

AUGUSTIN CALMET

THE PHANTOM WORLD;
OR, THE PHILOSOPHY
OF SPIRITS,
APPARITIONS, &C, &C.

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Quemadmodum multa fieri non posse, priusquam facta sunt, judicantur; ita multa quoque, quæ antiquitus facta, quia nos ea non vidimus, neque ratione assequimur, ex iis esse, quæ fieri non potuerunt, judicamus. Quæ certè summa insipientia est. — Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. vii. c. 1.

TO HENRY JAMES SLACK, Esq., F.G.S

&c. &c. &c

My dear Henry —

I inscribe these volumes with your name to record a friendship which has lasted from our infancy, taint suspicion, and darkened by no shadow.

So long as eminent talents can challenge admiration, varied and extensive acquirements command respect, and unfeigned virtues ensure esteem and regard, so long will you have no common claim to them all; and none will pay the tribute more gladly than your affectionate

Friend and Cousin,

HENRY CHRISTMAS.

Sion College, March, 1850.

INTRODUCTION

Among the many phases presented by human credulity, few are more interesting than those which regard the realities of the invisible world. If the opinions which have been held on this subject were written and gathered together they would form hundreds of volumes – if they were arranged and digested they would form a few, but most important. It is not merely because there is in almost every human error a substratum of truth, and that the more important the subject the more important the substratum, but because the investigation will give almost a history of human aberrations, that this otherwise unpromising topic assumes so high an interest. The superstitions of every age, for no age is free from them, will present the popular modes of thinking in an intelligible and easily accessible form, and may be taken as a means of gauging (if the expression be permitted) the philosophical and metaphysical capacities of the period. In this light, the volumes here presented to the reader will be found of great value, for they give a picture of the popular mind at a time of great interest, and furnish a clue to many difficulties in the ecclesiastical affairs of that era. In the time of Calmet, cases of demoniacal possession, and instances of returns from the world of spirits, were reputed to be of no uncommon occurrence. The church was continually called on to exert her powers of exorcism; and the instances gathered by Calmet, and related in this work,

may be taken as fair specimens of the rest. It is then, first, as a storehouse of facts, or reputed facts, that Calmet compiled the work now in the reader's hands – as the foundation on which to rear what superstructure of system they pleased; and secondly, as a means of giving his own opinions, in a detached and desultory way, as the subjects came under his notice. The value of the first will consist in their *evidence*— and of this the reader will be as capable of judging as the compiler; that of the second will depend on their truth – and of this, too, we are as well, and in some respects better, able to judge than Calmet himself. Those accustomed to require rigid evidence will be but ill satisfied with the greater part of that which will be found in this work; simple assertion for the most part suffices – often first made long after the facts, or supposed facts, related, and not unfrequently far off from the places where they were alleged to have taken place. But these cases are often the *best* authenticated, for in the more modern ones there is frequently such an evident mistake in the whole nature of the case, that all the spiritual deductions made from it fall to the ground.

Not a few instances of so-called demoniacal possession are capable of being resolved into cataleptic trance, a state not unlike that produced by mesmerism, and in which many of the same phenomena seem naturally to display themselves; the well-known instance of the young servant girl, related by Coleridge, who, though ignorant and uneducated, could during her sleep-walking discourse learnedly in rabbinical Hebrew, would furnish

a case in point. The circumstance of her old master having been in the habit of walking about the house at night, reading from rabbinical books aloud and in a declamatory manner; the impression made by the strange sounds upon her youthful imagination; their accurate retention by a memory, which, however, could only reproduce them in an abnormal condition – all teach us many most interesting psychological facts, which, had this young girl fallen into other hands, would have been useless in a philosophical point of view, and would have been only used to establish the doctrine of diabolical possession and ecclesiastical exorcism. We should have been told how skilled was the fallen angel in rabbinical tradition, and how wholesome a terror he entertained of the Jesuits, the Capuchins, or the *Fratres Minimi*, as the case might be. Not a few of the most remarkable cases of supposed *modern* possession are to be accounted for by involuntary or natural mesmerism. Indeed the same view seems to be taken by a popular minister of the church (Mr. Mac Niel), in our own day, viz., that mesmerism and diabolical possession are frequently identical. Our difference with him is that we should consider the cases called by the two names as all natural, and he would consider them as all supernatural. And here, to avoid misconception, or rather misinterpretation, let me at once observe, that I speak thus of *modern* and *recorded* cases only, accepting *literally* all related in the New Testament, and not presuming to say that similar cases *might* not occur now. Calmet, however, may be supposed to have collected all the

most remarkable of modern times, and I am compelled to say I believe not one of them. But when we pass from the evidence of truth, in which they are so wanting, to the evidence of fraud and collusion by which many are so characterized, we shall have less wonder at the general spread of infidelity in times somewhat later, on all subjects not susceptible of ocular demonstration. Where a system claimed to be received as a whole, or not at all, it is hardly to be wondered at that when some portion was manifestly wrong, its own requirements should be complied with, and the whole rejected. The system which required an implicit belief in such absurdities as those related in these volumes, and placed them on a level with the most awful verities of religion, might indeed make some interested use of them in an age of comparative darkness, but certainly contained within itself the seeds of destruction, and which could not fail to germinate as soon as light fell upon them. The state of Calmet's own mind, as revealed in this book, is curious and interesting. The belief *of the intellect* in much which he relates is evidently gone, the belief *of the will* but partially remains. There is a painful sense of uncertainty as to whether certain things *ought* not to be received more fully than he felt himself able to receive them, and he gladly follows in many cases the example of Herodotus of old, merely relating stories without comment, save by stating that they had not fallen under his own observation.

The time, indeed, had hardly come to assert freedom of belief on subjects such as these. Theology embraced philosophy, and

the Holy Inquisition defended the orthodoxy of both; and if the investigators of Calmet's day were permitted to hold, with some limitation, the Copernican theory, it was far otherwise with regard to the world of spirits, and its connection with our own. The rotundity of the earth affected neither shrines nor exorcisms; metaphysical truth might do both one and the other; and the cry of "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," was not raised in the capital of Asia Minor, till the "craft by which we get our wealth" was proved to be in danger.

Reflections such as these are painfully forced on us by the evident fraud exhibited by many of the actors in the scenes of exorcism narrated by Calmet, the vile purposes to which the services of the church were turned, and the recklessness with which the supposed or pretended evil, and equally pretended remedy, were used for political intrigue or state oppression.

Independent of these conclusions, there is something lamentable in a state of the public mind, which was so little prone to examination as to receive such a mass of superstition without sifting the wheat, for such there undoubtedly is, from the chaff. Calmet's work contains enough, had we the minor circumstances in each case preserved, to set at rest many philosophic doubts, and to illustrate many physical facts; and to those who desire to know what was believed by our Christian forefathers, and why it was believed, the compilation is absolutely invaluable. Calmet was a man of naturally cool, calm judgment, possessed of singular learning, and was pious and truthful. A short sketch

of his life will not, perhaps, be unacceptable to the reader.

Augustine Calmet was born in the year 1672, at a village near Commerci, in Lorraine. He early gave proofs of aptitude for study, and an opportunity was speedily offered of devoting himself to a life of learning. In his sixteenth year he became a Benedictine of the Congregation of St. Vannes, and prosecuted his theological and such philosophical studies as the time allowed with great success. He was soon appointed to teach the younger portion of the community, and gave in this employment such decided satisfaction to his superiors, that he was soon marked for preferment. His chief study was the Scriptures; and in the twenty-second year of his age, a period unusually early, in an age when all benefices and beneficial employments were matters of sale, he was appointed to be sub-prior of the monastery of Munster, in Alsace, where he presided over an academy. This academy consisted of ten or twelve monks, and its object was the investigation of Scripture. Calmet was not idle in his new position; besides communicating so much valuable information as to make his pupils the best biblical scholars of the country, he made extensive collections for his Commentary on the Old and New Testaments, and for his still more celebrated work, the History of the Bible. These materials he subsequently digested and arranged. The Commentary, a work of immense value, was published in separate volumes from 1707 to 1716. His labors attracted renewed and increased attention, and the offer of a bishopric was made to him, which he unhesitatingly declined.

In 1718, he was elected to the abbacy of St. Leopold, in Nancy; and ten years afterwards, to that of Senones, where he spent the remainder of his days. His writings are numerous – two have been already mentioned – and so great was the popularity attained by his Commentaries, that they have been translated into no fewer than six languages within ten years. It exhibits a favorable aspect of the author's mind, and gives a very high idea of his erudition. One cause which tended greatly to its universal acceptability, was its singular freedom from sectarian bitterness. Protestants as well as Romanists may use it with equal satisfaction; and accordingly, it is considered a work of standard authority in England as much as on the continent.

In addition to these Commentaries, and his History of the Bible, and Fragments, (the best edition of which latter work in English, is by Isaac Taylor,) he wrote the "Ecclesiastical and Civil History of Lorraine;" "A Catalogue of the Writers of Lorraine;" "Universal History, Sacred and Profane;" a small collection of Reveries; and a work entitled, "A Literal, Moral, and Historical Commentary on the Rule of St. Benedict," a work which is full of curious information on ancient customs, particularly ecclesiastical. He is among the few, also, who have written on ancient music. He lived to a good old age; and died regretted and much respected in 1757.

Of all his works, the one presented here to the reader, is perhaps the most popular; it went rapidly through many editions, and received from the author's hand continual corrections and

additions. To say that it is characterized by uniform judgment, would be to give it a praise somewhat different as well as somewhat greater than that which it merits. It is a vast repertory of legends, more or less probable; some of which have very little foundation – and some which Calmet himself would have done well to omit, though *now*, as a picture of the belief entertained in that day, they greatly add to the value of the book. For the same reasons which have caused the retention of these passages, no alterations have been made in the citations from Scripture, which being translations from the Vulgate, necessarily differ in phraseology from the version in use among ourselves. The apocryphal books too are quoted, and the story of Bel and the Dragon referred to as a part of the prophecy of Daniel; but what is of consequence to observe, is, that *doctrines* are founded on these translations, and on those very points in which they differ from our own.

If the history of popery, and especially that form and development of it exhibited in the monastic orders, be ever written, this work will be of the greatest importance: – it will show the means by which dominion was obtained over the minds of the ignorant; how the most sacred mysteries were perverted; and frauds, which can hardly be termed pious, used to support institutions which can scarcely be called religious. That the spirits of the dead should be permitted to return to earth, under circumstances the most grotesque, to support the doctrines of masses for the dead, purgatory and propitiatory penance; that

demons should be exorcised to give testimony to the merits of rival orders of monks and friars; that relics, many of them supposititious, and many of the most disgusting and blasphemous character, should have power to affect the eternal state of the departed; and that *all* saints, angels, demons, and the ghosts of the departed, should support, with great variations indeed, the corrupt dealings of a corrupt priesthood – form a creed worthy of the darkest and most unworthy days of heathenism.

There is, however, one excuse, or rather palliation, for the superstition of that time. In periods of great public depravity – and few epochs have been more depraved than that in which Calmet lived – Satan has great power. With a ruler like the regent Duke of Orleans, with a Church governor like Cardinal Dubois, it would appear that the civil and ecclesiastical authority of France had sold itself, like Ahab of old, to work wickedness; or, as the apostle says, "to work all uncleanness with greediness." In an age so characterized, it does not seem at all improbable that portentous events should from time to time occur; that the servants of the devil should be strengthened together with their master; that many should be given over to strong delusions and to believe a lie; and that the evil part of the invisible world should be permitted to ally itself more closely with the men of an age so congenial. Real cases of demoniacal possession might, perhaps, be met with, and though scarcely amenable to the exorcisms of a clergy so corrupt as that of France in that day, they would yet justify a belief in the reality of those cases got up for the

sake of filthy lucre, personal ambition, or private revenge. If the public mind was prepared for a belief in such cases, there were not wanting men to turn it to profitable account; and the quiet student who believed the efficacy of the means used, and was scarcely aware of the wickedness of the age in which he lived, might easily be induced to credit the tales told him of demons expelled by the power of a church, to which in the beginning an authority to do so had undoubtedly been given, and whose awful corruptions were to him at least greatly veiled.

Calmet was a man of great integrity and considerable acumen, but he passed an innocent and exemplary life in studious seclusion; he mixed little with the world at large, resided remote "from courts, and camps, and strife of war or peace;" and there appears occasionally in his writings a kind of nervous apprehension lest the dogmas of the church to which he was pledged should be less capable than he could wish of satisfactory investigation. When he meets with tales like those of the vampires or vroucolacas, which concern only what he considered a heretical church, and with which, therefore, he might deal according to his own will – apply to them the ordinary rules of evidence, and treat them as mundane affairs – there he is clear-sighted, critical and acute, and accordingly he discusses the matter philosophically and logically, and concludes without fear of sinning against the church, that the whole is delusion. When, on the other hand, he has to deal with cases of demoniacal possession, in countries under the rule of the Roman hierarchy,

he contents himself with the decisions of the scholastic divines and the opinions of the fathers, and makes frequent references to the decrees of various provincial parliaments. The effects of such a state of mind upon scientific and especially metaphysical investigation, may be easily imagined, and are to be traced more or less distinctly in every page of the work before us.

To conclude: books like this – the "Disquisitiones Magicæ" of Delrio, the "Demonomanie" of Bodin, the "Malleus Maleficarum" of Sprengel, and the like, are at no time to be regarded merely as subjects of amusement; they have their philosophical value; they have a still greater historical value; and they show how far even upright minds may be warped by imperfect education, and slavish deference to authority.

The edition here followed is that of 1751, which contains the latest corrections of the author, and several additional pieces, which are all included in the present volumes.

*Sion College, London Wall,
April, 1850.*

PREFACE

The great number of authors who have written upon the apparitions of angels, demons, and disembodied souls is not unknown to me; and I do not presume sufficiently on my own capacity to believe that I shall succeed better in it than they have done, and that I shall enhance their knowledge and their discoveries. I am perfectly sensible that I expose myself to criticism, and perhaps to the mockery of many readers, who regard this matter as done with, and decried in the minds of philosophers, learned men, and many theologians. I must not reckon either on the approbation of the people, whose want of discernment prevents their being competent judges of this same. My aim is not to foment superstition, nor to feed the vain curiosity of visionaries, and those who believe without examination everything that is related to them as soon as they find therein anything marvelous and supernatural. I write only for reasonable and unprejudiced minds, which examine things seriously and coolly; I speak only for those who assent even to known truth but after mature reflection, who know how to doubt of what is uncertain, to suspend their judgment on what is doubtful, and to deny what is manifestly false.

As for pretended freethinkers, who reject everything to distinguish themselves, and to place themselves above the common herd, I leave them in their elevated sphere; they will

think of this work as they may consider proper, and as it is not calculated for them, apparently they will not take the trouble to read it.

I undertook it for my own information, and to form to myself a just idea of all that is said on the apparitions of angels, of the demon, and of disembodied souls. I wished to see how far that matter was certain or uncertain, true or false, known or unknown, clear or obscure.

In this great number of facts which I have collected I have endeavored to make a choice, and not to heap together too great a multitude of them, for fear that in the too numerous examples the doubtful might not harm the certain, and in wishing to prove too much I might prove absolutely nothing. There will, even amongst those I have cited, be found some which will not easily be credited by many readers, and I allow them to regard them as not related.

I beg those readers, nevertheless, to discern justly amongst these facts and instances; after which they can with me form their opinion – affirm, deny, or remain in doubt.

From the respect which every man owes to truth, and the veneration which a Christian and a priest owes to religion, it appeared to me very important to undeceive people respecting the opinion which they have of apparitions, if they believe them all to be true; or to instruct them and show them the truth and reality of a great number, if they think them all false. It is always shameful to be deceived; and in regard to religion, to believe on

light grounds, to remain wilfully in doubt, or to maintain oneself without any reason in superstition and illusion; it is already much to know how to doubt wisely, and not to form a decided opinion beyond what one really knows.

I never had any idea of treating profoundly the matter of apparitions; I have treated of it, as it were, by chance, and occasionally. My first and principal object was to discourse of the vampires of Hungary. In collecting my materials on that subject, I found many things concerning apparitions; the great number of these embarrassed this treatise on vampires. I detached some of them, and thus have composed this treatise on apparitions: there still remains a large number of them, which I might have separated for the better arrangement of this treatise. Many persons here have taken the accessory for the principal, and have paid more attention to the first part than to the second, which was, however, the first and the principal in my design. For I own I have always been much struck with what was related of the vampires or ghosts of Hungary, Moravia, and Poland; of the vourcolacas of Greece; and of the excommunicated, who are said not to rot. I thought I ought to bestow on it all the attention in my power; and I have deemed it right to treat on this subject in a particular dissertation. After having deeply studied it, and obtaining as much information as I was able, I found little solidity and certainty on the subject; which, joined to the opinion of some prudent and respectable persons whom I consulted, had induced me to give up my design entirely, and to renounce laboring

on a subject which is so contradictory, and embraces so much uncertainty.

But looking at the matter in another point of view, I resumed my pen, decided upon undeceiving the public, if I found that what was said of it was absolutely false; showing that what is uttered on this subject is uncertain, and that one ought to be very reserved in pronouncing on these vampires, which have made so much noise in the world for a certain time, and still divide opinions at this day, even in the countries which are the scene of their pretended return, and where they appear; or to show that what has been said and written on this subject is not destitute of probability, and that the subject of the return of vampires is worthy the attention of the curious and the learned, and deserves to be seriously studied, to have the facts related of it examined, and the causes, circumstances, and means sounded deeply.

I am then about to examine this question as a historian, philosopher, and theologian. As a historian, I shall endeavor to discover the truth of the facts; as a philosopher, I shall examine the causes and circumstances; lastly, the knowledge or light of theology will cause me to deduce consequences as relating to religion. Thus I do not write in the hope of convincing freethinkers and pyrrhonians, who will not allow the existence of ghosts or vampires, nor even of the apparitions of angels, demons, and spirits; nor to intimidate those weak and credulous, by relating to them extraordinary stories of apparitions. I do not reckon either on curing the superstitious of their errors, nor

the people of their prepossessions; not even on correcting the abuses which arise from this unenlightened belief, nor of doing away all the doubts which may be formed on apparitions; still less do I pretend to erect myself as a judge and censor of the works and sentiments of others, nor to distinguish myself, make myself a name, or divert myself, by spreading abroad dangerous doubts upon a subject which concerns religion, and from which they might make wrong deductions against the certainty of the Scriptures, and against the unshaken dogmas of our creed. I shall treat it as solidly and gravely as it merits; and I pray God to give me that knowledge which is necessary to do it successfully.

I exhort my reader to distinguish between the facts related, and the manner in which they happened. The fact may be certain, and the way in which it occurred unknown. Scripture relates certain apparitions of angels and disembodied souls; these instances are indubitable and found in the revelations of the holy books; but the manner in which God operated the resurrections, or in which he permitted these apparitions to take place, is hidden among his secrets. It is allowable for us to examine them, to seek out the circumstances, and propound some conjectures on the manner in which it all came to pass; but it would be rash to decide upon a matter which God has not thought proper to reveal to us. I say as much in proportion, concerning the stories related by sensible, contemporary, and judicious authors, who simply relate the facts without entering into the examination of the circumstances, of which, perhaps, they themselves were not well informed.

It has already been objected to me, that I cited poets and authors of little credit, in support of a thing so grave and so disputed as the apparition of spirits: such authorities, they say, are more calculated to cast a doubt on apparitions, than to establish the truth of them.

But I cite those authors as witnesses of the opinions of nations; and I count it not a small thing in the extreme license of opinions, which at this day predominates in the world, amongst those even who make a profession of Christianity, to be able to show that the ancient Greeks and Romans thought that souls were immortal, that they subsisted after the death of the body, and that there was another life, in which they received the reward of their good actions, or the chastisement of their crimes.

Those sentiments which we read in the poets, are also repeated in the fathers of the church, and the pagan and Christian historians; but as they did not pretend to think them weighty, nor to approve them in repeating them, it must not be imputed to me either, that I have any intention of authorizing. For instance, what I have related of the manes, or lares; of the evocation of souls after the death of the body; of the avidity of these souls to suck the blood of the immolated animals, of the shape of the soul separated from the body, of the inquietude of souls which have no rest until their bodies are under ground; of those superstitious statues of wax which are devoted and consecrated under the name of certain persons whom the magicians pretended to kill by burning and stabbing their effigies of wax; of the transportation

of wizards and witches through the air, and of their assemblies of the Sabbath; all those things are related both in the works of the philosophers and pagan historians, as well as in the poets.

I know the value of one and the other, and I esteem them as they deserve; but I think that in treating this matter, it is important to make known to our readers the ancient superstitions, the vulgar or common opinions, and the prejudices of nations, to be able to refute them, and bring back the figures to truths, by freeing them from what poesy had added for the embellishment of the poem, and the amusement of the reader.

Moreover, I generally repeat this kind of thing, only when it is apropos of certain facts avowed by historians, and by other grave and rational authors; and sometimes rather as an ornament of the discourse, or to enliven the matter, than to derive thence certain proofs and consequences necessary for the dogma, or to certify the facts and give weight to my recital.

I know how little we must depend on what Lucian says on this subject; he only speaks of it to make game of it. Philostratus, Jamblicus, and some others, do not merit more consideration; therefore I quote them only to refute them, or to show how far idle and ridiculous credulity has been carried on these matters, which were laughed at by the most sensible among the heathens themselves.

The consequences which I deduce from all these stories, and these poetical fictions, and the manner in which I speak of them in the course of this dissertation, sufficiently vouch that esteem,

and give as true and certain only what is so in fact; and that I do not wish to impose on my reader, by relating many things which I myself regard as false, or as doubtful, or even as fabulous. But that ought to be prejudicial to the dogma of the immortality of the soul, and to that of another life, not to the truth of certain apparitions related in Scripture, or proved elsewhere by good testimony.

The first edition of this work having been printed in my absence, and upon an incorrect copy, several misprints have occurred, and even expressions and phrases displeasing and interrupted. I have tried to remedy this in a second edition, and to cast light on those passages which they noticed as demanding explanation, and correcting what might offend scrupulous readers, and prevent the bad consequences which might be derived from what I had said. I have even done more in this third edition. I have retrenched several passages; others I have suppressed; I have profited by the advice which has been given me; and I have replied to the objections which have been made.

People have complained that I took no part, and did not come to a decision on several difficulties which I propose, and that I leave my reader in uncertainty.

I make but little defence against this reproach; I should require more justification if I decided without a perfect knowledge of causes, for one side of the question, at the risk of embracing an error, and of falling into a still greater impropriety. There is

wisdom in suspending one's judgment till we have succeeded in finding the very truth.

I have also been told, that certain persons have made a joke of some facts which I have related. If I have related them as certain, and they afford just cause for pleasantry, let the condemnation pass; but if I cited them as fabulous and false, they present no subject for pleasantry; *Falsum non est de ratione faceti*.

There are certain persons who delight in jesting on the most serious things, and who spare nothing, either sacred or profane. The histories of the Old and New Testament, the most sacred ceremonies of our religion, the lives of the most respectable saints, are not safe from their dull, tasteless pleasantry.

I have been reproached for having related several false histories, several doubtful facts, and several fabulous events. This is true; but I give them for what they are. I have declared several times, that I did not vouch for their truth, that I repeated them to show how false and ridiculous they were, and to deprive them of the credit they might have with the people; and if I had gone at length into their refutation, I thought it right to let my reader have the pleasure of refuting them, supposing him to possess enough good sense and self-sufficiency, to form his own judgment upon them, and feel the same contempt for such stories that I do myself. It is doing too much honor to certain things to refute them seriously.

But another objection, and a much more serious one, is said to be, what I say of the illusions of the demon, leading some persons

to doubt of the truth of the apparitions related in Scripture, as well as of the others suspected of falsehood.

I answer, that the consequences deduced from principles are not right, except when things are equal, and the subjects and circumstances the same; without that there can be no application of principles. The facts to which my reasoning applies are related by authors of small authority, by ordinary or commonplace historians, bearing no character which deserves a belief of anything superhuman. I can, without attacking their person or their merit, advance that they may have been badly informed, prepossessed, and mistaken; that the spirit of seduction may have been of the party; that the senses, the imagination, and superstition, may have made them take that for truth, which was only seeming.

But, in regard to the apparitions related in the Holy Scriptures, they borrow their infallible authority from the sacred and inspired authors who wrote them; they are verified by the events which followed them, by the execution or fulfilment of predictions made many ages preceding; and which could neither be done, nor foreseen, nor performed, either by the human mind, or by the strength of man, not even by the angel of darkness.

I am but little concerned at the opinion passed on myself and my intentions in the publication of this treatise. Some have thought that I did it to destroy the popular and common idea of apparitions, and to make it appear ridiculous; and I acknowledge that those who read this work attentively and without prejudice,

will remark in it more arguments for doubting what the people believe on this point, than they will find to favor the contrary opinion. If I have treated this subject seriously, it is only in what regards those facts in which religion and the truth of Scripture is interested; those which are indifferent I have left to the censure of sensible people, and the criticism of the learned and of philosophical minds.

I declare that I consider as true all the apparitions related in the sacred books of the Old and New Testament; without pretending, however, that it is not allowable to explain them, and reduce them to a natural and likely sense, by retrenching what is too marvelous about them, which might rebut enlightened persons. I think on that point I may apply the principle of St. Paul;¹ "the letter killeth, and the Spirit giveth life."

As to the other apparitions and visions related in Christian, Jewish, or heathen authors, I do my best to discern amongst them, and I exhort my readers to do the same; but I blame and disapprove the outrageous criticism of those who deny everything, and make difficulties of everything, in order to distinguish themselves by their pretended strength of mind, and to authorize themselves to deny everything, and to dispute the most certain facts, and in general all that savors of the marvelous, and which appears above the ordinary laws of nature. St. Paul permits us to examine and prove everything: *Omnia probate*; but he desires us to hold fast that which is good and true: *quod bonum*

¹ 2 Cor. iii. 16.

*est tenete.*²

² 1 Thess. v. 21.

ADVERTISEMENT

Every body talks of apparitions of angels and demons, and of souls separated from the body. The reality of these apparitions is considered as certain by many persons, while others deride them and treat them as altogether visionary.

I have determined to examine this matter, just to see what certitude there can be on this point; and I shall divide this Dissertation into four parts. In the first, I shall speak of good angels; in the second, of the appearance of bad angels; in the third, of the apparitions of souls of the dead; and in the fourth, of the appearance of living men to others living, absent, distant, and this unknown to those who appear. I shall occasionally add something on magic, wizards, and witches; on the Sabbath, oracles, and obsession and possession by demons.

CHAPTER I.

THE APPEARANCE OF GOOD ANGELS PROVED BY THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The apparitions or appearances of good angels are frequently mentioned in the books of the Old Testament. He who was stationed at the entrance of the terrestrial Paradise³ was a cherub, armed with a flaming sword; those who appeared to Abraham, and who promised that he should have a son;⁴ those who appeared to Lot, and predicted to him the ruin of Sodom, and other guilty cities;⁵ he who spoke to Hagar in the desert,⁶ and commanded her to return to the dwelling of Abraham, and to remain submissive to Sarah, her mistress; those who appeared to Jacob, on his journey into Mesopotamia, ascending and descending the mysterious ladder;⁷ he who taught him how to cause his sheep to bring forth young differently marked;⁸ he

³ Gen. iii. 24.

⁴ Gen. xviii. 1-3.

⁵ Gen. xix.

⁶ Gen. xxi. 17.

⁷ Gen. xxviii. 12.

⁸ Gen. xxxi. 10, 11.

who wrestled with Jacob on his return from Mesopotamia,⁹ – were angels of light, and benevolent ones; the same as he who spoke with Moses from the burning bush on Horeb,¹⁰ and who gave him the tables of the law on Mount Sinai. That Angel who takes generally the name of God, and acts in his name, and with his authority;¹¹ who served as a guide to the Hebrews in the desert, hidden during the day in a dark cloud, and shining during the night; he who spoke to Balaam, and threatened to kill his she-ass;¹² he, lastly, who contended with Satan for the body of Moses;¹³ – all these angels were without doubt good angels.

We must think the same of him who presented himself armed to Joshua on the plain of Jericho,¹⁴ and who declared himself head of the army of the Lord; it is believed, with reason, that it was the angel Michael. He who showed himself to the wife of Manoah,¹⁵ the father of Samson, and afterwards to Manoah himself. He who announced to Gideon that he should deliver Israel from the power of the Midianites.¹⁶ The angel Gabriel, who appeared to Daniel, at Babylon;¹⁷ and Raphael who conducted

⁹ Gen. xxxii.

¹⁰ Exod. iii. 6, 7.

¹¹ Exod. iii. iv.

¹² Numb. xxii. xxiii.

¹³ Jude 9.

¹⁴ Josh. v. 13.

¹⁵ Judges xiii.

¹⁶ Judges vi. vii.

¹⁷ Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21.

the young Tobias to Rages, in Media.¹⁸

The prophecy of the Prophet Zechariah is full of visions of angels.¹⁹ In the books of the Old Testament the throne of the Lord is described as resting on cherubim; and the God of Israel is represented as having before his throne²⁰ seven principal angels, always ready to execute his orders, and four cherubim singing his praises, and adoring his sovereign holiness; the whole making a sort of allusion to what they saw in the court of the ancient Persian kings,²¹ where there were seven principal officers who saw his face, approached his person, and were called the eyes and ears of the king.

¹⁸ Tobit v.

¹⁹ Zech. v. 9, 10, 11, &c.

²⁰ Psalm xvii. 10; lxxix. 2, &c.

²¹ Tobit xii. Zech. iv. 10. Rev. i. 4.

CHAPTER II.

THE APPEARANCE OF GOOD ANGELS PROVED BY THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The books of the New Testament are in the same manner full of facts which prove the apparition of good angels. The angel Gabriel appeared to Zachariah the father of John the Baptist, and predicted to him the future birth of the Forerunner.²² The Jews, who saw Zachariah come out of the temple, after having remained within it a longer time than usual, having remarked that he was struck dumb, had no doubt but that he had seen some apparition of an angel. The same Gabriel announced to Mary the future birth of the Messiah.²³ When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds in the night,²⁴ and declared to them that the Saviour of the world was born at Bethlehem. There is every reason to believe that the star which appeared to the Magi in the East, and which led them straight to Jerusalem, and thence to Bethlehem, was directed by

²² Luke i. 10-12, &c.

²³ Luke i. 26, 27, &c.

²⁴ Luke ii. 9, 10.

a good angel.²⁵ St. Joseph was warned by a celestial spirit to retire into Egypt, with the mother and the infant Christ, for fear that Jesus should fall into the hands of Herod, and be involved in the massacre of the Innocents. The same angel informed Joseph of the death of King Herod, and told him to return to the land of Israel.

After the temptation of Jesus Christ in the wilderness, angels came and brought him food.²⁶ The demon tempter said to Jesus Christ that God had commanded his angels to lead him, and to prevent him from stumbling against a stone; which is taken from the 92d Psalm, and proves the belief of the Jews on the article of guardian angels. The Saviour confirms the same truth when he says that the angels of children constantly behold the face of the celestial Father.²⁷ At the last judgment, the good angels will separate the just,²⁸ and lead them to the kingdom of heaven, while they will precipitate the wicked into eternal fire.

At the agony of Jesus Christ in the garden of Olives, an angel descended from heaven to console him.²⁹ After his resurrection, angels appeared to the holy women who had come to his tomb to embalm him.³⁰ In the Acts of the Apostles, they appeared to

²⁵ Matt. ii. 13, 14, 20.

²⁶ Matt. iv. 6, 11.

²⁷ Matt. xviii. 16.

²⁸ Matt. xiii. 45, 46.

²⁹ Luke xxii. 43.

³⁰ Matt. xxviii. John.

the apostles as soon as Jesus had ascended into heaven; and the angel of the Lord came and opened the doors of the prison where the apostles were confined, and set them at liberty.³¹ In the same book, St. Stephen tells us that the law was given to Moses by the ministration of angels;³² consequently, those were angels who appeared on Sinai and Horeb, and who spoke to him in the name of God, as his ambassadors, and as invested with his authority; also, the same Moses, speaking of the angel of the Lord, who was to introduce Israel into the Promised Land, says that "the name of God is in him."³³ St. Peter, being in prison, is delivered from thence by an angel,³⁴ who conducted him the length of a street, and disappeared. St. Peter, knocking at the door of the house in which his brethren were, they could not believe that it was he; they thought that it was his angel who knocked and spoke. St. Paul, instructed in the school of the Pharisees, thought as they did on the subject of angels; he believed in their existence, in opposition to the Sadducees,³⁵ and supposed that they could appear. When this apostle, having been arrested by the Romans, related to the people how he had been overthrown at Damascus, the Pharisees, who were present, replied to those who exclaimed against him – "How do we know, if an angel or a spirit hath not

³¹ Acts v. 19.

³² Acts vii. 30, 35.

³³ Exod. xxiii. 21.

³⁴ Acts xii. 8, 9.

³⁵ Rom. i. 18. 1 Cor. iv. 9; vi. 3; xii. 7. Gal. iii. 19. Acts xvi. 9; xxiii. 9. Rev. i. 11.

spoken to him?" St. Luke says that a Macedonian (apparently the angel of Macedonia) appeared to St. Paul, and begged him to come and announce the Gospel in that country.

St. John, in the Apocalypse, speaks of the seven angels who presided over the churches in Asia. I know that these seven angels are the bishops of these churches, but the ecclesiastical tradition will have it that every church has its tutelary angel. In the same book, the Apocalypse, are related divers appearances of angels. All Christian antiquity has recognized them; the synagogue also has recognized them; so that it may be affirmed that nothing is more certain than the existence of good angels and their apparitions.

I place in the number of apparitions, not only those of good or bad angels, and the spirits of the dead who show themselves to the living, but also those of the living who show themselves to the angels or souls of the dead; whether these apparitions are seen in dreams, or during sleep, or awaking; whether they manifest themselves to all those who are present, or only to the persons to whom God judges proper to manifest them. For instance, in the Apocalypse,³⁶ St. John saw the four animals, and the four-and-twenty elders, who were clothed in white garments and wore crowns of gold upon their heads, and were seated on thrones around that of the Almighty, who prostrated themselves before the throne of the Eternal, and cast their crowns at his feet.

And, elsewhere: "I saw four angels standing at the four corners

³⁶ Rev. iv. 4, 10.

of the world,³⁷ who held back the four winds and prevented them from blowing on the earth; then I saw another angel, who rose on the side of the east, and who cried out to the four angels who had orders to hurt the earth, Do no harm to the earth, or the sea, or the trees, until we have impressed a sign on the foreheads of the servants of God. And I heard that the number of those who received this sign (or mark) was a hundred and forty-four thousand. Afterwards I saw an innumerable multitude of all nations, tribes, people, and languages, standing before the throne of the Most High, arrayed in white garments, and having palms in their hands."

And in the same book³⁸ St. John says, after having described the majesty of the throne of God, and the adoration paid to him by the angels and saints prostrate before him, one of the elders said to him, – "Those whom you see covered with white robes, are those who have suffered great trials and afflictions, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb; for which reason they stand before the throne of God, and will do so night and day in his temple; and He who is seated on the throne will reign over them, and the angel which is in the midst of the throne will conduct them to the fountains of living water." And, again,³⁹ "I saw under the altar of God the souls of those who have been put to death for defending the Word of God, and for the testimony

³⁷ Rev. vii. 1-3, 9, &c.

³⁸ Rev. vii. 13, 14.

³⁹ Rev. vi. 9, 10.

which they have rendered; they cried with a loud voice, saying, When, O Lord, wilt thou not avenge our blood upon those who are on the earth?" &c.

All these apparitions, and several others similar to them, which might be related as being derived from the holy books as well as from authentic histories, are true apparitions, although neither the angels nor the martyrs spoken of in the Apocalypse came and presented themselves to St. John; but, on the contrary, this apostle was transported in spirit to heaven, to see there what we have just related. These are apparitions which may be called passive on the part of the angels and holy martyrs, and active on the part of the holy apostle who saw them.

CHAPTER III.

UNDER WHAT FORM HAVE GOOD ANGELS APPEARED?

The most usual form in which good angels appear, both in the Old Testament and the New, is the human form. It was in that shape they showed themselves to Abraham, Lot, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Manoah the father of Samson, to David, Tobit, the Prophets; and in the New Testament they appeared in the same form to the Holy Virgin, to Zachariah the father of John the Baptist, to Jesus Christ after his fast of forty days, and to him again in his agony in the Garden of Olives. They showed themselves in the same form to the holy women after the resurrection of the Saviour. The one who appeared to Joshua⁴⁰ on the plain of Jericho appeared apparently in the guise of a warrior, since Joshua asks him, "Art thou for us, or for our adversaries?"

Sometimes they hide themselves under some form which has resemblance to the human shape, like him who appeared to Moses in the burning bush,⁴¹ and who led the Israelites in the desert in the form of a cloud, dense and dark during the day, but luminous at night.⁴² The Psalmist tells us that God makes his

⁴⁰ Josh. v. 29.

⁴¹ Exod. iii. 3, 44.

⁴² Exod. xiii. xiv.

angels serve as a piercing wind and a burning fire, to execute his orders.⁴³

The cherubim, so often spoken of in the Scriptures, and who are described as serving for a throne to the majesty of God, were hieroglyphical figures, something like the sphinx of the Egyptians; those which are described in Ezekiel⁴⁴ are like animals composed of the figure of a man, having the wings of an eagle, the feet of an ox; their heads were composed of the face of a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle, two of their wings were spread towards their fellows, and two others covered their body; they were brilliant as burning coals, as lighted lamps, as the fiery heavens when they send forth the lightning's flash – they were terrible to look upon.

The one who appeared to Daniel⁴⁵ was different from those we have just described; he was in the shape of a man, covered with a linen garment, and round his loins a girdle of very fine gold; his body was shining as a chrysolite, his face as a flash of lightning; his eyes darted fire like a lamp; his arms and all the lower part of his body was like brass melted in the furnace; his voice was loud as that of a multitude of people.

St. John, in the Apocalypse,⁴⁶ saw around the throne of the Most High four animals, which doubtless were four angels; they

⁴³ Psalm civ. 4.

⁴⁴ Ezek. i. 4, 6.

⁴⁵ Dan. x. 5.

⁴⁶ Rev. iv. 7, 8.

were covered with eyes before and behind. The first resembled a lion, the second an ox, the third had the form of a man, and the fourth was like an eagle with outspread wings; each of them had six wings, and they never ceased to cry night and day, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come."

The angel who was placed at the entrance of the terrestrial paradise was armed with a shining sword,⁴⁷ as well as the one who appeared to Balaam,⁴⁸ and who threatened, or was near killing both himself and his ass; and so, apparently, was the one who showed himself to Joshua in the plain of Jericho,⁴⁹ and the angel who appeared to David, ready to smite all Israel. The angel Raphael guided the young Tobias to Ragès under the human form of a traveler.⁵⁰ The angel who was seen by the holy woman at the sepulchre of the Saviour, who overthrew the large stone which closed the mouth of the tomb, and who was seated upon it, had a countenance which shone like lightning, and garments white as snow.⁵¹

In the Acts of the Apostles,⁵² the angel who extricated them from prison, and told them to go boldly and preach Jesus Christ in the temple, also appeared to them in a human form. The

⁴⁷ Gen. iii. 24.

⁴⁸ Numb. xxii. 22, 23.

⁴⁹ 1 Chron. xxi. 16.

⁵⁰ Tobit v. 5.

⁵¹ Matt. xxviii. 3.

⁵² Acts ii.

manner in which he delivered them from the dungeon is quite miraculous; for the chief priests having commanded that they should appear before them, those who were sent found the prison securely closed, the guards wide awake; but having caused the doors to be opened, they found the dungeon empty. How could an angel without opening, or any fracture of the doors, thus extricate men from prison without either the guards or the jailer perceiving anything of the matter? The thing is beyond any known powers of nature; but it is no more impossible than to see our Saviour, after his resurrection, invested with flesh and bones, as he himself says, come forth from his sepulchre, without opening it, and without breaking the seals,⁵³ enter the chamber wherein were the apostles without opening the doors,⁵⁴ and speak to the disciples going to Emmaus without making himself known to them; then, after having opened their eyes, disappear and become invisible.⁵⁵ During the forty days that he remained upon earth till his ascension, he drank and ate with them, he spoke to them, he appeared to them; but he showed himself only to those witnesses who were pre-ordained by the eternal Father to bear testimony to his resurrection.

The angel who appeared to the centurion Cornelius, a pagan, but fearing God, answered his questions, and discovered to him unknown things, which things came to pass.

⁵³ Matt. xxviii. 1, 2.

⁵⁴ John xix. 20.

⁵⁵ Luke xxiii. 15-17, &c.

Sometimes the angels, without assuming any visible shape, give proofs of their presence by intelligible voices, by inspirations, by sensible effects, by dreams, or by revelations of things unknown, whether future or past. Sometimes by striking with blindness, or infusing a spirit of uncertainty or stupidity in the minds of those whom God wills should feel the effects of his wrath; for instance, it is said in the Scriptures that the Israelites heard no distinct speech, and beheld no form on Horeb when God spoke to Moses and gave him the Law.⁵⁶

The angel who might have killed Balaam's ass was not at first perceived by the prophet;⁵⁷ Daniel was the only one who beheld the angel Gabriel, who revealed to him the mystery of the great empires which were to succeed each other.⁵⁸

When the Lord spoke for the first time to Samuel, and predicted to him the evils which he would inflict on the family of the high-priest Eli, the young prophet saw no visible form; he only heard a voice, which he at first mistook for that of the high-priest Eli, not being yet accustomed to distinguish the voice of God from that of a man.

The angels who guided Lot and his family from Sodom and Gomorrah were at first perceived under a human form by the inhabitants of the city; but afterwards these same angels struck the men with blindness, and thus prevented them from finding

⁵⁶ Deut. iv. 15.

⁵⁷ Numb. xii. 22, 23.

⁵⁸ Dan. x. 7, 8.

the door of Lot's house, into which they would have entered by force.

Thus, then, angels do not always appear under a visible or sensible form, nor in a figure uniformly the same; but they give proofs of their presence by an infinity of different ways – by inspirations, by voices, by prodigies, by miraculous effects, by predictions of the future, and other things hidden and impenetrable to the human mind.

St. Cyprian relates that an African bishop, falling ill during the persecution, earnestly requested to have the viaticum administered to him; at the same time he saw, as it were, a young man, with a majestic air, and shining with such extraordinary lustre that the eyes of mortals could not have beheld him without terror; nevertheless, the bishop was not alarmed. This angel said to him, angrily, and in a menacing tone, "You fear to suffer. You do not wish to leave this world. What would you have me do for you?" (or "What can I do for you?") The good bishop comprehended that these words alike regarded him and the other Christians who feared persecution and death. The bishop talked to them, encouraged them, and exhorted them to arm themselves with patience to support the tortures with which they were threatened. He received the communion, and died in peace. We shall find in different histories an infinite number of other apparitions of angels under a human form.

CHAPTER IV. OPINIONS OF THE JEWS, CHRISTIANS, MAHOMETANS, AND ORIENTAL NATIONS CONCERNING THE APPARITIONS OF GOOD ANGELS

After what we have just related from the books of the Old and New Testament, it cannot be disavowed that the Jews in general, the apostles, the Christians, and their disciples have commonly believed in the apparitions of good angels. The Sadducees, who denied the existence and the apparition of angels, were commonly considered by the Jews as heretics, and as supporting an erroneous doctrine. Jesus Christ refutes them in the Gospel. The Jews of our days believe literally what is related in the Old Testament, concerning the angels who appeared to Abraham, Lot, and other patriarchs. It was the belief of the Pharisees and of the apostles in the time of our Saviour, as may be seen by the writings of the apostles and by the whole of the Gospel.

The Mahometans believe, as do the Jews and Christians, that good angels appear to men sometimes under a human form; that they appeared to Abraham and Lot; that they punished the

inhabitants of Sodom; that the archangel Gabriel appeared to Mahomet, and revealed to him all that is laid down in his Koran: that the genii are of a middle nature, between man and angel;⁵⁹ that they eat, drink, beget children; that they die, and can foresee things to come. In consequence of this principle or idea, they believe that there are male and female genii; that the males, whom the Persians call by the name of *Dives*, are bad, very ugly, and mischievous, making war against the *Peris*, who are the females. The Rabbis will have it that these genii were born of Adam alone, without any concurrence of his wife Eve, or of any other woman, and that they are what we call *ignis fatui* (or wandering lights).

The antiquity of these opinions touching the corporality of angels appears in several *old* writers, who, deceived by the apocryphal book which passes under the name of the *Book of Enoch*, have explained of the angels what is said in Genesis,⁶⁰ "*That the children of God, having seen the daughters of men, fell in love with their beauty, wedded them, and begot giants of them.*" Several of the ancient Fathers⁶¹ have adopted this opinion, which is now given up by everybody, with the exception of some new writers, who desire to revive the idea of the corporality of angels, demons, and souls – an opinion which is absolutely incompatible

⁵⁹ D'Herbelot, Bibl. Orient. *Perith. Dives*, 785. Idem, 243, p. 85.

⁶⁰ Gen. vi. 2.

⁶¹ Joseph. Antiq. lib. i. c. 4. Philo, De Gigantibus. Justin. Apol. Turtul. de Animâ. Vide Commentatores in Gen. iv.

with that of the Catholic church, which holds that angels are of a nature entirely distinct from matter.

I acknowledge that, according to their system, the affair of apparitions could be more easily explained; it is easier to conceive that a corporeal substance should appear, and render itself visible to our eyes, than a substance purely spiritual; but this is not the place to reason on a philosophical question, on which different hypotheses could be freely grounded, and to choose that which should explain these appearances in the most plausible manner, even though it answer in the most satisfactory manner the question asked, and the objections formed against the facts, and against the proposed manner of stating them.

The question is resolved, and the matter decided. The church and the Catholic schools hold that angels, demons, and reasonable souls, are disengaged from all matter; the same church and the same school hold it as certain that good and bad angels, and souls separated from the body, sometimes appear by the will and with the permission of God: there we must stop; as to the manner of explaining these apparitions, we must, without losing sight of the certain principle of the immateriality of these substances, explain them according to the analogy of the Christian and Catholic faith, acknowledged sincerely that in this matter there are certain depths which we cannot sound, and confine our mind and information within the limits of that obedience which we owe to the authority of the church, that can neither err nor deceive us.

The apparitions of good angels and of guardian angels are frequently mentioned in the Old as in the New Testament. When the Apostle St. Peter had left the prison by the assistance of an angel, and went and knocked at the door where the brethren were, they believed that it was his angel and not himself who knocked.⁶² And when Cornelius the Centurion prayed to God in his own house, an angel (apparently his good angel) appeared to him, and told him to send and fetch Peter, who was then at Joppa.⁶³

St. Paul desires that at church no woman should appear among them without her face being veiled, because of the angels;⁶⁴ doubtless from respect to the good angels who presided in these assemblies. The same St. Paul reassures those who were with him in danger of almost inevitable shipwreck, by telling them that his angel had appeared to him⁶⁵ and assured him that they should arrive safe at the end of their voyage.

In the Old Testament, we likewise read of several apparitions of angels, which can hardly be explained but as of guardian angels; for instance, the one who appeared to Hagar in the wilderness, and commanded her to return and submit herself to Sarah her mistress;⁶⁶ and the angel who appeared to Abraham, as he was about to immolate Isaac his son, and told him that God

⁶² Acts xii. 15.

⁶³ Acts x. 2, 3.

⁶⁴ 1 Cor. xi. 10.

⁶⁵ Acts xxvii. 21, 22.

⁶⁶ Gen. xvi. 9.

was satisfied with his obedience;⁶⁷ and when the same Abraham sent his servant Eleazer into Mesopotamia, to ask for a wife for his son Isaac, he told him that the God of heaven, who had promised to give him the land of Canaan, would send his angel⁶⁸ to dispose all things according to his wishes. Examples of similar apparitions of tutelary angels, derived from the Old Testament, might here be multiplied, but the circumstance does not require a greater number of proofs.

Under the new dispensation, the apparitions of good angels, of guardian spirits, are not less frequent in most authentic stories; there are few saints to whom God has not granted similar favors: we may cite, in particular, St. Frances, a Roman lady of the sixteenth century, who saw her guardian angel, and he talked to her, instructed her, and corrected her.

⁶⁷ Gen. xxii. 11, 17.

⁶⁸ Gen. xxiv. 7.

CHAPTER V.

OPINION OF THE GREEKS AND ROMANS ON THE APPARITIONS OF GOOD GENII

Jamblichus, a disciple of Porphyry,⁶⁹ has treated the matter of genii and their apparition more profoundly than any other author of antiquity. It would seem, to hear him discourse, that he knew both the genii and their qualities, and that he had with them the most intimate and continual converse. He affirms that our eyes are delighted by the appearance of the gods, that the apparitions of the archangels are terrible; those of angels are milder; but when demons and heroes appear, they inspire terror; the archontes, who preside over this world, cause at the same time an impression of grief and fear. The apparition of souls is not quite so disagreeable as that of heroes. In the appearance of the gods there is order and mildness, confusion and disorder in that of demons, and tumult in that of the archontes.

When the gods show themselves, it seems as if the heavens, the sun and moon, were all about to be annihilated; one would think that the earth could not support their presence. On the appearance of an archangel, there is an earthquake in every part

⁶⁹ Jamblic. lib. ii. cap. 3 & 5.

of the world; it is preceded by a stronger light than that which accompanies the apparition of the angels; at the appearance of a demon it is less strong, and diminishes still more when it is a hero who shows himself.

The apparitions of the gods are very luminous; those of angels and archangels less so; those of demons are dark, but less dark than those of heroes. The archontes, who preside over the brightest things in this world, are luminous; but those which are occupied only with what is material, are dark. When souls appear, they resemble a shade. He continues his description of these apparitions, and enters into tiresome details on the subject; one would say, to hear him, that that there was a most intimate and habitual connection between the gods, the angels, the demons, and the souls separated from the body, and himself. But all this is only the work of his imagination; he knew no more than any other concerning a matter which is above the reach of man's understanding. He had never seen any apparitions of gods or heroes, or archontes; unless we say that there are veritable demons which sometimes appear to men. But to discern them one from the other, as Jamblichus pretends to do, is mere illusion.

The Greeks and Romans, like the Hebrews and Christians, acknowledged two sorts of genii, some good and beneficent, the others bad, and causing evil. The ancients even believed that every one of us received at our birth a good and an evil genius; the former procured us happiness and prosperity, the latter engaged us in unfortunate enterprises, inspired us with unruly desires, and

cast us into the worst misfortunes. They assigned genii, not only to every person, but also to every house, every city, and every province.⁷⁰ These genii are considered as good, beneficent,⁷¹ and worthy of the worship of those who invoke them. They were represented sometimes under the form of a serpent, sometimes as a child or a youth. Flowers, incense, cakes, and wine were offered to them.⁷² Men swore by the names of the genii.⁷³ It was a great crime to perjure one's self after having sworn by the genius of the emperor, says Tertullian;⁷⁴ *Citius apud vos per omnes Deos, quàm per unicum Genium Cæsaris perjuratur.*

We often see on medals the inscription, *Genio populi Romani*; and when the Romans landed in a country, they failed not to salute and adore its genius, and to offer him sacrifices.⁷⁵ In short, there was neither kingdom, nor province, nor town, nor house, nor door, nor edifice, whether public or private, which had not its genius.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ "Quod te per Genium, dextramque Deosque Penates, Obsecro et obtestor." — Horat. lib. i. Epist. 7. 94.— "Dum cunctis supplex advolveris aris, Ei mitem Genium Domini præsentis adoras." Stac. lib. v. Syl. I. 73.

⁷¹ Antiquité expliquée, tom. i.

⁷² Perseus, Satire ii.

⁷³ Senec. Epist. 12.

⁷⁴ Tertull. Apol. c. 23.

⁷⁵ "Troja vale, rapimur, clamant; dant oscula terræ Troades." — Ovid. Metam., lib. xiii. 421.

⁷⁶ "Quamquam cur Genium Romæ, mihi fingitis unum? Cùm portis, domibus; thermis, stabulis soleatis, Assignare suos Genios?" — Prudent. contra Symmach.

We have seen above what Jamblichus informs us concerning apparitions of the gods, genii, good and bad angels, heroes, and the archontes who preside over the government of the world.

Homer, the most ancient of Greek writers, and the most celebrated theologian of Paganism, relates several apparitions both of gods and heroes, and also of the dead. In the *Odyssey*,⁷⁷ he represents Ulysses going to consult the sorcerer Tiresias; and this diviner having prepared a grave or trench full of blood to evoke the manes, Ulysses draws his sword to prevent them from coming to drink this blood, for which they thirst; but which they were not allowed to taste before they had answered the questions put to them. They believed also that the souls of the dead could not rest, and that they wandered around their dead bodies so long as the corpse remained uninhumed.

Even after they were interred, food was offered them; above everything honey was given, as if leaving their tomb they came to taste what was offered them.⁷⁸ They were persuaded that the demons loved the smoke of sacrifices, melody, the blood of victims, and intercourse with women; that they were attached for a time to certain spots and certain edifices which they infested. They believed that souls separated from the gross and terrestrial body, preserved after death one more subtile and elastic, having the form of that they had quitted; that these bodies

⁷⁷ *Odys.* XI. sub. fin. *Vid.* *Horat.* lib. i. Satire 7, &c.

⁷⁸ *Virgil.* *Æneid.* I. 6. August. Serm. 15. de SS. et Quæst. 5. in *Deut.* i. 5 c. 43. *Vide* Spencer, de Leg. Hebræor. Ritual.

were luminous, and like the stars; that they retained an inclination for those things which they had loved during their life on earth, and that often they appeared gliding around their tombs.

To bring back all this to the matter here treated of, that is to say, to the appearance of good angels, we may note, that in the same manner that we attach to the apparitions of good angels the idea of tutelary spirits of kingdoms, provinces, and nations, and of each of us in particular – as, for instance, the Prince of the kingdom of Persia, or the angel of that nation, who resisted the archangel Gabriel during twenty-one days, as we read in Daniel;⁷⁹ the angel of Macedonia, who appeared to St. Paul,⁸⁰ and of whom we have spoken before; the archangel St. Michael, who is considered as the chief of the people of God and the armies of Israel;⁸¹ and the guardian angels deputed by God to guide us and guard us all the days of our life – so we may say that the Greeks and Romans, being Gentiles, believed that certain sorts of spirits, which they imagined were good and beneficent, protected their kingdoms, provinces, towns, and private houses.

They paid them a superstitious and idolatrous worship, as to domestic divinities; they invoked them, offered them a kind of sacrifice and offerings of incense, cakes, honey, and wine, &c. – but not bloody sacrifices.⁸²

⁷⁹ Dan. x. 13.

⁸⁰ Acts xvi. 9.

⁸¹ Josh. v. 13. Dan. x. 13, 21; xii. 1. Judg. v. 6. Rev. xii. 7

⁸² *Forsitan quis quærat, quid causæ sit, ut merum fundendum sit genio, non hostiam*

The Platonicians taught that carnal and voluptuous men could not see their genii, because their mind was not sufficiently pure, nor enough disengaged from sensual things; but that men who were wise, moderate, and temperate, and who applied themselves to serious and sublime subjects, could see them; as Socrates, for instance, who had his familiar genius, whom he consulted, to whose advice he listened, and whom he beheld, at least with the eyes of the mind.

If the oracles of Greece and other countries are reckoned in the number of apparitions of bad spirits, we may also recollect the good spirits who have announced things to come, and have assisted the prophets and inspired persons, whether in the Old Testament or the New. The angel Gabriel was sent to Daniel⁸³ to instruct him concerning the vision of the four great monarchies, and the accomplishment of the seventy weeks, which were to put an end to the captivity. The prophet Zechariah says expressly that *the angel who appeared unto him*⁸⁴ revealed to him what he must say – he repeats it in five or six places; St. John, in the Apocalypse,⁸⁵ says the same thing, that God had sent his angel to inspire him with what he was to say to the Churches.

faciendam putaverint... *Scilicet ut die natali munus annale genio solverent, manum à cœde ac sanguine abstinere.* – Censorin. de Die Natali, c. 2. Vide Taffin de Anno Sæcul.

⁸³ Dan. viii. 16; ix. 21.

⁸⁴ Zech. i. 10, 13, 14, 19; ii. 3, 4; iv. 1, 4, 5; v. 5, 10.

⁸⁵ Rev. i. 1.

Elsewhere⁸⁶ he again makes mention of the angel who talked with him, and who took in his presence the dimensions of the heavenly Jerusalem. And again, St. Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews,⁸⁷ "If what has been predicted by the angels may pass for certain."

From all we have just said, it results that the apparitions of good angels are not only possible, but also very real; that they have often appeared, and under diverse forms; that the Hebrews, Christians, Mahometans, Greeks, and Romans have believed in them; that when they have not sensibly appeared, they have given proofs of their presence in several different ways. We shall examine elsewhere how we can explain the kind of apparition, whether of good or bad angels, or souls separated from the body.

⁸⁶ Rev. x. 8, 9, &c.; xi. 1, 2, 3, &c.

⁸⁷ Heb. ii. 2.

CHAPTER VI.

THE APPARITION OF BAD ANGELS PROVED BY THE HOLY SCRIPTURES – UNDER WHAT FORM THEY HAVE APPEARED

The books of the Old and New Testament, together with sacred and profane history, are full of relations of the apparition of bad spirits. The first, the most famous, and the most fatal apparition of Satan, is that of the appearance of this evil spirit to Eve, the first woman,⁸⁸ in the form of a serpent, which animal served as the instrument of that seducing demon in order to deceive her and induce her to sin. Since that time he has always chosen to appear under that form rather than any other; so in Scripture he is often termed *the Old Serpent*,⁸⁹ and it is said that the infernal dragon fought against the woman who figured or represented the church; that the archangel St. Michael vanquished him and cast him down from heaven. He has often appeared to the servants of God in the form of a dragon, and he has caused himself to be adored by unbelievers in this form, in a

⁸⁸ Gen. iii. 1, 23.

⁸⁹ Rev. xii. 9.

great number of places: at Babylon, for instance, they worshiped a living dragon,⁹⁰ which Daniel killed by making it swallow a ball or bolus, composed of ingredients of a mortally poisonous nature. The serpent was consecrated to Apollo, the god of physic and of oracles; and the pagans had a sort of divination by means of serpents, which they called *Ophiomantia*.

The Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans worshiped serpents, and regarded them as divine.⁹¹ They brought to Rome the serpent of Epidaurus, to which they paid divine honors. The Egyptians considered vipers as divinities.⁹² The Israelites adored the brazen serpent elevated by Moses in the desert,⁹³ and which was in after times broken in pieces by the holy king Hezekiah.⁹⁴

St. Augustine⁹⁵ assures us that the Manichæans regarded the serpent as the Christ, and said that this animal had opened the eyes of Adam and Eve by the bad counsel which he gave them. We almost always see the form of the serpent in the magical figures⁹⁶ *Akraxas* and *Abrachadabra*, which were held in veneration among the Basilidian heretics, who, like the Manichæans, acknowledge two principles in all things – the

⁹⁰ Bel and the Dragon.

⁹¹ Wisd. xi. 16.

⁹² Elian. Hist. Animal.

⁹³ Numb. xxi. 2 Kings xviii. 4.

⁹⁴ On this subject, see a work of profound learning, and as interesting as profound, on "The Worship of the Serpent," by the Rev. John Bathurst Deane, M. A. F. S. A.

⁹⁵ Aug. tom. viii. pp. 28, 284.

⁹⁶ *Ab-racha*, *pater mali*, or *pater malus*.

one good, the other bad; *Abraxas* in Hebrew signifies *that bad principle*, or the father of evil; *ab-ra-achad-ab-ra*, *the father of evil, the sole father of evil*, or the only bad principle.

St. Augustine⁹⁷ remarks that no animal has been more subject to the effects of enchantment and magic than the serpent, as if to punish him for having seduced the first woman by his imposture.

However, the demon has usually assumed the human form when he would tempt mankind; it was thus that he appeared to Jesus Christ in the desert;⁹⁸ that he tempted him and told him to change the stones into bread that he might satisfy his hunger; that he transported him, the Saviour, to the highest pinnacle of the temple, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world, and offered him the enjoyment of them.

The angel who wrestled with Jacob at Peniel,⁹⁹ on his return from his journey into Mesopotamia, was a bad angel, according to some ancient writers; others, as Severus Sulpicius¹⁰⁰ and some Rabbis, have thought that it was the angel of Esau, who had come to combat with Jacob; but the greater number believe that it was a good angel. And would Jacob have asked him for his blessing had he deemed him a bad angel? But however that fact may be taken, it is not doubtful that the demon has appeared in a human form.

Several stories, both ancient and modern, are related which

⁹⁷ August. de Gen. ad Lit. 1. ii. c. 18.

⁹⁸ Matt. iv. 9, 10, &c.

⁹⁹ Gen. xxxii. 24, 25.

¹⁰⁰ Sever. Sulpit. Hist. Sac.

inform us that the demon has appeared to those whom he wished to seduce, or who have been so unhappy as to invoke his aid, or make a compact with him, as a man taller than the common stature, dressed in black, and with a rough ungracious manner; making a thousand fine promises to those to whom he appeared, but which promises were always deceitful, and never followed by a real effect. I can even believe that they beheld what existed only in their own confused and deranged ideas.

At Molsheim,¹⁰¹ in the chapel of St. Ignatius in the Jesuits' church, may be seen a celebrated inscription, which contains the history of a young German gentleman, named Michael Louis, of the house of Boubenhoren, who, having been sent by his parents when very young to the court of the Duke of Lorraine, to learn the French language, lost all his money at cards: reduced to despair, he resolved to give himself to the demon, if that bad spirit would or could give him some good money; for he doubted that he would only furnish him with counterfeit and bad coin. As he was meditating on this idea, suddenly he beheld before him a youth of his own age, well made, well dressed, who, having asked him the cause of his uneasiness, presented him with a handful of money, and told him to try if it was good. He desired him to meet him at that place the next day.

Michael returned to his companions, who were still at play, and not only regained all the money he had lost, but won all that

¹⁰¹ A small city or town of the Electorate of Cologne, situated on a river of the same name.

of his companions. Then he went in search of his demon, who asked as his reward three drops of his blood, which he received in an acorn-cup; after which, presenting a pen to Michael, he desired him to write what he should dictate. He then dictated some unknown words, which he made him write on two different bits of paper,¹⁰² one of which remained in the possession of the demon, the other was inserted in Michael's arm, at the same place whence the demon had drawn the blood. And the demon said to him, "I engage myself to serve you during seven years, after which you will unreservedly belong to me."

The young man consented to this, though with a feeling of horror; and the demon never failed to appear to him day and night under various forms, and taught him many unknown and curious things, but which always tended to evil. The fatal termination of the seven years was approaching, and the young man was then about twenty years old. He returned to his father's house, when the demon to whom he had given himself inspired him with the idea of poisoning his father and mother, of setting fire to their château, and then killing himself. He tried to commit all these crimes, but God did not allow him to succeed in these attempts. The gun with which he wished to kill himself missed fire twice, and the poison did not take effect on his father and mother.

More and more uneasy, he revealed to some of his father's

¹⁰² There were in all ten letters, the greater part of them Greek, but which formed no (apparent) sense. They were to be seen at Molsheim, in the tablet which bore a representation of this miracle.

domestics the miserable state in which he found himself, and entreated them to procure him some succor. At the same time the demon seized him, and bent his body back, so that he was near breaking his bones. His mother, who had adopted the heresy of Suenfeld, and had induced her son to follow it also, not finding in her sect any help against the demon that possessed or obsessed him, was constrained to place him in the hands of some monks. But he soon withdrew from them and retired to Islade, from whence he was brought back to Molsheim by his brother, a canon of Wurzburg, who put him again into the hands of fathers of the society. Then it was that the demon made still more violent efforts against him, appearing to him in the form of ferocious animals. One day, amongst others, the demon, wearing the form of a hairy savage, threw on the ground a schedule, or compact, different from the true one which he had extorted from the young man, to try by means of this false appearance to withdraw him from the hands of those who kept him, and prevent his making his general confession. At last they fixed on the 20th of October, 1603, as the day for being in the Chapel of St. Ignatius, and to cause to be brought the true schedule containing the compact made with the demon. The young man there made profession of the Catholic and orthodox faith, renounced the demon, and received the holy sacrament. Then, uttering horrible cries, he said he saw as it were two he-goats of immeasurable size, which, holding up their forefeet (standing on their hindlegs), held between their claws, each one separately, one of the schedules

or agreements. But as soon as the exorcisms were begun, and the priests invoked the name of St. Ignatius, the two he-goats fled away, and there came from the left arm or hand of the young man, almost without pain, and without leaving any scar, the compact, which fell at the feet of the exorcist.

There now wanted only the second compact, which had remained in the power of the demon. They recommenced their exorcisms, and invoked St. Ignatius, and promised to say a mass in honor of the saint; at the same moment there appeared a tall stork, deformed and badly made, who let fall the second schedule from his beak, and they found it on the altar.

The pope, Paul V., caused information of the truth of these facts to be taken by the missionary-deputies, M. Adam, Suffragan of Strasburg, and George, Abbot of Altorf, who were juridically interrogated, and who affirmed that the deliverance of this young man was principally due, after God, to the intercession of St. Ignatius.

The same story is related rather more at length in Bartoli's *Life of St. Ignatius Loyola*.

Melancthon owns¹⁰³ that he has seen several spectres, and conversed with them several times; and Jerome Cardan affirms that his father, Fassius Cardanus, saw demons whenever he pleased, apparently in a human form. Bad spirits sometimes appear also under the figure of a lion, a dog, or a cat, or some other animal – as a bull, a horse, or a raven; for the pretended

¹⁰³ Lib. de Anima.

sorcerers and sorceresses relate that at the (witches') Sabbath he is seen under several different forms of men, animals, and birds; whether he takes the shape of these animals, or whether he makes use of the animals themselves as instruments to deceive or harm, or whether he simply affects the senses and imagination of those whom he has fascinated and who give themselves to him; for in all the appearances of the demon we must always be on our guard, and mistrust his stratagems and malice. St. Peter¹⁰⁴ tells us that Satan is always roaming round about us, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. And St. Paul, in more places than one,¹⁰⁵ warns us to mistrust the snares of the devil, and to hold ourselves on our guard against him.

Sulpicius Severus,¹⁰⁶ in the life of St. Martin, relates a few examples of persons who were deceived by apparitions of the demon, who transformed himself into an angel of light. A young man of very high rank, and who was afterwards elevated to the priesthood, having devoted himself to God in a monastery, imagined that he held converse with angels; and as they would not believe him, he said that the following night God would give him a white robe, with which he would appear amongst them. In fact, at midnight the monastery was shaken as with an earthquake, the cell of the young man was all brilliant with light, and they heard a noise like that of many persons going to and fro, and speaking.

¹⁰⁴ 1 Pet. iii. 8.

¹⁰⁵ Eph. vi. 11. 1 Tim. iii. 7.

¹⁰⁶ Sulpit. Sever. Vit. St. Martin, b. xv.

After that, coming forth from his cell, he showed to the brothers (of the convent) the tunic with which he was clothed: it was made of a stuff of admirable whiteness, shining as purple, and so extraordinarily fine in texture that they had never seen anything like it, and could not tell from what substance it was woven.

They passed the rest of the night in singing psalms of thanksgiving, and in the morning they wished to conduct him to St. Martin. He resisted as much as he could, saying that he had been expressly forbidden to appear in his presence. As they were pressing him to come, the tunic vanished, which led every one present to suppose that the whole thing was an illusion of the demon.

Another solitary suffered himself to be persuaded that he was Eli; another that he was St. John the Evangelist. One day, the demon wished to mislead St. Martin himself, appearing to him, having on a royal robe, wearing on his head a rich diadem, ornamented with gold and precious stones, golden sandals, and all the apparel of a great prince. Addressing himself to Martin, he said to him, "Acknowledge me, Martin; I am Jesus Christ, who, wishing to descend to earth, have resolved to manifest myself to thee first of all." St. Martin remained silent at first, fearing some snare; and the phantom having repeated to him that he was the Christ, Martin replied: "My Lord Jesus Christ did not say that he should come clothed in purple and decked with diamonds. I shall not acknowledge him unless he appears in that same form in

which he suffered death, and unless I see the marks of his cross and passion."

At these words the demon disappeared; and Sulpicius Severus affirms that he relates this as he heard it from the mouth of St. Martin himself. A little before this, he says that Satan showed himself to him sometimes under the form of Jupiter, or Mercury, or Venus, or Minerva; and sometimes he was to reproach Martin greatly because, by baptism, he had converted and regenerated so many great sinners. But the saint despised him, drove him away by the sign of the cross, and answered him that baptism and repentance effaced all sins in those who were sincere converts.

All this proves the malice, envy, and fraud of the devil against the saints, on the one side; and on the other, the weakness and uselessness of his efforts against the true servants of God, and that it is but too true he often appears in a visible form.

In the histories of the saints we sometimes see that he hides himself under the form of a woman, to tempt pious hermits and lead them into evil; sometimes in the form of a traveler, a priest, a monk, or an *angel of light*,¹⁰⁷ to mislead simple minded people, and cause them to err; for everything suits his purpose, provided he can exercise his malice and hatred against men.

When Satan appeared before the Lord in the midst of his holy angels, and asked permission of God to tempt Job,¹⁰⁸ and try his patience through everything that was dearest to that holy man,

¹⁰⁷ 2 Cor. xi. 14.

¹⁰⁸ Job i. 6-8.

he doubtless presented himself in his natural state, simply as a spirit, but full of rage against the saints, and in all the deformity of his sin and rebellion.

But when he says, in the Books of Kings, *that he will be a lying spirit in the mouth of false prophets*,¹⁰⁹ and that God allows him to put in force his ill-will, we must not imagine that he shows himself corporeally to the eyes of the false prophets of King Ahab; he only inspired the falsehood in their minds – they believed it, and persuaded the king of the same. Amongst the visible appearances of Satan may be placed mortalities, wars, tempests, public and private calamities, which God sends upon nations, provinces, cities, and families, whom the Almighty causes to feel the terrible effects of his wrath and just vengeance. Thus the exterminating angel kills the first-born of the Egyptians.¹¹⁰ The same angel strikes with death the inhabitants of the guilty cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.¹¹¹ He does the same with Onan, who committed an abominable action.¹¹² *The wicked man seeks only division and quarrels*, says the sage; *and the cruel angel shall be sent against him*.¹¹³ And the Psalmist, speaking of the plagues which the Lord inflicted upon Egypt, says that he sent evil angels among them.

¹⁰⁹ 1 Kings xxii. 21.

¹¹⁰ Exod. ix. 6.

¹¹¹ Gen. xviii. 13, 14.

¹¹² Gen. xxxviii.

¹¹³ Prov. xvii. 11.

When David, in a spirit of vanity, caused his people to be numbered, God showed him an angel hovering over Jerusalem, ready to smite and destroy it. I do not say decidedly whether it was a good or a bad angel, since it is certain that sometimes the Lord employs good angels to execute his vengeance against the wicked. But it is thought that it was the devil who slew eighty-five thousand men of the army of Sennacherib. And in the Apocalypse, those are also evil angels who pour out on the earth the phials of wrath, and caused all the scourges set down in that holy book.

We shall also place amongst the appearances and works of Satan false Christs, false prophets, Pagan oracles, magicians, sorcerers, and sorceresses, those who are inspired by the spirit of Python, the obsession and possession of demons, those who pretend to predict the future, and whose predictions are sometimes fulfilled; those who make compacts with the devil to discover treasures and enrich themselves; those who make use of charms; evocations by means of magic; enchantment; the being devoted to death by a vow; the deceptions of idolatrous priests, who feigned that their gods ate and drank and had commerce with women – all these can only be the work of Satan, and must be ranked with what the Scripture calls *the depths of Satan*.¹¹⁴ We shall say something on this subject in the course of the treatise.

¹¹⁴ Rev. ii. 24.

CHAPTER VII.

OF MAGIC

Many persons regard magic, magicians, witchcraft, and charms as fables and illusions, the effects of imagination in weak minds, who, foolishly persuaded of the excessive power possessed by the devil, attribute to him a thousand things which are purely natural, but the physical reasons for which are unknown to them, or which are the effects of the art of certain charlatans, who make a trade of imposing on the simple and ignorant. These opinions are supported by the authority of the principal parliaments of the kingdom, who acknowledge neither magicians nor sorcerers, and who never punish those accused of magic, or sorcery, unless they are convicted also of some other crimes. As, in short, the more they punish and seek out magicians and sorcerers, the more they abound in a country; and, on the contrary, experience proves that in places where nobody believes in them, none are to be found, the most efficacious means of uprooting this fancy is to despise and neglect it.

It is said that magicians and sorcerers themselves, when they fall into the hands of judges and inquisitors, are often the first to maintain that magic and sorcery are merely imaginary, and the effect of popular prejudices and errors. Upon that footing, Satan would destroy himself, and overthrow his own empire, if

he were thus to decry magic, of which he is himself the author and support. If the magicians really, and of their own good will, independently of the demon, make this declaration, they betray themselves most lightly, and do not make their cause better; since the judges, notwithstanding their disavowal, prosecute them, and always punish them without mercy, being well persuaded that it is only the fear of execution and the hope of remaining unpunished which makes them say so.

But would it not rather be a stratagem of the evil spirit,¹¹⁵ who endeavors to render the reality of magic doubtful, to save from punishment those who are accused of it, and to impose on the judges, and make them believe that magicians are only madmen and hypochondriacs, worthy rather of compassion than chastisement? We must then return to the deep examination of the question, and prove that magic is not a chimera, neither has it aught to do with reason. We can neither rest on a sure foundation, nor derive any certain argument for or against the reality of magic, either from the opinion of pretended *esprits forts*, who deny because they think proper to do so, and because the proofs of the contrary do not appear to them sufficiently clear or demonstrative; nor from the declaration of the demon, of magicians and sorcerers, who maintain that magic and sorcery are only the effects of a disturbed imagination; nor from minds foolishly and vainly prejudiced on the subject, that these declarations are produced simply by the fear of punishment;

¹¹⁵ Vide Bodin Preface.

nor by the subtilty of the malignant spirit, who wishes to mask his play, and cast dust in the eyes of the judges and witnesses, by making them believe that what they regard with so much horror, and what they so vigorously prosecute, is anything but a punishable crime, or at least a crime deserving of punishment.

We must then prove the reality of magic by the Holy Scriptures, by the authority of the Church, and by the testimony of the most grave and sensible writers; and, lastly, show that it is not true that the most famous parliaments acknowledge neither sorcerers nor magicians.

The teraphim which Rachael, the wife of Jacob, brought away secretly from the house of Laban, her father,¹¹⁶ were doubtless superstitious figures, to which Laban's family paid a worship, very like that which the Romans rendered to their household gods, *Penates* and *Lares*, and whom they consulted on future events. Joshua¹¹⁷ says very distinctly that Terah, the father of Abraham, adored strange gods in Mesopotamia. And in the prophets Hosea and Zechariah,¹¹⁸ the Seventy translate *teraphim* by the word *oracles*. Zechariah and Ezekiel¹¹⁹ show that the Chaldeans and the Hebrews consulted these *teraphim* to learn future events.

Others believe that they were talismans or preservatives;

¹¹⁶ Gen. xxxi. 19.

¹¹⁷ Josh. xxiv. 2-4.

¹¹⁸ Hosea ii. 4, &c. Zech. v. 2.

¹¹⁹ Zech. x. 2. Ezek. xxi. 21.

everybody agrees as to their being superstitious figures (or idols) which were consulted in order to find out things unknown, or that were to come to pass.

The patriarch Joseph, speaking to his own brethren according to the idea which they had of him in Egypt, says to them:¹²⁰ "Know ye not that in all the land there is not a man who equals me in the art of divining and predicting things to come?" And the officer of the same Joseph, having found in Benjamin's sack Joseph's cup which he had purposely hidden in it, says to them:¹²¹ "It is the cup of which my master makes use to discover hidden things."

By the secret of their art, the magicians of Pharaoh imitated the true miracles of Moses; but not being able like him to produce gnats (English version *lice*), they were constrained to own that the finger of God was in what Moses had hitherto achieved.¹²²

After the departure of the Hebrews from Egypt, God expressly forbids his people to practice any sort of magic or divination.¹²³ He condemns to death magicians, and those who make use of charms.

Balaam, the diviner, being invited by Balak, the king, to come and devote the Israelites to destruction, God put blessings into

¹²⁰ Gen. xliv. 15.

¹²¹ Gen. xliv. 5.

¹²² Exod. vii. 10-12. Exod. viii. 19.

¹²³ Exod. xxii. 18.

his mouth instead of curses;¹²⁴ and this bad prophet, amongst the blessings which he bestows on Israel, says there is among them neither augury, nor divination, nor magic.

In the time of the Judges, the Idol of Micah was consulted as a kind of oracle.¹²⁵ Gideon made, in his house and his city, an Ephod, accompanied by a superstitious image, which was for his family, and to all the people, the occasion of scandal and ruin.¹²⁶

The Israelites went sometimes to consult Beelzebub, god of Ekron,¹²⁷ to know if they should recover from their sickness. The history of the evocation of Samuel by the witch of Endor¹²⁸ is well known. I am aware that some difficulties are raised concerning this history. I shall deduce nothing from it here, except that this woman passed for a witch, that Saul esteemed her such, and that this prince had exterminated the magicians in his own states, or, at least, that he did not permit them to exercise their art.

Manasses, king of Judah,¹²⁹ is blamed for having introduced idolatry into his kingdom, and particularly for having allowed there diviners, aruspices, and those who predicted things to come. King Josiah, on the contrary, destroyed all these

¹²⁴ Numb. xxii., xxiii.

¹²⁵ Judg. xvii. 1, 2.

¹²⁶ Judg. viii. 27.

¹²⁷ 2 Kings i. 2, 2.

¹²⁸ 1 Sam. xxviii. 7, *et seq.*

¹²⁹ 2 Kings xxi. 16.

superstitions.¹³⁰

The prophet Isaiah, who lived at the same time, says that they wished to persuade the Jews then in captivity at Babylon to address themselves, as did other nations, to diviners and magicians; but they ought to reject these pernicious counsels, and leave those abominations to the Gentiles, who knew not the Lord. Daniel¹³¹ speaks of the magicians, or workers of magic among the Chaldeans, and of those amongst them who interpreted dreams, and predicted things to come.

In the New Testament, the Jews accused Jesus Christ of casting out devils in the name of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils;¹³² but he refutes them by saying, that being come to destroy the empire of Beelzebub, it was not to be believed that Beelzebub would work miracles to destroy his own power or kingdom.¹³³ St. Luke speaks of Simon the sorcerer, who had for a long time bewitched the inhabitants of Samaria with his sorceries; and also of a certain Bar-Jesus of Paphos, who professed sorcery, and boasted he could predict future events.¹³⁴ St. Paul, when at Ephesus, caused a number of books of magic to be burned.¹³⁵ Lastly, the Psalmist,¹³⁶ and the author of the Book

¹³⁰ 2 Kings xxii. 24.

¹³¹ Dan. iv. 6, 7.

¹³² Matt. x. 25; xii. 24, 25.

¹³³ Luke xi. 15, 18, 19.

¹³⁴ Acts viii. 11; xiii. 6.

¹³⁵ Acts xix. 19.

of Ecclesiasticus,¹³⁷ speak of charms with which they enchanted serpents.

In the Acts of the Apostles,¹³⁸ the young girl of the town of Philippi, who was a Pythoness, for several successive days rendered testimony to Paul and Silas, saying that they were "*the servants of the Most High, and that they announced to men the way of salvation.*" Was it the devil who inspired her with these words, to destroy the fruit of the preaching of the Apostles, by making the people believe that they acted in concert with the spirit of evil? Or was it the Spirit of God which put these words into the mouth of this young girl, as he put into the mouth of Balaam prophecies concerning the Messiah? There is reason to believe that she spoke through the inspiration of the evil spirit, since St. Paul imposed silence on her, and expelled the spirit of Python, by which she had been possessed, and which had inspired the predictions she uttered, and the knowledge of hidden things. In what way soever we may explain it, it will always follow that magic is not a chimera, that this maiden was possessed by an evil spirit, and that she predicted and revealed things hidden and to come, and brought her *masters considerable gain by soothsaying*; for those who consulted her would, doubtless, not have been so foolish as to pay for these predictions, had they not experienced the truth of them by their success and by the event.

¹³⁶ Psalm lvii.

¹³⁷ Ecclus. xii. 13.

¹³⁸ Acts xvi. 16, 17.

From all this united testimony, it results that magic, enchantments, sorcery, divination, the interpretation of dreams, auguries, oracles, and the magical figures which announced things to come, are very real, since they are so severely condemned by God, and that He wills that those who practice them should be punished with death.

CHAPTER VIII.

OBJECTIONS TO THE REALITY OF MAGIC

I shall not fail to be told that all these testimonies from Scripture do not prove the reality of magic, sorcery, divination, and the rest; but only that the Hebrews and Egyptians – I mean the common people among them – believe that there were people who had intercourse with the Divinity, or with good and bad angels, to predict the future, explain dreams, devote their enemies to the direst misfortunes, cause maladies, raise storms, and call forth the souls of the dead; if there was any reality in all this, it was not in the things themselves, but in their imaginations and prepossessions.

Moses and Joseph were regarded by the Egyptians as great magicians. Rachel, it appears, believed that the teraphim of her father Laban were capable of giving her information concerning things hidden and to come. The Israelites might consult the idol of Micha, and Beelzebub the god of Ekron; but the sensible and enlightened people of those days, like similar persons in our own, considered all this as the sport and knavery of pretended magicians, who derived much emolument from maintaining these prejudices among the people.

Moses most wisely ordained the penalty of death against those

persons who abused the simplicity of the ignorant to enrich themselves at their expense, and turned away the people from the worship of the true God, in order to keep up among them such practices as were superstitious and contrary to true religion.

Besides, it was necessary to good order, the interests of the commonwealth and of true piety, to repress those abuses which are in opposition to them, and to punish with extreme severity those who draw away the people from the true and legitimate worship due to God, lead them to worship the devil, and place their confidence in the creature, in prejudice to the right of the Creator; inspiring them with vain terrors where there is nothing to fear, and maintaining their minds in the most dangerous errors. If, amongst an infinite number of false predictions, or vain interpretations of dreams, some of them are fulfilled, either this is occasioned by chance or it is the work of the devil, who is often permitted by God to deceive those whose foolishness and impiety lead them to address themselves to him and place their confidence in him, all which the wise lawgiver, animated by the Divine Spirit, justly repressed by the most rigorous punishment.

All histories and experience on this subject demonstrate that those who make use of the art of magic, charms, and spells, only employ their art, their secret, and their power to corrupt and mislead; for crime and vice; thus they cannot be too carefully sought out, or too severely punished.

We may add that what is often taken for black or diabolical magic is nothing but natural magic, or art and cleverness on the

part of those who perform things which appear above the force of nature. How many marvelous effects are related of the divining rod, sympathetic powder, phosphoric lights, and mathematical secrets! How much knavery is now well known in the priests of idols, and in those of Babylon, who made the people believe that the god Bel drank and ate; that a large living dragon was a divinity; that the god Anubis desired to have certain women, who were thus deceived by the priests; that the ox Apis gave out oracles, and that the serpent of Alexander of Abonotiche knew the sickness, and gave remedies to the patient without opening the billet which contained a description of the illness! We may possibly speak more fully on this subject hereafter.

In short, the most judicious and most celebrated Parliaments have recognized neither magicians nor sorcerers; at least, they have not condemned them to death unless they were convicted of other crimes, such as theft, bad practices, poisoning, or criminal seduction – for instance, in the affair of Gofredi, a priest of Marseilles, who was condemned by the Parliament of Aix to be torn with hot pincers, and burnt alive. The heads of that company, in the account which they render to the chancellor of this their sentence, testify that this curé was in truth accused of sorcery, but that he had been condemned to the flames as guilty, and convicted of spiritual incest with his penitent, Madelaine de la Palu. From all this it is concluded that there is no reality in what is called magic.

CHAPTER IX.

REPLY TO THE OBJECTIONS

In answer to these, I allow that there is indeed very often a great deal of illusion, prepossession, and imagination in all that is termed magic and sorcery; and sometimes the devil by false appearances combines with them to deceive the simple; but oftener, without the evil spirit being any otherwise a party to it, wicked, corrupt, and interested men, artful and deceptive, abuse the simplicity both of men and women, so far as to persuade them that they possess supernatural secrets for interpreting dreams and foretelling things to come, for curing maladies, and discovering secrets unknown to any one. I can easily agree to all that. All kinds of histories are full of facts which demonstrate what I have just said. The devil has a thousand things imputed to him in which he has no share; they give him the honor of predictions, revelations, secrets, and discoveries, which are by no means the effect of his power, or penetration; as in the same manner he is accused of having caused all sorts of evils, tempests, and maladies, which are purely the effect of natural but unknown causes.

It is very true that there are really many persons who are persuaded of the power of the devil, of his influence over an infinite number of things, and of the effects which they

attribute to him; that they have consulted him to learn future events, or to discover hidden things; that they have addressed themselves to him for success in their projects, for money, or favor, or to enjoy their criminal pleasures. All this is very real. Magic, then, is not a simple chimera, since so many persons are infatuated with the power of charms and convicted of holding commerce with the devil, to procure a number of effects which pass for supernatural. Now it is the folly, the vain credulity, the prepossession of such people that the law of God interdicts, that Moses condemns to death, and that the Christian Church punishes by its censures, and which the secular judges repress with the greatest rigor. If in all these things there was nothing but a diseased imagination, weakness of the brain, or popular prejudices, would they be treated with so much severity? Do we put to death hypochondriacs, maniacs, or those who imagine themselves ill? No; they are treated with compassion, and every effort is made to cure them. But in the other case it is impiety, or superstition, or vice in those who consult, or believe they consult, the devil, and place their confidence in him, against which the laws are put in force and ordain chastisement.

Even if we could deny and contest the reality of augurs, diviners, and magicians, and look on all these kind of persons as seducers, who abuse the simplicity of those who betake themselves to them, could we deny the reality of the magicians of Pharaoh, that of Simon, of Bar-Jesus, of the Pythoness of the Acts of the Apostles? Did not the first-mentioned perform

many wonders before Pharaoh? Did not Simon the magician rise into the air by means of the devil? Did not St. Paul impose silence on the Pythoness of the city of Philippi in Macedonia?¹³⁹ Will it be said that there was any collusion between St. Paul and the Pythoness? Nothing of the kind can be maintained by any reasonable argument.

A small volume was published at Paris, in 1732, by a new author, who conceals himself under the two initials M. D.; it is entitled, *Treatise on Magic, Witchcraft, Possessions, Obsessions and Charms; in which their truth and reality are demonstrated*. He shows that he believes there are magicians; he shows by Scripture, both in the Old and New Testament, and by the authority of the ancient fathers, some passages from whose works are cited in that of Father Debrío, entitled *Disquisitiones Magicæ*. He proves it by the rituals of all the dioceses, and by the examinations which are found in the printed "Hours," wherein they suppose the existence of sorcerers and magicians.

The civil laws of the emperors, whether pagan or Christian, those of the kings of France, both ancient and modern, jurisconsult, physicians, historians both sacred and profane, concur in maintaining this truth. In all kinds of writers we may remark an infinity of stories of magic, spells and sorcery. The Parliaments of France, and the tribunals of justice in other nations, have recognized magicians, the pernicious effects of their art, and condemned them personally to the most rigorous

¹³⁹ Acts xvi. 10.

punishments.

He relates at full length¹⁴⁰ the remonstrances made to King Louis XIV., in 1670, by the Parliament at Rouen, to prove to that monarch that it was not only the Parliament of Rouen, but also all the other Parliaments of the kingdom, which followed the same rules of jurisprudence in what concerns magic and sorcery; that they acknowledged the existence of such things and condemn them. This author cites several facts, and several sentences given on this matter in the Parliaments of Paris, Aix, Toulouse, Rennes, Dijon, &c. &c.; and it was upon these remonstrances that the same king, in 1682, made his declaration concerning the punishment of various crimes, and in particular of sorcery, diviners or soothsayers, magicians, and similar crimes.

He also cites the treaty of M. de la Marre, commissary at the *châtelet* of Paris, who speaks largely of magic, and proves its reality, origin, progress, and effects. Would it be possible that the sacred authors, laws divine and human, the greatest men of antiquity, jurisconsults, the most enlightened historians, bishops in their councils, the Church in her decisions, her practices and prayers, should have conspired to deceive us, and to condemn those who practice magic, sorcery, spells, and crimes of the same nature, to death, and the most rigorous punishments, if they were merely illusive, and the effect only of a diseased and prejudiced imagination? Father le Brun, of the Oratoire, who has written so well upon the subject of superstitions, substantiates the fact

¹⁴⁰ Page 31, *et seq.*

that the Parliament of Paris recognizes that there are sorcerers, and that it punishes them severely when they are convicted. He proves it by a decree issued in 1601 against some inhabitants of Campagne accused of witchcraft. The decree wills that they shall be sent to the Conciergerie by the subaltern judges on pain of being deprived of their charge. It supposes that they must be rigorously punished, but it desires that the proceedings against them for their discovery and punishment may be exact and regular.

M. Servin, advocate-general and councillor of state, fully proves from the Old and New Testament, from tradition, laws and history, that there are diviners, enchanterers, and sorcerers, and refutes those who would maintain the contrary. He shows that magicians and those who make use of charms, ought to be punished and held in execration; but he adds that no punishment must be inflicted till after certain and evident proofs have been obtained; and this is what must be strictly attended to by the Parliament of Paris, for fear of punishing madmen for guilty persons, and taking illusions for realities.

The Parliament leaves it to the Church to inflict excommunication, both on men and women who have recourse to charms, and who believe they go in the night to nocturnal assemblies, there to pay homage to the devil. The Capitularies of the kings¹⁴¹ recommend the pastors to instruct the faithful on the subject of what is termed the Sabbath; at any rate they

¹⁴¹ Capitular. R. xiii de Sortilegiis et Sorciariis, 2 col. 36.

do not command that these persons should receive corporeal punishment, but only that they should be undeceived and prevented from misleading others in the same manner.

And there the Parliament stops, so long as the case goes no farther than simply misleading; but when it goes so far as to injure others, the kings have often commanded the judges to punish these persons with fines and banishment. The Ordonnances of Charles VIII. in 1490, and of Charles IX. in the States of Orleans in 1560, express themselves formally on this point, and they were renewed by King Louis XIV. in 1682. The third article of these Ordonnances bears, that if it should happen "*there were persons to be found wicked enough to add impiety and sacrilege to superstition, those who shall be convicted of these crimes shall be punished with death.*"

When, therefore, it is evident that some person has inflicted injury on his neighbor by malpractices, the Parliament punishes them rigorously, even to the pain of death, conformably to the ancient Capitularies of the kingdom,¹⁴² and the royal Ordonnances. Bodin, who wrote in 1680, has collected a great number of decrees, to which may be added those which the reverend Father le Brun reports, given since that time.

He afterwards relates a remarkable instance of a man named Hocque, who was condemned to the galleys, the 2d of September, 1687, by sentence of the High Court of Justice at Passy, for having made use of malpractices towards animals,

¹⁴² Capitular. in 872, x. 2. col. 230.

and having thus killed a great number in Champagne. Hocque died suddenly, miserably, and in despair, after having discovered, when drunken with wine, to a person named Beatrice, the secret which he made use of to kill the cattle; he was not ignorant that the demon would cause his death to revenge the discovery which he had made of this spell.

Some of the accomplices of this wretched man were condemned to the galleys by divers decrees; others were condemned to be hanged and burnt, by order of the Baillé of Passy, the 26th of October, 1691, which sentence was confirmed by decree of the Parliament of Paris, the 18th of December, 1691. From all which we deduce that the Parliament of Paris acknowledges that the spells by which people do injury to their neighbors ought to be rigorously punished; that the devil has very extensive power, which he too often exercises over men and animals, and that he would exercise it oftener, and with greater extension and fury, if he were not limited and hindered by the power of God, and that of good angels, who set bounds to his malice. St Paul warns us¹⁴³ to put on the armor of God, to be able to resist the snares of the devil: for, adds he, "we have not to war against flesh and blood: but against princes and powers, against the bad spirits who govern this dark world, against the spirits of malice who reign in the air."

¹⁴³ Eph. vi. 12.

CHAPTER X.

EXAMINATION OF THE AFFAIR OF HOCQUE, MAGICIAN

Monsieur de St. André, consulting physician in ordinary to the king, in his sixth letter¹⁴⁴ against magic, maintains that in the affair of Hocque which has been mentioned, there was neither magic, nor sorcery, nor any operation of the demon; that the venomous drug which Hocque placed in the stables, and by means of which he caused the death of the cattle stalled therein, was nothing but a poisonous compound, which, by its smell and the diffusion of its particles, poisoned the animals and caused their death; it required only for these drugs to be taken away for the cattle to be safe, or else to keep the cattle from the stable in which the poison was placed. The difficulty laid in discovering where these poisonous drugs were hidden; the shepherds, who were the authors of the mischief, taking all sorts of precautions to conceal them, knowing that their lives were in danger if they should be discovered.

He further remarks that these *gogues* or poisoned drugs lose their effects after a certain time, unless they are renewed or watered with something to revive them and make them ferment

¹⁴⁴ M. de St. André, Letter VI. on the subject of Magic, &c.

again. If the devil had any share in this mischief, the drug would always possess the same virtue, and it would not be necessary to renew it and refresh it to restore it to its pristine power.

In all this, M. de St. André supposes that if the demon had any power to deprive animals of their lives, or to cause them fatal maladies, he could do so independently of secondary causes; which will not be easily granted him by those who hold that God alone can give life and death by an absolute power, independently of all secondary causes and of any natural agent. The demon might have revealed to Hocque the composition of this fatal and poisonous drug – he might have taught him its dangerous effects, after which the venom acts in a natural way; it recovers and resumes its pristine strength when it is watered; it acts only at a certain distance, and according to the reach of the corpuscles which exhale from it. All these effects have nothing supernatural in them, nor which ought to be attributed to the demon; but it is credible enough that he inspired Hocque with the pernicious design to make use of a dangerous drug, which the wretched man knew how to make up, or the composition of which was revealed to him by the evil spirit.

M. de St. André continues, and says that there is nothing in the death of Hocque which ought to be attributed to the demon; it is, says he, a purely natural effect, which can proceed from no other cause than the venomous effluvia which came from the poisonous drug when it was taken up, and which were carried towards the malefactor by those which proceeded from his own

body while he was preparing it, and placing it in the ground, which remained there and were preserved in that spot, so that none of them had been dissipated.

These effluvia proceeding from the person of Hocque, then finding themselves liberated, returned to whence they originated, and drew with them the most malignant and corrosive particles of the charge or drug, which acted on the body of this shepherd as they did on those of the animals who smelled them. He confirms what he has just said, by the example of sympathetic powder which acts upon the body of a wounded person, by the immersion of small particles of the blood, or the pus of the wounded man upon whom it is applied, which particles draw with them the spirit of the drugs of which it (the powder) is composed, and carry them to the wound.

But the more I reflect on this pretended evaporation of the venomous effluvia emanating from the poisoned drug, hidden at Passy en Brie, six leagues from Paris, which are supposed to come straight to Hocque, shut up at la Tournelle, borne by the animal effluvia proceeding from this malefactor's body at the time he made up the poisonous drug and put it in the ground, so long before the dangerous composition was discovered; the more I reflect on the possibility of these evaporations the less I am persuaded of them. I could wish to have proofs of this system, and not instances of the very doubtful and very uncertain effects of sympathetic powder, which can have no place in the case in question. It is proving the obscure by the obscure, and

the uncertain by the uncertain; and even were we to admit generally some effects of the sympathetic powder, they could not be applicable here; the distance between the places is too great, and the time too long; and what sympathy can be found between this shepherd's poisonous drug and his person for it to be able to return to him who is imprisoned at Paris, when the *gogue* is discovered at Passy?

The account composed and printed on this event bears, that the fumes of the wine which Hocque had drank having evaporated, and he reflecting on what Beatrice had made him do, began to agitate himself, howled, and complained most strangely, saying that Beatrice had taken him by surprise, that it would occasion his death, and that he must die the instant that *Bras-de-fer*—another shepherd, to whom Beatrice had persuaded Hocque to write word to take off the poisoned drug which he had scattered on the ground at Passy – should take away the dose. He attacked Beatrice, whom he wanted to strangle; and even excited the other felons who were with him in prison and condemned to the galleys, to maltreat her, through the pity they felt for the despair of Hocque, who, at the time the dose was taken off the land, had died in a moment, in strange convulsions, and agitating himself like one possessed.

M. de St. André would again explain all this by supposing Hocque's imagination being struck with the idea of his dying, which he was persuaded would happen at the time they carried away the poison, had a great deal to do with his sufferings and

death. How many people have been known to die at the time they had fancied they should, when struck with the idea of their approaching death. The despair and agitation of Hocque had disturbed the mass of his blood, altered the humors, deranged the motion of the effluvia, and rendered them much susceptible of the actions of the vapors proceeding from the poisonous composition.

M. de St. André adds that, if the devil had any share in this kind of mischievous spell, it could only be in consequence of some compact, either expressed or tacit, that as soon as the poison should be taken up, he who had put it there should die immediately. Now, what likelihood is there that the person who should make this compact with the devil should have made use of such a stipulation, which would expose him to a cruel and inevitable death?

1. We may reply that fright can cause death; but that it is not possible for it to produce it at a given time, nor can he who falls into a paroxysm of grief say that he shall die at such a moment; the moment of death is not in the power of man in similar circumstances.

2. That so corrupt a character as Hocque, a man who, without provocation, and to gratify his ill-will, kills an infinite number of animals, and causes great damage to innocent persons, is capable of the greatest excess, may give himself up to the evil spirit, by implicated or explicit compacts, and engage, on pain of losing his life, never to take off the charge he had thrown upon a village.

He believed he should risk nothing by this stipulation, since he was free to take it away or to leave it, and it was not probable that he should ever lightly thus expose himself to certain death. That the demon had some share in this virtue of the poisonous composition is very likely, when we consider the circumstances of its operations, and those of the death and despair of Hocque. This death is the just penalty of his crimes, and of his confidence in the exterminating angel to whom he had yielded himself.

It is true that impostors, weak minds, heated imaginations, ignorant and superstitious persons have been found who have taken for black magic, and operations of the demon, what was quite natural, and the effect of some subtilty of philosophy or mathematics, or even an illusion of the senses, or a secret which deceives the eye and the senses. But to conclude from thence that there is no magic at all, and that all that is said about it is pure prejudice, ignorance, and superstition, is to conclude what is general from what is particular, and to deny what is true and certain, because it is not easy to distinguish what is true from what is false, and because men will not take the trouble to examine into causes. It is far easier to deny everything than to enter upon a serious examination of facts and circumstances.

CHAPTER XI.

MAGIC OF THE EGYPTIANS AND CHALDEANS

All pagan antiquity speaks of magic and magicians, of magical operations, and of superstitious, curious, and diabolical books. Historians, poets, and orators are full of things which relate to this matter: some believe in it, others deny it; some laugh at it, others remain in uncertainty and doubt. Are they bad spirits, or deceitful men, impostors and charlatans, who, by the subtilties of their art, make the ignorant believe that certain natural effects are produced by supernatural causes? That is the point on which men differ. But in general the name of magic and magician is now taken in these days in an odious sense, for an art which produces marvelous effects, that appear above the common course of nature, and that by the operation of the bad spirit.

The author of the celebrated book of Enoch, which had so great a vogue, and has been cited by some ancient writers¹⁴⁵ as inspired Scripture, says that the eleventh of the watchers, or of those angels who were in love with women, was called Pharmacius, or Pharmachus; that he taught men, before the flood, enchantments, spells, magic arts, and remedies against

¹⁴⁵ Apud Syncell.

enchancements. St. Clement, of Alexandria, in his recognitions, says that Ham, the son of Noah, received that art from heaven, and taught it to Misraim, his son, the father of the Egyptians.

In the Scripture, the name of *Mage* or *Magus* is never used in a good sense as signifying philosophers who studied astronomy, and were versed in divine and supernatural things, except in speaking of the Magi who came to adore Jesus Christ at Bethlehem.¹⁴⁶ Everywhere else the Scriptures condemn and abhor magic and magicians.¹⁴⁷ They severely forbid the Hebrews to consult such persons and things. They speak with abhorrence of *Simon and of Elymas*, well-known magicians, in the Acts of the Apostles;¹⁴⁸ and of the magicians of Pharaoh, who counterfeited by their illusions the true miracles of Moses. It seems likely that the Israelites had taken the habit in Egypt, where they then were, of consulting such persons, since Moses forbids them in so many different places, and so severely, either to listen to them or to place confidence in their predictions.

The Chevalier Marsham shows very clearly that the school for magic among the Egyptians is the most ancient ever known in the world; that from thence it spread amongst the Chaldeans, the Babylonians, the Greeks and Persians. St. Paul informs us that Jannès and Jambres, famous magicians of the time of Pharaoh, resisted Moses. Pliny remarks, that anciently, there

¹⁴⁶ Matt. iii. 1, 7, 36.

¹⁴⁷ Lev. xix. 31; xx.

¹⁴⁸ Acts viii. 9; xiii. 8.

was no science more renowned, or more in honor, than that of magic: *Summam litterarum claritatem gloriamque ex ea scientia antiquitus et penè semper petitam.*

Porphry¹⁴⁹ says that King Darius, son of Hystaspes, had so high an idea of the art of magic that he caused to be engraved on the mausoleum of his father Hystaspes, "*That he had been the chief and the master of the Magi of Persia.*"

The embassy that Balak, King of the Moabites, sent to Balaam the son of Beor, who dwelt in the mountains of the East, towards Persia and Chaldea,¹⁵⁰ to entreat him to come and curse and devote to death the Israelites who threatened to invade his country, shows the antiquity of magic, and of the magical superstitions of that country. For will it be said that these maledictions and inflictions were the effect of the inspiration of the good Spirit, or the work of good angels? I acknowledge that Balaam was inspired by God in the blessings which he gave to the people of the Lord, and in the prediction which he made of the coming of the Messiah; but we must acknowledge, also, the extreme corruption of his heart, his avarice, and all that he would have been capable of doing, if God had permitted him to follow his bad inclination and the inspiration of the evil spirit.

Diodorus of Sicily,¹⁵¹ on the tradition of the Egyptians, says that the Chaldeans who dwelt at Babylon and in Babylonia were

¹⁴⁹ Porph. de Abstinens. lib. iv. § 16. Vid. et Ammian. Marcell. lib. xxiii.

¹⁵⁰ Numb. xxiii. 1-3.

¹⁵¹ Diodor. Sicul. lib. i. p. 5.

a kind of colony of the Egyptians, and that it was from these last that the sages, or Magi of Babylon, learned the astronomy which gave such celebrity.

We see, in Ezekiel,¹⁵² the King of Babylon, marching against his enemies at the head of his army, stop short where two roads meet, and mingle the darts, to know by magic art, and the flight of these arrows, which road he must take. In the ancients, this manner of consulting the demon by divining wands is known – the Greeks call it *Rhabdomanteia*.

The prophet Daniel speaks more than once of the magicians of Babylon. King Nebuchadnezzar, having been frightened in a dream, sent for the Magi, or magicians, diviners, aruspices, and Chaldeans, to interpret the dream he had had.

King Belshazzar in the same manner convoked the magicians, Chaldeans, and aruspices of the country, to explain to him the meaning of these words which he saw written on the wall: *Mene, Tekel, Perez*. All this indicates the habit of the Babylonians to exercise magic art, and consult magicians, and that this pernicious art was held in high repute among them. We read in the same prophet of the trickery made use of by the priests to deceive the people, and make them believe that their gods lived, ate, drank, spoke, and revealed to them hidden things.

I have already mentioned the Magi who came to adore Jesus Christ; there is no doubt that they came from Chaldea or the neighboring country, but differing from those of whom we have

¹⁵² Ezek. xxi. 21.

just spoken, by their piety, and having studied the true religion.

We read in books of travels that superstition, magic, and fascinations are still very common in the East, both among the fire-worshippers descended from the ancient Chaldeans, and among the Persians, sectaries of Mohammed. St. Chrysostom had sent into Persia a holy bishop, named Maruthas, to have the care of the Christians who were in that country; the King Isdegerde having discovered him, treated him with much consideration. The Magi, who adore and keep up the perpetual fire, which is regarded by the Persians as their principal divinity, were jealous at this, and concealed underground an apostate, who, knowing that the king was to come and pay his adoration to the (sacred) fire, was to cry out from the depth of his cavern that the king must be deprived of his throne because he esteemed the Christian priest as a friend of the gods. The king was alarmed at this, and wished to send Maruthas away; but the latter discovered to him the imposture of the priests; he caused the ground to be turned up where the man's voice had been heard, and there they found him from whom it proceeded.

This example, and those of the Babylonish priests spoken of by Daniel, and that of some others, who, to satisfy their irregular passions, pretended that their God required the company of certain women, proved that what is usually taken for the effect of the black art is only produced by the knavishness of priests, magicians, diviners, and all kinds of persons who impose on the simplicity and credulity of the people; I do not deny that the devil

sometimes takes part in it, but more rarely than is imagined.

CHAPTER XII.

MAGIC AMONG THE GREEKS AND ROMANS

The Greeks have always boasted that they received the art of magic from the Persians, or the Bactrians. They affirm that Zoroaster communicated it to them; but when we wish to know the exact time at which Zoroaster lived, and when he taught them these pernicious secrets, they wander widely from the truth, and even from probability; some placing Zoroaster 600 years before the expedition of Xerxes into Greece, which happened in the year of the world 3523, and before Jesus Christ 477; others 500 years before the Trojan war; others 5000 years before that famous war; others 6000 years before that great event. Some believe that Zoroaster is the same as Ham, the son of Noah. Lastly, others maintain that there were several Zoroasters. What appears indubitably true is, that the worship of a plurality of gods, as also magic, superstition, and oracles, came from the Egyptians and Chaldeans, or Persians, to the Greeks, and from the Greeks to the Latins.

From the time of Homer,¹⁵³ magic was quite common among the Greeks. That poet speaks of the cure of wounds, and of

¹⁵³ Homer, *Iliad*, IV.

blood staunched by the secrets of magic, and by enchantment. St. Paul, when at Ephesus, caused to be burned there books of magic and curious secrets, the value of which amounted to the sum of 50,000 pieces of silver.¹⁵⁴ We have before said a few words concerning Simon the magician, and the magician Elymas, known in the Acts of the Apostles.¹⁵⁵ Pindar says¹⁵⁶ that the centaur Chiron cured several enchantments. When they say that Orpheus rescued from hell his wife Eurydice, who had died from the bite of a serpent, they simply mean that he cured her by the power of charms.¹⁵⁷ The poets have employed magic verses to make themselves beloved, and they have taught them to others for the same purpose; they may be seen in Theocritus, Catullus, and Virgil. Theophrastus affirms that there are magical verses which cure sciatica. Cato mentions (or repeats) some against luxations.¹⁵⁸ Varro admits that there are some powerful against the gout.

The sacred books testify that enchanters have the secret of putting serpents to sleep, and of charming them, so that they can never either bite again or cause any more harm.¹⁵⁹ The crocodile, that terrible animal, fears even the smell and voice

¹⁵⁴ Acts xix. 19.

¹⁵⁵ Acts viii. 9; xiii. 8.

¹⁵⁶ Pind. Od. iv.

¹⁵⁷ Plin. I. 28.

¹⁵⁸ Cato de Rerustic. c. 160.

¹⁵⁹ Psalm lvii. Jer. vii. 17. Eccles. x. 11.

of the Tentyriens.¹⁶⁰ Job, speaking of the leviathan, which we believe to be the crocodile, says, "Shall the enchanter destroy it?"¹⁶¹ And in Ecclesiasticus, "Who will pity the enchanter that has been bitten by the serpent?"¹⁶²

Everybody knows what is related of the Marsi, people of Italy, and of the Psyllæ, who possessed the secret of charming serpents. One would say, says St. Augustine,¹⁶³ that these animals understand the languages of the Marsi, so obedient are they to their orders; we see them come out of their caverns as soon as the Marsian has spoken. All this can only be done, says the same father, by the power of the malignant spirit, whom God permits to exercise this empire over venomous reptiles, above all, the serpent, as if to punish him for what he did to the first woman. In fact, it may be remarked that no animal is more exposed to charms, and the effects of magic art, than the serpent.

The laws of the Twelve Tables forbid the charming of a neighbor's crops, *qui fruges excantâsset*. Valerius Flaccus quotes authors who affirm that when the Romans were about to besiege a town, they employed their priests to evoke the divinity who presided over it, promising him a temple in Rome, either like the one dedicated to him in the besieged place, or on a rather larger

¹⁶⁰ Plin. lib. viii. c. 50.

¹⁶¹ Job xl. 25.

¹⁶² Ecclus. xii. 13. "Frigidus in pratis cantando rumpitur anguis." —Virgil, Ecl. viii. "Vipereas rumpo verbis et carmine fauces." —Ovid.

¹⁶³ Plin. lib. xxviii.

scale, and that the proper worship should be paid to him. Pliny says that the memory of these evocations is preserved among the priests.

If that which we have just related, and what we read in ancient and modern writers, is at all real, and produces the effects attributed to it, it cannot be doubted that there is something supernatural in it, and that the devil has a great share in the matter.

The Abbot Trithemius speaks of a sorceress who, by means of certain beverages, changed a young Burgundian into a beast.

Everybody knows the fable of Circé, who changed the soldiers or companions of Ulysses into swine. We know also the fable of the Golden Ass, by Apuleius, which contains the account of a man metamorphosed into an ass. I bring forward these things merely as what they are, that is to say, simply poetic fictions.

But it is very credible that these fictions are not destitute of some foundation, like many other fables, which contain not only a hidden and moral sense, but which have also some relation to an event really historical: for instance, what is said of the Golden Fleece carried away by Jason; of the Wooden Horse, made use of to surprise the city of Troy; the Twelve Labors of Hercules; the metamorphoses related by Ovid. All fabulous as those things appear in the poets, they have, nevertheless, their historical truth. And thus the pagan poets and historians have travestied and disguised the stories of the Old Testament, and have attributed to Bacchus, Jupiter, Saturn, Apollo, and Hercules, what is related

of Noah, Moses, Aaron, Samson, and Jonah, &c.

Origen, writing against Celsus, supposes the reality of magic, and says that the Magi who came to adore Jesus Christ at Bethlehem, wishing to perform their accustomed operations, not being able to succeed, a superior power preventing the effect and imposing silence on the demon, they sought out the cause, and beheld at the same time a divine sign in the heavens, whence they concluded that it was the Being spoken of by Balaam, and that the new King whose birth he had predicted, was born in Judea, and immediately they resolved to go and seek him. Origen believes that magicians, according to the rules of their art, often foretell the future, and that their predictions are followed by the event, unless the power of God, or that of the angels, prevents the effect of their conjurations, and puts them to silence.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ The fables of Jason and many others of the same class are said by Fortuitus Comes to have a reference to alchemy.

CHAPTER XIII.

EXAMPLES WHICH PROVE THE REALITY OF MAGIC

St. Augustine¹⁶⁵ remarks that not only the poets, but the historians even, relate that Diomede, of whom the Greeks have made a divinity, had not the happiness to return to his country with the other princes who had been at the siege of Troy; that his companions were changed into birds, and that these birds have their dwelling in the environs of the Temple of Diomede, which is situated near Mount Garganos; that these birds caress the Greeks who come to visit this temple, but fly at and peck the strangers who arrive there.

Varro, the most learned of Romans, to render this more credible, relates what everybody knows about Circé, who changed the companions of Ulysses into beasts; and what is said of the Arcadians, who, after having drawn lots, swam over a certain lake, after which they were metamorphosed into wolves, and ran about in the forests like other wolves. If during the time of their transmutation they did not eat human flesh, at the end of nine years they repassed the same lake, and resumed their former shape.

¹⁶⁵ Aug. de Civit. Dei, lib. xviii. c. 16-18.

The same Varro relates of a certain Demenotas that, having tasted the flesh of a child which the Arcadians had immolated to their god Lycæa, he had also been changed into a wolf, and ten years after he had resumed his natural form, had appeared at the Olympic games, and won the prize for pugilism.

St. Augustine testifies that in his time many believed that these transformations still took place, and some persons even affirmed that they had experienced them in their own persons. He adds that, when in Italy, he was told that certain women gave cheese to strangers who lodged at their houses, when these strangers were immediately changed into beasts of burden, without losing their reason, and carried the loads which were placed upon them; after which they returned to their former state. He says, moreover, that a certain man, named Præstantius, related that his father, having eaten of this magic cheese, remained lying in bed, without any one being able to awaken him for several days, when he awoke, and said that he had been changed into a horse, and had carried victuals to the army; and the thing was found to be true, although it appeared to him to be only a dream.

St. Augustine, reasoning on all this, says that either these things are false, or else so extraordinary that we cannot give faith to them. It is not to be doubted that God, by his almighty power, can do anything that he thinks proper, but that the devil, who is of a spiritual nature, can do nothing without the permission of God, whose decrees are always just; that the demon can neither change the nature of the spirit, or the body of a man, to transform

him into a beast; but that he can only act upon the fancy or imagination of a man, and persuade him that he is what he is not, or that he appears to others different from what he is; or that he remains in a deep sleep, and believes during that slumber that he is bearing loads which the devil carries for him; or that he (the devil) fascinates the eyes of those who believe they see them borne by animals, or by men metamorphosed into animals.

If we consider it only a change arising from fancy or imagination, as it happens in the disorder called lycanthropy, in which a man believes himself changed into a wolf, or into any other animal, as Nebuchadnezzar, who believed himself changed into an ox, and acted for seven years as if he had really been metamorphosed into that animal, there would be nothing in that more marvelous than what we see in hypochondriacs, who persuade themselves that they are kings, generals, popes, and cardinals; that they are snow, glass, pottery, &c. Like him who, being alone at the theatre, believed that he beheld there actors and admirable representations; or the man who imagined that all the vessels which arrived at the port of Pireus, near Athens, belonged to him; or, in short, what we see every day in dreams, and which appear to us very real during our sleep. In all this, it is needless to have recourse to the devil, or to magic, fascination, or illusion; there is nothing above the natural order of things. But that, by means of certain beverages, certain herbs, and certain kinds of food, a person may disturb the imagination, and persuade another that he is a wolf, a horse, or an ass, appears

more difficult of explanation, although we are aware that plants, herbs, and medicaments possess great power over the bodies of men, and are capable of deranging the brain, constitution, and imagination. We have but too many examples of such things.

Another circumstance which, if true, deserves much reflection, is that of Apollonius of Tyana, who, being at Ephesus during a great plague which desolated the city, promised the Ephesians to cause the pest to cease the very day on which he was speaking to them, and which was that of his second arrival in their town. He assembled them at the theatre, and ordered them to stone to death a poor old man, covered with rags, who asked alms. "Strike," cried he, "that enemy of the gods! heap stones upon him." They could not make up their minds to do so, for he excited their pity, and asked mercy in the most touching manner. But Apollonius pressed it so much, that at last they slew him, and amassed over him an immense heap of stones. A little while after he told them to take away these stones, and they would see what sort of an animal they had killed. They found only a great dog, and were convinced that this old man was only a phantom who had fascinated their eyes, and caused the pestilence in their town.

We here see five remarkable things: – 1st. The demon who causes the plague in Ephesus; 2d. This same demon, who, instead of a dog, causes the appearance of a man; 3d. The fascination of the senses of the Ephesians, who believe that they behold a man instead of a dog; 4th. The proof of the magic of Apollonius, who discovers the cause of this pestilence; 5th. And who makes

it cease at the given time.

Æneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who was afterwards Pope by the name of Pius II., writes, in his History of Bohemia, that a woman predicted to a soldier of King Wratislaus, that the army of that prince would be cut in pieces by the Duke of Bohemia, and that, if this soldier wished to avoid death, he must kill the first person he should meet on the road, cut off their ears, and put them in his pocket; that with the sword he had used to pierce them he must trace on the ground a cross between his horse's legs; that he must kiss it, and then take flight. All this the young soldier performed. Wratislaus gave battle, lost it, and was killed. The young soldier escaped; but on entering his house, he found that it was his wife whom he had killed and run his sword through, and whose ears he had cut off.

This woman was, then, strangely disguised and metamorphosed, since her husband could not recognize her, and she did not make herself known to him in such perilous circumstances, when her life was in danger. These two were, then, apparently magicians; both she who made the prediction, and the other on whom it was exercised. God permits, on this occasion, three great evils. The first magician counsels the murder of an innocent person; the young man commits it on his own wife without knowing her; and the latter dies in a state of condemnation, since by the secrets of magic she had rendered it impossible to recognize her.

A butcher's wife of the town of Jena, in the duchy of Wiemar

in Thuringia,¹⁶⁶ having refused to let an old woman have a calf's head for which she offered very little, the old woman went away grumbling and muttering. A little time after this the butcher's wife felt violent pains in her head. As the cause of this malady was unknown to the cleverest physicians, they could find no remedy for it; from time to time a substance like brains came from this woman's left ear, and at first it was supposed to be her own brain. But as she suspected that old woman of having cast a spell upon her on account of the calf's head, they examined the thing more minutely, and they saw that these were calf's brains; and what strengthened this opinion was that splinters of calf's-head bones came out with the brains. This disorder continued some time; at last the butcher's wife was perfectly cured. This happened in 1685. M. Hoffman, who relates this story in his dissertation *on the Power of the Demon over Bodies*, printed in 1736, says that the woman was perhaps still alive.

One day they brought to St. Macarius the Egyptian, a virtuous woman who had been transformed into a mare by the pernicious arts of a magician. Her husband, and all those who saw her, thought that she really was changed into a mare. This woman remained three days and three nights without tasting any food, proper either for man or horse. They showed her to the priests of the place, who could apply no remedy.

Then they led her to the cell of St. Macarius, to whom God had revealed that she was to come; his disciples wanted to send

¹⁶⁶ Frederici Hoffman, de Diaboli Potentia in Corpora, p. 382.

her back, thinking that it was a mare. They informed the saint of her arrival, and the subject of her journey. "He said to them, You are downright animals yourselves, thinking you see what is not; that woman is not changed, but your eyes are fascinated. At the same time he sprinkled holy water on the woman's head, and all present beheld her in her former state. He gave her something to eat, and sent her away safe and sound with her husband. As he sent her away the saint said to her, Do not keep from church, for this has happened to you for having been five weeks without taking the sacrament of our Lord, or attending divine service."

St. Hilarion, much in the same manner, cured by virtue of holy water a young girl, whom a magician had rendered most violently amorous of a young man. The demon who possessed her cried aloud to St. Hilarion, "You make me endure the most cruel torments, for I cannot come out till the young man who caused me to enter shall unloose me, for I am enchained under the threshold of the door by a band of copper covered with magical characters, and by the tow which envelops it." Then St. Hilarion said to him, "Truly your power is very great, to suffer yourself to be bound by a bit of copper and a little thread;" at the same time, without permitting these things to be taken from under the threshold of the door, he chased away the demon and cured the girl.

In the same place, St. Jerome relates that one Italicus, a citizen of Gaza and a Christian, who brought up horses for the games in the circus, had a pagan antagonist who hindered and held back

the horses of Italicus in their course, and gave most extraordinary celerity to his own. Italicus came to St. Hilarion, and told him the subject he had for uneasiness. The saint laughed and said to him, "Would it not be better to give the value of your horses to the poor rather than employ them in such exercises?" "I cannot do as I please," said Italicus; "it is a public employment which I fill, because I cannot help it, and as a Christian I cannot employ malpractices against those used against me." The brothers, who were present, interceded for him; and St. Hilarion gave him the earthen vessel out of which he drank, filled it with water, and told him to sprinkle his horses with it. Italicus not only sprinkled his horses with this water, but likewise his stable and chariot all over; and the next day the horses and chariot of this rival were left far behind his own; which caused the people to shout in the theatre, "Marnas is vanished – Jesus Christ is victorious!" And this victory of Italicus produced the conversion of several persons at Gaza.

Will it be said that this is only the effect of imagination, prepossession, or the trickery of a clever charlatan? How can you persuade fifty people that a woman who is present before their eyes can be changed into a mare, supposing that she has retained her own natural shape? How was it that the soldier mentioned by Æneas Sylvius did not recognize his wife, whom he pierced with his sword, and whose ears he cut off? How did Apollonius of Tyana persuade the Ephesians to kill a man, who really was only a dog? How did he know that this dog, or this man, was the

cause of the pestilence which afflicted Ephesus? It is then very credible that the evil spirit often acts on bodies, on the air, the earth, and on animals, and produces effects which appear above the power of man.

It is said that in Lapland they have a school for magic, and that fathers send their children to it, being persuaded that magic is necessary to them, that they may avoid falling into the snares of their enemies, who are themselves great magicians. They make the familiar demons, whose services they command, pass as an inheritance to their children, that they may make use of them to overcome the demons of other families who are adverse to their own. They often make use of a certain kind of drum for their magical operations; for instance, if they wish to know what is passing in a foreign country, one amongst them beats this drum, placing upon it at the part where the image of the sun is represented, a quantity of pewter rings attached together with a chain of the same metal; then they strike the drum with a forked hammer made of bone, so that these rings move; at the same time they sing distinctly a song, called by the Laplanders *Jonk*; and all those of their nation who are present, men and women, add their own songs, expressing from time to time the name of the place whence they desire to have news.

The Laplander having beaten the drum for some time, places it on his head in a certain manner, and falls down directly motionless on the ground, and without any sign of life. All the men and all the women continue singing, till he revives; if they

cease to sing, the man dies, which happens also if any one tries to awaken him by touching his hand or his foot. They even keep the flies from him, which by their humming might awaken him and bring him back to life.

When he is recovered he replies to the questions they ask him concerning the place he has been at. Sometimes he does not awake for four-and-twenty hours, sometimes more, sometimes less, according to the distance he has gone; and in confirmation of what he says, and of the distance he has been, he brings back from the place he has been sent to the token demanded of him, a knife, a ring, shoes, or some other object.¹⁶⁷

These same Laplanders make use also of this drum to learn the cause of any malady, or to deprive their enemies of their life or their strength. Moreover, amongst them are certain magicians, who keep in a kind of leathern game-bag magic flies, which they let loose from time to time against their enemies or against their cattle, or simply to raise tempests and hurricanes. They have also a sort of dart which they hurl into the air, and which causes the death of any one it falls upon. They have also a sort of little ball called *tyre*, almost round, which they send in the same way against their enemies to destroy them; and if by ill luck this ball should hit on its way some other person, or some animal, it will inevitably cause its death.

Who can be persuaded that the Laplanders who sell fair winds,

¹⁶⁷ See John Schesser, *Laponia*, printed at Frankfort in 4to. an. 1673, chap. xi. entitled, *De sacris Magicis et Magia Laponia*, p. 119, and following.

raise storms, relate what passes in distant places, where they go, as they say, in the spirit, and bring back things which they have found there – who can persuade themselves that all this is done without the aid of magic? It has been said that in the circumstance of Apollonius of Tyana, they contrived to send away the man all squalid and deformed, and put in his place a dog which was stoned, or else they substituted a dead dog. All which would require a vast deal of preparation, and would be very difficult to execute in sight of all the people: it would, perhaps, be better to deny the fact altogether, which certainly does appear very fabulous, than to have recourse to such explanations.

CHAPTER XIV.

EFFECTS OF MAGIC

ACCORDING TO THE POETS

Were we to believe what is said by the poets concerning the effects of magic, and what the magicians boast of being able to perform by their spells, nothing would be more marvelous than their art, and we should be obliged to acknowledge that the power of the demon was greatly shown thereby. Pliny¹⁶⁸ relates that Appian evoked the spirit of Homer, to learn from him which was his country, and who were his parents. Philostratus says¹⁶⁹ that Apollonius of Tyana went to the tomb of Achilles, evoked his manes, and implored them to cause the figure of that hero to appear to him; the tomb trembled, and afterwards he beheld a young man, who at first appeared about five cubits, or seven feet and a half high – after which, the phantom dilated to twelve cubits, and appeared of a singular beauty. Apollonius asked him some frivolous questions, and as the young man jested indecently with him, he comprehended that he was possessed by a demon; this demon he expelled, and cured the young man. But all this is fabulous.

¹⁶⁸ Plin. lib. iii. c. 2.

¹⁶⁹ Philost. Vit. Apollon.

Lactantius,¹⁷⁰ refuting the philosophers Democritus, Epicurus, and Dichearchus, who denied the immortality of the soul, says they would not dare to maintain their opinion before a magician, who, by the power of his art, and by his spells, possessed the secret of bringing souls from Hades, of making them appear, speak, and foretell the future, and give certain signs of their presence.

St. Augustine,¹⁷¹ always circumspect in his decisions, dare not pronounce whether magicians possess the power of evoking the spirits of saints by the might of their enchantments. But Tertullian¹⁷² is bolder, and maintains that no magical art has power to bring the souls of the saints from their rest; but that all the necromancers can do is to call forth some phantoms with a borrowed shape, which fascinate the eyes, and make those who are present believe that to be a reality which is only appearance. In the same place he quotes Heraclius, who says that the Nasamones, people of Africa, pass the night by the tombs of their near relations to receive oracles from the latter; and that the Celts, or Gauls, do the same thing in the mausoleums of great men, as related by Nicander.

Lucan says¹⁷³ that the magicians, by their spells, cause thunder in the skies unknown to Jupiter; that they tear the moon from

¹⁷⁰ Lactant. lib. vi. Divin. Instit. c. 13.

¹⁷¹ Aug. ad Simplic.

¹⁷² Tertull. de Animâ, c. 57.

¹⁷³ Lucan. Pharsal. lib. vi. 450, *et seq.*

her sphere, and precipitate her to earth; that they disturb the course of nature, prolong the nights, and shorten the days; that the universe is obedient to their voice, and that the world is chilled as it were when they speak and command.¹⁷⁴ They were so well persuaded that the magicians possessed power to make the moon come down from the sky, and they so truly believed that she was evoked by magic art whenever she was eclipsed, that they made a great noise by striking on copper vessels, to prevent the voice which pronounced enchantments from reaching her.¹⁷⁵

These popular opinions and poetical fictions deserve no credit, but they show the force of prejudice.¹⁷⁶ It is affirmed that, even at this day, the Persians think they are assisting the moon when eclipsed by striking violently on brazen vessels, and making a great uproar.

Ovid¹⁷⁷ attributes to the enchantments of magic the evocation of the infernal powers, and their dismissal back to hell; storms, tempests, and the return of fine weather. They attributed to it the power of changing men into beasts by means of certain herbs,

¹⁷⁴ "Cessavere vices rerum, dilataque longa, Hæsit nocte dies; legi non paruit æther; Torpuit et præceps audito carmine mundus; Et tonat ignaro cœlum Jove."

¹⁷⁵ "Cantat et e curro tentat deducere Lunam Et faceret, si non æra repulsa sonent." Tibull. lib. i. Eleg. ix. 21

¹⁷⁶ Pietro della Valle, Voyage.

¹⁷⁷ "... Obscurum verborum ambage nervorum Ter novies carmen magico demurmurat ore. Jam ciet infernas magico stridore catervas, Jam jubet aspersum lacte referre pedem. Cùm libet, hæc tristi depellit nubila cœlo; Cùm libet, æstivo provocat orbe nives." Ovid. Metamorph. 14.

the virtues of which are known to them.¹⁷⁸

Virgil¹⁷⁹ speaks of serpents put to sleep and enchanted by the magicians. And Tibullus says that he has seen the enchantress bring down the stars from heaven, and turn aside the thunderbolt ready to fall upon the earth – and that she has opened the ground and made the dead come forth from their tombs.

As this matter allows of poetical ornaments, the poets have vied with each other in endeavoring to adorn their pages with them, not that they were convinced there was any truth in what they said; they were the first to laugh at it when an opportunity presented itself, as well as the gravest and wisest men of antiquity. But neither princes nor priests took much pains to undeceive the people, or to destroy their prejudices on those subjects. The Pagan religion allowed them, nay, authorized them, and part of its practices were founded on similar superstitions.

¹⁷⁸ "Naïs nam ut cantu, nimiumque potentibus herbis
Verterit in tacitos juvenilia
corpora pisces."

¹⁷⁹ "Vipereo generi et graviter spirantibus hydriis
Spargere qui somnos cantuque
manque solebat,"

CHAPTER XV. OF THE PAGAN ORACLES

If it were well proved that the oracles of pagan antiquity were the work of the evil spirit, we could give more real and palpable proofs of the apparition of the demon among men than these boasted oracles, which were given in almost every country in the world, among the nations which passed for the wisest and most enlightened, as the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Syrians, even the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans. Even the most barbarous people were not without their oracles.

In the pagan religion there was nothing esteemed more honorable, or more complacently boasted of.

In all their great undertakings they had recourse to the oracle; by that was decided the most important affairs between town and town, or province and province. The manner in which the oracles were rendered was not everywhere the same. It is said¹⁸⁰ the bull Apis, whose worship was anciently established in Egypt, gave out his oracles on his receiving food from the hand of him who consulted. If he received it, say they, it was considered a good omen; if he refused it, this was a bad augury. When this animal appeared in public, he was accompanied by a troop of children, who sang hymns in his honor; after which these boys were filled

¹⁸⁰ Plin. lib. viii. c. 48.

with sacred enthusiasm, and began to predict future events. If the bull went quietly into his lodge, it was a happy sign;¹⁸¹ if he came out, it was the contrary. Such was the blindness of the Egyptians.

There were other oracles also in Egypt:¹⁸² as those of Mercury, Apollo, Hercules, Diana, Minerva, Jupiter Ammon, &c., which last was consulted by Alexander the Great. But Herodotus remarks that in his time there were neither priests nor priestesses who uttered oracles. They were derived from certain presages, which they drew by chance, or from the movements of the statues of the gods, or from the first voice which they heard after having consulted. Pausanias says¹⁸³ that he who consults whispers in the ear of Mercury what he requires to know, then he stops his ears, goes out of the temple, and the first words which he hears from the first person he meets are held as the answer of the god.

The Greeks acknowledge that they received from the Egyptians both the names of their gods and their most ancient oracles; amongst others that of Dodona, which was already much resorted to in the time of Homer,¹⁸⁴ and which came from the oracle of Jupiter of Thebes: for the Egyptian priests related that two priestesses of that god had been carried off by Phœnician merchants, who had sold them, one into Libya and the other into

¹⁸¹ Herodot. lib. ix.

¹⁸² *Vide* Joan. Marsham, Sæc. iv. pp. 62, 63.

¹⁸³ Pausan. lib. vii. p. 141.

¹⁸⁴ Homer, Iliad, xii. 2, 235.

Greece.¹⁸⁵ Those of Dodona related that two black doves had flown from Thebes of Egypt – that the one which had stopped at Dodona had perched upon a beech-tree, and had declared in an articulate voice that the gods willed that an oracle of Jupiter should be established in this place; and that the other, having flown into Lybia, had there formed or founded the oracle of Jupiter Ammon. These origins are certainly very frivolous and very fabulous. The Oracle of Delphi is more recent and more celebrated. Phemonoë was the first priestess of Delphi, and began in the time of Acrisius, twenty-seven years before Orpheus, Musæus, and Linus. She is said to have been the inventress of hexameters.

But I think I can remark vestiges of oracles in Egypt, from the time of the patriarch Joseph, and from the time of Moses. The Hebrews had dwelt for 215 years in Egypt, and having multiplied there exceedingly, had begun to form a separate people and a sort of republic. They had imbibed a taste for the ceremonies, the superstitions, the customs, and the idolatry of the Egyptians.

Joseph was considered the cleverest diviner and the greatest expounder of dreams in Egypt. They believed that he derived his oracles from the inspection of the liquor which he poured into his cup. Moses, to cure the Hebrews of their leaning to the idolatry and superstitions of Egypt, prescribed to them laws and ceremonies which favored his design; the first, diametrically opposite to those of the Egyptians; the second, bearing some

¹⁸⁵ Herodot. lib. ii. c. 52, 55.

resemblance to theirs in appearance, but differing both in their aim and circumstances.

For instance, the Egyptians were accustomed to consult diviners, magicians, interpreters of dreams, and augurs; all which things are forbidden to the Hebrews by Moses, on pain of rigorous punishment; but in order that they might have no room to complain that their religion did not furnish them with the means of discovering future events and hidden things, God, with condescension worthy of reverential admiration, granted them the *Urim and Thummim*, or the Doctrine and the Truth, with which the high-priest was invested according to the ritual in the principal ceremonies of religion, and by means of which he rendered oracles, and discovered the will of the Most High. When the ark of the covenant and the tabernacle were constructed, the Lord, consulted by Moses,¹⁸⁶ gave out his replies from between the two cherubim which were placed upon the mercy-seat above the ark. All which seems to insinuate that, from the time of the patriarch Joseph, there had been oracles and diviners in Egypt, and that the Hebrews consulted them.

God promised his people to raise up a prophet¹⁸⁷ among them, who should declare to them his will: in fact, we see in almost all ages among them, prophets inspired by God; and the true prophets reproached them vehemently for their impiety, when instead of coming to the prophets of the Lord, they went to

¹⁸⁶ Exod. xxv. 22.

¹⁸⁷ Deut. xviii. 13.

consult strange oracles,¹⁸⁸ and divinities equally powerless and unreal.

We have spoken before of the teraphim of Laban, of the idols or pretended oracles of Micah and Gideon. King Saul, who, apparently by the advice of Samuel, had exterminated diviners and magicians from the land of Israel, desired in the last war to consult the Lord, who would not reply to him. He then afterwards addressed himself to a witch, who promised him she would evoke Samuel for him. She did, or feigned to do so, for the thing offers many difficulties, into which we shall not enter here.

The same Saul having consulted the Lord on another occasion, to know whether he must pursue the Philistines whom he had just defeated, God refused also to reply to him,¹⁸⁹ because his son Jonathan had tasted some honey, not knowing that the king had forbidden his army to taste anything whatever before his enemies were entirely overthrown.

The silence of the Lord on certain occasions, and his refusal to answer sometimes when He was consulted, are an evident proof that He usually replied, and that they were certain of receiving instructions from Him, unless they raised an obstacle to it by some action which was displeasing to Him.

¹⁸⁸ 2 Kings i. 2, 3, 16, &c.

¹⁸⁹ 1 Sam. xiv. 24.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE CERTAINTY OF THE EVENT PREDICTED IS NOT ALWAYS A PROOF THAT THE PREDICTION COMES FROM GOD

Moses had foreseen that so untractable and superstitious a people as the Israelites would not rest satisfied with the reasonable, pious, and supernatural means which he had procured them for discovering future events, by giving them prophets and the oracle of the high-priest. He knew that there would arise among them false prophets and seducers, who would endeavor by their illusions and magical secrets to mislead them into error; whence it was that he said to them:¹⁹⁰ "If there should arise among you a prophet, or any one who boasts of having had a dream, and he foretells a wonder, or anything which surpasses the ordinary power of man, and what he predicts shall happen; and after that he shall say unto you, Come, let us go and serve the strange gods, which you have not known; you shall not hearken unto him, because the Lord your God will prove you, to see whether you love Him with all your heart and with all your soul."

¹⁹⁰ Deut. xiii. 1, 2.

Certainly, nothing is more likely to mislead us than to see what has been foretold by any one come to pass.

"Show the things that are to come," says Isaiah,¹⁹¹ "that we may know that ye are gods. Let them come, let them foretell what is to happen, and what has been done of old, and we will believe in them," &c. *Idoneum testimonium divinationis*, says Tertullian,¹⁹² *veritas divinationis*. And St. Jerome,¹⁹³ *Confitentur magi, confitentur arioli, et omnis scientia sæcularis litteraturæ, præscientiam futurorum non esse hominum, sed Dei*.

Nevertheless, we have just seen that Moses acknowledges that false prophets can predict things which will happen. And the Saviour warns us in the Gospel that at the end of the world several false prophets will arise, who will seduce many¹⁹⁴ – "They shall shew great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive even the elect." It is not, then, precisely either the successful issue of the event which decides in favor of the false prophet – nor the default of the predictions made by true prophets which proves that they are not sent by God.

Jonah was sent to foretell the destruction of Nineveh,¹⁹⁵ which did not come to pass; and many other threats of the prophets were not put into execution, because God, moved by the repentance

¹⁹¹ Isaiah xli. 22, 23.

¹⁹² Tertull. Apolog. c. 20.

¹⁹³ Hieronym. in Dan.

¹⁹⁴ Matt. xxiv. 11, 24.

¹⁹⁵ Jonah i. 2.

of the sinful, revoked or commuted his former sentence. The repentance of the Ninevites guarantied them against the last misfortune.

Isaiah had distinctly foretold to King Hezekiah¹⁹⁶ that he would not recover from his illness: "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live." Nevertheless, God, moved with the prayer of this prince, revoked the sentence of death; and before the prophet had left the court of the king's house, God commanded him to return and tell the king that God would add yet fifteen years to his life.

Moses assigns the mark of a true prophet to be, when he leads us to God and his worship – and the mark of a false prophet is, when he withdraws us from the Lord, and inclines us to superstition and idolatry. Balaam was a true prophet, inspired by God, who foretold things which were followed up by the event; but his morals were very corrupt, and he was extremely self-interested. He did everything he could to deserve the recompense promised him by the king of Moab, and to curse and immolate Israel.¹⁹⁷ God did not permit him to do so; he put into his mouth blessings instead of curses; he did not induce the Israelites to forsake the Lord; but he advised the Moabites to seduce the people of God, and cause them to commit fornication, and to worship the idols of the country, and by that means to irritate God against them, and draw upon them the effects of his vengeance.

¹⁹⁶ 2 Kings xx. 1. Isai. xxxviii. 1.

¹⁹⁷ Numb. xxii. xxiii. xxiv.

Moses caused the chiefs among the people, who had consented to this crime, to be hung; and caused to perish the Midianites who had led the Hebrews into it. And lastly, Balaam, who was the first cause of this evil, was also punished with death.¹⁹⁸

In all the predictions of diviners or oracles, when they are followed by fulfilment, we can hardly disavow that the evil spirit intervenes, and discovers the future to those who consult him. St. Augustine, in his book *de Divinatione Dæmonum*,¹⁹⁹ or of predictions made by the evil spirit, when they are fulfilled, supposes that the demons are of an ærial nature, and much more subtile than bodies in general; insomuch that they surpass beyond comparison the lightness both of men and the swiftest animals, and even the flight of birds, which enables them to announce things that are passing in very distant places, and beyond the common reach of men. Moreover, as they are not subject to death as we are, they have acquired infinitely more experience than even those who possess the most among mankind, and are the most attentive to what happens in the world. By that means they can sometimes predict things to come, announce several things at a distance, and do some wonderful things; which has often led mortals to pay them divine honors, believing them to be of a nature much more excellent than their own.

But when we reflect seriously on what the demons predict, we may remark that often they announce nothing but what they

¹⁹⁸ Numb. xxxi. 8.

¹⁹⁹ Aug. de Divinat. Dæmon. c. 3, pp. 507, 508, *et seq.*

are to do themselves.²⁰⁰ For God permits them, sometimes, to cause maladies, corrupt the air, and produce in it qualities of an infectious nature, and to incline the wicked to persecute the worthy. They perform these operations in a hidden manner, by resources unknown to mortals, and proportionate to the subtilty of their own nature. They can announce what they have foreseen must happen by certain natural tokens unknown to men, like as a physician foresees by the secret of his art the symptoms and the consequences of a malady which no one else can. Thus, the demon, who knows our constitution and the secret tendency of our humors, can foretell the maladies which are the consequences of them. He can also discover our thoughts and our secret wishes by certain external motions, and by certain expressions we let fall by chance, whence he infers that men would do or undertake certain things consequent upon these thoughts or inclinations.

But his predictions are far from being comparable with those revealed to us by God, through his angels, or the prophets; these are always certain and infallible, because they have for their principle God, who is truth; while the predictions of the demons are often deceitful, because the arrangements on which they are founded can be changed and deranged, when they least expect it, by unforeseen and unexpected circumstances, or by the authority of superior powers overthrowing the first plans, or by a peculiar disposition of Providence, who sets bounds to the power of the prince of darkness. Sometimes, also, demons purposely deceive

²⁰⁰ Idem. c. 5.

those who have the weakness to place confidence in them. But, usually, they throw the fault upon those who have taken on themselves to interpret their discourses and predictions.

So says St. Augustine;²⁰¹ and although we do not quite agree with him, but hold the opinion that souls, angels and demons are disengaged from all matter or substance, still we can apply his reasoning to evil spirits, even upon the supposition that they are immaterial – and own that sometimes they can predict the future, and that their predictions may be fulfilled; but that is not a proof of their being sent by God, or inspired by his Spirit. Even were they to work miracles, we must anathematize them as soon as they turn us from the worship of the true God, or incline us to irregular lives.

²⁰¹ S. August. in his *Retract.* lib. ii. c. 30, owns that he advanced this too lightly.

CHAPTER XVII.
REASONS WHICH LEAD US TO
BELIEVE THAT THE GREATER
PART OF THE ANCIENT ORACLES
WERE ONLY IMPOSITIONS OF
THE PRIESTS AND PRIESTESSES,
WHO FEIGNED THAT THEY
WERE INSPIRED BY GOD

If it is true, as has been thought by many, both among the ancients and the moderns, that the oracles of pagan antiquity were only illusions and deceptions on the part of the priests and priestesses, who said that they were possessed by the spirit of Python, and filled with the inspiration of Apollo, who discovered to them internally things hidden and past, or present and future, I must not place them here in the rank of evil spirits. The devil has no other share in the matter than he has always in the crimes of men, and in that multitude of sins which cupidity, ambition, interest, and self-love produce in the world; the demon being always ready to seize an occasion to mislead us, and draw us into irregularity and error, employing all our passions to lead

us into these snares. If what he has foretold is followed by fulfilment, either by chance, or because he has foreseen certain circumstances unknown to men, he takes to himself all the credit of it, and makes use of it to gain our confidence and conciliate credit for his predictions; if the thing is doubtful, and he knows not what the issue of it will be, the demon, the priest, or priestess will pronounce an equivocal oracle, in order that at all events they may appear to have spoken true.

The ancient legislators of Greece, the most skillful politicians, and generals of armies, dexterously made use of the prepossession of the people in favor of oracles, to persuade them what they had concerted was approved of by the gods, and announced by the oracle. These things and these oracles were often followed by success, not because the oracle had predicted or ordained it, but because the enterprise being well concerted and well conducted, and the soldiers also perfectly persuaded that God was on their side, fought with more than ordinary valor. Sometimes they gained over the priestess by the aid of presents, and thus disposed her to give favorable replies. Demosthenes haranguing at Athens against Philip, King of Macedon, said that the priestess of Delphi *Philipized*, and only pronounced oracles conformable to the inclinations, advantage, and interest of that prince.

Porphyry, the greatest enemy of the Christian name,²⁰² makes no difficulty of owning that these oracles were dictated by the

²⁰² Porphr. apud Euseb. de Præpar. Evang. lib, iv. c. 5, 6.

spirit of falsehood, and that the demons are the true authors of enchantments, philtres, and spells; that they fascinate or deceive the eyes by the spectres and phantoms which they cause to appear; that they ambitiously desire to pass for gods; that their aërial and spiritual bodies are nourished by the smell and smoke of the blood and fat of the animals which are immolated to them; and that the office of uttering oracles replete with falsehood, equivocation, and deceit has devolved upon them. At the head of these demons he places *Hecate and Serapis*. Jamblichus, another pagan author, speaks of them in the same manner, and with as much contempt.

The ancient fathers who lived so near the times when these oracles existed, several of whom had forsaken paganism and embraced Christianity, and who consequently knew more about the oracles than we can, speak of them as things invented, governed, and maintained by the demons. The most sensible among the heathens do not speak of them otherwise, but also they confess that often the malice, imposition, servility and interest of the priests had great share in the matter, and that they abused the simplicity, credulity and prepossessions of the people.

Plutarch says,²⁰³ that a governor of Cilicia having sent to consult the oracle of Mopsus, as he was going to Malle in the same country, the man who carried the billet fell asleep in the temple, where he saw in a dream a handsome looking man, who said to him the single word *black*. He carried this reply

²⁰³ Plutarch, de Defectu Oracul. p. 434.

to the governor, whose mysterious question he knew nothing about. Those who heard this answer laughed at it, not knowing what was in the billet: but the governor having opened it showed them these words written in it; *shall I immolate to thee a black ox or a white one?* and that the oracle had thus answered his question without opening the note. But who can answer for their not having deceived the bearer of the billet in this case, as did Alexander of Abonotiche, a town of Paphlagonia, in Asia Minor. This man had the art to persuade the people of his country that he had with him the god Esculapius, in the shape of a tame serpent, who pronounced oracles, and replied to the consultations addressed to him on divers diseases without opening the billets they placed on the altar of the temple of this pretended divinity; after which, without opening them, they found the next morning the reply written below. All the trick consisted in the seal being raised artfully by a heated needle, and then replaced after having written the reply at the bottom of the note, in an obscure and enigmatical style, after the manner of other oracles. At other times he used mastic, which being yet soft, took the impression of the seal, then when that was hardened he put on another seal with the same impression. He received about ten sols (five pence) per billet, and this game lasted all his life, which was a long one; for he died at the age of seventy, being struck by lightning, near the end of the second century of the Christian era: all which may be found more at length in the book of Lucian, entitled *Pseudo Manes*, or *the false Diviner*. The priest of the oracle of

Mopsus could by the same secret open the billet of the governor who consulted him, and showing himself during the night to the messenger, declared to him the above-mentioned reply.

Macrobius²⁰⁴ relates that the Emperor Trajan, to prove the oracle of Heliopolis in Phœnicia, sent him a well-sealed letter in which nothing was written; the oracle commanded that a blank letter should also be sent to the emperor. The priests of the oracle were much surprised at this, not knowing the reason of it. Another time the same emperor sent to consult this same oracle to know whether he should return safe from his expedition against the Parthians. The oracle commanded that they should send him some branches of a knotted vine, which was sacred in his temple. Neither the emperor nor any one else could guess what that meant; but his body, or rather his bones, having been brought to Rome after his death, which happened during his journey, it was supposed that the oracle had intended to predict his death, and designate his fleshless bones, which somewhat resemble the branches of a vine.

It is easy to explain this quite otherwise. If he had returned victorious, the vine being the source of wine which rejoices the heart of man, and is agreeable to both gods and men, would have typified his victory – and if the expedition had proved fruitless, the wood of the vine, which is useless for any kind of work, and only good for burning as firewood, might in that case signify the inutility of this expedition. It is allowed that the artifice, malice,

²⁰⁴ Macrobi. Saturnal. lib. i. c. 23.

and inventions of the heathen priests had much to do with the oracles; but are we to infer from this that the demon had no part in the matter?

We must allow that as by degrees the light of the Gospel was spread in the world, the reign of the demon, ignorance, corruption of morals, and crime, diminished. The priests who pretended to predict, by the inspiration of the evil spirit, things concealed from mortal knowledge, or who misled the people by their illusions and impostures, were obliged to confess that the Christians imposed silence on them, either by the empire they exercised over the devil, or else by discovering the malice and knavishness of the priests, which the people had not dared to sound, from a blind respect which they had for this mystery of iniquity.

If in our days any one would deny that in former times there were oracles which were rendered by the inspiration of the demon, we might convince him of it by what is still practiced in Lapland, and by what missionaries²⁰⁵ relate, that in India the demon reveals things hidden and to come, not by the mouth of idols, but by that of the priests, who are present when they interrogate either the statues or the demon. And they remark that there the demon becomes mute and powerless, in proportion as the light of the Gospel is spread among these nations. Thus then the silence of the oracles may be attributed – 1. To a superhuman cause, which is the power of Jesus Christ, and the publication of

²⁰⁵ Lettres édifiantes, tom. x.

the Gospel. 2. Mankind are become less superstitious, and bolder in searching out the cause of these pretended revelations. 3. To their having become less credulous, as Cicero says.²⁰⁶ 4. Because princes have imposed silence on the oracles, fearing that they might inspire the nation with rebellious principles. For which reason, Lucan says, that princes feared to discover the future.²⁰⁷

Strabo²⁰⁸ conjectures that the Romans neglected them because they had the Sibylline books, and their auspices (aruspices, or haruspices), which stood them instead of oracles. M. Vandale demonstrates that some remains of the oracles might yet be seen under the Christian emperors. It was then only in process of time that oracles were entirely abolished; and it may be boldly asserted that sometimes the evil spirit revealed the future, and inspired the ministers of false gods, by permission of the Almighty, who wished to punish the confidence of the infidels in their idols. It would be going too far, if we affirmed that all that was said of the oracles was only the effect of the artifices or the malice of the priests, who always imposed on the credulity of mankind. Read on this subject the learned reply of Father Balthus to the treatises of MM. Vandale and Fontenelle.

²⁰⁶ Cicero, de Divinat. lib. ii. c. 57.

²⁰⁷ "Reges timent futuraEt superos vetant loqui." Lucan, Pharsal. lib. v. p. 112.

²⁰⁸ Strabo, lib. xvii.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON SORCERERS AND SORCERESSES, OR WITCHES

The empire of the devil nowhere shines forth with more lustre than in what is related of the Sabbath (witches' sabbath or assembly), where he receives the homage of those of both sexes who have abandoned themselves to him. It is there, the wizards and witches say, that he exercises the greatest authority, and appears in a visible form, but always hideous, misshapen, and terrible; always during the night in out-of-the-way places, and arrayed in a manner more gloomy than gay, rather sad and dull, than majestic and brilliant. If they pay their adoration in that place to the prince of darkness, he shows himself there in a despicable posture, and in a base, contemptible and hideous form; if people eat there, the viands of the feast are dirty, insipid, and destitute of solidity and substance – they neither satisfy the appetite, nor please the palate; if they dance there, it is without order, without skill, without propriety.

To endeavor to give a description of the infernal sabbath, is to aim at describing what has no existence and never has existed, except in the craving and deluded imagination of sorcerers and sorceresses: the paintings we have of it are conceived after the reveries of those who fancy they have been transported through

the air to the sabbath, both in body and soul.

People are carried thither, say they, sitting on a broom-stick, sometimes on the clouds or on a he-goat. Neither the place, the time, nor the day when they assemble is fixed. It is sometimes in a lonely forest, sometimes in a desert, usually on the Wednesday or the Thursday night; the most solemn of all is that of the eve of St. John the Baptist: they there distribute to every sorcerer the ointment with which he must anoint himself when he desires to go to the sabbath, and the spell-powder he must make use of in his magic operations. They must all appear together in this general assembly, and he who is absent is severely ill-used both in word and deed. As to the private meetings, the demon is more indulgent to those who are absent for some particular reason.

As to the ointment with which they anoint themselves, some authors, amongst others, John Baptista Porta, and John Wierius,²⁰⁹ boast that they know the composition. Amongst other ingredients there are many narcotic drugs, which cause those who make use of it to fall into a profound slumber, during which they imagine that they are carried to the sabbath up the chimney, at the top of which they find a tall black man,²¹⁰ with horns, who transports them where they wish to go, and afterwards brings them back again by the same chimney. The accounts given by these people, and the description which they give of their

²⁰⁹ Joan. Vier. lib. ii. c. 7.

²¹⁰ A remarkably fine print on this subject was published at Paris some years ago; if we remember right, it was suppressed.

assemblies, are wanting in unity and uniformity.

The demon, their chief, appears there, either in the shape of a he-goat, or as a great black dog, or as an immense raven; he is seated on an elevated throne, and receives there the homage of those present in a way which decency does not allow us to describe. In this nocturnal assembly they sing, they dance, they abandon themselves to the most shameful disorder; they sit down to table, and indulge in good cheer; while at the same time they see on the table neither knife nor fork, salt nor oil; they find the viands devoid of savor, and quit the table without their hunger being satisfied.

One would imagine that the attraction of a better fortune, and a wish to enrich themselves, drew thither men and women. The devil never fails to make them magnificent promises, at least the sorcerers say so, and believe it, deceived, without doubt, by their imagination; but experience shows us that these people are always ragged, despised, and wretched, and usually end their lives in a violent and dishonorable manner.

When they are admitted for the first time to the sabbath, the demon inscribes their name and surname on his register, which he makes them sign; then he makes them forswear cream and baptism, makes them renounce Jesus Christ and his church; and, to give them a distinctive character and make them known for his own, he imprints on their bodies a certain mark with the nail of the little finger of one of his hands; this mark, or character, thus impressed, renders the part insensible to pain. They even

pretend that he impresses this character in three different parts of the body, and at three different times. The demon does not impress these characters, say they, before the person has attained the age of twenty-five.

But none of these things deserve the least attention. There may happen to be in the body of a man, or a woman, some benumbed part, either from illness, or the effect of remedies, or drugs, or even naturally; but that is no proof that the devil has anything to do with it. There are even persons accused of magic and sorcery, on whom no part thus characterized has been found, nor yet insensible to the touch, however exact the search. Others have declared that the devil has never made any such marks upon them. Consult on this matter the second letter of M. de St. André, Physician to the King, in which he well develops what has been said about these characters of sorcerers.

The word sabbath, taken in the above sense, is not to be found in ancient writers; neither the Hebrews nor the Egyptians, the Greeks nor the Latins have known it.

The thing itself, I mean the *sabbath* taken in the sense of a nocturnal assembly of persons devoted to the devil, is not remarked in antiquity, although magicians, sorcerers, and witches are spoken of often enough – that is to say, people who boasted that they exercised a kind of power over the devil, and by his means, over animals, the air, the stars, and the lives and fortunes of men.

Horace²¹¹ makes use of the word *coticia* to indicate the nocturnal meetings of the magicians —*Tu riseris coticia*; which he derives from *Cotys*, or *Cotto*, Goddess of Vice, who presided in the assemblies which were held at night, and where the Bacchantes gave themselves up to all sorts of dissolute pleasures, but this is very different from the witches' sabbath.

Others derive this term from *Sabbatius*, which is an epithet given to the god Bacchus, whose nocturnal festivals were celebrated in debauchery. Arnobius and Julius Firmicus Maternus inform us that in these festivals they slipped a golden serpent into the bosoms of the initiated, and drew it downwards; but this etymology is too far-fetched: the people who gave the name of *sabbath* to the assemblies of the sorcerers wished apparently to compare them in derision to those of the Jews, and to what they practiced in their synagogues on sabbath days.

The most ancient monument in which I have been able to remark any express mention of the nocturnal assemblies of the sorcerers is in the Capitularies,²¹² wherein it is said that women led away by the illusions of the demons, say that they go in the night with the goddess Diana and an infinite number of other women, borne through the air on different animals, that they go

²¹¹ Horat. Epodon. xviii. 4.

²¹² "Quædam sceleratæ mulieres dæmonum illusionibus et phantasmatis seductæ, credunt se et profitentur nocturnis horis cum Dianâ Paganorum deâ et innumerâ multitudine mulierum equitare super quasdam bestias et multa terrarum spalia intempestæ noctis silentio pertransire ejusque jussionibus veluti dominæ obedire." — Baluz. Capitular. fragment. c. 13. Vide et Capitul. Herardi, Episc. Turon.

in a few hours a great distance, and obey Diana as their queen. It was, therefore, to the goddess Diana, or the Moon, and not to Lucifer, that they paid homage. The Germans call witches' dances what we call the sabbath. They say that these people assemble on Mount Bructere.

The famous Agobard,²¹³ Archbishop of Lyons, who lived under the Emperor Louis the Debonair, wrote a treatise against certain superstitious persons in his time, who believed that storms, hail, and thunder were caused by certain sorcerers whom they called tempesters (*tempestarios*, or storm-brewers), who raised the rain in the air, caused storms and thunder, and brought sterility upon the earth. They called these extraordinary rains *aura lavatitia*, as if to indicate that they were raised by magic power. In this place the people still call these violent rains *alvace*. There were even persons sufficiently prejudiced to boast that they knew of *tempêtiers*, who had to conduct the tempests where they choose, and to turn them aside when they pleased. Agobard interrogated some of them, but they were obliged to own that they had not been present at the things they related.

Agobard maintains that this is the work of God alone; that in truth, the saints, with the help of God, have often performed similar prodigies; but that neither the devil nor sorcerers can do anything like it. He remarks that there were among his people superstitious persons who would pay very punctually what they called *canonicum*, which was a sort of tribute which they offered

²¹³ Agobard de Grandine.

to these tempest-brewers (*tempêtiers*), that they might not hurt them, while they refused the tithe to the priest and alms to the widow, orphan, and other indigent persons.

He adds that he had of late found people sufficiently foolish enough to spread a report that Grimaldus, Duke of Benevento, had sent persons into France, carrying certain powders which they had scattered over the fields, mountains, meadows, and springs, and had thus caused the death of an immense number of animals. Several of these persons were taken up, and they owned that they carried such powders about with them and though they made them suffer various tortures, they could not force them to retract what they had said.

Others affirmed that there was a certain country named Mangonia, where there were vessels which were borne through the air and took away the productions; that certain wizards had cut down trees to carry them to their country. He says, moreover, that one day three men and a woman were presented to him, who, they said, had fallen from these ships which floated in the air. They were kept some days in confinement, and at last having been confronted with their accusers, the latter were obliged, after contesting the matter, and making several depositions, to avow that they knew nothing certain concerning their being carried away, or of their pretended fall from the ship in the sky.

Charlemagne²¹⁴ in his Capitularies, and the authors of his time, speak also of these wizard tempest-brewers, enchanters,

²¹⁴ Vide Baluzii in Agobard. pp. 68, 69.

&c., and commanded that they should be reprimanded and severely chastised.

Pope Gregory IX.²¹⁵ in a letter addressed to the Archbishop of Mayence, the Bishop of Hildesheim, and Doctor Conrad, in 1234, thus relates the abominations of which they accused the heretic *Stadingians*. "When they receive," says he, "a novice, and when he enters their assemblies for the first time, he sees an enormous toad, as big as a goose, or bigger. Some kiss it on the mouth, some kiss it behind. Then the novice meets a pale man with very black eyes, and so thin that he is only skin and bones. He kisses him, and feels that he is cold as ice. After this kiss, the novice easily forgets the Catholic faith; afterwards they hold a feast together, after which a black cat comes down behind a statue, which usually stands in the room where they assemble.

"The novice first of all kisses the cat on the back, then he who presides over the assembly, and the others who are worthy of it. The imperfect receive only a kiss from the master; they promise obedience; after which they extinguish the lights, and commit all sorts of disorders. They receive every year, at Easter, the Lord's Body, and carry it in their mouth to their own houses, when they cast it away. They believe in Lucifer, and say that the Master of Heaven has unjustly and fraudulently thrown him into hell. They believe also that Lucifer is the creator of celestial things, that will re-enter into glory after having thrown down his adversary, and that through him they will gain eternal bliss." This letter bears

²¹⁵ Fleury, Hist. Eccles. tom. xvii. p. 53, ann. 1234.

date the 13th of June, 1233.

CHAPTER XIX.

INSTANCES OF SORCERERS AND WITCHES BEING, AS THEY SAID, TRANSPORTED TO THE SABBATH

All that is said about witches going to the sabbath is treated as a fable, and we have several examples which prove that they do not stir from their bed or their chamber. It is true that some of them anoint themselves with a certain grease or unguent, which makes them sleepy, and renders them insensible; and during this swoon they fancy that they go to the sabbath, and there see and hear what every one says is there seen and heard.

We read, in the book entitled *Malleus Maleficorum*, or the *Hammer of the Sorcerers*, that a woman who was in the hands of the Inquisitors assured them that she repaired really and bodily whither she would, and that even were she shut up in prison and strictly guarded, and let the place be ever so far off.

The Inquisitors ordered her to go to a certain place, to speak to certain persons, and bring back news of them; she promised to obey, and was directly locked up in a chamber, where she lay down, extended as if dead; they went into the room, and moved her; but she remained motionless, and without the least sensation, so that when they put a lighted candle to her foot and burnt it

she did not feel it. A little after, she came to herself, and gave an account of the commission they had given her, saying she had had a great deal of trouble to go that road. They asked her what was the matter with her foot; she said it hurt her very much since her return, and knew not whence it came.

Then the Inquisitors declared to her what had happened; that she had not stirred from her place, and that the pain in her foot was caused by the application of a lighted candle during her pretended absence. The thing having been verified, she acknowledged her folly, asked pardon, and promised never to fall into it again.

Other historians relate²¹⁶ that, by means of certain drugs with which both wizards and witches anoint themselves, they are really and corporally transported to the sabbath. Torquemada relates, on the authority of Paul Grilland, that a husband suspecting his wife of being a witch, desired to know if she went to the sabbath, and how she managed to transport herself thither. He watched her so narrowly, that he saw her one day anoint herself with a certain unguent, and then take the form of a bird and fly away, and he saw her no more till the next morning, when he found her by his side. He questioned her very much, without making her own anything; at last he told her what he had himself seen, and by dint of beating her with a stick, he constrained her to tell him her secret, and to take him with her to the sabbath.

Arrived at this place, he sat down to table with the others; but

²¹⁶ Alphons. à Castro ex Petro Grilland. Tract. de Hæresib.

as all the viands which were on the table were very insipid, he asked for some salt; they were some time before they brought any; at last, seeing a salt-cellar, he said – "God be praised, there is some salt at last!" At the same instant, he heard a very great noise, all the company disappeared, and he found himself alone and naked in a field among the mountains. He went forward and found some shepherds; he learned that he was more than three leagues from his dwelling. He returned thither as he could, and, having related the circumstance to the Inquisitors, they caused the woman and several others, her accomplices, to be taken up and chastised as they deserved.

The same author relates that a woman, returning from the sabbath and being carried through the air by the evil spirit, heard in the morning the bell for the *Angelus*. The devil let her go immediately, and she fell into a quickset hedge on the bank of a river; her hair fell disheveled over her neck and shoulders. She perceived a young lad who after much entreaty came and took her out and conducted her to the next village, where her house was situated; it required most pressing and repeated questions on the part of the lad, before she would tell him truly what had happened to her; she made him presents, and begged him to say nothing about it, nevertheless the circumstance got spread abroad.

If we could depend on the truth of these stories, and an infinite number of similar ones, which books are full of, we might believe that sometimes sorcerers are carried bodily to the sabbath; but

on comparing these stories with others which prove that they go thither only in mind and imagination, we may say boldly, that what is related of wizards and witches who go or think they go to the sabbath, is usually only illusion on the part of the devil, and seduction on the part of those of both sexes who fancy they fly and travel, while they in reality do not stir from their places. The spirit of malice and falsehood being mixed up in this foolish prepossession, they confirm themselves in their follies and engage others in the same impiety; for Satan has a thousand ways of deceiving mankind and of retaining them in error. Magic, impiety, enchantments, are often the effects of a diseased imagination. It rarely happens that these kind of people do not fall into every excess of licentiousness, irreligion, and theft, and into the most outrageous consequences of hatred to their neighbors.

Some have believed that demons took the form of the sorcerers and sorceresses who were supposed to be at the sabbath, and that they maintained the simple creatures in their foolish belief, by appearing to them sometimes in the shape of those persons who were reputed witches, while they themselves were quietly asleep in their beds. But this belief contains difficulties as great, or perhaps greater, than the opinion we would combat. It is far from easy to understand that the demon takes the form of pretended sorcerers and witches, that he appears under this shape, that he eats, drinks, and travels, and does other actions to make simpletons believe that sorcerers go to

the sabbath. What advantage does the devil derive from making idiots believe these things, or maintaining them in such an error? Nevertheless it is related²¹⁷ that St. Germain, Bishop of Auxerre, traveling one day, and passing through a village in his diocese, after having taken some refreshment there, remarked that they were preparing a great supper, and laying out the table anew; he asked if they expected company, and they told him it was for those good women who go by night. St. Germain well understood what was meant, and resolved to watch to see the end of this adventure.

Some time after he beheld a multitude of demons who came in the form of men and women, and sat down to table in his presence. St. Germain forbade them to withdraw, and calling the people of the house, he asked them if they knew those persons: they replied, that they were such and such among their neighbors: "Go," said he, "and see if they are in their houses:" they went, and found them asleep in their beds. The saint conjured the demons, and obliged them to declare that it is thus they mislead mortals, and make them believe that there are sorcerers and witches who go by night to the sabbath; they obeyed, and disappeared, greatly confused.

This history may be read in old manuscripts, and is to be found in Jacques de Varasse, Pierre de Noël's, in St. Antonine, and in old Breviaries of Auxerre, as well printed, as manuscript. I by no means guarantee the truth of this story; I think it is absolutely

²¹⁷ Bolland, 5 Jul. p. 287.

apocryphal; but it proves that those who wrote and copied it believed that these nocturnal journeys of sorcerers and witches to the sabbath, were mere illusions of the demon. In fact, it is hardly possible to explain all that is said of sorcerers and witches going to the sabbath, without having recourse to the ministry of the demon; to which we must add a disturbed imagination, with a mind misled, and foolishly prepossessed, and, if you will, a few drugs which affect the brain, excite the humors, and produce dreams relative to impressions already in their minds.

In John Baptist Porta Cardan, and elsewhere, may be found the composition of those ointments with which witches are said to anoint themselves, to be able to transport themselves to the sabbath; but the only real effect they produce is to send them to sleep, disturb their imagination, and make them believe they are going long journeys, while they remain profoundly sleeping in their beds.

The fathers of the council of Paris, of the year 829, confess that magicians, wizards, and people of that kind, are the ministers and instruments of the demon in the exercise of their diabolical art; that they trouble the minds of certain persons by beverages calculated to inspire impure love; that they are persuaded they can disturb the sky, excite tempests, send hail, predict the future, ruin and destroy the fruit, and take away the milk of cattle belonging to one person, in order to give it to cattle the property of another.

The bishops conclude that all the rigor of the laws enacted

by princes against such persons ought to be put in force against them, and so much the more justly, that it is evident they yield themselves up to the service of the devil.

Spranger, in the *Malleus Maleficorum*, relates, that in Suabia, a peasant who was walking in his fields with his little girl, a child about eight years of age, complained of the drought, saying, "Alas! when will God give us some rain?" Immediately the little girl told him that she could bring him some down whenever he wished it. He answered, – "And who has taught you that secret?" "My mother," said she, "who has strictly forbidden me to tell any body of it."

"And what did she do to give you this power?"

"She took me to a master, who comes to me as many times as I call him."

"And have you seen this master?"

"Yes," said she, "I have often seen men come to my mother's house; she has devoted me to one of them."

After this dialogue, the father asked her how she could do to make it rain upon his field only. She asked but for a little water; he led her to a neighboring brook, and the girl having called the water in the name of him to whom she had been devoted by her mother, they beheld directly abundance of rain falling on the peasant's field.

The father, convinced that his wife was a sorceress, accused her before the judges, who condemned her to be burnt. The daughter was baptized and vowed to God, but she then lost the

power of making it rain at her will.

CHAPTER XX.

STORY OF LOUIS GAUFREDI AND MAGDALEN DE LA PALUD, OWNED BY THEMSELVES TO BE A SORCERER AND SORCERESS

This is an unheard-of example; a man and woman who declared themselves to be a sorcerer and sorceress. Louis Gaufredi, Curé of the parish of Accouls, at Marseilles,²¹⁸ was accused of magic, and arrested at the beginning of the year 1611. Christopher Gaufredi, his uncle, of Pourrieres, in the neighborhood of Beauversas, sent him, six months before he (Christopher) died, a little paper book, in 16mo., with six leaves written upon; at the bottom of every leaf were two verses in French, and in the other parts were characters or ciphers, which contained magical mysteries. Louis Gaufredi at first thought very little of this book, and kept it for five years.

At the end of that time, having read the French verses, the devil presented himself under a human shape, and by no means deformed, and told him that he was come to fulfil all his wishes, if he would give *him* credit for all his good works. Gaufredi

²¹⁸ Causes Célèbres, tom. vi. p. 192.

agreed to the condition. He asked of the demon that he might enjoy a great reputation for wisdom and virtue among persons of probity, and that he might inspire with love all the women and young girls he pleased, by simply breathing upon them.

Lucifer promised him all this in writing, and Gaufredi very soon saw the perfect accomplishment of his designs. He inspired with love a young lady named Magdalen, the daughter of a gentleman whose name was Mandole de la Palud. This girl was only nine years old, when Gaufredi, on pretence of devotion and spirituality, gave her to understand that, as her spiritual father, he had a right to dispose of her, and persuaded her to give herself to the devil; and some years afterwards, he obliged her to give a schedule, signed with her own blood, to the devil, to deliver herself up to him still more. It is even said that he made her give from that time seven or eight other schedules.

After that, he breathed upon her, inspired her with a violent passion for himself, and took advantage of her; he gave her a familiar demon, who served her and followed her everywhere. One day he transported her to the witches' sabbath, held on a high mountain near Marseilles; she saw there people of all nations, and in particular Gaufredi, who held there a distinguished rank, and who caused characters to be impressed or stamped on her head and in several other parts of her body. This girl afterwards became a nun of the order of St. Ursula, and passed for being possessed by the devil.

Gaufredi also inspired several other women with an irregular

passion, by breathing on them; and this diabolical power lasted for six years. For at last they found out that he was a sorcerer and magician; and Mademoiselle de Mandole having been arrested by the Inquisition, and interrogated by father Michael Jacobin, owned a great part of what we have just told, and during the exorcisms discovered several other things. She was then nineteen years of age.

All this made Gaufredi known to the Parliament of Provence. They arrested him; and proceedings against him commenced February, 1611. They heard in particular the deposition of Magdalen de la Palud, who gave a complete history of the magic of Gaufredi, and the abominations he had committed with her. That for the last fourteen years he had been a magician, and head of the magicians; and if he had been taken by the justiciary power, the devil would have carried him body and soul to hell.

Gaufredi had voluntarily gone to prison; and from the first examination which he underwent, he denied everything and represented himself as an upright man. But from the depositions made against him, it was shown that his heart was very corrupted, and that he had seduced Mademoiselle de Mandole, and other women whom he confessed. This young lady was heard juridically the 21st of February, and gave the history of her seduction, of Gaufredi's magic, and of the sabbath whither he had caused her to be transported several times.

Some time after this, being confronted with Gaufredi, she owned that he was a worthy man, and that all which had

been reported against him was imaginary, and retracted all she herself had avowed. Gaufredi on his part acknowledged his illicit connection with her, denied all the rest, and maintained that it was the devil, by whom she was possessed, that had suggested to her all she had said. He owned that, having resolved to reform his life, Lucifer had appeared to him, and threatened him with many misfortunes; that in fact he had experienced several; that he had burnt the magic book in which he had placed the schedules of Mademoiselle de la Palud and his own, which he had made with the devil; but that when he afterwards looked for them, he was much astonished not to find them. He spoke at length concerning the sabbath, and said there was, near the town of Nice, a magician, who had all sorts of garments ready for the use of the sorcerers; that on the day of the sabbath, there is a bell weighing a hundred pounds, four ells in width, and with a clapper of wood, which made the sound dull and lugubrious. He related several horrors, impieties, and abominations which were committed at the sabbath. He repeated the schedule which Lucifer had given him, by which he bound himself to cast a spell on those women who should be to his taste.

After this exposition of the things related above, the attorney-general drew his conclusions: As the said Gaufredi had been convicted of having divers marks in several parts of his body, where if pricked he has felt no pain, neither has any blood come; that he has been illicitly connected with Magdalen de la Palud, both at church and in her own house, both by day and by night,

by letters in which were amorous or love characters, invisible to any other but herself; that he had induced her to renounce her God and her Church – and that she had received on her body several diabolical characters; that he has owned himself to be a sorcerer and a magician; that he had kept by him a book of magic, and had made use of it to conjure and invoke the evil spirit; that he has been with the said Magdalen to the sabbath, where he had committed an infinite number of scandalous, impious and abominable actions, such as having worshiped Lucifer: – for these causes, the said attorney-general requires that the said Gaufredi be declared attainted and convicted of the circumstances imputed to him, and as reparation of them, that he be previously degraded from sacred orders by the Lord Bishop of Marseilles, his diocesan, and afterwards condemned to make honorable amends one audience day, having his head and feet bare, a cord about his neck, and holding a lighted taper in his hands – to ask pardon of God, the king, and the court of justice – then, to be delivered into the hands of the executioner of the high court of law, to be taken to all the chief places and cross-roads of this city of Aix, and torn with red-hot pincers in all parts of his body; and after that, in the *Place des Jacobins*, burned alive, and his ashes scattered to the wind; and before being executed, let the question be applied to him, and let him be tormented as grievously as can be devised, in order to extract from him the names of his other accomplices. Deliberated the 18th of April, 1611, and the decree in conformity given the 29th of April, 1611.

The same Gaufredi having undergone the question ordinary and extraordinary, declared that he had seen at the sabbath no person of his acquaintance except Mademoiselle de Mandole; that he had seen there also certain monks of certain orders, which he did not name, neither did he know the names of the monks. That the devil anointed the heads of the sorcerers with certain unguents, which quite effaced every thing from their memory.

Notwithstanding this decree of the Parliament of Provence, many people believed that Gaufredi was a sorcerer only in imagination; and the author from whom we derive this history says, that there are some parliaments, amongst others the Parliament of Paris, which do not punish sorcerers when no other crimes are combined with magic; and that experience has proved that, in not punishing sorcerers, but simply treating them as madmen, it has been seen in time that they were no longer sorcerers, because they no longer fed their imagination with these ideas; while in those places where sorcerers were burnt, they saw nothing else, because everybody was strengthened in this prejudice. That is what this writer says.

But we cannot conclude from thence that God does not sometimes permit the demon to exercise his power over men, and lead them to the excess of malice and impiety, and shed darkness over their minds and corruption in their hearts, which hurry them into an abyss of disorder and misfortune. The demon tempted Job²¹⁹ by the permission of God. The messenger of Satan and the

²¹⁹ Job i. 12, 13, 22.

thorn in the flesh wearied St. Paul;²²⁰ he asked to be delivered from them; but he was told that the grace of God would enable him to resist his enemies, and that virtue was strengthened by infirmities and trials. Satan took possession of the heart of Judas, and led him to betray Jesus Christ his Master to the Jews his enemies.²²¹ The Lord wishing to warn his disciples against the impostors who would appear after his ascension, says that, by God's permission, these impostors would work such miracles as might mislead the very elect themselves,²²² were it possible. He tells them elsewhere,²²³ that Satan has asked permission of God to sift them as wheat, but that He has prayed for them that their faith may be steadfast.

Thus then with permission from God, the devil can lead men to commit such excesses as we have just seen in Mademoiselle de la Palud and in the priest Louis Gaufredi, perhaps even so far as really to take them through the air to unknown spots, and to what is called the witches' sabbath; or, without really conducting them thither, so strike their imagination and mislead their senses, that they think they move, see, and hear, when they do not stir from their places, see no object and hear no sound.

Observe, also, that the Parliament of Aix did not pass any sentence against even that young girl, it being their custom to

²²⁰ 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8.

²²¹ John xiii. 2.

²²² Matt. xxiv. 5.

²²³ Luke xxi.

inflict no other punishment on those who suffered themselves to be seduced and dishonored than the shame with which they were loaded ever after. In regard to the curé Gaufredi, in the account which they render to the chancellor of the sentence given by them, they say that this curé was in truth accused of sorcery, but that he had been condemned to the flames, as being arraigned and convicted of spiritual incest with Magdalen de la Palud, his penitent.²²⁴

²²⁴ The attentive reader of this horrible narrative will hardly fail to conclude that Gaufredi's fault was chiefly his seduction of Mademoiselle de la Palud, and that the rest was the effect of a heated imagination. The absurd proportions of the "*Sabbath*" bell will be sufficient to show this. If the bell were metallic, it would have weighed many tons, and a *wooden* bell of such dimensions, even were it capable of sounding, would weigh many hundred weight.

CHAPTER XXI.

REASONS WHICH PROVE THE POSSIBILITY OF SORCERERS AND WITCHES BEING TRANSPORTED TO THE SABBATH

All that has just been said is more fitted to prove that the going of sorcerers and witches to the sabbath is only an illusion and a deranged imagination on the part of these persons, and malice and deceit on that of the devil, who misleads them, and persuades them to yield themselves to him, and renounce true religion, by the lure of vain promises that he will enrich them, load them with honors, pleasures, and prosperity, rather than to convince us of the reality of the corporeal transportation of these persons to what they call the sabbath.

Here are some arguments and examples which seem to prove, at least, that the transportation of sorcerers to the sabbath is not impossible; for the impossibility of this transportation is one of the strongest objections which is made to the opinion that supposes it.

There is no difficulty in believing that God may allow the demon to mislead men, and carry them on to every excess of irregularity, error, and impiety; and that he may also permit him

to perform some things which to us appear astonishing, and even miraculous; whether the devil achieves them by natural power, or by the supernatural concurrence of God, who employs the evil spirit to punish his creature, who has willingly forsaken Him to yield himself up to his enemy. The prophet Ezekiel was transported through the air from Chaldea, where he was a captive, to Judea, and into the temple of the Lord, where he saw the abominations which the Israelites committed in that holy place; and thence he was brought back again to Chaldea by the ministration of angels, as we shall relate in another chapter.

We know by the Gospel that the devil carried our Saviour to the highest point of the temple at Jerusalem.²²⁵ We know also that the prophet Habakkuk²²⁶ was transported from Judea to Babylon, to carry food to Daniel in the lion's den. St. Paul informs us that he was carried up to the third heaven, and that he heard ineffable things; but he owns that he does not know whether it was in the body or only in the spirit. He therefore doubted not the possibility of a man's being transported in body and soul through the air. The deacon St. Philip was transported from the road from Gaza to Azotus in a very little time by the Spirit of God.²²⁷ We learn by ecclesiastical history, that Simon the magician was carried by the demon up into the air, whence he was precipitated, through

²²⁵ Matt. iv. 5.

²²⁶ Dan. xiv. 33, 34. Douay Version.

²²⁷ Acts viii. 40.

the prayers of St. Peter. John the Deacon,²²⁸ author of the life of St. Gregory the Great, relates that one Farold having introduced into the monastery of St. Andrew, at Rome, some women who led disorderly lives, in order to divert himself there with them, and offer insult to the monks, that same night Farold having occasion to go out, was suddenly seized and carried up into the air by demons, who held him there suspended by his hair, without his being able to open his mouth to utter a cry, till the hour of matins, when Pope St. Gregory, the founder and protector of that monastery, appeared to him, reproached him for his profanation of that holy place, and foretold that he would die within the year – which did happen.

I have been told by a magistrate, as incapable of being deceived by illusions as of imposing any such on other people,²²⁹ that on the 16th of October, 1716, a carpenter, who inhabited a village near Bar, in Alsace, called Heiligenstein, was found at five o'clock in the morning in the garret of a cooper at Bar. This cooper having gone up to fetch the wood for his trade that he might want to use during the day, and having opened the door, which was fastened with a bolt *on the outside*, perceived a man lying at full length upon his stomach, and fast asleep. He recognized him, and having asked him what he did there, the carpenter in the greatest surprise told him he knew neither by what means, nor by whom, he had been taken to that place.

²²⁸ Joan. Diacon. Vit. Gregor. Mag.

²²⁹ Lettre de M. G. P. R., 5th October, 1746.

The cooper not believing this, told him that assuredly he was come thither to rob him, and had him taken before the magistrate of Bar, who having interrogated him concerning the circumstance just spoken of, he related to him with great simplicity, that, having set off about four o'clock in the morning to come from Heiligenstein to Bar – there being but a quarter of an hour's distance between those two places – he saw on a sudden, in a place covered with verdure and grass, a magnificent feast, brightly illuminated, where a number of persons were highly enjoying themselves with a sumptuous repast and by dancing; that two women of his acquaintance, inhabitants of Bar, having asked him to join the company, he sat down to table and partook of the good cheer, for a quarter of an hour at the most; after that, one of the guests having cried out "*Citò, Citò*," he found himself carried away gently to the cooper's garret, without knowing how he had been transported there.

This is what he declared in presence of the magistrate. The most singular circumstance of this history is, that hardly had the carpenter deposed what we read, than those two women of Bar who had invited him to join their feast hung themselves, each in her own house.

The superior magistrates, fearing to carry things so far as to compromise perhaps half the inhabitants of Bar, judged prudently that they had better not inquire further; they treated the carpenter as a visionary, and the two women who hung themselves were considered as lunatics; thus the thing was hushed

up, and the matter ended.

If this is what they call the witches' sabbath, neither the carpenter, nor the two women, nor apparently the other guests at the festival, had need to come mounted on a demon; they were too near their own dwellings to have recourse to superhuman means in order to have themselves transported to the place of meeting. We are not informed how these guests repaired to this feast, nor how they returned each one to their home; the spot was so near the town, that they could easily go and return without any extraneous assistance.

But if secrecy was necessary, and they feared discovery, it is very probable that the demon transported them to their homes through the air before it was day, as he had transported the carpenter to the cooper's garret. Whatever turn may be given to this event, it is certainly difficult not to recognize a manifest work of the evil spirit in the transportation of the carpenter through the air, who finds himself, without being aware of it, in a well-fastened garret. The women who hung themselves, showed clearly that they feared something still worse from the law, had they been convicted of magic and witchcraft. And had not their accomplices also, whose names must have been declared, as much to fear?

William de Neubridge relates another story, which bears some resemblance to the preceding. A peasant having heard, one night as he was passing near a tomb, a melodious concert of different voices, drew near, and finding the door open, put in his head, and

saw in the middle a grand feast, well lighted, and a well-covered table, round which were men and women making merry. One of the attendants having perceived him, presented him with a cup filled with liquor; he took it, and having spilled the liquor, he fled with the cup to the first village, where he stopped. If our carpenter had done the same, instead of amusing himself at the feast of the witches of Bar, he would have spared himself much uneasiness.

We have in history several instances of persons full of religion and piety, who, in the fervor of their orisons, have been taken up into the air, and remained there for some time. We have known a good monk, who rises sometimes from the ground, and remains suspended without wishing it, without seeking to do so, especially on seeing some devotional image, or on hearing some devout prayer, such as "*Gloria in excelsis Deo.*" I know a nun to whom it has often happened in spite of herself to see herself thus raised up in the air to a certain distance from the earth; it was neither from choice, nor from any wish to distinguish herself, since she was truly confused at it. Was it by the ministration of angels, or by the artifice of the seducing spirit, who wished to inspire her with sentiments of vanity and pride? Or was it the natural effect of Divine love, or fervor of devotion in these persons?

I do not observe that the ancient fathers of the desert, who were so spiritual, so fervent, and so great in prayer, experienced similar ecstasies. These risings up in the air are more common

among our new saints, as we may see in the Life²³⁰ of St. Philip of Neri, where they relate his ecstasies and his elevations from earth into the air, sometimes to the height of several yards, and almost to the ceiling of his room, and this quite involuntarily. He tried in vain to hide it from the knowledge of those present, for fear of attracting their admiration, and feeling in it some vain complacency. The writers who give us these particulars do not say what was the cause, whether these ecstatic elevations from the ground were produced by the fervor of the Holy Spirit, or by the ministry of good angels, or by a miraculous favor of God, who desired thus to do honor to his servants in the eyes of men. God had moreover favored the same St. Philip de Neri, by permitting him to see the celestial spirits and even the demons, and to discover the state of holy spirits, by supernatural knowledge.

St. John Columbino, teacher of the Jesuits, made use of St. Catherine Columbine,²³¹ a maiden of extraordinary virtue, for the establishment of nuns of his order. It is related of her, that sometimes she remained in a trance, and raised up two yards from the ground, motionless, speechless, and insensible.

The same thing is said of St. Ignatius de Loyola,²³² who remained entranced by God, and raised up from the ground to the height of two feet, while his body shone like light. He has been seen to remain in a trance insensible, and almost without

²³⁰ On the 26th of May, of the Bollandists, c. xx. n. 356, 357.

²³¹ Acta S. J. Bolland. 3 Jul. p. 95.

²³² Ibid. 31 Jul. pp. 432, 663.

respiration, for eight days together.

St. Robert de Palentin²³³ rose also from the ground, sometimes to the height of a foot and a half, to the great astonishment of his disciples and assistants. We see similar trances and elevations in the Life of St. Bernard Ptolomei, teacher of the congregation of Notre Dame of Mount Olivet;²³⁴ of St. Philip Benitas, of the order of Servites; of St. Cajetan, founder of the Théatins;²³⁵ of St. Albert of Sicily, confessor, who, during his prayers, rose three cubits from the ground; and lastly of St. Dominic, the founder of the order of Preaching Brothers.²³⁶

It is related of St. Christina,²³⁷ Virgin at S. Tron, that being considered dead, and carried into the church in her coffin, as they were performing for her the usual service, she arose suddenly, and went as high as the beams of the church, as lightly as a bird. Being returned into the house with her sisters, she related to them that she had been led first to purgatory, and thence to hell, and lastly to paradise, where God had given her the choice of remaining there, or of returning to this world and doing penance for the souls she had seen in purgatory. She chose the latter, and was brought back to her body by the holy angels. From that time she could not bear the effluvia of the human body, and rose up

²³³ Acta S. J. Bolland, 21 Aug. pp. 469, 481.

²³⁴ Ibid. 18 Aug. p. 503.

²³⁵ Ibid. 17 Aug. p. 255.

²³⁶ Ibid. 4 Aug. p. 405.

²³⁷ Vita S. Christina. 24 Jul. Bolland. pp. 652, 653.

into trees and on the highest towers with incredible lightness, there to watch and pray. She was so light in running that she outran the swiftest dogs. Her parents tried in vain all they could do to stop her, even to loading her with chains, but she always escaped from them. So many other almost incredible things are related of this saint, that I dare not repeat them here.

M. Nicole, in his letters, speaks of a nun named Seraphina, who, in her ecstasies, rose from the ground with so much impetuosity that five or six of the sisters could hardly hold her down.

This doctor, reasoning on the fact,²³⁸ says, that it proves nothing at all for Sister Seraphina; but the thing well verified proves God and the devil – that is to say, the whole of religion; that the circumstance being proved, is of very great consequence to religion; that the world is full of certain persons who believe only what cannot be doubted; that the great heresy of the world is no longer Calvinism and Lutheranism, but atheism. There are all sorts of atheists – some real, others pretended; some determined, others vacillating, and others tempted to be so. We ought not to neglect this kind of people; the grace of God is all-powerful; we must not despair of bringing them back by good arguments, and by solid and convincing proofs. Now, if these facts are certain, we must conclude that there is a God, or bad angels who imitate the works of God, and perform by themselves or their subordinates works capable of deceiving even the elect.

²³⁸ Nicole, tom. i. Letters, pp. 203, 205. Letter xlv.

One of the oldest instances I remark of persons thus raised from the ground without any one touching them, is that of St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury, who died in 988, and who, a little time before his death, as he was going up stairs to his apartment, accompanied by several persons, was observed to rise from the ground; and as all present were astonished at the circumstance, he took occasion to speak of his approaching death.²³⁹

Trithemius, speaking of St. Elizabeth, Abbess of Schonau, in the diocese of Treves, says that sometimes she was in an ecstatic trance, so that she would remain motionless and breathless during a long time. In these intervals, she learned, by revelation and by the intercourse she had with blessed spirits, admirable things; and when she revived, she would discourse divinely, sometimes in German, her native language, sometimes in Latin, though she had no knowledge of that language. Trithemius did not doubt her sincerity and the truth of her discourse. She died in 1165.

St. Richard, Abbot of S. Vanne de Verdun, appeared in 1036 elevated from the ground while he was saying mass in presence of the Duke Galizon, his sons, and a great number of lords and soldiers.

In the last century, the reverend Father Dominic Carme Déchaux, was raised from the ground before the King of Spain, the queen, and all the court, so that they had only to blow upon

²³⁹ Vita Sancti Dunstani, xi. 42.

his body to move it about like a soap-bubble.²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ It is worthy of remark, that in the cases which Calmet refers to of persons in his own time, and of his own acquaintance, being thus raised from the ground, he in no instance states himself to have been a witness of the wonder.

CHAPTER XXII.

CONTINUATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT

We cannot reasonably dispute the truth of these ecstatic trances, the elevations of the body of some saints to a certain distance from the ground, since these circumstances are supported by so many witnesses. To apply this to the matter we here treat of, might it not be said that sorcerers and witches, by the operation of the demon, and with God's permission, by the help of a lively and subtile temperament, are rendered light and rise into the air, where their heated imagination and prepossessed mind lead them to believe that they have done, seen, and heard, what has no reality except in their own brain?

I shall be told that the parallel I make between the actions of saints, which can only be attributed to angels and the operation of the Holy Spirit, or to the fervor of their charity and devotion, with what happens to wizards and witches, is injurious and odious. I know how to make a proper distinction between them: do not the books of the Old and New Testament place in parallel lines the true miracles of Moses with those of the magicians of Pharaoh; those of antichrist and his subordinates with those of the saints and apostles; and does not St. Paul inform us that the angel of darkness often transforms himself into an angel of light?

In the first edition of this work, we spoke very fully of certain persons, who boast of having what they call "the garter," and by that means are able to perform with extraordinary quickness, in a very few hours, what would naturally take them several days journeying. Almost incredible things are related on that subject, nevertheless, the details are so circumstantial, that it is hardly possible there should not be some foundation for them; and the demon may transport these people in a forced and violent manner which causes them a fatigue similar to what they would have suffered, had they really performed the journey with more than ordinary rapidity.

For instance, the two circumstances related by Torquemada: the first of a poor scholar of his acquaintance, a clever man, who at last rose to be physician to Charles V.; when studying at Guadaloupe, was invited by a traveler who wore the garb of a monk, and to whom he had rendered some little service, to mount up behind him on his horse, which seemed a sorry animal and much tired; he got up and rode all night, without perceiving that he went at an extraordinary pace, but in the morning he found himself near the city of Granada; the young man went into the town, but the conductor passed onwards.

Another time, the father of a young man, known to the same Torquemada, and the young man himself, were going together to Granada, and passing through the village of Almeda, met a man on horseback like themselves and going the same way; after having traveled two or three leagues together, they halted, and the

cavalier spread his cloak on the grass, so that there was no crease in the mantle; they all placed what provisions they had with them on this extended cloak, and let their horses graze. They drank and ate very leisurely, and having told their servants to bring their horses, the cavalier said to them, "Gentlemen, do not hurry, you will reach the town early" – at the same time he showed them Granada, at not a quarter of an hour's distance from thence.

Something equally marvelous is said of a canon of the cathedral of Beauvais. The chapter of that church had been charged for a long time to acquit itself of a certain personal duty to the Church of Rome; the canons having chosen one of their brethren to repair to Rome for this purpose, the canon deferred his departure from day to day, and set off after matins on Christmas day – arrived that same day at Rome, acquitted himself there of his commission, and came back from thence with the same dispatch, bringing with him the original of the bond, which obliged the canons to send one of their body to make this offering in person. However fabulous and incredible this story may appear, it is asserted that there are authentic proofs of it in the archives of the cathedral; and that upon the tomb of the canon in question may still be seen the figures of demons engraved at the four corners in memory of this event. They even affirm that the celebrated Father Mabillon saw the authentic voucher.

Now, if this circumstance and the others like it are not absolutely fabulous, we cannot deny that they are the effects of

magic, and the work of the evil spirit.

Peter, the venerable Abbot of Cluny,²⁴¹ relates so extraordinary a thing which happened in his time, that I should not repeat it here, had it not been seen by the whole town of Mâcon. The count of that town, a very violent man, exercised a kind of tyranny over the ecclesiastics, and against whatever belonged to them, without troubling himself either to conceal his violence, or to find a pretext for it; he carried it on with a high hand and gloried in it. One day, when he was sitting in his palace in company with several nobles and others, they beheld an unknown person enter on horseback, who advanced to the count and desired him to follow him. The count rose and followed him, and having reached the door, he found there a horse ready caparisoned; he mounts it, and is immediately carried up into the air, crying out, in a terrible tone to those who were present, "Here, help me!" All the town ran out at the noise, but they soon lost sight of him; and no doubt was entertained that the devil had flown away with him to be the companion of his tortures, and to bear the pain of his excesses and his violence.

It is, then, not absolutely impossible that a person may be raised into the air and transported to some very high and distant place, by order or by permission of God, by good or evil spirits; but we must own that the thing is of rare occurrence, and that in all that is related of sorcerers and witches, and their assemblings at the witches' sabbath, there is an infinity of stories, which are

²⁴¹ Petrus Venerab. lib. ii. de Miraculis, c. 1, p. 1299.

false, absurd, ridiculous, and even destitute of probability. M. Remi, attorney-general of Lorraine, author of a celebrated work entitled *Demonology*, who tried a great number of sorcerers and sorceresses, with which Lorraine was then infested, produces hardly any proof whence we can infer the truth and reality of witchcraft, and of wizards and witches being transported to the sabbath.

CHAPTER XXIII.

OBSESSION AND

POSSESSION OF THE DEVIL

It is with reason that obsessions and possessions of the devil are placed in the rank of apparitions of the evil spirit among men. We call it *obsession* when the demon acts externally against the person whom he besets, and *possession* when he acts internally, agitates them, excites their ill humor, makes them utter blasphemy, speak tongues they have never learnt, discovers to them unknown secrets, and inspires them with the knowledge of the obscurest things in philosophy or theology. Saul was agitated and possessed by the evil spirit,²⁴² who at intervals excited his melancholy humor, and awakened his animosity and jealousy against David, or who, on occasion of the natural movement or impulsion of these dark moods, seized him, agitated him, and disturbed from his usual tenor of mind. Those whom the Gospel speaks of as being possessed,²⁴³ and who cried aloud that Jesus was the Christ, and that he was come to torment them before the time, that he was the Son of God, are instances of possession. But the demon Asmodeus, who

²⁴² 1 Sam. xvi. 23.

²⁴³ Matt. viii. 16; x. 11; xviii. 28.

beset Sara, the daughter of Raguel,²⁴⁴ and who killed her first seven husbands; those spoken of in the Gospel, who were simply struck with maladies or incommodities which were thought to be incurable; those whom the Scripture sometimes calls *lunatics*, who foamed at the mouth, who were convulsed, who fled the presence of mankind, who were violent and dangerous, so that they were obliged to be chained to prevent them from striking and maltreating other people; these kinds of persons were simply beset, or obsessed by the devil.

Opinions are much divided on the matter of obsessions and possessions of the devil. The hardened Jews, and the ancient enemies of the Christian religion, convinced by the evidence of the miracles which they saw worked by Jesus Christ, by his apostles, and by Christians, dared neither dispute their truth nor their reality; but they attributed them to magic, to the prince of the devils, or to the virtue of certain herbs, or of certain natural secrets.

St. Justin,²⁴⁵ Tertullian, Lactantius, St. Cyprian, Minutius, and the other fathers of the first ages of the church, speak of the power which the Christian exorcists exercised over the possessed, so confidently and so freely, that we can doubt neither the certainty nor the evidence of the thing. They call upon their adversaries to bear witness, and pique themselves on making the

²⁴⁴ Tob. iii. 8.

²⁴⁵ Justin. Dialog. cum supplem. Tertull. de Corona Militis, c. 11; and Apolog. c. 23; Cyp. ad Demetrium, &c.; Minutius, in Octavio, &c.

experiment in their presence, and of forcing to come out of the bodies of the possessed, to declare their names, and acknowledge that those they adore in the pagan temples are but devils.

Some opposed to the true miracles of the Saviour those of their false gods, their magicians, and their heroes of paganism, such as those of Esculapius, and the famous Apollonius of Tyana. The pretended freethinkers dispute them in our days upon philosophical principles; they attribute them to a diseased imagination, the prejudices of education, and hidden springs of the constitution; they reduce the expressions of Scripture to hyperbole; they maintain that Jesus Christ condescended to the understanding of the people, and their prepossessions or prejudices; that demons being purely spiritual substances could not by themselves act immediately upon bodies; and that it is not at all probable God should work miracles to allow of their doing so.

If we examine closely those who have passed for being possessed, we shall not perhaps find one amongst them, whose mind had not been deranged by some accident, or whose body was not attacked by some infirmity either known or hidden, which had caused some ferment in the blood or the brain, and which, joined to prejudice, or fear, had given rise to what was termed in their case obsession or possession.

The possession of King Saul is easily explained by supposing that he was naturally an atrabilarian, and that in his fits of melancholy he appeared mad, or furious; therefore they sought

no other remedy for his illness than music, and the sound of instruments proper to enliven or calm him. Several of the obsessions and possessions noted in the New Testament were simple maladies, or fantastic fancies, which made it believed that such persons were possessed by the devil. The ignorance of the people maintained this prejudice, and their being totally unacquainted with physics and medicine served to strengthen such ideas.

In one it was a sombre and melancholy temper, in another the blood was too fevered and heated; here the bowels were burnt up with heat, there a concentration of diseased humor, which suffocated the patient, as it happens with those subject to epilepsy and hypochondria, who fancy themselves gods, kings, cats, dogs, and oxen. There were others, who, disturbed at the remembrance of their crimes, fell into a kind of despair, and into fits of remorse, which irritated their mind and constitution, and made them believe that the devil pursued and beset them. Such, apparently, were those women who followed Jesus Christ, and who had been delivered by him from the unclean spirits that possessed them, and partly so Mary Magdalen, from whom he expelled seven devils. The Scripture often speaks of the spirit of impurity, of the spirit of falsehood, of the spirit of jealousy; it is not necessary to have recourse to a particular demon to excite these passions in us; St. James²⁴⁶ tells us that we are enough tempted by our own concupiscence, which leads us to

²⁴⁶ James i. 14.

evil, without seeking after external causes.

The Jews attributed the greater part of their maladies to the demon: they were persuaded that they were a punishment for some crime either known or unrevealed. Jesus Christ and his apostles wisely supposed these prejudices, without wishing to attack them openly and reform the old opinions of the Jews; they cured the diseases, and chased away the evil spirits who caused them, or who were said to cause them. The real and essential effect was the cure of the patient; no other thing was required to confirm the mission of Jesus Christ, his divinity, and the truth of the doctrine which he preached. Whether he expelled the demon, or not, is not essentially necessary to his first design; it is certain that he cured the patient either by expelling the devil, if it be true that this evil spirit caused the malady, or by replacing the inward springs and humors in their regular and natural state, which is always miraculous, and proves the Divinity of the Saviour.

Although the Jews were sufficiently credulous concerning the operations of the evil spirit, they at the same time believed that in general the demons who tormented certain persons were nothing else than the souls of some wretches, who, fearing to repair to the place destined for them, took possession of the body of some mortal whom they tormented and endeavored to deprive of life.²⁴⁷

Josephus the historian²⁴⁸ relates that Solomon composed some

²⁴⁷ Joseph. Antiq. lib. vii. c. 25.

²⁴⁸ Ibid. lib. viii. c. 2.

charms against maladies, and some formulæ of exorcism to expel evil spirits. He says, besides, that a Jew named Eleazar cured in the presence of Vespasian some possessed persons by applying under their nose a ring, in which was enchased a root, pointed out by that prince. They pronounced the name of Solomon with a certain prayer, and an exorcism; directly, the person possessed fell on the ground, and the devil left him. The generality of common people among the Jews had not the least doubt that Beelzebub, prince of the devils, had the power to expel other demons, for they said that Jesus Christ only expelled them in the name of Beelzebub.²⁴⁹ We read in history that sometimes the pagans expelled demons; and the physicians boast of being able to cure some possessed persons, as they cure hypochondriacs, and imaginary disorders.

These are the most plausible things that are said against the reality of the possessions and obsessions of the devil.

²⁴⁹ Matt. xii. 24.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TRUTH AND REALITY OF POSSESSION AND OBSESSION BY THE DEVIL PROVED FROM SCRIPTURE

But the possibility, the verity and reality of the obsessions and possessions of the devil are indubitable, and proved by the Scripture and by the authority of the Church, the Fathers, the Jews, and the pagans. Jesus Christ and the apostles believed this truth, and taught it publicly. The Saviour gives us a proof of his mission that he cures the possessed; he refutes the Pharisees, who asserted that he expelled the demons only in the name of Beelzebub; and maintains that he expels them by the virtue of God.²⁵⁰ He speaks to the demons; he threatens them, and puts them to silence. Are these equivocal marks of the reality of obsessions? The apostles do the same, as did the early Christians their disciples. All this was done before the eyes of the heathen, who could not deny it, but who eluded the force and evidence of these things, by attributing this power to other demons, or to certain divinities, more powerful than ordinary demons; as if

²⁵⁰ Luke viii. 21.

the kingdom of Satan were divided, and the evil spirit could act against himself, or as if there were any collusion between Jesus Christ and the demons whose empire he had just destroyed.

The seventy disciples on their return from their mission came to Jesus Christ²⁵¹ to give him an account of it, and tell him that the demons themselves are obedient to them. After his resurrection,²⁵² the Saviour promises to his apostles that they shall work miracles in his name, *that they shall cast out devils*, and receive the gift of tongues. All which was literally fulfilled.

The exorcisms used at all times in the Church against the demons are another proof of the reality of possessions; they show that at all times the Church and her ministers have believed them to be true and real, since they have always practiced these exorcisms. The ancient fathers defied the heathen to produce a demoniac before the Christians; they pride themselves on curing them, and expelling the demon. The Jewish exorcists employed even the name of Jesus Christ to cure demoniacs;²⁵³ they found it efficacious in producing this effect; it is true that sometimes they employed the name of Solomon, and some charms said to have been invented by that prince, or roots and herbs to which they attributed the same virtues, like as a clever physician by the secret of his art can cure a hypochondriac or a maniac, or a man strongly persuaded that he is possessed by the devil, or as

²⁵¹ Luke x. 17.

²⁵² Mark xvi. 27.

²⁵³ Mark ix. 36-38. Acts xi. 14.

a wise confessor will restore the mind of a person disturbed by remorse, and agitated by the reflection of his sins, or the fear of hell. But we are speaking now of real possessions and obsessions which are cured only by the power of God, by the name of Jesus Christ, and by exorcisms. The son of Sceva, the Jewish priest,²⁵⁴ having undertaken to expel a devil in the name of Jesus Christ, whom Paul preached, the demoniac threw himself upon him, and would have strangled him, saying that he knew Jesus Christ, and Paul, but that for him, he feared him not. We must then distinguish well between possessions and possessions, exorcists and exorcists. There may be found demoniacs who counterfeit the possessed, to excite compassion and obtain alms. There may even be exorcists who abuse the name and power of Jesus Christ to deceive the ignorant; and how do I know that there are not even impostors to be found, who would place pretended possessed persons in the way, in order to pretend to cure them, and thus gain a reputation?

I do not enter into longer details on this matter; I have treated it formerly in a particular dissertation on the subject, printed apart with other dissertations on Scripture, and I have therein replied to the objections which were raised on this subject.

²⁵⁴ Acts xix. 14.

CHAPTER XXV. EXAMPLES OF REAL POSSESSIONS CAUSED BY THE DEVIL

We must now report some of the most famous instances of the possession and obsession of the demon. Every body is talking at this time of the possession (by the devil) of the nuns of Loudun, on which such different opinions were given, both at the time and since. Martha Broissier, daughter of a weaver of Romorantin,²⁵⁵ made as much noise in her time; but Charles Miron, Bishop of Orleans, discovered the fraud, by making her drink holy water as common water; by making them present to her a key wrapped up in red silk, which was said to be a piece of the true cross; and in reciting some lines from Virgil, which Martha Broissier's demon took for exorcisms, agitating her very much at the approach of the hidden key, and at the recital of the verses from Virgil. Henri de Gondi, Cardinal Bishop of Paris, had her examined by five of the faculty; three were of opinion that there was a great deal of imposture and a little disease. The parliament took notice of the affair, and nominated eleven physicians, who reported unanimously that there was nothing demoniacal in this matter.

²⁵⁵ Jean de Lorres, sur l'an 1599. Thuan. Hist. l. xii.

In the reign of Charles IX.²⁵⁶ or a little before, a young woman of the town of Vervins, fifteen or sixteen years of age, named Nicola Aubry, had different apparitions of a spectre, who called itself her grandfather, and asked her for masses and prayers for the repose of his soul.²⁵⁷ Very soon after, she was transported to different places by this spectre, and sometimes even was carried out of sight, and from the midst of those who watched over her.

Then, they had no longer any doubt that it was the devil, which they had a great deal of trouble to make her believe. The Bishop of Laon gave his power (of attorney) for conjuring the spirit, and commanded them to see that the proces-verbaux were exactly drawn up by the notaries nominated for that purpose. The exorcisms lasted more than three months, and only serve to prove more and more the fact of the possession. The poor sufferer was torn from the hands of nine or ten men, who could hardly retain their hold of her; and on the last day of the exorcisms sixteen could not succeed in so doing. She had been lying on the ground, when she stood upright and stiff as a statue, without those who held her being able to prevent it. She spoke divers languages, revealed the most secret things, announced others at the moment they were being done, although at a great distance; she discovered to many the secret of their conscience, uttered at once three

²⁵⁶ Charles IX. died in 1574.

²⁵⁷ This story is taken from a book entitled "Examen et Discussion Critique de l'Histoire des Diables de Loudun, &c., par M. de la Ménardaye." A Paris, chez de Bure l'Ainé, 1749.

different voices, or tones, and spoke with her tongue hanging half a foot out of her mouth. After some exorcisms had been made at Vervins, they took her to Laon, where the bishop undertook her. He had a scaffolding erected for this purpose in the cathedral. Such immense numbers of people went there, that they saw in the church ten or twelve thousand persons at a time; some even came from foreign countries. Consequently, France could not be less curious; so the princes and great people, and those who could not come there themselves, sent persons who might inform them of what passed. The Pope's nuncios, the parliamentary deputies, and those of the university were present.

The devil, forced by the exorcisms, rendered such testimony to the truth of the Catholic religion, and, above all, to the reality of the holy eucharist, and at the same time to the falsity of Calvinism, that the irritated Calvinists no longer kept within bounds. From the time the exorcisms were made at Vervins, they wanted to kill the possessed, with the priest who exorcised her, in a journey they made her take to Nôtre Dame de Liesse. At Laon, it was still worse; as they were the strongest in numbers there, a revolt was more than once apprehended. They so intimidated the bishop and the magistrates, that they took down the scaffold, and did not have the general procession usually made before exorcisms. The devil became prouder thereupon, insulted the bishop, and laughed at him. On the other hand, the Calvinists having obtained the suppression of the procession, and that she should be put in prison to be more nearly examined, Carlier,

a Calvinist doctor, suddenly drew from his pocket something which was averred to be a most violent poison, which he threw into her mouth, and she kept it on her stomach whilst the convulsion lasted, but she threw it up of herself when she came to her senses.

All these experiments decided them on recommencing the processions, and the scaffold was replaced. Then the outraged Calvinists conceived the idea of a writing from M. de Montmorency, forbidding the continuation of the exorcisms, and enjoining the king's officers to be vigilant. Thus they abstained a second time from the procession, and again the devil triumphed at it. Nevertheless, he discovered to the bishop the trick of this suppositious writing, named those who had taken part in it, and declared that he had again gained time by this obedience of the bishop to the will of man rather than that of God. Besides that, the devil had already protested publicly that it was against his own will that he remained in the body of this woman; that he had entered there by the order of God; that it was to convert the Calvinists or to harden them, and that he was very unfortunate in being obliged to act and speak against himself.

The chapter then represented to the bishop that it would be proper to make the processions and the conjurations twice a-day, to excite still more the devotion of the people. The prelate acquiesced in it, and everything was done with the greatest *éclât*, and in the most orthodox manner. The devil declared again more than once that he had gained time; once because the bishop had

not confessed himself; another time because he was not fasting; and lastly, because it was requisite that the chapter and all the dignitaries should be present, as well as the court of justice and the king's officers, in order that there might be sufficient testimony; that he was forced to warn the bishop thus of his duty, and that accursed was the hour when he entered into the body of this person; at the same time, he uttered a thousand imprecations against the church, the bishop, and the clergy.

Thus, at the last day of possession, everybody being assembled in the afternoon, the bishop began the last conjurations, when many extraordinary things took place; amongst others, the bishop desiring to put the holy eucharist near the lips of this poor woman, the devil in some way seized hold of his arm, and at the same moment raised this woman up, as it were, out of the hands of sixteen men who were holding her. But at last, after much resistance, he came out, and left her perfectly cured, and thoroughly sensible of the goodness of God. The *Te Deum* was sung to the sound of all the bells in the town; nothing was heard among the Catholics but acclamations of joy, and many of the Calvinists were converted, whose descendants still dwell in the town. Florimond de Raimond, counselor of the parliament of Bordeaux, had the happiness to be of the number, and has written the history of it. For nine days they made the procession, to return thanks to God; and they founded a perpetual mass, which is celebrated every year on the 8th of February, and they represented this story in *bas-relief* round the choir, where it may

be seen at this day.

In short, God, as if to put the finishing stroke to so important a work, permitted that the Prince of Condé, who had just left the Catholic religion, should be misled on this subject by those of his new communion. He sent for the poor woman, and also the Canon d'Espinois, who had never forsaken her during all the time of the exorcisms. He interrogated them separately, and at several different times, and made every effort, not to discover if they had practiced any artifice, but to find out if there was any in the whole affair. He went so far as to offer the canon very high situations if he would change his religion. But what can you obtain in favor of heresy from sensible and upright people, to whom God has thus manifested the power of his church? All the efforts of the prince were useless; the firmness of the canon, and the simplicity of the poor woman, only served to prove to him still more the certainty of the event which displeased him, and he sent them both home.

Yet a return of ill-will caused him to have this woman again arrested, and he kept her in one of his prisons until her father and mother having entreated an inquiry into this injustice to King Charles IX., she was set at liberty by order of his majesty.²⁵⁸

An event of such importance, and so carefully attested, both on the part of the bishop and the chapter, and on that of the magistrates, and even by the violence of the Calvinistic party,

²⁵⁸ Trésor et entière Histoire de la Victime du Corps de Dieu, présentée au Pape, au Roi, au Chancelier de France, au Premier Président. A Paris, 4to. chez Chesnau. 1578.

ought not to be buried in silence. King Charles IX., on making his entry into Laon some time after, desired to be informed about it by the dean of the cathedral, who had been an ocular witness of the affair. His majesty commanded him to give publicity to the story, and it was then printed, first in French, then in Latin, Spanish, Italian, and German, with the approbation of the Sorbonne, supported by the rescripts of Pope Pius V. and Gregory XIII. his successor. And they made after that a pretty exact abridgment of it, by order of the Bishop of Laon, printed under the title of *Le Triomphe du S. Sacrament sur le Diable*.

These are facts which have all the authenticity that can be desired, and such as a man of honor cannot with any good-breeding affect to doubt, since he could not after that consider any facts as certain without being in shameful contradiction with himself.²⁵⁹

²⁵⁹ This account is one of the many in which the theory of possession was made use of to impugn the Protestant faith. The simplicity and credulity of Calmet are very remarkable. — Editor.

CHAPTER XXVI. CONTINUATION OF THE SAME SUBJECT

There was in Lorraine, about the year 1620, a woman, possessed (by the devil), who made a great noise in the country, but whose case is much less known among foreigners. I mean Mademoiselle Elizabeth de Ranfaing, the story of whose possession was written and printed at Nancy, in 1622, by M. Pichard, a doctor of medicine, and physician in ordinary to their highnesses of Lorraine. Mademoiselle de Ranfaing was a very virtuous person, through whose agency God established a kind of order of nuns *of the Refuge*, the principal object of which is to withdraw from profligacy the girls or women who have fallen into libertinism. M. Pichard's work was approved by doctors of theology, and authorized by M. de Porcelets, Bishop of Toul, and in an assembly of learned men whom he sent for to examine the case, and the reality of the possession. It was ardently attacked and loudly denied by a monk of the Minimite order, named Claude Pithoy, who had the temerity to say that he would pray to God to send the devil into himself, in case the woman whom they were exorcising at Nancy was possessed; and again, that God was not God if he did not command the devil to seize his body, if the woman they exorcised at Nancy was really possessed.

M. Pichard refutes him fully; but he remarks that persons who are weak minded, or of a dull and melancholy character, heavy, taciturn, stupid, and who are naturally disposed to frighten and disturb themselves, are apt to fancy that they see the devil, that they speak to him, and even that they are possessed by him, above all, if they are in places where others are possessed, whom they see, and with whom they converse. He adds that, thirteen or fourteen years ago, he remarked at Nancy a great number of this kind, and with the help of God he cured them. He says the same thing of atrabilarians, and women who suffer from *furor uterine*, who sometimes do such things and utter such cries, that any one would believe they were possessed.

Mademoiselle Ranfaing having become a widow in 1617, was sought in marriage by a physician named Poviot. As she would not listen to his addresses, he first of all gave her philtres to make her love him, which occasioned strange derangements in her health. At last he gave her some magical medicaments (for he was afterwards known to be a magician, and burnt as such by a judicial sentence). The physicians could not relieve her, and were quite at fault with her extraordinary maladies. After having tried all sorts of remedies, they were obliged to have recourse to exorcisms.

Now these are the principal symptoms which made it believed that Mademoiselle Ranfaing was really possessed. They began to exorcise her the 2d September, 1619, in the town of Remirémont, whence she was transferred to Nancy; there she was

visited and interrogated by several clever physicians, who, after having minutely examined the symptoms of what happened to her, declared that the casualties they had remarked in her had no relation at all with the ordinary course of known maladies, and could only be the result of diabolical possession.

After which, by order of M. de Porcelets, Bishop of Toul, they nominated for the exorcists M. Viardin, a doctor of divinity, counselor of state of the Duke of Lorraine, a Jesuit and Capuchin. Almost all the monks in Nancy, the said lord bishop, the Bishop of Tripoli, suffragan of Strasburg, M. de Sancy, formerly ambassador from the most Christian king at Constantinople, and then priest of the *Oratoire*, Charles de Lorraine, Bishop of Verdun; two doctors of the Sorbonne sent on purpose to be present at the exorcisms, often exorcised her in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, and she always replied pertinently to them, she who could hardly read Latin.

They report the certificate given by M. Nicolas de Harley, very well skilled in the Hebrew tongue, who avowed that Mademoiselle Ranfaing was really possessed, and had answered him from the movement of his lips alone, without his having pronounced any words, and had given several proofs of her possession. The Sieur Garnier, a doctor of the Sorbonne, having also given her several commands in Hebrew, she replied pertinently, but in French, saying that the compact was made that he should speak only in the usual tongue. The demon added, "Is it not enough that I show thee that I understand what thou sayest?"

The same M. Garnier, speaking to him in Greek, inadvertently put one case for another; the possessed, or rather the devil, said to him, "*Thou hast committed an error.*" The doctor said to him in Greek, "Point out my fault;" the devil replied, "*Let it suffice thee that I point out an error; I shall tell thee no more concerning it.*"

The doctor telling him in Greek to hold his tongue, he answered, "Thou commandest me to hold my tongue, and I will not do so."

M. Midot Ecolâtre de Toul said to him in the same language, "Sit down;" he replied, "I will not sit down." M. Midot said to him moreover in Greek, "Sit down on the ground and obey;" but as the demon was going to throw the possessed by force on the ground, he said to him in the same tongue, "Do it gently;" he did so. He said in Greek, "Put out the right foot;" he extended it; he said also in the same language, "Cause her knees to be cold," the woman replied that she felt them very cold.

The Sieur Mince, a doctor of the Sorbonne, holding a cross in his hand, the devil whispered to him in Greek, "Give me the cross," which was heard by some persons who were near him. M. Mince desired to make the devil repeat the same sentence; he answered, "I will not repeat it all in Greek;" but he simply said in French, "Give me," and in Greek, "the cross."

The Reverend Father Albert, Capuchin, having ordered him in Greek to make the sign of the cross seven times with his tongue, in honor of the seven joys of the Virgin, he made the sign of the cross three times with his tongue, and then twice with his nose; but the holy man told him anew to make the sign of the

cross seven times with his tongue; he did so; and having been commanded in the same language to kiss the feet of the Lord Bishop of Toul, he prostrated himself and kissed his feet.

The same father having observed that the demon wished to overturn the *Bénitier*, or basin of holy water which was there, he ordered him to take the holy water and not spill it, and he obeyed. The Father commanded him to give marks of the possession; he answered, "The possession is sufficiently known;" he added in Greek, "I command thee to carry some holy water to the governor of the town." The demon replied, "It is not customary to exorcise in that tongue." The father answered in Latin, "It is not for thee to impose laws on us; but the church has power to command thee in whatever language she may think proper."

Then the demon took the basin of holy water and carried it to the keeper of the Capuchins, to the Duke Eric of Lorraine, to the Counts of Brionne, Remonville, la Vaux, and other lords.

The physician, M. Pichard, having told him in a sentence, partly Hebrew, and partly Greek, to cure the head and eyes of the possessed woman; hardly had he finished speaking the last words, when the demon replied: "Faith, we are not the cause of it; her brain is naturally moist: that proceeds from her natural constitution;" then M. Pichard said to the assembly, "Take notice, gentlemen, that he replies to Greek and Hebrew at the same time." "Yes," replied the demon, "you discover the pot of roses, and the secret; I will answer you no more." There were several questions and replies in foreign languages, which showed that he

understood them very well.

M. Viardin having asked him in Latin, "Ubi censebaris quandò mane oriebaris?" He replied, "Between the seraphim." They said to him, "Pro signo exhibe nobis patibulum fratris Cephæ;" the devil extended his arms in the form of a St. Andrew's cross. They said to him, "Applica carpum carpo;" he did so, placing the wrist of one hand over the other; then, "Admove tarsum tarso et metatarsum metatarso;" he crossed his feet and raised them one upon the other. Then afterwards he said, "Excita in calcaneo qualitatem congregantem heterogenea;" the possessed said she felt her heel cold; after which, "Repræsenta nobis labarum Venetorum;" he made the figure of the cross. Afterwards they said, "Exhibe nobis videntum Deum benè precantem nepotibus ex salvatore Egypti;" he crossed his arms as did Jacob on giving his blessing to the sons of Joseph; and then, "Exhibe crucem conterebrantem stipiti," he represented the cross of St. Peter. The exorcist having by mistake said, "Per eum qui adversus te præliavit," the demon did not give him time to correct himself; he said to him, "O the ass! instead of *præliatus est*." He was spoken to in Italian and German, and he always answered accordingly.

They said to him one day, "Sume encolpium ejus qui hodiè functus est officio illius de quo cecinit Psaltes: pro patribus tuis nati sunt tibi filii;" he went directly and took the cross hanging round the neck and resting on the breast of the Prince Eric de Lorraine, who that same day had filled the office of bishop in

giving orders, because the Bishop of Toul was indisposed. He discovered secret thoughts, and heard words that were said in the ear of some persons which he was not possibly near enough to overhear, and declared that he had known the mental prayer that a good priest had made before the holy sacrament.

Here is a trait still more extraordinary. They said to the demon, speaking Latin and Italian in the same sentence: "Adi scholastrum seniore[m] et osculare ejus pedes, la cui scarpa ha più di sugaro;" that very moment he went and kissed the foot of the Sieur Juillet, ecolâtre of St. George, the Elder of M. Viardin, ecolâtre of the Primitiale. M. Juillet's right foot was shorter than the left, which obliged him to wear a shoe with a cork heel (or raised by a piece of cork, called in Italian *sugaro*).

They proposed to him very difficult questions concerning the Trinity, the Incarnation, the holy sacrament of the altar, the grace of God, free will, the manner in which angels and demons know the thoughts of men, &c., and he replied with much clearness and precision. She discovered things unknown to everybody, and revealed to certain persons, but secretly and in private, some sins of which they had been guilty.

The demon did not obey the voice only of the exorcists; he obeyed even when they simply moved their lips, or held their hand, or a handkerchief, or a book upon the mouth. A Calvinist having one day mingled secretly in the crowd, the exorcist, who was warned of it, commanded the demon to go and kiss his feet; he went immediately, rushing through the crowd.

An Englishman having come from curiosity to the exorcist, the devil told him several particulars relating to his country and religion. He was a Puritan; and the Englishman owned that everything he had said was true. The same Englishman said to him in his language, "As a proof of thy possession, tell me the name of my master who formerly taught me embroidery;" he replied, "William." They commanded him to recite the *Ave Maria*

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