

am sorry, however, to say that the opportunity for verifying your theory was unfavourable. Before Mrs. — was able distinctly to double her vision, my figure had retreated to the window, and disappeared there.— The lady followed, shook the curtains, and tried the window, being still loth to believe it was not a reality, so distinct and forcible was the impression. Finding, however, that there was no natural means of egress, she became convinced of having seen a spectral apparition, such as are recorded in Dr. Hibern's work, and consequently felt no alarm or agitation. The appearance lasted four or five minutes. It was bright day-light, and Mrs. — is confident that the apparition was fully as vivid as the reality; and when standing close to her, it concealed of course, the real objects behind it. Upon being told of this my visible appearance in the spirit, having only been audible a few days before, I was, as you may imagine, more alarmed for the health of the lady than for my own approaching death, or any other fatality the vision might be supposed to forebode. Still both the stories were so very much *en regle* as ghost stories, the three calls of the plaintive voice, each one louder than the preceding, the fixed eyes and mournful expression of the phantom, its noiseless step, and spirit like vanishing, were all so characteristic of the *Wraith*, that I might have been unable to shake off some disagreeable fancies, such as a mind once deeply saturated with the poison of nursery tales, cannot altogether banish, had it not been for a third apparition, at whose visit I myself assisted a few days afterwards, and which I think is the key stone of the case, rendering it as complete as could be wished.

"On the 4th of this month (January, 1830,) five days after the last apparition, at about ten o'clock at night, I was sitting in the drawing-room with Mrs. —, and in the act of stirring the fire, when she exclaimed 'Why there's the cat in the room.' I asked 'Where?' she replied 'there, close to you.' 'Where?' I repeated. 'Why on the rug to be sure, between yourself and the coal-scuttle.' I had the poker in my hand, and I pushed it in the direction mentioned. 'Take care,' she cried out, 'take care, you are hitting her with the poker.' I again asked her to point out exactly where she saw the cat. She replied, 'why sitting up there close to your feet on the rug—she is looking at me: it is Kitty—come here Kitty.' There are two cats in the house, one of which went by this name: they were rarely, if ever in the drawing room. At this time Mrs. — had certainly no idea that the sight of the cat was an illusion. I asked her to touch it.— She got up for the purpose, and seemed as if she was pursuing something which moved away. She followed a few steps, and then said 'it has gone under that chair.' I told her it was an illusion.— She would not believe it. I lifted up the chair; there was nothing there, nor did Mrs. — see anything more of it. I searched the room all over, and found nothing. There was a dog lying on the hearth, who would have betrayed great uneasiness had a cat been in the room. He was perfectly quiet. In order to be quite certain, however, I rang the bell, and sent for the two cats. They were both found in the housekeeper's room. The most superstitious person could now doubt no longer as to the real character of all these illusory appearances; and the case is so complete, that I hope there will be no renewal of them symptomatic as they of course are, of a disordered state of the body. I am sorry to say Mrs. — as well as myself forgot to try in time the *exerimentum crucis* on the cat.

"Mrs. — has naturally a morbidly sensitive imagination, so strongly affecting her corporeal impressions, that the story of any person having suffered severe pain by accident or otherwise, will occasionally produce acute twinges of pain in the corresponding parts of her person. An account for instance, of the amputation of an arm, will produce an instantaneous and severe sense of pain in her own arm, and so of other relations. She is subject to talk in her sleep with great fluency, to repeat poetry very much at length, particularly when unwell, and even to *cap verses* for half an hour together, never failing to quote lines beginning with the final letter of the preceding, till her memory is exhausted.

"She has, during the last six weeks, been considerably reduced and weakened by a tiresome cough, which has also added to her weakness, by preventing the taking of a daily tonic, to which she had been for some time accustomed. She had also confined herself from this cause to the house for some weeks, which is not usual with her, being accustomed to take a great deal of air and exercise. Her general health has not been strong for some time past, and a long experience has proved, beyond a doubt, that her ill health is attributable to a disordered state of the digestive organs. These details are necessary for a complete understanding of this case which strikes me as being one of remarkable interest, from combining the characters of an ordinary ghost story with those of an indubitable illusion; as well as from the circumstance occurring to a person of strong mind; devoid of any superstitious fancies, and to be implicitly relied on for

the truth of all the minutest details of the appearances. Indeed, I do not recollect any well authenticated and recent instance of *auricular delusion* like the first of those I have related; though, of course the warning voices and sounds which have frightened so many weak persons into their graves, must have been of this nature. Mrs. — tells me that about ten years ago a similar circumstance happened to her, when residing at Florence, and in perfect health. While undressing after a ball, she heard a voice call her repeatedly by name, and was at that time unable to account for the fact.

"January 10, 1830."

ORIGIN OF THE DUTIES ON SPIRITS.

During the latter part of the reign of George I. and the earlier part of that of George II, gin-drinking was exceedingly prevalent; and the cheapness of ardent spirits, and the multiplication of public houses were denounced from the pulpit, and in the presentments of Grand Juries, as pregnant with the most destructive consequences to the health and morals of the community.— At length, ministers determined to make a vigorous effort to put a stop to the further use of spirituous liquors, except as a cordial or medicine. For this purpose, an act was passed in 1739. Its preamble is to this effect:—"Whereas the drinking of spirituous liquors or strong waters has become very common, especially among people of lower and inferior rank, the constant and excessive use of which tends greatly to the destruction of their health, rendering them unfit for useful labour and business, debauching their morals, and inciting them to perpetrate all vices; and the ill consequences of the excessive use of such liquors are not confined to the present generation, but extend to future ages, and tend to the destruction and ruin of this kingdom." The enactments were such as might be expected to follow such a preamble. They were not intended to repress the vice of gin-drinking, but to root it out altogether. To accomplish this, a duty of twenty shillings a gallon was laid on spirits, exclusive of a heavy license duty on retailers. Extraordinary encouragements were at the same time held out to informers and a fine of £100. was ordered to be rigorously exacted from those who, were it even through inadvertency, should vend the smallest quantity of spirits which had not paid the full duty. Here was an act which might, one should think, have satisfied the bitterest enemy of gin. But instead of the anticipated effects, it produced those directly opposite. The respectable dealers withdrew from a trade proscribed by the legislature; so that the spirit business fell into the hands of the lowest and most profligate characters, who, as they had nothing to lose were not deterred by penalties from breaking through all its provisions. The populace having in this, as in all similar cases, espoused the cause of the smugglers, and unlicensed dealers, the officers of the revenue were openly assailed in the streets of London and other great towns; informers were hunted down like wild beasts; and drunkenness, disorders and crimes, increased with a frightful rapidity. "Within two years of the passing of the act," says Tindal, "it had become *odious and contemptible*, and policy as well as humanity forced the Commissioners of Excise to mitigate its penalties." During the two years in question, no fewer than 12,000 persons were convicted of offences connected with the sale of spirits.— But no exertion on the part of the revenue officers and magistrates could stem the torrent of smuggling. According to a statement made by the Earl of Cholmondeley in the House of Lords, it appears, that at the very moment when the sale of spirits was declared to be illegal, and every possible exertion made to suppress it, upwards of SEVEN MILLIONS of gallons were annually consumed in London, and other parts immediately adjacent! Under such circumstances, government had but one course to pursue—to give up the unequal struggle. In 1742, the high prohibitory duties were accordingly repealed, and such moderate duties imposed, as were calculated to increase the revenue, by increasing the consumption of legally distilled spirits. The bill for this purpose, was vehemently opposed in the House of Lords by most of the Bishops, and many other Peers, who exhausted all their rhetoric in depicting the mischievous consequences that would result from a toleration of the practice of gin-drinking. To these declamations it was unanswerably replied, that whatever the evils of the practice might be, it was impossible to repress them by prohibitory enactments! and that the attempts to do so had been productive of far more mischief than had ever resulted, or could be expected to result, from the greatest abuse of spirits. An instant stop was put to smuggling; and if the vice of drunkenness was not materially diminished, it has never been stated that it was increased.—*Edinburgh Review.*

POPISH RELICS.

Ere the bright dawn of the Reformation lighted upon England, the furniture of churches appears, from ancient records, to

have been of a splendid description; an vast sums are stated to have been lavished upon the images of saints, &c. Great Saint Mary's Chapel, Cambridge, is in the possession of an inventory of the goods and chattels possessed by that ancient edifice in the 19th year of Henry VII., of which the following is a transcript:—

- "Item—A coat of tawney damask-purpled with velvet, appertaining to our Lady.
- "Item—A coat for her son, of the same satin, purpled with black velvet, and spangled with gold.
- "Item—A relic, called a box of silver with the oil of St. Nicholas.
- "Item—Another little box of silver with a bone of St. Lawrence.
- "Item—A shoe of silver for the image of our Lady, and a piece of a penny, weighing in all two ounces in a box.
- "Item—An image of our Lady and her Son, of copper and gilt, with a crystal stone.
- "Item—A collar of gold for to hang about our Lady's neck, of nine links in the collar.
- "Item—A cap of black velvet, with fine pearl, for our Lady's son.
- "Item—Two maces for St. Edmund.
- "Item—Three small crowns for St. Katherine.
- "Item—A cross and staff for St. Nicholas."

The orthography of this extract has been modernized, but the *idiom* (if any) has been retained.

THE ORNITHORHYNCHUS PARADOXUS.—The following interesting fact in natural history was communicated by Dr Weatherhead, to the committee of science of the Zoological Society, at their last meeting.

For the last five-and-twenty years naturalists in Europe have been striving to obtain the carcass of the impregnated female *Ornithorhynchus paradoxus*, for the purpose of ascertaining its mode of gestation, but without success; for it is by dissection alone the hitherto doubtful and disputed point concerning the anomalous and paradoxical manner of bringing forth and rearing its young can be satisfactorily demonstrated.— This long-sought-for desideratum is at length attained. Through the kindness of his friend, Lieutenant the honourable Lauderdale Maule, of the 39th regiment, Dr Weatherhead has had the bodies of several ornithorhynchi transmitted to him from New Holland, in one of which the ova preserved; establishing, along with other curious circumstances ascertained, the extraordinary fact, that this animal which combines the bird and the quadruped together in its outward form, lays eggs and hatches them like the one and rears and suckles them like the other.—*Proc. Zool. Soc.*

WATCHING FOR THE SEAL.—Margaret of Valois, Queen of Navarre, being present at the death-bed of one of her maids of honour, continued to fix her eyes on the dying person with uncommon eagerness and perseverance till she breathed her last. The ladies of the Court expressed their astonishment at this conduct, and requested to know what satisfaction her Majesty could derive from so close an inspection of the agonies of death. Her answer marked a most daring and inquisitive mind. She said that having often heard the most learned doctors and ecclesiastics assert, that on the extinction of the body the immortal part was set at liberty and unloosed, she could not restrain her anxious curiosity to observe if such separation were visible or discernible; that none had she been able in any degree to discover. She was suspected of Hugonotism, and was so devout as to compose hymns.

PARTY SPIRIT.—Fuller did not think party madness; for, he says such men as will side with neither party "hope, though the great vessel of the state be wrecked, in a private fly-boat of neutrality, to wait their own private adventure safe to the shore.— But who ever saw dancers on ropes so equally poise themselves, that at last they fall not down and break their necks?"

ALL ON ONE SIDE.—Major Grose told me that when he was quartered in Dublin, he ordered an Irish sergeant to exercise the men in shooting at a mark. The sergeant had placed a pole for them to take aim, stationing a certain number on one side, and an equal number on the other, in direct opposition. The Major happened to reach the spot just as they were about to fire, stopped them, and expressed his surprise that the sergeant should have placed them in so dangerous a position, as they must necessarily wound, if not kill each other. "Kill each other!" said the sergeant, "why, they are all our own men." As the men so contentedly remained in the dangerous position, it may be inferred that they were as wise as the sergeant. This story illustrates that of Lord Thomond's cooks, which when the keeper let loose, were fighting each other, — much to his surprise he said, as they belonged to one person, and were "all on the same side."

DUELLING IN FRANCE.—Mr. G——, a young English *militaire* of fashion and spirit, not a great while since, had the fortune to fight a couple of duels in Paris, under circumstances rather curious. He was acquainted with a French gentleman, whom nature had endowed with more tongue than with discretion and good principles;—in fact, it came to the ears of Mr. G——, that the loquacious Gaul was a revolutionist in politics, a professed atheist in religion, and (how could it happen otherwise?) a man devoid of the most ordinary principles of honour, probity, and social decencies. He was in the habit of slandering and vituperating, in the most violent manner; and, in the well-thronged *cafés* and *salons* of the French capital, not only his *bon ami* Mr. G——, but everything and everybody *English*, until our young officer, provoked by his insolence beyond all patience, taking the advice of a friend, challenged him. The Gaul, affecting to be highly irritated, at first protested that "he would never consent to *degrade* himself by fighting any of the English;" and, with horrid imprecations, parodied *Caligula's* memorable malice, by wishing that "all the cursed members of that nation were but one body, which he might destroy at a shot!" However, that no imputation might rest on his courage, he consented to meet his adversary—for whom, by the way, he expressed the most thorough contempt—next morning, at the *Bois de Boulogne*.— They met; and this miserable man received the reward of his perfidy and malice, by a ball through his heart!

Some days after this affair, Mr. G—— being grossly insulted by another French gentleman—a notorious duellist, and, if we mistake not, an ally of the deceased—felt himself obliged to notice the affront in a similar manner. Monsieur ——— treated the challenge with supreme contempt, begged to assure Mr G—— that he was a dead man if they met, but professed himself much at his service if he was really bent on quitting this world, and though the most appropriate spot for so doing would be the *Champs d'Élysées*. Thither next morning the parties repaired. Mr. G—— found his antagonist already on the ground, and amusing himself by firing at a mark: viz.—his glove, attached to the branch of a tree, which he shot at with such precision as to send his bullet, at every successive trial, through the aperture in the glove made by the first. Monsieur was, in truth, a splendid and formidable marksman. Mr. G——, in preparing for the duel, happening to cast his eyes on his adversary, perceived that he had slyly placed his arm in such a position, as must ensure, on the honourable gentleman's fire, the fulfilment of his vaunt to make him "a dead man." No time was to be lost; the young Englishman's life depended upon despatch; and, instantly firing, he proved himself as good a marksman as Monsieur ———, by sending his ball, with the utmost precision, through the wily manœuvre's elbow, from whence it passed into his side; and he dropped down, disabled, if not dead. Thus did British spirit twice humble, in a remarkable manner, French insolence and presumption.

SPIRIT DRINKING.—The direful practice of spirit drinking seems to have arrived at its acme in the metropolis. Splendid mansions rear their *dazzling heads* at almost every turning; and it appears as if Circe had fixed her abode in these superb haunts. Happy are those who, like Ulysses of old, will not partake of her deadly cup. If the unhappy dram-drinker was merely to calculate the annual expense of two glasses of gin per day, he would find a sum expended which would procure for him many comforts, for the want of which he is continually grumbling. If this sum is expended for only two glasses of spirits, what must be the expense to the habitual and daily sot, who constantly haunts the tap-room or the wretched bar? to say nothing of the loss of time, health, and every comfort.

Dr. Willan, says—"On comparing my own observations with the bills of mortality, I am convinced that considerably more than one-eighth of all the deaths which take place in persons above twenty years old, happen prematurely, through excess in drinking spirits."

Spirits, like other poisons, if taken in a sufficient quantity, prove immediately fatal. The newspapers frequently furnish us with examples of almost instant death, occasioned by wantonly swallowing a pint or other large quantity of spirits, for the sake of wages, or in boast.

Dr. Trotter says—"We daily see, in all parts of the world, men who, by profligacy and hard-drinking, have brought themselves to a goal; yet, if we consult the register of the prison, it does not appear that any of these habitual drunkards die by being forced to lead sober lives." And he contends, that "whatever debility of the constitution exists, it is to be cured by the usual medicinal means which are employed to restore weakened organs. But the great difficulty in these attempts to cure inebriety is in satisfying the mind, and in whetting the blunted resolutions of the patient; and this is, doubtless, more easily accomplished by a gradual abstraction of his favourable potations."

Dr. Lettsom mentions a person who usu-