions and cheats which the Devil put upon mankind for three or four hundred years practice of this kind in the world. I shall satisfy myself only to let you see, by way of abridgment, what these talismans were, and what the authors of them pretended ; take the description of them, as collected from the best authors, thus :

Talismans, or Muthalsans, was the name of certain magical figures graved upon stones or metals, whereof the anonymous author of a book, entitled, *The Talismans Justified*, gives this description. The talismans, says he, is the seal, the figure, the character or image of a celestial sign, constellation, or planet, graved on a sympathetic stone, or on metal correspondent to the star. The effects which were

attributed to these figures are altogether marvellous; it is said, for example, that the figure of a lion engraved on gold, while the sun is in Leo, preserves those from the stone that carry this talisman about them; and that that of a scorpion made under the sign Scorpio, secures from the wounds of that animal. For to give beauty and strength of body, they grave the figure of Venus, on the first face of Libra, Pisces, or Taurus: to purchase honours and dignities easily, they grave the image of Jupiter, that is, a man having the head of a ram, on silver, or on a white stone; and he that carries this talisman about him, will see (say they) surprising effects: to be successful in merchandise and gaming, they represent Mercury on silver; to be courageous and victorious, they engrave the figure of Mars on the first face of Scorpio; to procure the favour of kings, they represent the sun in likeness of a king, sitting on a throne, with a lion at his side, in very fine gold, in the first face of Leo. In the number of talismans are ranked the Palladium of Troy; the Roman bucklers called *ancilia*; the fatal statues of Constantinople, for the preservation of that city: the statue of Memnon in Egypt, which moved and gave oracles, as soon as the sun was risen: the statue of the goddess Fortune, that Sejanus had, which brought good luck to those that possessed it: the brazen fly: Virgil's golden leech, which hindered the flies from entering Naples, and destroyed all the leeches of a well in that city: the figure of a stork, which Apollonius set up in Constantinople, to drive away these animals: the statue of a knight, which served that city as a preservative against the plague: the figure of a serpent in brass, which hindered all serpents from entering into the same place; whence it happened, that Mahomet, soon after the taking of Constantinople, having broken the teeth of that serpent, a prodigious number of serpents came upon

the inhabitants of that city, but without doing them any hurt, because all their teeth were broke, as were those of the brazen serpent.

Talismans are distinguished into three sorts, viz., astronomical, magical, and mixed: the astronomical are referred to signs of celestial constellations, which are engraven with other figures, and some intelligible characters: the magical have extraordinary figures with superstitious words, and the names of unknown angels: the mixed are composed of signs and barbarous names, but which are neither superstitious, or of unknown angels. They bury them in the earth, or in the squares of public places, or they may carry them about them. Some have believed that Apollonius Tyanæus was the first author of the talismans, but others are of opinion that the Egyptians were the inventers of them, which Herodotus seems to insinuate in the second book of his history, when he says, this people having first of all given names to the twelve celestial gods, did likewise engrave animals on stones. The inhabitants of the island of Samothracia made talismans with gold rings, which had iron set in them instead of precious stones: Petronius speaks of it, when he says, that Trimalcio carried a gold ring set with stars of iron. The gods, which they called the gods of Samothracia, were those that presided over the science of the talismans, which is confirmed by the inscriptions of those three altars whereof Tertullian speaks. Before the pillars, saith he, there are three great altars, dedicated to three sorts of gods, which they call great, and mighty, and strong, and which are believed to be those of Samothracia. Apollonius makes mention of three divinities, to whom he joineth Mercury, and relateth the barbarous names of those gods, which it was prohibited to reveal, viz., Axierus, Axiocerso, Axiocersus, and Casmilus, which, he says, are Ceres, Proserpina, Pluto, and

Mercury. The Egyptians, from whom the greatest part of other people have learned the secret of those rings, had also other talismans for all parts of the body. And perhaps it is for this that we find so many little figures of gods, men, and animals, in the ancient tombs of this country. The most ancient talismans are made upon plants, branches of trees, or roots. Josephus speaks of them in the eighth book of his Antiquities, and attributes the invention of them to Solomon. They apply, says he, to the nose of the sick possessed by the Devil, a ring, wherein a root was set instead of a stone: Solomon had taught it in his works. This historian says, that he has even seen the effects; and that a Jew, Eleazer by name, cured many possessed in this manner, in the presence of the emperor Vespasian. The ancient Egyptians believed that certain stones, cut out into beetles, had considerable virtues to procure strength and courage for those that carried them about with them; because, says Ælian, this animal has no female, and is an image of the sun. They put likewise sometimes the figures of frogs in talismans, and Pliny testifies that if we believe those that improve that science, a parcel of frogs ought to be esteemed more significant in a commonwealth than a body of laws. Ælian says, that those of Egypt took a reed, which preserved them from being devoured by adders or crocodiles of the Nile, and that they are the emblem of wisdom and prudence. Tzetzes relateth, that a philosopher put a stop to a plague at Antioch, by a talisman of stone, wherein there was the head of Charon graved. Apollonius made use of the figures of storks and serpents, and the Egyptians commonly made use of the figures of Serapis, of Canopus, god of the Egyptians, of the spar-hawk and asp, against the evils which might come from the four elements, earth, water, air, and fire.

The modern talismans are not so curious as the ancient, and we may know them by the characters, which are purely Arabic, Turkish, or of other Oriental tongues. The principal authors that have treated on this subject in the latter ages, are Camilli Leonardi, who has writ the *Mirror of Stones*. Geber, Bacon, and Paracelsus, who have treated of astrological magic, and of the sympathy of stones, metals, and planets. Gaffarel has composed a book on this subject; entitled, *Unheard-of Curiosities*. And Agrippa has treated of it in his *Occult Philosophy*. Gregory of Tours relateth, that the city of Paris had been built under a constellation, which preserved it from conflagration, serpents, and mice; and that a little before the fire that happened in the year 588, they had found, in raking up an arch of a bridge, the two talismans, preservers of that city, which were a serpent and a mouse of brass. Some have derived the Arabic name talisman from the Greek *συντέρησις*, which signifies preservation. We will not spend time to show the vanity of the talismans, for we live in an age that is not much addicted to such superstitions.

But these things went but a little way, compared to what followed; for now the pagan worship declining, the world began to see with other eyes; the Devil lost ground everywhere, and the Christian religion spread itself insensibly, and in a surprising manner, especially over all the eastern and northern parts, as into Asia, and into Germany and France; and now it behoved the Devil to take new measures also.

Nor was he at all at a loss, for he knew his method presently, and that was to put on the face of religion, rank in with the sanctified part of the people, to wit, the clergy, and draw them into his scheme, as he had done the pagan priests before.

Upon this he took up the tonsure, shaved himself

for a monk, or a monkey, which you please, dressed himself up in the habit, put on the sacred vestments, and got presently into orders. The popes quickly fell in with him : pope Sylvester II. gave him institution and induction, and from this time forward he quitted the astrologic, and set up an ecclesiastic magic in the world : the success has been wonderful, beyond even his own expectation ; for it must be confessed, when the priests first began a correspondence with him, they outstripped him in their speed, for they run even before they were sent. St. Francis and St. Ignatius outdid all the arts of infernal magic that ever were known, or in use in the world, and, with his assistance, did more to establish a race of enchanters and church magicians in the world, than the Devil himself could have expected.

This served his interest effectually on one side of the world, that is to say, for Europe especially, and all the western world : and Confucius drew out another plan of ecclesiastic or rather philosophic magic for him in China and Japan. But he was still at a loss for all the rest of Asia and Africa, which we might then call the middle part of the world, and which at that time was ripe for any kinds of enthusiasm or church magic, let it be almost what it would.

Satan, who always sees his opportunity, and has no want of vigilance to lay hold of it, saw the occasion, but could not readily find out a handle. He could not presently think of a method ; till at length the industrious Devil found out the contrivance of setting up the Unity against the Trinity, the house of Ishmael against the house of Isaac, the race of the bondwoman against the race of the freewoman ; the circumcision against the baptism, and the magic of Mahomet's pigeon to mimic the Christian dove.

Having thus settled the scheme, he found out a tool fit for his purpose ; a fierce ignorant Arabian, bold, subtle, cruel, and merciless ; to men insolent, and audacious to Heaven ; who, by this mere magic of enthusiasm, backed by the sword and spear, set up the boldest, the grossest, and the most senseless of all impostures that ever was in the world ; and which yet at this time, and for above a thousand years past, has strangely triumphed over the Christian world, has spread itself over Asia and Africa, from the utmost islands of India east, to the utmost corner of Africa to the west ; and it was, till within a few years past, master of a fourth part of Europe besides.

Such is the force of ecclesiastic magic ; and how far it is gone, besides this, to break into the ecclesiastic affairs of the Christian world, is not hard to describe, though it would take up too much room, especially at the close of this work, to inquire into the particulars.

What a continued series of ecclesiastic magic has been acted among the Romish clergy, and in the whole papal hierarchy ! Even popery itself seems to me to be one entire system of antichristian magic ; its constitutions are all sorcery and witchcraft ; they prevail upon sense by nonsense, upon the head by the tail, upon zeal by enthusiasm, and upon the Christian doctrine by the doctrine of the Devil.

How could it be possible that mankind, blinded by their own obstinacy, could sink their reason to erect notion ; establish fraud and cheat, against Christian sincerity and plainness ; make men refuse to see when their eyes are open ; worship priests in the name of God, and set up darkness in the room of light, if they were not bewitched with the magic of hell, and under the entire management of the Devil ?

It would be worth while here to draw a table of proportions, and let us see how much more fatal to the world this ecclesiastic magic of popery, inclusive of a few other spiritual delusions and enthusiasms, has been, than all the magic of paganism and all the conjurations of hell were before.

That men should renounce the idols, and then worship the priest; condemn oracles, and inquire of the Devil; cast off the Baals, the Jupiters, and the Saturns of the pagans, and set up a brea-den god, that they should first worship and then de-vour!

That whole nations should relinquish the glorious host of heaven, the much more rational gods of their forefathers, and empower every priest to make a god for them with half an ounce of meal! The clergy were indeed in the right of it so far, that they, like the silversmiths of Ephesus, when they had once drawn the people into this magic of a wor-ship, took care to engross the art of making gods all to themselves.

Nor was it the least part of the magic of this con-trivance that they should make eating their god be a part of their most solemn idolatry, I cannot call it worship; that when they had made a bushel or two of gods, and been paid for them, the people that came to church might eat them up, and the priests be richly set to work to make more.

If ever the talismans of the Greeks, the augurs and aruspices of the Romans, the lapdog of Venu-tius, or Mahomet's pigeon, could outdo these delu-sions of church magic, I am quite mistaken, and shall be ready to acknowledge it.

That men should sin against God, and then ask the priest pardon for it; as if a man should commit treason in England against the king, and then go to a chimney-sweeper or a blackguard boy to be par-doned for it; that a man should go to a shopkeeper

in Cheapside to buy a license to commit whoredom or to rob upon the highway, and stock-job Heaven in Exchange-alley by puts and refusal!

If ever there was any magic in Egypt or Arabia like this, history is entirely silent in it, nor had the Devil ever craft enough to teach his disciples any such art. What sums of money would the heathen priests have raised if their gods had took bribes as ours do; and pardons for sin, and license to sin, had been to be bought and sold at the church doors, as it is with us!

But these are merry times, and the church magic outdoes all the conjurings of the ancients, as much as madam Violante outdoes a common stage-tumbler, or as an hospital thorough-bred surgeon does a mountebank tooth-drawer.

As to our religious magic, the enthusiasms and heresies that reign among us, I think we must deal with them just as their maker seems to have done, let them alone, give them up to their own magic, and to their own delusions, to believe the lies of their own making. For as those holy cheats are the easiest to be discovered, they are the hardest to be cured, because they are generally supported from this invisible world of spirits, these mighty good superior beings; that is to say, the Devil, with whom the fathers of these religious frauds have so intimate acquaintance, that the mischiefs they spread, and the confusions which they bring every day into all our religious establishment, are too deep-rooted for all the skill and application of the more religious world to cure.

But I must observe one thing here, which is necessary to your illumination; and though it should bring me back, and draw me in again to the sin of gravity, which the town hates; yet venturing the general displeasure, I say it is necessary to take notice here, that these religious effluvia of hell, which

at present make such confusion of principles among as, are so demonstrably embraced by the present magi, the sages, the conversers with good spirits, the Rosicrucians, and masters of the occult sciences, and all the other pretenders to supernaturals and secret illuminations, that they leave us no more room to doubt but they are all natives of the same climate, bred up in the same country, carrying on the same interest, and will share at last in the same destruction, when the tares and the wheat shall be skilfully and critically separated, as we are well assured they will be.

This, indeed, stands fair against all the modern teachers of the Rosicrucian whimseys, and the doctrine of spirits, viz., that none of them apply to the establishment of true religion. On the contrary, they establish, or strive to establish, old errors, and continually broach new; they preach another doctrine, and their notions, were they not exposed by their own extravagances, and enthusiastic brains, would expose themselves, being a kind of religious ramble, a confused and a confounding heap of nonsense: the poor people would otherwise be in danger of being wheedled into their delusions, but this unravels all their dark schemes, and tends to show us the cheat of all the rest, and to convince us that it is all a black art, all a diabolic, a mere emanation of hell.

Thus all their magic detects and exposes itself, all the high and blustering bombast of sacred, divine, excellent, and such-like, discover whence they come; the pretences to illuminations, communication, or intercourse with spirits, and an invisible world, appear to be pretences, and no more; their dreams of aerial substances and spirituous bodies, the inhabitants of the elements, the refined incorporeal essences; their abstracts of quintessence, and a thousand more which they put upon the

world ; I say, they all smell of the fire and brimstone, are born of hell, their invisible world is evidently to be understood the infernal world, and their study of the sacred sciences is neither more or less, to speak in the common dialect, than dealing with the Devil ; there it begins, and there it must and will end.

What else means their philosophic cant of mingling the supernatural essences, their confounding the terms of religion and things divine, with the dreams and the jargon of their unsignifying language ? loosing the name of God, Devil, Heaven, Hell, in the cant of their trade, and the laboured expressions of sacred flame, mental fire, immortal spirit, perfection, corruption, illuminating genius, and a vast throng of words, tending to amuse the foolish, and distract the wise ; tending to destroy religion and all the solid establishment of heaven, whether for the felicity of the just, or punishment of the wicked ?

Had their magic any tokens of a truly divine institution, of a heavenly original, and was this demonstrated by its confirming and conforming to the principles of either natural or revealed religion, something might be said for it ; or was its tendency to establish, not bewilder the understanding, and to fix the knowledge of the true God in the minds of men ; was it qualified to establish our faith in divine illuminations, and truly to direct our worship and homage to him, encouraging at the same time peace, justice, humility, and every Christian virtue ; were this the case, we should not dispute with them the converse of spirits between us and the invisible world, the spirits uncased and fled from hence, with the spirits yet embodied, by an invisible and inconceivable communication. But leave it as it is, a matter indifferent to us at present, till it comes to be understood better when we arrive there.

CHAP. V.

Of the magic of the present time, as it stands stripped in the last chapter, from all the pretences of the magicians, and the delusions of hell; of what length it has gone, or is like to go, in deluding mankind; what the magicians can do, and that they really have now no converse with the Devil at all: so that the art being at an end, the history comes to an end of course.

HAVING, in the last chapter, brought down this idol called magic to its true original, stripped it of all the masquerade dresses, jested a little about it, and at last laid the bastard at the Devil's door, who is the true father of it; one would think so barefaced an imposture should be able to appear no longer in the world, that it would be hissed off the stage, and that the very boys and girls would throw stones and dirt at it in the street.

But the case is quite otherwise, and in spite of contradiction the Devil goes on his own way; if this or that nation, or country, or people, drop him, and refuse him, he goes to another; like a true pedlar, if he is answered no at one door, he knocks at the next. If he sells counterfeits, and is called cheating knave at one house, he calls himself honest man at another. The Devil is never balked, but carries on his game, in spite of all the repulses he meets with, nay, in spite of Heaven itself.

Besides, he is never at a loss for disguises, and like a lady at the ball, if she happens to have been known in her masquerade habit yesterday, to-

morrow she gets another that shall be a more perfect disguise. If he happens to be blown here, he is concealed there. If he is discovered and known for a devil to-day, you shall mistake him again, and take him for a saint or magician of another kind to-morrow.

Nay, and after all, even where he is known to be the Devil, and finds he cannot be disguised any longer; yet he has his ways with him, to win and please you, and draw you in, at least to bear with him, seeing he does you no harm. Thus, do you not see the crowd about the puppet-show, and do they not laugh, and halloo, and appear infinitely pleased with the grossest and simplest of all cheats; and that though they know them to be cheats and delusions, and that they are but mere puppets?

So our magicians, though you know them to be cheats, though you know that notwithstanding all their pretences, they really deal with the Devil; yet we have people among us that would be content, and deal with them upon that very score. I want to know, says the jealous-headed countryman, who has made me a cuckold, and don't tell me of the cunning man going to the Devil for information. Why, I'd go to the Devil myself, if I knew where he was, rather than not find it out.

Nay, though you convince them, that even in the worst of it all, the fellow is not so wicked as they think he is, or as he makes of himself; that he knows nothing of the Devil any more than they do, but only cheats them, and persuades them to believe he knows something, when indeed he knows nothing of the matter, yet still they will go to him; such an old woman, or such a young fool told them, that they had been with the cunning man, and they will go too; nor is it possible to persuade them against it, till they have thrown their money away, and come back ashamed.

So that the delusion still goes on. A young girl has two sweethearts, and she goes to the cunning man to know which of those two shall have her. A young fellow has lost his mistress, and must know who courts her. Another has lost a cow, and away he goes to the cunning man to know who has stole her. The crafty shaver, like the Devil's oracles of old, gives doubtful answers, satisfies nobody, and yet pleases everybody. He sends the girl home with an 'old wife's tale; bids her lay two sticks across under her pillow, and the first she dreams on will be the man. The poor girl's head runs upon the affair of a husband, it is no wonder she should dream of one of them, and it may be the right, as well the wrong, so that it is an even lay. But the conjurer is right; and to be once right, secures him the custom of all the young people in the country; whereas, if he is out, that's forgotten, and does him no harm.

This is the Devil's low-priced game, and he carries it on a great way; and as the mountebank oftentimes gets more money than a licensed physician, and the quack than the doctor; so the Devil gets more clients than the counsellor, and his agents have as much practise as the lawyers, and perhaps upon as honest a foot too as some of them.

I should inquire a little here, and expose the weak doings of those cunning men, and how they delude the poor people; but it is of no great use. For as it is one of the simplest things of its kind in the world, and by which the poor people are the most imposed upon, yet it is perhaps one of the last delusions in the world that they will be cured of; nor can all the cunning men of a higher kind in the whole world reason them out of it. They will leave the surgeon for the mountebank, the physician for the quack, the parson for the conjurer, and God for the Devil. A few short tales upon this part may

perhaps illustrate the speculation, and show you the force of fraud, though I doubt it will not do much towards a cure.

A magician giving out his bills, and boasting of his mighty performances, went down in the way of his calling, as other tradesmen do, to Bristol fair, and there he did wonders, told fortunes, calculated nativities, looked in the girls' hands, peeped in their eyes, talked broad things to them to make them blush; and then guessing from their colour how things stood with them, and by a thousand cross questions, first crept into their cases, and then told them for a mighty discovery, what they had discovered to him with their own foolish tongues that very minute.

Among the rest of the young lasses that came to him with their grievances, there comes one with that laudable question; if in love, whether I shall marry the man or no? She was so modest that she could not tell the doctor her case herself, but she brings it him in writing; and instead of stating the question as above, if in love, she had written, if courted.

The doctor (for they are all doctors) looks upon the paper, and seeing it a woman's hand; it is your own writing, child, says he, I suppose you would not trust anybody else with it; she curtsied, and said yes: so he reads it out, if in love, whether the man will marry me or no? The girl coloured, and said, 'tis not so, you don't read it right, sir. Well, child, says he, I'll read it right by and by; come hither sweetheart, pull off thy glove, let me see thy hand; so he takes her by the hand, looks in the palm, cries hum, very well, all's right there; then he feels her pulse, ha! says he, with a kind of start, is it so? well, come child, says he, sit down in this chair, I'll tell thee a story: so the girl, after a few curtsies and slight refuses, sits down; and the doctor begins his story: there was, says he, a young

woman, a very pretty clever girl, as you are, my dear, (and with that he feels her pulse again,) came to me t'other day, just with such a question as this, and after I had a little talk with her, and feeling her pulse, as I do yours, my dear, (and then he felt her pulse again, and started again, ha, says he, it is so indeed, and then goes on,) I, by the help of my art, which is the most certain line for the discovery of hidden truth directed by nature, and by the intercourse of invisible beings, which inform me of everything proper to be known, and for the service of those who come to be assisted with my exalted genius, I say, by my infallible judgment, I found the poor girl had concealed something from me, which indeed she ought not to have done.

For by giving me a wrong account of her case, how should I give a direct answer; were it not that I, who am assisted by the good spirits, the inhabitants of the superior world, am not to be deceived.

So I said to her, sweetheart, thou hast concealed the chief part of thy case; is there not something more in this question than thou hast acknowledged? She made me no answer at first, till I being illuminated by the bright spirit of the fifth region of Alahamed Irwishah, and by all the assisting lights of the high exalted atmosphere, (here the doctor run over a great many Greek words, which almost frightened the poor girl whom he held fast by the hand or wrist all the while,) I, said he, that could not be deceived, told her in plain words, why thou hast concealed from me that thou art with child; at which, continues he, the guilty poor girl having nothing to say, and being not able to deny what she found was revealed to me by my never-failing intelligence, confessed to me that it was so; and I having compassion for her circumstances (for she had been deluded) promised her my powerful assistance to bring the knave to marry her, which is now

happily done to her infinite satisfaction. All this while he held her by the wrist, and looked frequently in her face.

By the first he discerned an unusual fluttering and sudden disorder in her pulse, occasioned by the story being well enough told, and the first girl's behaviour mimicked to the life; by looking in her face, he saw her colour come and go; and when he talked of his knowing everything from the superior beings and the invisible world, he saw she was in the utmost confusion.

Now, my dear, says the doctor, raising her by the hand out of the chair, give me leave to look a little further; so leading her to the window, he gently lifted up one of her eyelids, then he gave two hums, and said, pretty well there. The girl all the while blushed and coloured, and changed now red, and then pale; a little conjuration indeed would tell the doctor how it was with her.

Now, my dear, says he to the girl, you would do well to be so free with me as to let me know your whole case, if you think fit to trust me with it, and for that, I am as secret as death; you need not be under the least concern about that, for it is my business, I am trusted with the secret of princes, and am a counsellor of counsellors; and if I should betray anybody, it would be a double offence, neither would the invisible spirits communicate the secrets of people's affairs to me if they did not judge me faithful, therefore you may trust me with the utmost safety, child, adds he, I shall never divulge anything that you commit to me.

The girl was as mute as a fish, and said not one word to him, but blushed and coloured as red as the gills of a turkey-cock when he is angry.

Come, my dear, says he, perhaps you can't express yourself freely, so I won't press you any further; but sit down till I consult the good spirits

again, who, as I told thee, are always ready to assist distressed innocence ; and who will not fail to give me a full information of your case, and directions also for your good ; so that I do not need you should make any kind of confession of your case to me. I shall be able presently to tell it you directly without your help ; so pray sit but two or three minutes, and I'll come to you again.

Having said this to her, he offered to go away, at which the girl fell a crying vehemently ; and the doctor, too cunning not to take hold of it, and satisfied that he had hit the mark, stopped, and came back to her : Well, my dear, says he, I see how it is, and I had partly intelligence of it before, as you may easily perceive ; but, come child, adds he, let's see, what is to be done for thee ? She cried all the while ; but when he said, what's to be done, she said, but could not speak it plain for crying, that Thomas would —, and there she stopped. I understand thee, child, says he, that I should make Thomas marry thee, is it not ? Yes, says she, and blubbered most sadly.

Well, says the doctor, but how far are you gone with child ? let me know that, and then I'll tell thee whether I can bring it to pass or no. With that he laid his hand gently upon her belly. I doubt thou art far gone, says he : About four months, says the girl. Well, child, says he, come to me again tomorrow in the afternoon, and I'll tell thee what is resolved in thy case by the powers who assist my never-failing art. So taking a crown of the poor girl for letting him pump the truth out of her own mouth, and getting the reputation of a most eminent magician and man of art, he dismissed her for that time, letting her know that if he undertook to bring Thomas to marry her, he should expect a more considerable acknowledgment.

In a word, he took Thomas's name, and where

he lived, and found ways to manage Thomas so well, that Thomas came to him in two or three days to get rid of a ghost, that haunted him. The case was this: the doctor had an implement which he carried with him upon the occasion of his business; a subtle, oily-tongued young fellow, who was a jack-of-all-trades; here was a juggler, there a tumbler, to-day a conjurer, at one time a ghost or apparition, at another a devil or spirit, and so acted all shapes and postures that could be desired.

The doctor having had his intelligence from the girl where Thomas lived, and finding, very happily, that he lodged in a public-house not far off, being servant to a tradesman, who not having room for him in his house, paid for a lodging for him in the alehouse; I say, having gotten this handle, he sends his engineer to lodge in the same house.

This fellow finds an opportunity to come so far acquainted with Thomas, as always to know whither he went, and upon what errands and business: and the first time that Thomas was sent of an errand (very happily for him) was to a village, about a mile out of the city, and in the evening.

As Thomas was going to this village, this subtle rogue gets behind a wall in his way, and with a hollow dead kind of voice calls him three times by his name; and immediately conveyed himself away into a field of corn, where, had Thomas suspected him, he could not have found him; and getting out of the corn, he runs round by another way, and puts himself just in the way that Thomas was to come, and, as if he had been farther that way, and was returning, meets Thomas, full-but, as they call it, one going from the city, and the other coming to it.

They salute as usual, and as acquaintance, and fall into a short discourse upon the occasion of the voice that Thomas had heard.

George, says Thomas, I am very glad to see you; I wish you would go back with me to yon town there, I'd be much beholden to you for your company.

I am in great haste, says George; I can't go now.

O pray do, if you can, for I am terribly frightened, says Thomas.

Frighted, says George, at what?

Why, as I came along by the stone wall there, says Thomas, at the bottom of the hill, I heard a voice call me three times by my name aloud.

Why, what does that signify, says George? 'twas somebody behind the wall, to be sure, that knew you; what should you be frightened at that for?

No, no, it was not behind the wall, it was rather on t'other side of the road, says Thomas; but the voice was up in the air, to be sure it must be some spirit.

Nay, if it was up in the air, indeed, says George, there may be something in it; those voices are sad things; my master now would tell you exactly what it meant.

Why ay, says Thomas, so they say; your master can tell folks all such things, but can't you tell a-boby something of it too? come, do go back with me a little.

Nay, says George, since you are so concerned, I will go till I see you safe at the next town, or so, but I must run home then, for it is almost night, and my master will want me.

So, in short, George goes along with him, which was all he wanted.

But, George, says Thomas, what can this voice mean?

How many times did it call you? says George.

Three times, says Thomas.

And was it very loud and distinct? says George.

Are you sure you are not deceived? for sometimes people fancy voices when there are none.

Ay, that may be, says Thomas, but I an't so fanciful; I am very sure I heard it three times; it called my Christian name and surname, Thomas first, then Thomas Saunders, and Thomas Saunders again; it was a devil's voice, to be sure, it was harsh and hollow as the Devil.

Nay, I don't like it, I confess, says George; it seems to signify death when people are called so, and it may be in three days, three weeks, or three months, or three years.

Can't you tell me which? says Thomas.

No really, says George, I can't go so far as that. If my master was to know the case, he would tell you exactly; but I dare say it is death, or something very bad.

They had not gone far after this, but George watching a convenient place, gives a little start, and stops, looking as if he saw something: hold a little, says he to Thomas.

What's the matter? says Thomas.

Matter, says George; nay, you best know what's the matter; have you committed murder, Thomas? have you killed anybody?

I killed anybody! mercy upon me! says Thomas, what do you mean?

Why, do you see nothing, says George, do you see nothing there? (*He points to a great tree which stood on the common which they were going over.*)

No, not I, says Thomas; don't fright me; you know, George, I am frightened enough already.

Nay, says George, I don't desire to fright you, Thomas; but you would be worse frightened than I if you saw it; I'm glad you don't.

But what is it? says Thomas. Dear George, tell me, is it the Devil?

No, no, not the Devil, says George, but 'tis a

spirit, 'tis a ghost to be sure; that made me ask if you had killed anybody.

Well, I shall die, says Thomas; I'm e'en dead with the fright; why how should you see it and not I, George?

O, there's a reason for that, says George; my master gave me a particular sight; that I can see apparitions when others can't, it belongs to our business; but you'll see it presently, for it will come nearer, I see that.

O, says Thomas, what shall I do, George? will it speak to me?

I don't know yet, says George, it may be not, I'll tell you presently.

They continued going forward all this while, and began to come pretty near the town; when by and by, says George, I don't know what to think of it, Thomas; it threatens and makes signs as it would come up to you and strike you.

Strike me! says Thomas: nay then 'twill kill me to be sure.

No, no, they never kill anybody; besides, I see you are in such a fright, I'll see if I can speak to it, and keep it off; if my master were here, he'd send it away with a word speaking. With that George goes three steps forward; bids Thomas stand still, draws a circle with his stick upon the ground, and puts Thomas into it: Stand there, says George, and you shall be safe, and don't be afraid, I'll see what I can do for thee.

Thomas stands still as he was bid, but quaking and trembling in the utmost confusion; and George goes forward a little out of the way and talks aloud, but so that Thomas could hear only the voice, not understand the words; and George makes a great many motions and crosses in the air, and this he held a good while, when he comes back to Thomas.

Well, Thomas, says he, I believe I have delivered

you for this time, but something is the matter ; this apparition threatens you strangely ; I fancy you'll hear of it again.

But is it gone now ? says Thomas.

Stand still, says George, a little, I think 'tis a going.

So George and he stand still a little : Ay, there, says George, it goes off that way (pointing north) and now 'tis gone up in the air, says George, come, now we'll go on. So away they went to the town, and George tells him he must take his leave of him, and run home as hard as he can drive.

Dear George, says Thomas, don't leave me ; why, I could not go back in the dark if you would give me a thousand pounds.

I can't possibly stay, says George ; if you are so frightened, you had best lie there all night, and come home in the morning.

I dare not do that neither, says Thomas, my master will be so angry, 'tis as much as my place is worth.

Why then you must get somebody to come with you at the town, says George, for indeed I can't stay now. So away comes George and leaves him, and sets up a run, as if he was bound to be back again with the utmost expedition.

When George had got away and was out of sight, he altered himself, as he knew very well how to do by his skill in postures and tumbling, which, as before, was a part of his trade ; and having a linen habit in his great pocket, dresses himself up in the habit of a ghost or an apparition, not in a shroud like a dead body, but all in white, down to the feet, and a woman's headdress upon his head ; and in this posture he places himself where he knew Thomas would come. But before this, covering his habit with his great coat, he placed himself at the village in sight of the door where Thomas went in,

that he might be sure to know when he came out, and which way he went, lest he should take some other way; and also to know who and how many he got to come with him.

He soon found Thomas on his way, for he came out of the house and two fellows with him in about an hour: so George followed them at a distance, till he saw them in a little lane leading into the common as before, and when he knew they could go no other way; upon which he run by another way over the fields, and got into the common before them.

The first thing he did was to get into a little thicket, where lying flat on the ground, and out of sight, he lay and hissed like a serpent most frightfully; this had its immediate effect, for it frightened them all, and he heard one of them say, It was the Devil, and that he was come for Thomas to be sure: and the other said so too, adding, that he would go no further; this was enough for George, for by this he knew they were no champions that Thomas had brought along with him; so removing and getting to another place a little behind them, that they might not run back again, there he changed his note, and then growled like a great dog, and that frightened them again. Now having made this beginning, he leaves off a little, and goes into the common, and stands in the middle of the road just where the lane opened into the heath; so that he might be sure to be seen all in white, a little before they came out of the lane.

The night was not very dark, but no moonlight; some stars, not many, were seen; when coming to the lane's end, they saw the spectre, and no sooner saw it, but all three run away and cried out most terribly. George had now his end, for he didn't desire to carry it on any further; so he kept his post till he found by their noise they crossed the common further off and out of sight; then he put

off his habit, and made the best of his way to their lodging; where when Thomas came, he found George very sedately standing at the door smoking his pipe.

He bade Thomas welcome home, but said no more, not taking the least notice of anything; but found that Thomas went immediately up stairs, and threw himself down upon the bed; and the next morning Thomas was very sick.

George in the mean time went home to his master, and gave him an account of the whole transaction, who finding his engines work to his mind, gave George further instructions; which were in short, to haunt the poor fellow night and day, and give him no quiet till he had managed him up to a necessity of coming to him (the doctor) for help, which was not long first.

I should have observed, that the doctor or cunning man finding he should compass his ends upon Thomas, sent now for the poor girl, and told her, that he had employed the utmost of his art and skill in her behalf; And upon my word, adds he, my child, I have had a fatherly concern for you; and I have engaged so many of the good spirits of the superior regions in your favour, that they (always ready to do acts of beneficence and kindness to distressed mortals) have assured me that Thomas shall marry you; ay, and shall come and court you to have him too, as much as if he had not gotten this unjust advantage of you, or he shall have no rest in this life; nay, he shall have no rest in this life till he does.

The poor girl smiled, and was mightily pleased, as you may well suppose, and puts her hand in her pocket, and gives the doctor half a guinea for the good news. The doctor took the money, but told her modestly, that if he did her such a great piece of service as this, she must consider, &c. She understood him, and told him, she had not a great

deal of money, but yet she had a rich aunt, and other good friends; and Thomas need not ha' used her so; for that if —— and then she cried again, she would have scorned to have married him, but —— I understand you, child, says the doctor; now you must not only take him, but must be glad he will take you? Yes, sir, says she.

Well, says the doctor, and does your aunt know this unlucky story?

Yes, sir, says the girl, and she bid me tell you she will make a handsome present to you, if you can bring it about.

Well, child, says the doctor, tell your aunt, I will undertake to do it, if she will be as good as her word.

Indeed she will, sir. I will bring it you, says she; and named the sum, which was no less than twenty pounds; and the doctor, with an unusual modesty, not craving any more, told her generously, that if he failed, he would have nothing more than she had given him already.

This treaty took up two or three days, and in the mean time George haunted Thomas upon several occasions: nay, he could hardly stir out of doors in the night, but he showed himself, sometimes all in white, sometimes all in black; till at last Thomas comes to him one evening: George, says he, dear George, if you don't help me, I know not what to do. I am harassed out of my wits. This Devil, if it is the Devil, haunts me so that it gives me no rest. Last night it called me again three times at my chamber window, the very same voice, and three times over, just as it did at the long wall.

N. B. George had cunningly got a ladder in the night, and set it up to the fellow's window, and went up, and called him aloud, with the same hollow dead sound as he did before.

Well, says George, I am sorry for it, Thomas; I would have you send for a minister, and prepare for

another world, for I doubt you are not very long for this world.

But did not you tell me, says Thomas, your master could do something for me?

Yes indeed, says George, I did so; and I believe he could, if you han't let it run too far, and if you han't done some sad thing, Thomas: for the spirits of the invisible world, which my master knows and converses with, are all good spirits, Thomas, and they will do nothing for you, adds he, if you have committed murder or robbery, or any such thing; and therefore if that be your case, do not let me carry you to my master, for he can do you no good.

Thomas stared as if he had been bewitched. Mercy upon me! what do you mean, brother George, says he, I am as innocent as the child unborn. I never did any such thing in my life.

Well, Thomas, says George, if you speak honestly, I'll let my master know your case, and if you will come to our office to-morrow morning, you shall have his answer.

Good George, says Thomas, don't put it off till to-morrow; what shall I do; why George, the Devil will murder me to-night.

What would you have me do? says George. I'll go immediately, if you will, but I doubt he is not at home.

However, Thomas pressing him, away they go to the doctor together; which was indeed what George wanted. When they came to him, George introduces the young man; and, in a word, tells him the whole story at large, and implores his high superior assistance to the poor distressed young man, who was daily terrified and harassed, to the danger of his wits.

But, says the doctor, (just as George had been taught to do before,) I fear this man has committed

some flagrant crime, and so the evil spirits have a right to pursue him. Hark thee, friend, come hither to me, let me see thy hand; hast thou not committed murder, or treason? No indeed, sir, says Thomas, never in my life.

Well, pull off thy glove, says the doctor.

Here, sir, says Thomas, you may see I an't burnt in the hand.

Prythee, young man, says the doctor, I don't look for that; so he examines his palm. Well, says the doctor, all's well here. Nor you have committed no robbery or felony? don't come to me if you are guilty of any such crimes as you ought to be hanged for.

No, indeed, I han't, and't please you, says Thomas.

Then the doctor feels his pulse, and looks him full in the face: here is some disorder, some guilt here. Look ye young man, assure yourself, if you have stole anything, or committed any crime, the good spirits, inhabitants of the invisible world, whose sublime influences I shall apply to them for in your behalf, and to deliver you from the power of the evil spirits which haunt you thus, will do nothing for you if you are a criminal; and more than that, they will certainly inform me of it, as soon as I make my application for your relief, and tell it me as the reason why they can do nothing for you; so you had better let me know it beforehand.

Indeed, sir, and please you, says Thomas, I have never done any such thing in my life.

Hast thou ever done any injury, says the doctor, to any, for which thou can'st be thus plagued?

No indeed, sir, not I, says Thomas.

Well, friend, says the doctor, I inquire for your service only; for I don't care what you have done, nor do I care to know it. But let me ask you one

question more, and then I shall be able to speak for you in general, as a very innocent, honest person. Are you willing to make satisfaction, or reparation, to anybody, or to everybody that you have done any injury to?

Yes, sir, with all my heart, says Thomas; and sir, adds he, I have never done any hurt in all my life.

All this while the doctor holds him by the hand, and every now and then feels his pulse. Look you, friend, says he, here is some little disorder here in your blood, your conscience flutters, and is a little disturbed. Come, don't send me of a fool's errand, for if thou doest, I cannot only do thee no good, but these evil spirits will tear thee to pieces, when they know, as they will do, that I have spoke for thee. Come, I'll ask thee but one question more: has there been no love business between any young girl and you, and she has broke her heart, and is dead for you, and now pays you home for it, and plagues you? for it seems you say the apparition had a woman's headdress on.

No, indeed, sir, says Thomas, I ne'er had any fancy, but for one, and she is alive; I am sure I saw her several times since this happened.

Now the doctor had him fast. Well, is there anything between you, is she your sweetheart still?

No, and't please you, says Thomas, we have done.

Done! says the Doctor, what have you done? you han't lain with her, have you? But however, come, Thomas, says the Doctor, I must own that is not a fair question, so I don't press you to answer me. I hope you have done the girl no wrong, if you have, you say you'll make reparation. Come, sit down there, till I go into my study, and if you have been honest, I shall serve you, I don't doubt; but if you han't, I shall come back, and tell you all you have

concealed, without giving myself the trouble of asking you.

Here Thomas began to stare and look frightened. Why, sir, and't please you, says he, must I confess everything?

No, no, Thomas, says the doctor, I don't ask you to confess anything; I'll come back presently and tell you, as well as if you told me yourself.

Ay, but then, sir, says Thomas, you say, if I don't tell you everything first, then I shall get no help afterwards.

That's very true, Thomas, says the doctor, gravely, I do say so; and therefore, if you have anything to tell me before I go, let me know it; but I don't oblige you to tell, you may do as you will; if you have anything to say, tell me; if not, tell me.

Why nothing, sir, but about the girl, a little.

Why, there now, I thought so, when I felt your pulse; didn't I almost tell you so? says the doctor. I warrant you, ye have lain with the poor girl now, and, it may be, got her with child: is that it?

I'm afraid so, indeed sir, says Thomas; but it was but twice.

Well, says the doctor, you drew her in, I dare say, by promising to marry her, didn't you?

I think you know everything, says Thomas; indeed 'tis so, sir.

And then, says the doctor, when you found the poor girl was with child, you disappointed her, I suppose.

Yes, sir, says Thomas; there's no hiding anything from you, I think.

Well, Thomas, says the doctor, but what shall I do for you now? for unless you make this poor girl some satisfaction, there's no saving you. Where is she? you say she's alive, it seems.

Yes, and't please you, she's alive, says Thomas ; she don't live far off.

Well, what must be done, Thomas ? says the doctor. What, would you marry her ? will that give her satisfaction, Thomas ?

Yes, and't please you, I'll marry her ; and I'll send for her just now, says Thomas.

What, and marry her in the dark ! says the doctor ; that won't do, Thomas.

Why, sir, says Thomas, I'll marry her over again by daylight.

No, no, Thomas, says the doctor, we won't break through the laws neither. I'll tell you what you shall do : send for the girl, and let me hear her story, and what she demands ; if marrying her will do, Thomas, and that will satisfy her, you shall sign a bond here to her to marry her to-morrow morning ; and then to protect you from the Devil that haunted you, you shall lie here with my other man Will, to-night, and I will answer none of them will dare to haunt you in my house.

With all my heart, and't please you, says Thomas ; if you will promise me I shall not be haunted any more afterwards.

Why, Thomas, says the doctor, to secure you I'll cast a figure for you to-night, and I will know if those voices and spectres were upon her account or no ; and if they were, I will answer for it you shall hear no more of them after you have married her ; and if they were not, you shan't be obliged to take her : that's a fair proposal, Thomas.

Nay, master, and't please you, says Thomas, I think I should take her, that's the truth on't ; and I'll e'en have her, I think, whether I am delivered or no, since you say 'tis just, and I should do it. And besides, master, says Thomas, she is a good honest girl, and loves me too, mainly, and she'll be

a good wife : I'll e'en take her, master, for better for worse.

Now you speak honestly, says the doctor. Now I like you, Thomas. I warrant you the Devil will haunt you no more if you take her ; but you have been but a kind of a rogue to her before, I understand.

Upon the whole the doctor heartens him on, the young fellow is easy, and the young woman is sent for ; and in the morning they were married, and had a great wedding-dinner near the doctor's house ; so that all was done to the girl's mind, and the conjurer's too : for the doctor had two guineas of Thomas for delivering him from the Devil, (who could do it cheaper ?) and twenty of the good wife's friends, and the lady that gave the money thought it very well bestowed.

This management of the magician serves to let you see with what art and dexterity these men play the doctor with our ignorant people ; and well they deserve the name of cunning men : and as this is the greatest part of the magic they are masters of, so this is the chief end and aim of this relation, to let the reader into the cheat of it. Here were two fools managed by one cunning knave ; yet both of them are served. The knowledge of their story, and the way to do them both justice, is picked out of their own mouths ; yet they are brought to do one another justice, and believe it is all done by the magic of the cunning man ; he gets their money, and they come both off thankful into the bargain. And here's not an ounce of magic in it all ; here's no dealing with the Devil in all this. It is nothing but a bite, a kind of a juggle ; a devil and no devil, a doctor no conjurer, a vision without a spirit, a dance without a fiddle ; and, in a word, here was craft, but no knavery neither ; for what he did ended in doing a poor injured wench justice, and

bringing a young impudent fellow upon his knees, making him take the woman, not indeed for the fear of God, but for fear of the Devil.

This account of the doctor, or cunning man, may stand upon record as a specimen of the magic which we have now generally practised among us; or, if you please to take it, as a specimen of what is at present put upon the world for magic. For as to the real black art, or dealing with the Devil by way of compact, intercourse, witchcraft, and such-like, we find so little of it left, that we have some reason to say it is quite out of use, and we have heard very little of it in this part of the world for many years.

Not that we are much better than our ancestors, nor have we seen anything in the manners of the people less addicted to sorcery than formerly; but custom has made men turn magicians to themselves; we seem to carry on our correspondence with hell single-handed, and by a kind of immediate intercourse; so that we want no more the help of the magician, whatever we do of the magic. And here, I think, the magic itself being, as it were, brought to a conclusion, the history of it is justly at a conclusion also. The arts of hell are now no more carried on by particular instruments, and by way of profession; the black art is at end; the Devil having no more need of the magicians, has dropped them, and manages his affairs himself; and the magicians, having no other access to the Devil than what is imaginary and carried on by mere legerdemain, whatever it was formerly, their number is decreased, and, in a manner, worn off by time; so that you have now nothing left but a few jugglers, cunning men, gipseys, and fortune-tellers. In short, the trade is decayed, and we may suppose the managers of the black negotiation have turned their hands to other employments.

CHAP. VI.

Of raising the Devil by magical operations; whether the magicians really have such a power or no, and if they have, whether it is performed as an art, and by the consequence of magical experiments, or whether it is by concert and mutual consent, between Satan and the magicians.

RAISING the Devil has been thought by some to be a branch of witchcraft rather than magic; and then it should not be mentioned in this place; but the point is not fully decided. It seems both the worthy professions have pretended to it, and perhaps both have attained to practise it, and so it may be reckoned among the occult sciences, in common to the practitioners of both kinds, and then may be properly treated of in which part of our undertaking we please.

It is a kind of a vulgar expression, and has not much propriety in it, I mean that of raising the Devil; for the Devil is not raised, he is rather brought down. As his abode is expressly said to be in the upper regions, and his principality is in the air, he is not fetched out of the earth, and, as some have thought, with the stamp of a foot, as if he lodged under us, and we knocked for him, as the sick body knocks upon the floor for the nurse to come up stairs and speak to him.

Satan certainly is not far out of call, though it is still something doubtful in what particular element he inhabits.

1. Not in the earth, say I, because then he would be empowered to shake the world with earthquakes,

overturn cities and towns, and give mankind perpetual disturbances, and perhaps would be obliged to do so as often as he moved from place to place. Nay, it would seem necessary that the earth, notwithstanding his spirituous nature, must suffer some convulsions, dislocations, and openings, or some or other distortions, every time an old woman had occasion to speak with him.

2. Not in the sea: this is apparent by the devils of Gadarene, who besought Christ not to send them away into the deep. It seems they have an aversion to the water, and that therefore instinct led the herd of swine to run into the sea, to deliver themselves from the Devil, supposing he would leave them when they came there. But the hogs it seems were not sagacious enough to find their way out again, or to consider that before they went in. Luke viii. 31, 33.

3. Not in the fire; because that element is appropriated for their final state, is to be their prison, and the place of their punishment; and as they have at present an interval for action, so they must have a medium of space for their residence during the time of action.

4. It must then be in the air, or airy regions; and as we have reason to believe that they are not confined to the atmosphere of this globe the earth, which, compared to them, their numbers, and the extent of their operations, would be by much too narrow a place for them, too much prescribed and limited, and give them no room for action in proportion to themselves; so I am willing to allow Satan to be in capacity, (at least able) to visit all the atmospheres and spaces in the immense waste, whether of habited, habitable, or uninhabited bodies; and whether in those we call planets, or such bodies as we have no name for, because no knowledge of.

Thus the Devil cannot complain that I have not given him room enough, since I have denied his

locality to no place but heaven, (where he cannot come, and perhaps does not now desire it,) and the other gross elements, which could not contain him.

The Devil being resident, chiefly at least, in that invisible world, the air, and which we particularly call the world of spirits, our bringing him out into company is very unworthily called raising the Devil; for how can that be raised up, which is already not below?

However, if we will talk intelligibly, we must call things as other people call them, and speak of them as other people understand them, that they may know what we talk of, and know how to think upon what we speak to them about. Having therefore no other way of expressing it, you must be content to hear me speak of raising the Devil, though at the same time I tell you it is nonsense in the very terms, and contrary to nature.

But to hold you no longer upon settling preliminaries, the point in hand is, Can the magicians who we are now speaking of, raise the Devil, or can they not? can the magic art perform this high operation, is it in the reach of the profession, and is Satan subjected to it? is he obliged to come when he is called, when such and such words of command are given out, such and such methods used, such and such words repeated? is he roused, as the keeper rouses the lions in the Tower, disturbed from his abode, and obliged to come away? or as the huntsman unharbours a deer, by his horn and his halloo?

If the Devil is under this necessity, and is thus at the summons of every glass trumpet, as we may call it; that every scoundrel rascally figure-caster and circle-maker can fetch him up when they think fit, I must say I think Satan is no free agent; he is very far from being a prince, and a prince of the power of the air. Nay, there are so many rational objections against it, so many difficulties, absurdities

and even impossibilities in it, that I think there is hardly room for any further dispute about it; the thing has nothing in it rational, or agreeing to common sense.

But how is it done then? for that it is so, and that the Devil does appear when they call, does come when he is sent for, and that by the meanest of those creatures who have those dealings with him, is not to be denied; nor never has been deniable since the witch of Endor's days, nor will it want confirmation on many occasions since that: did not she put it to Saul, who he would have her bring up? intimating that she could bring up whom she pleased, even the Devil himself, if he wanted him.

It must be then by concert and agreement; for if the Devil can't be forced out of his den, if he is not conjured up, as we call it; he must be invited in a friendly manner, and prevailed upon by entreaties, or expected by agreement; and in both these cases it is much more agreeable to our understanding and we can conceive of things with much more propriety.

Either he is invited by entreaties and petitions, importuned and earnestly desired to come; and this is a kind of peculiar; for that it is a reality we have no room to doubt. I say, it is peculiar to those countries where the Devil is worshipped as a god, where they bow the knee, and, as the Indians call it, say 'O' to him as a supreme power. That he willingly observes these summons, and comes when they desire him, is easy to suppose; as he is a politic devil, and willing to preserve his possession among them, willing to be worshipped and adored, as he most obsequiously is upon those occasions, and which he, in a manner, triumphs over his Maker by, as if he had gained a victory, had conquered those parts of his dominions, and taken them from him by force.

Or on the other hand, he is obliged by contract between himself and those infernal merchants that trade with him. I say, he is obliged to come when they have occasion for him ; and in this case he must perform his promise, or else he would not maintain his credit, and would not be trusted again. Thus, in one he is bound to come, as he is a cunning devil, and knows his interest ; and in the other case, as he is an honest devil, and keeps his word ; though the last is subject to many breaches and falsifications, and he is not always as good as his word neither.

All the difficulty that lies before us here is, how he makes his bargains. Witches and wizards, they tell us, sign contracts, let him prick their hands, and sign with their blood ; hellish doings ! but I do not tell you I give any credit to them. But the magicians, who it is supposed are persons of a superior dignity, seem to act upon a better foot, and by the help of what they call art, have to do with him in a superior way ; what that way is, and what art it is to be called, that brings the affairs of hell into such a management, is the great question before me.

It is true, the magicians deny it, and Dr. Boreman would have told you he scorned your words ; he raised no devil, he had to do with no evil spirits, he dealt with no such cattle ; but, on the contrary, that he laid the Devil when other people raised him, that he cured houses that were haunted, and turned the Devil out of doors when he was got in ; all which I believe as steadfastly as I do that St. Dunstan took him by the nose with a pair of red-hot tongs ; or that St. Francis would have nothing to do with him, when he appeared to him in the shape of a bag of money ; or that St. Ignatius resisted him, when he tempted him in the shape of a naked beautiful lady.

Where, by the way, if the legend-makers of the Romish church could prove those two passages to be true in fact, so that we could no more doubt them, we should have much more reason to take those two persons for saints than ever I thought we had. It must be confessed the thing would be rare in itself, to see a priest kick a purse of gold out of his way upon the road, and not think it worth his while to take it up: so, to see a young lady, beautiful and charming, offer herself to a priest, and he turn from her, as Joseph from his mistress, looked a little more saint-like than I must own I should expect from any of the tribe, especially on the Roman side of the question. I hope our own church has abundance of such saints among the clergy, though I may not have the honour to be acquainted with many of them.

But these men of art can raise him; that seems to be a truth too solid to be denied; and I must not hazard my reputation so much as to oppose all the old women that have seen him, or dreamed they saw him; so that I must take it for granted, that they can raise him; though I believe it no more than I do that Dr. Boreman could lay him when other people had raised him, which I take to be whimsical and ridiculous.

But supposing, then, for discourse sake, that they can raise him, as they call it: what is it, and how is it done?

As to what it is, I take it to be no more than this, that the Devil is pleased, at their desire signified to him, in such manner as to the magician in his great wisdom seems meet, to assume a visibility, and put on such a shape or person as he and the magician agrees upon for the present purpose. This being granted, two things necessarily follow:

1. That the Devil and the magician really correspond.

2. That the Devil was present before, only not visibly.

First, That the Devil and the magician correspond: by corresponding must, I think, be understood, that the magician knows where Satan is; that measures are concerted between them, how to converse; as was the case between him and Albrahazen, of whom already; and that by these concerted measures he can ask the favour of Satan as often as he pleases, to make himself visible for such or such an occasion, as at that time presents.

Secondly, By this it should seem, according to the opinion of some, learned in this wisdom, that those magicians that are eminent in their practice have some devil or other always with them, visible to themselves, though invisible to others; and that they both see and converse with them continually. This is very rational to believe, and is what I take to be that which the Scripture means by having a familiar spirit; and that Manasseh had such the text is positive in. Now, that these men or women, whether magicians or what you please to call them, can desire the favour of their familiar or secondary devil to assume a shape and put on visibility, I make no question of; it seems to be no great matter, and to have no great difficulty in it. On the other hand, these seem to be the only people that can raise the Devil; for how should anybody else do it upon such common and ordinary occasions, if he was not at their elbow? how could they call him with muttering over a little gibberish, and talking it in whisper too? The Devil is not omniscient; he cannot, at the distance of his airy dwelling, know the thoughts of the agent, or see the circles and figures he draws; he must therefore be invisibly present with him, can see his circles, crosses, and figures, and all his motions, whether public or private; and I insist upon it that none can raise the Devil in this manner

but such men as those, that have a certain and constant intercourse with him. I do not say that the magicians have this correspondence with him, nor do I say or believe that all of them can bring Satan into apparition when they please ; but this I do both say and believe, that those that can or do thus raise him, as we call it, do it by this means, and have such a correspondence and intimacy with him, and that it can be done by no other.

All the notions which we can have of the Devil, founded upon the Scripture or upon reason, seem to justify this opinion ; for unless we shall allow him to be infinite, omniscient, and omnipresent, (and that would be to make him a god,) we cannot make it rational that he should be commanded into visibility and action just when we please.

If he is confined to locality, if he is anywhere, and that anywhere is somewhere, then he must have some settled intelligence established between him and mankind for the carrying on his business ; and this must be carried on by the agency of some spirits, it cannot be by voice only, by mere whisper and suggestion, if he be not present ; for though it may be true that spirits converse without the help of voice, yet infernal spirits cannot act as the infinite eternal Being acts, namely, by infinite, extensive knowledge, they must converse by the instrumentality and agency of their persons : it is true, it may be imperceptible to human sight, and it is so ; but there is not the less reality in their agency, for that there is not the less personality nor agency of persons or places on that account ; for that may as really be that cannot be perceived to exist, as that which is visible.

Now stand clear, magic, and stand clear magicians ; for if the magician can raise the Devil, he must correspond with the Devil ; and if he corresponds with the Devil, he must have a familiar ; or

how does he do it? The Devil must either be always by him, or have an agent devil in commission always attending him, and always ready to act as he shall direct; a deputy-devil under orders, and instructed to act for him, and to personate either devil, or other shape, as occasion presents, or as the magician pleases to direct. It can be no otherwise, not the Devil himself can act upon any other foot.

All we have to say for our magicians is, 'to hope that what they have to say for themselves may have some truth in it; namely, that they deal with spirits, but that it is with good spirits, not with the Devil, or with evil spirits; and this we have only their own words for; we cannot be sure it is so, nor will I venture to say that we have a great deal of reason to believe them; at least there may be room to doubt the truth of it.

I would rather advance for them what I have much more reason to believe, and that is, that they deal with no spirits at all, either good or bad; for if I should once entertain a belief that they really consulted with any spirits at all, I should be afraid they were devils; because, as I have said, that I believe the Devil would not be at their beck at every turn, so often as they have occasion for him; so I am less of the opinion that the good spirits would be called backward and forward on their trivial and frivolous errands, nor is it rational to believe they should.

If then they have any spirits, I doubt they are devils, not good spirits; but my more justifiable opinion, and which I think is really well-grounded, is, that most, if not all of them, who pretend to this converse with spirits, have no knowledge of, or correspondence with, any spirits at all; but that all the cant of their good spirits, the inhabitants of the invisible world, and their intelligence with them, is a

cheat, a mere cheat and delusion, to abuse the ignorant world, impose upon the weak, and, if possible, gain themselves a character and a fame of knowledge and wisdom, in order to pick pockets, and get money.

How many tricks do they play with mankind! how many frauds do they put upon us! under how many sham-appearances do they juggle with us! It is plain, when any sublime doctrine comes to be discussed by them, they are all in the dark; they neither can conceive right themselves, or teach us how to make a right judgment of anything, but appear to be empty, ignorant creatures themselves; who have, like Jacob Behemen, got a high cant of mystic language, words without meaning, and, as I said before, valued only for their being unintelligible, and that entirely so; and very particularly too, for that they are so put together, that not only nobody that hears them can understand them, but that they do not understand them themselves.

This certainly is the just character of most of the magicians we meet with in our times; what may have been formerly, or what may yet be, where the Devil has really a correspondence with any of these people, and if there are any Albrahazens alive, I will not determine; but then, I say, either these must have a more than intimate converse with the Devil personally, as Ali had, or they must do it by way of familiar, by a constant attending agent; and then they are no more magicians, but necromancers, and downright dealers with the Devil; and this is not what we are talking of, it is not what they pretend to, nor is it really in them.

To bring it then down to the case in hand, I mean, about raising the Devil; the present question is of two parts; first, whether the magicians have a power to raise the Devil, that is, to produce an appearance or apparition of the Devil. This, I say,

I will not deny ; only that then I say, they are no more magicians, but witches, wizards, necromancers, or what else you please to call those people that have an immediate conversation with the Devil.

Secondly, Whether, if they can do it at all, it is done as an art, a system, for the practice of which there are rules and methods, which being learned by others, enables them to perform the same thing, as an operation, whether mathematical or otherwise? and this, I think, I may venture to deny ; because I think it subjects Satan to such a situation of circumstances, as are inconsistent with all the notions we have of him as a spirit ; as a powerful unlimited seraph, a prince of the air, and who (except where his Maker has limited and prescribed him) is placed in a station inconceivably superior to all human influence or operation.

To talk of screwing the Devil up into an engine, that, like a jack in a box, he may be brought out and shown for a sight to the people whenever a conjurer thinks fit, or to be shown like a puppet-show for twopence apiece, I must needs say, this is really dishonouring the Devil himself.

What may be done by concert and agreement between the Devil and them, is one thing ; but to talk of bringing him out by an art or invention, so that, as I said before, the artists may call him in, or call him up, when they please ; this would be raising him indeed, in the very literal sense of the word ; and may be, for aught I know, what was the true meaning of the expression at first. And I must observe here, this raising the Devil is an old way of speaking, and was formerly much more in use among us than it is now ; for I am not yet determined in the matter fully, whether it be a fact or a mere proverbial speech : my opinion at present must necessarily be for the latter ; for as to raising him, it is, as I have said already, a piece of non-

sense, because, first, it intimates that he is fetched up *ab inferis*, from below; whereas, I have given many good reasons to move you to believe he is already rather above than below; and, secondly, because I can give you many more to prove, that if he was below, that is to say, in hell, in the bottomless pit itself, as we have too much fancied he is, all the old women and old witches, and all the prayers in the parish read backward, all the circles and figures, all the paw-waws and conjurings in the world, could never fetch him out again; till He comes who has the key of the bottomless pit, and who shuts, and no man can open.

We are told that St. Peter gave our holy father of St. Angelo the keys of heaven; but I doubt he has not the keys of t'other place too; if he has, he has been but a sorry jailer, for the Devil has been abroad these four thousand years to our knowledge, and continues still at large; not a constable can take him up, even a scape warrant cannot apprehend him.

As he is then at large, though he is a prisoner too in one sense, but as, I say, the Devil is at large, he is then a free agent as to us, he goes to and fro, in or throughout the earth, *and walks up and down therein*, Job i. 7. He has free liberty of egress and regress, can go and come, when where and how he pleases.

I must plead for liberty, you see, though it be for the Devil. It has pleased his Maker to give this roaring lion liberty to go up and down, seeking, &c. and how came he to sell or lose that liberty? How came the magician to be the Devil's jailer, that he should have him in his custody, to call him out when he thinks fit? If it is so, it is a voluntary confinement, and the Devil finds his account in it, or he would never submit to it; so that it must be by a consent of parties, and then we come into the

road of things again ; that is to say, that the Devil may consent to appear when he is so and so, and for such and such purposes, required ; but this is quite another thing than what the magicians are said to do ; I must therefore give it against them. The Devil is not to be raised by art ; no magic, no conjuring, no circles or squares, no prayers read backward, no, or forward either, will bring him out, unless he pleases, and finds it for his purpose. If he comes at all, he comes of himself, and about his own business, or by agreement with his own domestics, such as old mother —— of Endor, or mother Lackland of Ipswich, or such as he is in actual confederacy with ; but as for your pretenders to art, that they can raise him, and lay him, fetch him in or send him out, it is all a cheat, and the magician has this to be said in his favour, that he really is not so intimate with the Devil as he says he is.

CHAP. VII.

Seeing, as the magicians pretend, they do not deal with the Devil, or raise the Devil, who it is they do deal with, how is their correspondence managed, and why do they deal with good spirits, by conjurings and the black art?

THERE remain but two questions then, which have any difficulty in them, to speak to in this affair of magic; the first is the natural consequence of what is said before; if the magician cannot raise the Devil, who and what it is he does raise? for we will have it that he has spirits about him: if they are not evil spirits, as he will assert in his own defence, what spirits are they, and by what power or influence does he maintain such a correspondence among the intelligent beings of the invisible world, as to procure those superior angelic creatures to appear upon earth, either at his request, or upon such occasions as he represents to them?

There is too much difficulty, I had almost said absurdity, in this part, for us to come into it, as the magicians pretend to desire; they would have us believe that all they do is by the aid and assistance of these happy intelligent beings, that they, upon the mere principle of affection to mankind, and merely from their beneficent nature and disposition, are ready at all times to assist their faithful agent or servant the magician, in doing acts of charity, kindness and benevolence, to their fellow-creatures.

It is true the magician by this puts a great compliment upon himself, and suggests that he is him-

self a general blessing to mankind ; and that as such these generous and beneficent beings single out them (the magicians) as the proper instruments of their kindness to their fellow-creatures ; and that they even could not act, at least not so fully and effectually, without them.

That therefore it is, those superior beings are pleased to converse with these magicians, and communicate to them a superior knowledge of things, making them useful to mankind, and giving them a reputation for their wisdom, that so the distressed people may apply to them for assistance, direction, and counsel.

But then the second question is, how do they converse with them, by what means do those good spirits come to know when the magician has anything to be assisted in, and in what manner do they claim or desire their assistance? Now the difficulty of this question raises a doubt almost unanswerable against the truth of the magician's answer to the first.

They tell us they converse with the good spirits of the invisible world : that they would have us take as a first principle, a postulatum that should be granted ; though it is pretty much to ask too : but to oblige them as far as with any colour of common sense can be done, let us suppose it, though I can by no means grant it.

But how then is it managed? How is this converse carried on? In a word, how do they come together? It must be either,

1. By the magicians applying to these spirits for advice when they want it.

2. Or by the spirits officiously coming to them upon such occasions, of their own mere goodness.

3. Or those good spirits must be always present, and to be seen, spoken to, and conversed with, without calling, or without seeking to be called.

I must be so plain with our magicians, as to say, that I do not see how either of these three can be made out by them; nor yet how they can defend themselves from the charge of diabolic magic, unless they make out all the three, and that very clearly too.

1. As to magicians applying to these spirits for advice and intelligence; this I know is their pretence, this they all allege; and when the poor ignorant people apply to them, they make a great deal of ceremony with their circles and figures, with magical books, Hebrew or Arabic characters, muttering of hard words, and other barbarisms innumerable; just, in a word, as the old necromancers do, when they consult with the Devil.

Now, is there anything of all this requisite in order to converse with a good spirit? did the prophets of old use anything of this mimicry, when they went to inquire of the Lord? If they would have their art be called the sacred science, and we must believe that they converse with heavenly beings, what need of all these amusements, these conjurings and paw-wawings?

Will they make us believe that the good spirits are to be used as the wizards and witches use the Devil? that they are to be brought down by mutterings and conjurings, by postures and distortions, or (as our dancing-masters talk) by grotesque characters? This would do very little to oblige our reverence, nor to me, would it look like anything but talking to the Devil.

If it is done to put an amusement upon the ignorant people that come to them, and to give a solemnity (as they call it) to the thing, then 'tis evident it is done to cheat them. For what occasion could there be for such things, if they were really about to converse with the exalted spirits of a heavenly kind, and inhabitants of the invisible regions?

It is manifest they apply to their invisible angelic spirits, just as the other sort of people do to the Devil. Their ceremonies of address are much the same, and when the poor ignorant stranger seems surprised at it, they tell him he should not fear, for they are not going to raise the Devil; granting clearly that there was good reason to suspect it.

If they are honest, why then will they not tell us the reason of all these barbarisms? What cause, and what necessity, when they are applying to heaven, to act just as those do who apply to hell? Let them examine history or antiquity, nay, let them examine nature; are the application to God and idols the same? The Devil may mimic the methods of the best service, and seek to be served in the same manner as his Maker: but we nowhere read that ever the servants of God mimicked the Devil till now.

Let them look at that eminent time, when the prophet Elijah brought himself and the priests of Baal to a test for the truth of their worship, and the reality of the God they worshipped: the idolatrous priests began their pagan rites, their sacrifices were alike; that was appointed by the prophet, because they should not say but their idol devil had equal honour done him, as the true God had, in a proportion. But when they came to the service of the priests, the idol priests used their exorcisms, their conjurings, their ecstasies and their barbarisms, leaping up upon their altars, and dancing to their god, then cutting themselves with knives, and the like.

But when the truly reverend prophet came to begin the sacred office, and the apparatus of laying the sacrifice upon the wood was simply performed; what did Elijah? nothing, but in a solemn manner, and in the audience of all the people, and in the vulgar tongue, that they might all understand what was

said, and with a loud voice, call upon the true God to hear him, and to glorify himself in the sight of the people; and God did hear him, and magnified his power accordingly, to the conviction of the people, even to the conviction of their senses.

Bring this down to our case now. Here is a set of men pretending to consult the good spirits, inhabitants of the superior regions, and who dwell in the angelic world, wherever that is. To these they give all the adorable names they can devise, in strange and outlandish terms, and advance them in their notions, that they may raise the regard of their wondering, but ignorant admirers.

When they have done all this, they apply to them just after the pattern of the wizards and necromancers in their inquiring of the Devil, with mutterings and whispers, with hard and exotic words, and unintelligible speeches; as if the good spirits did not understand English, as well as Arabic and Hebrew, or as well as their unmeaning, unsignifying devil-language; a jargon of their own forming, without any real usage among men, but such as they please to put upon it.

How can this be reconciled to the conversing with good spirits? Intelligent and beneficent beings, who partake of the heavenly nature, and are always inclined to do good to mankind, who assist the indigent and distressed, and protect those that are in danger, direct in difficulties, and are ready on all occasions to do good offices and acts of kindness to every one?

How are they thus ready and beneficent, if they are thus to be called out of their happy abodes, like devils, with spells and conjurations, with necromancy and wizardism? Were they such blessed, bountiful, and beneficent beings, and so ready to help and assist mankind in times of difficulties, protect them from evil, and from evil spirits, it would

be but reasonable to suppose they should give some directions to mankind how to obtain and procure their assistance, when they want it.

It is supposed, if these spirits are such good, such beneficent, compassionate beings, and so particularly inclined to do good to mankind; I say, it is to be supposed they are so, by the determinate appointment of their Creator; their heavenly Father, from whose inherent goodness all good desires, and all good thoughts do proceed, as well in heaven as in earth, as well in angels and spirits, as in human creatures. These good spirits then, if they were such as is pretended, would certainly direct mankind to obtain their aid, by praying to the supreme Being, under whose command and direction they immediately are, that they (the said good spirits) might be sent to direct, assist, and protect those that so desire their assistance.

It is a shrewd sign to me, that these spirits are of another class, and that they do not proceed from Him who is the author of all good; that they must be applied to in such a scandalous manner, just as the Devil is applied to; that they take the honour to themselves of being applied to directly and immediately, as God himself is, and without giving the honour to God, the first cause and original author of all good; and that they at the same time stoop so low, as to accept of the like mean and base methods of being called to for help, which are used when we want to raise the Devil.

What do the magicians mean by this uncouth jargon, I'll go and consult with the good spirits which I converse with, and I'll bring you an answer? Where are these good spirits, and how do they converse with them? If they would say, I will pray to God that he may send his angels, or some of his angels, or good spirits, to advise and assist you; this had some sense in it; something like the usual me-

thod: then when we came to the magician or cunning man, our language would be, We pray you inquire of the Lord for us; and thus it was when God had his good prophets and his good spirits to act between his people and him, as much as can be supposed now.

But now the magician, instead of saying, I will inquire of the Lord for you, says, I will consult with the good spirits of the invisible world, who I have the honour to converse with, and I will tell you what they say in your case. Here's not a word of God, or of what he pleases to do, or not to do, to direct or not to direct; but these good spirits are to teach and direct; as if he that made these good spirits was out of the question, and had nothing to do, either with them or us.

These things, I say, render it very suspicious that there are no such things as good spirits in the case, especially when they are joined with the scandalous manner of their being applied to; and if there are no good spirits, and they disown all conversation with bad spirits, it may be said without offence, (though in the vulgar way,) not, what the Devil are they doing? but, what devils are they doing with?

2. But here is a second suggestion to help them out, and this is, that they do not go to converse with these good spirits, by a special influence, calling them to their assistance; but the good spirits (thereby showing themselves to be good and beneficent, as has been said) condescend to come volunteer, to help and assist, counsel and direct, in case of the distress of those helpless creatures called men; and that they do this officiously by the assistance of their chosen servants the magicians; who, like the almoners of a great prince, are always laying before their eyes suitable objects for their help and benevolence.

This is a formal story, and might have some weight in it, if it were not that it wanted truth of fact to support it; and that this is so, we must believe, till we get the following difficulties removed. The first is, How do they know the condition and circumstances of those that want to be assisted? That these good spirits must either know it by an infinite prescience, by which they must every one of them know everything, and that not everything that is visible to human eyes, and real, but every invisible and imaginary thing, the thoughts, the anguish of the soul, the desires, wishes, fears, terrors, and hopes of, not only the particular persons they are to assist, but of all people whatever, in all places and times, and on every particular occasion whatever; and to do so would be to be absolutely and essentially God, and every one of them separately so; a thought attended with a heap of horrid confusions, and forming distracted images in the mind, such as tend to all manner of blasphemies on one hand, or gross absurdities on the other.

The next thing is, if the good spirits cannot by their own prescience know the condition and circumstances of those that may want their assistance; how, or by whom must they be, or are they informed of it?

Now here is the only crisis in which the magician makes himself necessary; for if the good spirits had, joined to so universal beneficence in their disposition, an infinite knowledge of all the persons and their circumstances who stood in any need of their help, they would then certainly, in consequence of the general good disposition of their nature, immediately apply themselves to the proper objects, and in compassion to them would relieve and assist them of their own free goodness and beneficence, not needing the interposition of any other agent whatsoever.

But now this we do not find: but these good spirits, with all the goodwill which they bear to us, yet sit passively still, and see all the miseries of mankind, and all the distresses which this or that particular person labours under, and perhaps languishes in, and at last lets him perish without the least help or assistance.

This, I think, destroys the very notion of their prescience, or else it must destroy the notion of their beneficence; one or other must drop: they must either not know of the miserable wretch and his distresses, who wants their assistance; or knowing it, they must want a will or power to assist and deliver him.

But here comes in the magician, and he truly, to make himself a necessary man in his generation, is to be made acquainted with our distresses and our complaints, and he is to lay them before these good spirits, and procure their answers; in which case it follows most naturally,

First, That those good spirits are short-sighted, ignorant and uninformed beings, till they receive information from some inferior hand: thus, in short, the counsellor at law; he is ready to give his advice in the most difficult case, and perfectly qualified and able to direct what you should do; but he sits in his chambers in the Temple, or in Lincoln's Inn, and waits (perfectly passive in all business) till the client, brought by the attorney or solicitor, comes to him with his brief; and if the client does not come, he may sit still and be ruined for any advice or assistance the lawyer will give him, till he is asked: or as the physician; he is master of his business, able to direct and advise, able to prescribe a specific, a certain cure, for such or such distempers; but sits in his study, and stirs not out of his easy chair, to do the distressed people in his neighbourhood any good, or to help them in their

greatest distress, till he is sent for, and the case laid before him, and then he shows his beneficent good disposition : if they have stayed till the distemper is too far gone, he pities them and shows his concern for them ; but adds, Why did not you let me know his condition sooner ? I could have saved his life if you had sent to me in time ; but how should I do him any good, when you did not so much as let me know he was sick ? and thus the poor patient languishes and dies, and the physician is not blamed by anybody, for how should he help him, when they did not send to him for advice, or so much as let him know he was sick ?

Secondly, That the magicians are a most necessary generation of men, that without them the miserable world would be robbed of the assistance of all those beneficent good spirits in the invisible world, which wait to do us good, but cannot apply themselves to exert the good dispositions they are filled with, for want of knowing the condition and circumstances of those distressed creatures which stand in need of their help ; and that those magicians being the only men that converse in that invisible world, and hold any correspondence with the spirits that are disposed to assist us, they alone can hand that assistance to us, being the only people that can acquaint the said good spirits with our condition.

Thirdly, That therefore it is our only business to cherish and encourage these useful men called magicians, and to take care that the race be not extinct, and the world deprived of their extraordinary performances.

This would be a noble doctrine for the men of figures and circles ; a magician would outdo all the mountebanks, quacks and pretenders to infallible remedies in the world ; they would bring law, physic, and divinity, into one head of practice, and,

good spirits inspiring, they would cure the age of all its distempers, both of soul and body; they would resolve all cases of conscience *jure divino*, cure all the incurables in Guy's Hospital, and make that old ——'s charity as useless as his ——s. They would abridge the practice of the law to perfection, and bring all the pleadings at bar to chamber practice; the good spirits would all be peace-makers, and magicians be general arbitrators.

But this not being at present our case, from hence I venture to conclude, that these good spirits, if such there be, are not so intimate with our modern magicians as the latter pretend they are; and it is to be doubted these carry on their intelligence with a different sort of spirits, and in a manage savouring a little more of the diabolic, than the angelic; or, as I said before, with no spirits at all.

THE END OF THE SYSTEM OF MAGIC.

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