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Prophecies and Seers

Prophecies of Robert Nixon, Mother Shipton, and Martha, the Gipsy

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Anonymous (compilation); prophecies attributed to Robert Nixon and Mother Shipton (legendary authorship)

Original English text (19th century)

Credits

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About:

An undated, anonymous English chapbook ("published for the booksellers", London) collecting the prophecies of two seers of English folklore.

Their authorship is legendary: no document of the time shows that Robert Nixon or Mother Shipton said what is printed here, and the texts were written, enlarged and "updated" by editors long afterwards.

Robert Nixon, the "Cheshire prophet", is said to have been a simple ploughboy of Delamere Forest in the fifteenth century (this book gives 1467 as his birth year) whose muddled sayings came true; his prophecies appear in print only in the early eighteenth century, and one of the versions given here is John Oldmixon's (1714).

Mother Shipton is said to have been a witch and fortune-teller of Knaresborough, Yorkshire, in the time of Henry VIII; the first pamphlet of her prophecies dates from 1641, and Richard Head's fanciful "life" of 1684 created the legend.

The most famous verses attributed to her ("carriages without horses shall go", "around the world thoughts shall fly", the house of glass, the iron that floats) are in this book, but they were written by Charles Hindley for an edition of 1862, as he himself admitted in 1873.

The book also contains a vision of two armies in Delamere Forest; a prophecy of the French Revolution taken from the Protestant minister Pierre Jurieu (1687); extracts from sermons by the Baptist minister John Gill on the fulfilment of prophecy; a story told by John Wesley; the tale of Martha the Gipsy and her predictions in London; and three accounts of presentiments.

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THE LIFE OF ROBERT NIXON, COMMONLY CALLED THE CHESHIRE PROPHET

✦

1 THE Prophecy of Nixon has so often given a name to the productions of authors of different principles, that it is now almost become a doubt whether such a person ever existed.

1.2 Passing through Cheshire lately, curiosity led me to inquire what credit these legends bore among the natives: and I was not a little surprised to find with what confidence they related events which have come to pass within the memory of many of the inhabitants; and how strictly they adhered to the notion that he would not fail in the rest.

1.3 Amongst his number was a namesake and descendant of the same family with this famous idiot, who, at this time lives not far from Vale-Royal, from whom I had mostly what follows, which he said he had often heard his father and other ancient people in the country relate. I also obtained a manuscript copy which seemed to bear the appearance of antiquity.—Mr. Gerrard, Mr.

1.4 Grimes and many others of the inhabitants of the forest of Delamere very obligingly told me what they knew, and confirmed what was past.

2 John, or Jonathan Nixon, the father of our prophet was a husbandman who held the lease of a farm from the abbey of Vale-Royal, to this day known by the name of Bark, or Bridge-house in the parish of Over near New-Church, and not far from Vale-Royal, on the forest of Delamere, which house is still kept up and venerated by the natives of Cheshire for

nothing else that I could hear of but this extraordinary person's birth, which took place Whitsuntide, and he was christened by the name of Robert, in the year 1467, about the 7th year of Edward IV.; and from his infancy he was remarkable for a stupidity and invincible ignorance, so that it was with great difficulty his parents could instruct him to drive the team, tend the cattle and such sort of rustic employments.

3 His parents at their decease left the farm and our Robert very young, to the care of an elder brother with whom he first gave an instance of that foreknowledge which renders his name so famous.

4 As he was driving the team one day, whilst his brother's man guided the plough, he pricked an ox so very cruelly with his goad that the plough-holder threatened to acquaint his master; on which Nixon said, the ox should not be his brother's three days hence; which accordingly happened for a life drooping in the estate, the lord of the manor took the same ox for an heriot.

5 During his residence here he was chiefly distinguished for his simplicity, seldom spoke, and when he did it was with so rough a voice that it was painful to hear him; he was remarkably satirical, and what he said had generally some prophetic meaning. It was about this time that the monk of Vale-Royal having displeased him he said in an angry tone,

6 When you the arrow come on high,
Soon a raven's nest will be;

7 which is well known to have come to pass in the person of the last abbot of that place, whose name was Harrow. Being called before Sir Thomas Holcroft he was put to death for denying the supremacy of King Henry

VIII. Having suppressed the abbey the King gave the domain to this knight and his heirs who bore a raven for their crest.

8 At another time he told them that Norton and Vale-Royal abbeys should meet on Acton-bridge, a thing at that time looked upon as improbable; yet those two abbeys being pulled down the stones were used for the purpose of repairing the bridge; and what was more improbable still a small thorn growing in the abbey-yard would become its door.

8.2 We may easily guess no one thought this last would ever come to pass, and especially as it was understood by every one at that time of day that thorns never grew so large; but this shows the uncertain meaning of a prophecy, and that what we understand one way is possibly meant quite different; so it happened in this case, for, at the Reformation the savage ravages under the sanction of religion sought nothing but rapine and plunder to enrich themselves; and under the name of banishing superstition and pulling down idolatry, spared not even the most revered lineaments of antiquity, the most sacred piles, the most noble structures, or most valuable records, books written by our most venerable forefathers and heroic ancestors.

8.3 Pieces of the nicest paint and figures of the best workmanship being all lost, irrecoverably lost in one common fit of destructive zeal which every hue and cry is too apt to raise in the breast of a hot-headed bigot; whilst the truly religious, honest and learned men regret to this day the loss those destructive times have occasioned.

8.4 Whilst these reached Vale-Royal, this thorn amongst the rest, being cut down was cast in the door-way, to prevent sheep which grazed in the court from going in.

[9] But the Reformation he declares in still plainer terms; for he says,

[10] A time shall come when priests and monks
Shall have no churches nor houses,
And places where images stood,
Lined letters shall be good,
English books through churches are spread,
Where shall be no holy bread.

[11] It is not my intention to recite every particular he is said to have foretold, which regard either private families or past occasions—however, it may not be amiss to mention what is fresh in every one's memory who lives near Delamere forest and was vouched to me by several of the oldest inhabitants.

[12] Thro' Weaver-hall shall be a lone
Ridley-pool shall be sown and mown,
And Darnel-Park shall be hacked and hewn.

[13] The two wings of Weaver-hall are now standing and between them is a cart-road; Ridley-pool is filled up and made good meadow land: and in Darnel-Park the trees are cut down and it is made into pasture-ground.

[14] I was also assured that he foretold the use of broad wheels, etc. and that the town of Northwich now a considerable place of trade for salt will be destroyed by water, which is expected to come to pass, by the natives of Cheshire, as much as any other part of his prophecy has done; and some urge that the navigable cuts lately made is the water meant: but whether a prejudice against those useful improvements may not have given rise to this notion, time only can determine.

15 But what rendered Nixon the most noticed was that at the time when the battle of Bosworth-field was fought between King Richard the Third and King Henry the Seventh, he stopped his team on a sudden and pointing with his whip from one to the other cried, “Now, Richard! Now, Harry!” several times; till at last, he said, “Now, Harry, get over that ditch and you gain the day.”

15.2 The plough-holder, amazed, related what had passed when he came home, and the truth of the prediction was verified by special messengers sent to announce the proclamation of King Henry of England on the field of battle.

16 The messenger who went this circuit related on his return the prediction of Nixon concerning the King’s success; which, though it had been confirmed by his arrival had made it no news to the natives of those parts; but Henry perhaps the wisest Prince of his time not willing to be deceived, nor yet doubting the dispensations of Providence though by the mouth of a fool, sent the same messenger back to find Nixon, and to bring him before him.

16.2 At the moment the King gave his orders our prophet was in the town of Over, about which he ran like a madman declaring the King had sent for him and that he must go to court and there be clammed: that is, be starved to death.

16.3 Such a declaration caused a great deal of laughing in the town, to think that his Majesty so noted for his wisdom should send for a dirty drivelling clown to court, and that being sent for he should fear to be starved there; but how great was their surprise, in a few days after, when the messenger passing through the town demanded a guide to find Nixon

who (then turning the spit at his brother's at the Bark-house) cried, "He is coming, he is now on the road for me!" but the astonishment of the family can scarcely be imagined when, on the messenger's arrival he demanded Nixon in the King's name; the people who before scoffed at his simple appearance and odd sayings, and had pointed to the very children to make him their sport were now confounded on finding the most ridiculous of all he ever foretold (in their opinion) become a truth, which was vouched to their own eyes.

16.4 Whilst hurried through the country Nixon still loudly lamented that he was going to be starved at the court.

17 He had no sooner arrived there than the cautious King willing to make trial of his foreknowledge devised the following scheme to prove it. Having had a valuable diamond ring which he commonly wore after the most seemingly strict inquiry made through the palace whether any one had seen it; he sent for Nixon, telling him what a loss he had sustained, and that if he could not help him to find it, he had no hopes left. But how much surprised was the King, when he got for answer that old proverb,

18 He who hideth can find;

19 On which he declared with a smile that he had done this only to try the prophet; but ever after ordered that what he said should be carefully put in writing.

20 To prevent Nixon's being starved his Majesty gave orders for him to have the liberty to range through the whole palace and the kitchen was to be his more constant dwelling. Besides which, an officer was appointed to

take care that he was neither misused or affronted by the servants, nor at loss for any necessary of life.

20.2 Thus situated one would have thought want would never have reached him; yet one day, as the King was going out to his hunting-seat Nixon ran to him crying and begged in the most moving terms that he might not be left, for that if he was his Majesty would never see him again alive: that he should be starved; that now was the time, and if he was left he must die.

21 The King whose thoughts were doubtless fixed on the diversion he was going to and supposing the matter so very unlikely to come to pass, only said that it was impossible and recommended him strongly to the officer's care; but scarcely was the king gone from the palace-gate when the servants mocked and teased Nixon to such a degree, that the officer to prevent these insults locked him up in a closet and suffered no one but himself to attend on him thinking that he should prevent this part of his prophecy coming true: but a message of great importance coming from the King to this very officer, he in his readiness to obey the royal command forgot to set poor Nixon at liberty and though he was but three days absent when he recollected his prisoner he found him at his return, dead as he had foretold of hunger.

22 Thus evidenced with what is past stands his prophecy in every mouth in Cheshire; yet a greater affront cannot be given than to ask a copy from the families said to be possessed of it. Every possible means it is well known has been used to smother the truth, perplex the curious, and even to abolish the very remembrance that such a one ever existed, but from what reason cannot appear except that it is foretold that the heir of O— is

to meet with some ignominious death at his own gate, with other family events which, though no person or time being perfectly distinguished may perhaps occasion this secrecy.

23 I must also observe that the cross on Delamere forest, that is, three steps and the socket in which the cross formerly stood are now sunk within a few inches of the ground, though all remember to have seen it within the memory of man nearly six feet above, the cross itself having been destroyed long since. It is also remarkable that Headlets cross is mentioned by Merlin de Rymer and most other English and Scotch prophets as the last place in England on which it is supposed a decisive action will happen; but as to any fixed period when the things will come to pass I cannot learn, being all mentioned with the greatest uncertainty.

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THE ORIGINAL PREDICTIONS OF ROBERT NIXON, AS DELIVERED BY HIMSELF

✦

1 When a raven shall build in a stone lion's mouth,
On a church top beside the grey forest,
Then shall a king of England be drove from his crown,
And return no more.

2 When an eagle shall sit on the top of Vale-Royal house,
Then shall an heir be born, who shall live to see great troubles in England.

3 There shall be a miller nam'd Peter,
With two heels on one foot,
Who shall distinguish himself bravely,
And shall be knighted by the victor:
For foreign nations shall invade England;
But the invader shall be killed,
And laid across a horse's back,
And led in triumph.

4 A boy shall be born with three thumbs on one hand,
Who shall hold three King's horses,
Whilst England three times is won and lost in one day.

5 But after this shall be happy days,
A new set of people of virtuous manners shall live in peace.
But the wall of Vale-Royal near the pond shall be the token of its truth,

For it shall fall:
If it fall downwards,
Then shall the church be sunk for ever:
But if it fall upwards against a hill,
Then shall the church and honest men live still.

6 Under this wall shall be found the bones of a British King.
Peckforton-mill shall be removed to Ludington hill,
And three days blood shall turn Noginshire-mill.
But beware of a chance to the lord of Oulton,
Lest he should be hanged at his own door.

7 A crow shall sit on the top of Headless cross,
In the forest so grey,
And drink of the nobles' gentle blood so free;
Twenty hundred horses shall want masters,
Till their girths shall rot under their bellies.

8 Thro' our own money and our own men,
Shall a dreadful war begin;
Between the sickle and the suck,
All England shall have a pluck;
And be several times forsworn,
And put to their wits' end,
That it shall not be known, whether to reap their corn,
Bury their dead, or go to the field to fight.

9 A great scarcity of bread corn.
Foreign nations shall invade England with snow on their helmets,
And shall bring plague, famine, and murder in the skirts of their garments.
A great tax will be granted but never gathered.

10 Between a rick and two trees,
A famous battle fought shall be.

11 London street shall run with blood
And at last shall sink,
So that it shall be fulfilled,
Lincoln was, London is, and York shall be
The finest city of the three.

12 There will be three gates to London of imprisoned men for cowsters.
Then if you have three cows, at the first gate fell one, and keep thee at home,
At the second gate fell the other two, and keep thee at home.
At the last gate all shall be done.

13 When summer in winter shall come,
And peace is made at every man's home,
Then shall be danger of war;
For tho' with peace at night the nation ring,
Men shall rise to war in the morning.

14 There will be a winter Council, a careful Christmas, and a bloody Lent.
In those days there shall be hatred and bloodshed,
The father against the son, and the son against his father,

That one may have a house for lifting the latch of the door.
Landlords shall stand, with hats in their hands,
To desire tenants to hold their lands.

15 Great wars and pressing of soldiers,
But at last clubs and clouted shoes shall carry the day.
It will be good in these days for a man to sell his goods, and keep close at home.
Then forty pounds in hand
Will be better than forty pounds a year in land.
The cock of the North shall be made to flee,
And his feathers be plucked for his pride;
That he shall almost curse the day that he was born.

16 One asked Nixon, where he might be safe in those days? he answered,
In God's croft, between the rivers Mersey and Dee.

17 Scotland shall stand more or less,
Till it has brought England to a piteous case.
The Scots shall rule England one whole year.
Three years of great wars,
And in all countries great uproars.
The first is terrible, the second worse, but the third unbearable.

18 Three great battles;
One at Northumberland-bridge,
One at Cumberland-bridge,

And the other the south side of Trent.
Crows shall drink the blood of many nobles.
East shall rise against West, and North against South.

19 Then take this for good,
Noginshire-mill shall run with blood,
And many shall fly down Wanslow-lane.

20 A man shall come into England,
But the son of a king crown'd with thorns
Shall take from him the victory.

21 Many nobles shall fight,
But a bastard Duke shall win the day,
And so without delay,
Set England in a right way.
A wolf from the East shall right eagerly come,
On the South side of Sandford, on a grey Monday morn,
Where groves shall grow upon a green,
Beside green grey they shall flee
Into rocks, and many die.
They shall flee into Salt strand,
And twenty thousand, without sword, shall die each man.
The dark dragon over Sudsbrown,
Shall bring with him a royal band;

22 But their lives shall be forlorn,
His head shall be in Stafford town,
His tail in Ireland.

He boldly shall bring his men, thinking to win renown:
Beside a wall in forest fair he shall be beaten down.
On Hine's heath they shall begin this bloody fight,
And with train'd steed shall hew each others' helmet bright:
But who shall win that day no one can tell.

23 A Duke out of Denmark shall him dight,
On a day in England, and make many a lord full low to light,
And the ladies cry, 'Well away,'
And the black fleet with main and might
Their enemies full boldly their assail.

24 In Britain's land shall be a knight,
On them shall make a cruel fight,
A bitter boar with main and might
Shall bring a royal rout that day.
There shall die many a worthy knight,
And be driven into the fields green and grey,
They shall lose both field and fight.

25 The weary eagle shall to an island in the sea retire
Where leaves and herbs grow fresh and green.
There shall he meet a lady fair,
Who shall say, 'Go help thy friend in battle slain:'
Then by the counsel of that fair,
He eagerly will make to flee
Twenty-six standard of the enemy,

A rampant lion in silver set, in armour fair,
Shall help the eagle in that tide,
When many a knight shall die.

26 The bear that hath been long tied to a stake shall shake his chains,
That every man shall hear, and shall cause much debate.
The bull and red rose shall stand in strife,
That shall turn England to much woe,
And cause many a man to lose his life.

27 In a forest stand oaks three,
Beside a headless cross.
A well of blood shall run and ree,
Its cover shall be brass,
Which shall ne'er appear,
Till horses' feet have trod it bare;
Who wins it will declare,
The eagle shall so fight that day,
That ne'er a friend's from him away.
A hound without delay shall run the chase far and near.

28 The dark dragon shall die in fight.
A lofty head the bear shall rear,
The wide wolf so shall light,
The bridled steed against his enemies will fiercely fight.

29 A fleet shall come out of the North,
Riding on a horse of trees,
A white hind beareth he,

And there wreaths so free,
That day the eagle shall him slay,
And on a hill set his banner straightway.
That lion who's forsaken been and forced to flee,
Shall hear a woman shrilly say,
'Thy friends are killed on yonder hill,'
Death to many a knight this day.
With that the lion bears his banner to a hill,
Within a forest that's so plain,
Beside a headless cross of stone,
There shall the eagle die that day,
And the red lion get renown.
A great battle shall be fought by crowned Kings three;
One shall die and a bastard Duke will win the day.
In Sandyford there lies a stone,
A crowned King shall lose his head on.

30 In those dreadful days, five wicked priests' heads shall be sold for a penny.
Slaughter shall rage to such a degree,
And infants left by those that are slain,
That damsels shall with fear and glee,
Cry, 'Mother, mother, I've seen a man!'

31 Between seven, eight, and nine,
In England wonders shall be seen.
Between nine and thirteen
All sorrow shall be done.

Then rise up Richard, son of Richard,
And bless the happy reign,
Thrice happy he who sees this time to come
When England shall know rest and peace again.

32 End of the Original Prophecies.

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PREDICTIONS OF ROBERT NIXON COPIED FROM OLD PAMPHLETS

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1 The famous Cheshire prophet Nixon, besides his prophecies relative to the fate of private families, also predicted much of public affairs, which we find literally verified by the sequel.

2 On the Christmas before he went to court, being among the servants at Mr. Cholmondeley's house, to the surprise of them all he suddenly started up and said,

3 "I must prophecy." He went on, the favourite of a King shall be slain. "If the master's neck shall be cleft in twain. And the men of the North shall sell precious blood; yea their own blood.

3.2 And they shall sacrifice a noble warrior to the idol, and hang up his flesh in the high places; and a storm shall come out of the North, which shall blow down the steeples of the South: and the labourer shall rise above his lord, and the harvest shall in part be trampled down by horses, and the remainder lie waste to be devoured by birds.

4 "When an oak tree shall be softer than men's hearts, then look for better times but they be but beginning.

5 "The departure of a great man's soul shall trouble a river hard by, and overthrow trees, houses, and estates. From that part of the house from whence the mischief came you must look for the cure. First comes joy, then sorrow; after mirth comes mourning.

6 "I see men, women, and children, spotted like beasts, and their nearest and dearest friends affrighted at them. I see towns on fire, and innocent blood shed; but when men and horses walk upon the water, then shall be peace and plenty to the people, but trouble is preparing for Kings; and the great yellow fruit shall come over to this country, and flourish: and I see this tree take deep root and spread into a thousand branches, which shall afterwards be at strife one with another, because of their numbers: and there shall come a wind from the South, and the West, which shall shake the tree.

6.2 I see multitudes of people running to and fro, and talking in a strange tongue. And there shall be a famine in the midst of great plenty, and earthquakes and storms shall level and purify the earth."

7 After these sayings, which every one, with the slightest knowledge of our history will instantly apply to those events which they so wonderfully foretold, Nixon was silent, and relapsed into his wonted stupidity: from which he did not recover until many weeks after, when he became again inspired, and gave vent to those remarkable predictions which were recollected by Mr.

7.2 Oldmixon. Those which we have just now related were taken down from the prophet's mouth by the steward, in pursuance of the orders of Mr. Cholmondeley himself; and the original manuscript is now in the hands of a gentleman in Shropshire.

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NIXON'S CHESHIRE PROPHECY AT LARGE, FROM LADY COWPER'S COPY

✦

1 This remarkable Prophecy has been carefully revised, corrected, and improved; also some account given of our author, Robert Nixon, who was but a kind of idiot, and used to be employed in following the plough. He had lived in some farmers' families, and was their drudge and their jest.

2 At last, Thomas Cholmondeley, of Vale-Royal, Esq., took him into his house, where he lived when he composed this prophecy, which he delivered with as much gravity and solemnity as if he had been an oracle; and it was observed that though the fool was a driveller, and could not speak common sense when uninspired, yet in delivering his prophecies, he spoke plainly and sensibly; how truly will be seen in the following pages.

3 As to the credit of this prophecy I dare say it is as well attested as any of Nostradamus's or Merlin's, and will come to pass as well as the best of Squire Bickerstaff's; it is plain enough that great men in all ages had recourse to prophecy as well as the vulgar. I would not have all grave persons despise the inspiration of Nixon.

3.2 The late French King gave audience to an inspired farrier, and rewarded him with an hundred pistoles for his prophetical intelligence; though by what I can learn he did not come near our Nixon for gifts.

4 The simplicity, the circumstances, and the history of the Cheshire Prophecy are so remarkable that I hope the public will be as much delighted as I was myself.

5 By the way, this is not a prophecy of to-day; 'tis as old as the powder-plot, and the story will make it appear that there is as little imposture in it as the Jacobites pretend there is in the person it seems to have an eye to; but whether they are both impostures alike or not I leave the reader to determine.

6 J. OLDMIXON.

7 THE PROPHECY.

8 IN the reign of King James the First there lived a man generally reputed a fool, whose name was Nixon. One day, when he returned home from ploughing, he laid the things down which he had in his hands, and continued for some time in a seemingly deep and thoughtful meditation, at length he pronounced in a loud hoarse voice, 'Now I will prophecy;' and spoke as follows;

9 "When a raven shall build in a stone lion's mouth on the top of a church in Cheshire, then a King of England shall be driven out of his kingdom, and never return more.

10 "When an eagle shall sit on the top of the house, then an heir shall be born to the Cholmondeley family, and this heir shall live to see England invaded by foreigners, who shall proceed as far as a town in Cheshire; but a miller, named Peter, shall be born with two heels on one foot, and at that time living in a mill of Mr. Cholmondeley's he shall be instrumental in delivering the nation.

11 "The person who then governs the nation will be in great trouble, and skulk about:—The invading King shall be killed, laid across a horse's back like a calf, and led in triumph. The miller having been instrumental in it, shall bring forth the person that then governs the kingdom, and be knighted for what he has done; and after that England shall see happy days. A new set of young men, of virtuous manners, shall come, who shall prosper, and make a flourishing church for two hundred years.

12 "As a token of the truth of all this a wall of Mr. Cholmondeley's shall fall, if it falls downwards, the church shall be oppressed, and rise no more; but if it fall upwards, next the rising hill on the side of it, then shall it flourish again. Under this wall shall be found the bones of a British King.

13 "A pond shall run with blood three days, and the Cross stone Pillar in the forest sink so low into the ground, that a crow from the top of it shall drink of the best blood in England.

14 "A boy shall be born with three thumbs, and shall hold three kings' horses, while England shall be three times won and lost in one day."

15 The original may be seen in several families in the county, and in particular in the hands of Mr. Egerton, of Oulton, with many other remarkable things; as that Peckforton wind-mill should be removed to Ludington hill and that horses saddled should run about while their girths rotted away. But this is sufficient to prove Nixon as great a prophet as Partridge; and we shall give other proofs of it before we have done with him.

16 I know your prophets are generally for Raw-head and bloody-bones and therefore do not mind it much; or I might add that of Oulton mill shall be driven with blood instead of water, but these soothsayers are great butch-

ers and every hall is with them a slaughter-house.

17 Now as for authorities to prove this prophecy to be genuine and how it has hitherto been accomplished, I might refer myself to the whole country of Chester, where it is in every one's mouth and has been so these forty years. As much as I have of the manuscript was sent me by a person of sense and veracity and as little partial to visions as any body.

17.2 For my own part I build nothing on this or any other prophecy; only there is something so very odd in the story and so pat in the wording of it that I cannot help giving it as I found it.

18 The family of the Cholmondeleys is very ancient in this county and takes its name from a place so called near Nantwich; there are also Cholmton and Cholmondeston; but the seat of that branch of the family which kept our prophet Nixon is at Vale-Royal, on the river Weave in Delamere forest.

18.2 It was formerly an abbey, founded by Edward I. and came to the Cholmondeleys from the famous family of the Holcrofts. When Nixon prophesied this family was near being extinct, the heir having married Sir Walter St.

18.3 John's daughter, a lady not esteemed very young, who, notwithstanding, being with child, fell in labour and continued so for many days, during which time an eagle sat upon the house-top and flew away when she was delivered of a son.

19 A raven is also known to have built in a stone lion's mouth in the steeple of the church of Over, in the forest of Delamere. Not long before the abdication of King James the wall spoken of fell down and fell up-

wards and in removing the rubbish were found the bones of a man of more than ordinary size. A pond at the same time ran with water that had a reddish tincture and was never known to have done so before or since.

20 Headless cross in the forest, which in the memory of man was several feet high, is now only half a foot from the ground.

21 In the parish of Budworth a boy was born about eighteen years ago with three thumbs; the youth is still living there and the miller Peter lives in Noginshire mill in expectation of fulfilling this prophecy on the person of Perkin: he hath also two heels on one foot and I find he intends to make use of them in the interest of King George, for he is a bold Briton and a loyal subject, zealous for the Protestant succession in the illustrious House of Hanover, has a vote for the knights of the shire and never fails to give it on the right side: in a word, Peter will prate or box for the good cause that Nixon had lifted him in and if he does not do the business, this must be said of him, that no man will bid fairer for it; which the Lady Egerton was so apprehensive of, that wishing well to another restoration, she often instigated her husband to turn him out of the mill; but he looked upon it as whimsical and so Peter still continues there, in hopes of being as good a knight as Sir Philip his landlord was.

22 Of this Peter I have been told, that the Lady Narcliff of Chelsea and the Lady St. John of Battersea, together with several other persons of credit and fashion, have often been heard to talk and that they all asserted their knowledge of the truth of our prophecy and its accomplishment, with many particulars that are more extraordinary than any I have yet mentioned.

23 The noise of Nixon's Predictions reaching the ears of King James the First, he would needs see this fool, who cried and made ado that he might not go to court and the reason that he gave was, that he should there be STARVED.—(A very whimsical fancy of his, courts not being places where people are used to starve in, when they once come there, whatever they may have done before.)—The King being informed of Nixon's refusing to come, said he would take particular care that he should not be starved and ordered him to be brought up. Nixon cried out, that he was sent for again; and soon after the messenger arrived, who brought him up from Cheshire.

24 How or whether he prophecied to his Majesty, no person can tell; but he is not the first fool that has made a good court prophet.

25 That Nixon might be well provided for it was ordered that he should be kept in the kitchen, where he grew so troublesome in licking and picking the meat, that the cooks locked him up in a hole; and the King going on a sudden from Hampton Court to London in their hurry they forgot the fool and he was really starved to death.

26 There are a great many passages of this fool-prophet's life and sayings transmitted in tradition from father to son in this county palatine; as, that when he lived with a farmer before he was taken into Mr.

26.2 Cholmondeley's family, he goaded an ox so cruelly that one of the ploughmen threatened to beat him for abusing his master's beast—Nixon said, "My master's beast will not be his three days." A life in an estate dropping in at that time, the lord of the manor took the same ox for a heriot.

26.3 This account whimsical and romantic as it is was told to the Lady Cowper in the year 1670, by Dr. Patrick late Bishop of Ely then chaplain to Sir Walter St. John; and that lady had the following further particulars relating to this prophecy and the fulfilling of many parts of it from Mrs. Chute, sister to Mrs.

26.4 Cholmondeley of Vale-Royal, who affirmed that a multitude of people gathered together to see the eagle before-mentioned and the bird was frightened from her young; that she herself was one of them and the cry among the people was, Nixon's prophecy is fulfilled and we have a foreign King.

26.5 She declared that she read over the prophecy many times when her sister was with child of the heir who now enjoys the estate. She particularly remembers that King James the Second was plainly pointed at and that it was foretold he should endeavour to subvert the laws and religion of this kingdom, for which reason they would rise and turn him out: that the eagle of which Nixon prophecied perched in one of the windows all the time her sister was in labour.

26.6 She says it was the biggest bird she ever saw; that it was in a deep snow and it perched on the edge of a great bow-window, which had a large border on the outside and that she and many others opened the window to try to scare it away, but it would not stir till Mrs.

26.7 Cholmondeley was delivered; after which it took flight to a great tree over against the room her sister lay in, where having stayed about three days it flew away in the night.

26.8 She affirmed further to the Lady Cowper, that the falling of the garden wall was a thing not to be questioned, it being in so many people's memory that it was foretold that the heir of Vale-Royal should live to see

England invaded by foreigners and that he should fight bravely for his King and Country: that the miller mentioned is now alive and expects to be knighted and is in the very mill that is foretold: that he should kill two invaders who should come in, the one from the West and the other from the North: that he from the North should bring with him of all nations, Swedes, Danes, Germans, and Dutch; and that in the folds of his garments he should bring fire and famine, plague and murder: that many great battles should be fought in England, one upon London-bridge, which should be so bloody, that people will ride in London streets up to their horses' bellies in blood; that several other battles should be fought up and down most parts of Cheshire; and that the last that ever would be fought in England should be on Delamere forest: that the heir of Oulston, whose name is E— and has married Earl Cholmondeley's sister, should be hanged up at his own gate.

27 Lastly, Nixon foretells great glory and prosperity to those who stand up in defence of their laws and liberties; and ruin and misery to those who should betray them.

27.2 He says, the year before this would happen, bread corn would be very dear and that the year following more troubles should begin which would last three years; that the first would be moderate, the second bloody, and the third intolerable; that unless they were shortened no mortal could bear them; and that there were no mischiefs but what poor England would feel at that time.

27.3 But that GEORGE the SON of GEORGE, should put an end to all. That afterwards the church should flourish, and England be the most glorious nation on earth.

28 Lady Cowper was not content to take these particulars from Mrs. Chute, but she enquired of Sir Thomas Aston, of the truth of this prophecy and he attested it was in great reputation in Cheshire and that the facts were known by every one to have happened as Nixon said they would; adding, that the morning before the garden wall fell, his neighbour Mr.

28.2 Cholmondeley, going to ride out a hunting, said "Nixon seldom fails but now I think he will; for he foretold that this day my garden wall would fall and I think it looks as if it would stand these forty years;" that he had not been gone above a quarter of an hour before the wall split and fell upwards against the rising of the hill, which as Nixon would have it, was the presage of a flourishing church.

29 As to the removal of Peckforton-mill, it was done by Sir John Crew, the mill having lost its trade there, for which he ordered it to be set upon Ludington hill; and being asked if he did it to fulfil the prophecy, he declared he never thought of it. I myself have inquired of a person who knows Mr. Cholmondeley's pond as well as Rosamond's in St.

29.2 James's Park and he assured me the falling of the wall and the pond running blood, (as they call it) are facts which in Cheshire any one would be reckoned mad for making the least question of them.

29.3 As there are several particulars in this prophecy which remain unfulfilled; so when they come to pass, some other circumstances may be added, which are not convenient to be told until accomplished.

30 If I had a mind to look into the antiquities of this county, I might find that prodigies and prophecies are no unusual things there. Camden tells us that at Brereton not many miles from Vale-Royal which gave name to a

famous, ancient, numerous, and knightly family, there is a thing as strange as that of the eagle, or the falling of the wall, which he says was attested to him by many persons and was commonly believed; that before any heir of this family dies there are seen, in a lake adjoining the bodies of trees swimming upon the water for several days together.

30.2 He likewise adds that near the abbey of St. Maurice in Burgundy there is a fish-pond in which a number of fish are put equal to the number of monks of that place; and if any one of them happens to be sick, there is a fish seen floating on the surface of the water; and in case the fit of sickness proves fatal to the monk, the fish foretells it by its death some days before.

30.3 This the learned Camden relates in his description of Cheshire and the opinion of the trees swimming in the lake near Brereton, prevails all about the county to the present day, only with this difference, that some say it is one log only that swims and some say many.

31 Lancashire, which is not far off, has been famous for witches and I am afraid Cheshire is a little infected by its neighbourhood. Those that will not believe our prophecy may leave it alone; but if hope is a good help to faith, I shall not be long among the incredulous.

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A VISION SEEN IN THE FOREST OF DELAMERE

✦

1 The Editor presents his Readers with a Copy of a printed Paper, which several aged Persons, residing near the Forest, have vouched for the Authenticity of.

2 A true and particular Account of a strange and surprising Vision, that was seen in the Forest of Delamere, in Cheshire, on the 4th of last Month.

3 AS Nixon, in the reign of King James the First, prophesied of many strange and wonderful things that should come to pass, such as an heir being born to Lord Cholmondeley's which at that time there was little reason to expect, but which came to pass; and that the eldest son or young Lord Cholmondeley should have the misfortune to break his neck by riding a hunting, which accident really did happen; and several other things already come to pass according to the said prophecy, but, in particular, of a wonderful battle or engagement that should be fought in the forest of Delamere; and as it is now fully expected that we shall have an invasion from our natural and inveterate enemies the French, it is also thought it will be in the North of England and in all probability the said Forest of Delamere may be the place of action or engagement: and what strengthens the belief more is the vision that was seen in the said forest on the 4th, as follows:

4 As two ancient persons were walking over the said Forest, to their great surprise, they saw at a distance before them an army rise out of the ground drawn up with their proper officers and their commanders in front of them, and whilst they were looking at and ruminating upon so strange a sight, to their most wonderful surprise and amazement there arose also another army out of the ground, at a small distance from the first, and farther in the forest, which army was headed or commanded by a man in royal apparel, who, after having drawn up his army, marched to meet and engage the first; upon which a most bloody battle ensued with firearms, and many appeared to be killed on both sides; but, being so near each other, they laid down or grounded their arms and took to their swords, with which great slaughter was made; and then came to such close quarters that they put up their swords and fought with their hands; all of which engagements continued more than three quarters of an hour, during which time the said two ancient people were spectators; and at last the remains of the army that first appeared retreated towards the sea, and vanished directly out of their sight; whilst the other army which was commanded by the man in royal apparel marched victorious out of the field as far as it was possible to see them. These ancient people having spoken of the above vision it came to the ears of several gentlemen, who sent for, and examined them concerning the truth of it, which they were ready to make oath of for their satisfaction.

5 On the 6th of the same month, as seven men were going to Cheshire over the said forest, about the middle of it they saw to their astonishment, a vision much resembling that which was on the sixth as above described; only with this addition that the victorious army had many slain to all ap-

pearance, yet they resumed life again and joined their own army; all which is looked upon as a good omen, that if in case England is invaded by her enemies though the nation be seemingly dead and in great division, yet on the approach of the enemy they will all in one general heart and one mind exert themselves to repel our most inveterate enemies.

6 As Nixon's Prophecies are by some persons thought fables, yet by what has come to pass it is now thought and very plainly appears that most of them have or will prove true; for which reason we have all occasion not only to exert our utmost might to repel by force our enemies, but to return from our abandoned and wicked course of life, and make our continual prayers to God for protection and safety.

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PROPHECY OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, BY PETER JURIEU (1687)

✦

[1] Rev. xi. 13.

[2] And the same hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand, and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to God.

[3] NOW what is the tenth part of the city which shall fall? in my opinion we cannot doubt that it is France. This kingdom is the most considerable part or piece of the ten horns, or states, which once made up the great Babylonian city: it fell; this does not signify that the French Monarchy shall be ruined: it may be humbled; but in all appearance Providence does design a great elevation for her afterwards. 'Tis highly probable that God will not let go unpunished the horrible outrages which it acts at this day.

[3.2] Afterward, it must build its greatness upon the ruins of the papal empire and enrich itself with the spoils of those who shall take part with the papacy. They who at this day persecute the protestants know not whither God is leading them: this is not the way by which he will lead France to the height of glory.

[3.3] If she comes thither it is because she shall shortly change her road. Her greatening will be no damage to protestant states; on the contrary, the protestant states shall be enriched with the spoil of others and be strength-

ened by the fall of Antichrist's empire. This tenth part of the city shall fall, with respect to the papacy; it shall break with Rome and the Roman religion.

3.4 One thing is certain, that the Babylonian empire shall perish through the refusal of obedience by the ten Kings, who had given their power to the beast. This thing is already come to pass in part. The kingdoms of Sweden, Denmark, England and several sovereign States in Germany have withdrawn themselves from the jurisdiction of the Pope.

3.5 They have spoiled the harlot of her riches. They have eaten her flesh, i.e. seized on her benefices, and revenues, which she had in their countries. This must go on and be finished as it is begun. The Kings who yet remain under the empire of Rome must break with her, leave her solitary and desolate.

4 But who must begin this last revolt? it is most probable that France shall. Not Spain, which as yet is plunged in superstition and is as much under the tyranny of the clergy as ever. Not the Emperor, who in temporal matters is subject to the Pope and permits that in his states the Archbishop of Strigonium should teach that the Pope can take away the Imperial crown from him.

4.2 It cannot be any country but France, which a long time ago hath begun to shake off the yoke of Rome. 'Tis well known how solemnly and openly war hath been declared against the Pope by a declaration of the King (ratified in all the parliaments) by the decisions of the assembly of the French Clergy, by a disputation against the authority of the Pope, managed in the Sorbonne, solemnly and by order of the court.

4.3 And to heighten the affront the theses were posted up even upon the gates of his Nuncio. Nothing of this kind had hitherto happened at least in a time of peace and unless the Pope had given occasion by his insolence.

5 Besides this superstition and idolatry lose their credit much in France.—There is a secret party, though well enough known, which greatly despiseth the popular devotions, images, worship of saints, and is convinced that these are human inventions: God is beforehand preparing for his great work.

6 To this it may be objected that for the last hundred and fifty years the Pope's empire hath not been made up of ten Kings, because the Kings of England, Sweden, Denmark, etc., have thrown off his government; and consequently, France is not at this day the tenth part of the Babylonian empire; for it is more than a tenth part of it.

6.2 But this is no difficulty; for we must know, that things retain the names which they bore in their original (without regarding the alterations which time does bring along.)

6.3 Though at this day there are not ten kingdoms under the Babylonian empire, it is, notwithstanding, certain, that each kingdom was called, and ought to be called in this prophecy, the tenth part, because the prophet having described this empire in its beginning, by its ten horns, or ten kings, it is necessary for our clear understanding, that every one of these Kings and kingdoms, should be called one of the ten Kings, or of ten kingdoms, with respect to the original constitution of the Antichristian empire.

7 Seeing the tenth part of the city that must fall, is France, this gives me some hopes that the death of the two witnesses hath a particular relation to this kingdom. It is the street or place of this city, i.e. the most fair and eminent part of it. The witnesses must remain dead upon the street and upon it they must be raised again.

7.2 And as the death of the witnesses and their resurrection have a relation to the kingdom of France, it may well fall out, that we may not be far distant from the time of the resurrection of the witnesses, seeing the three years and a half of their death are either begun, or will begin shortly.

8 And in the earthquake were slain seven thousand; in the Greek it is seven thousand names of men, and not seven thousand men. I confess that this seems somewhat mysterious: in other places we find not this phrase, names of men, but simply men.

8.2 Perhaps there is a figure of grammar, called hypolage casus, so that names of men are put for men of name, i.e. of raised and considerable quality, be it on account of riches, or of dignity, or of learning.

8.3 But I am more inclined to say, that here these names of men, must be taken in their natural signification and do intimate that the total Reformation of France shall not be made with bloodshed, nothing shall be destroyed but names; such as are the names of Monks, of Carmelites, of Augustines, of Dominicans, of Jacobins, of Franciscans, Capuchins, Jesuits, Minimes and an infinite company of others, whose number it is not easy to define and which the Holy Ghost denotes by the number seven, which is the number of perfection, to signify that the orders of monks and nuns shall perish for ever.

8.4 This is an institution so degenerated from its first original, that it is become the ruin of Antichrist. These orders cannot perish one without the other.

9 These great events deserve to be distinguished from all others; for they have changed, or shall change, THE WHOLE FACE OF THE WORLD.

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EXTRACTS FROM SERMONS BY DR. JOHN GILL

✦

1 THERE are some times fixed in prophecy, which by diligence, attention, and application men may arrive to some understanding of. There are indeed some times and seasons, the knowledge of which is not to be attained unto; and it would be wrong, as well as in vain, curiously to search into them.

1.2 It is not for us to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power; for he has determined the times before appointed, when every thing that he has purposed or promised shall come to pass; and he has fixed a time for every purpose under the heaven, for the performance of every thing he has designed shall be; a time to be born, and a time to die, and for every intermediate event; but these times are not known beforehand, until things are brought into execution.

1.3 There are others and very remarkable events, the times of which are pointed at in prophecy; and which with diligence and application, a knowledge of them may in some measure be attained unto: as for instance, the first coming of Christ into this world to save men: the time for it was not only agreed upon and settled between the Father and the Son, called the fulness of time, but there were several prophetic hints of it; nay, not only was it described by some general circumstances, as that it should be before the second temple was destroyed, since he was to come into it and while the sceptre was in the tribe of Judah; but the precise time was fixed by Daniel's seventy weeks, or four hundred years, which were to com-

mence from a date given him; and before the expiration of which the Messiah was to come: and so as he by reading Jeremiah's books knew the time when the Babylonish captivity should end; another by reading his prophecies might know when the Messiah would come; and accordingly about the time when those weeks were drawing near to an expiration, there were many that were looking for the Messiah and redemption by him, as knowing that it was about the time by these weeks that he should come.

1.4 There is a time set for the second coming and God in his times will show him, or cause him openly to appear; and though he will come in an hour we know not of, yet there are some circumstances pointed out in the word of God by which it may be known that it is nigh at hand; as that the day when the Son of man shall be revealed shall be as the days of Noah and Lot, when men indulged themselves in pleasure, lived in great security, unaware of the ruin coming upon them; and that when the Son of man cometh, faith will not be found in the earth; whether this be understood of the grace or doctrine of faith, or of faith with respect to Christ's coming: and when we compare these things with the present times, and consider the luxury, love of pleasure, carnal security and infidelity that abound among us, we might conclude that the coming of Christ is just at hand, were it not that there are many things which require time yet to be fulfilled previous to it, as the destruction of Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in of the fulness of the Gentiles.

1.5 So the last judgment which will take place at the second coming of Christ, and is most certain, being early known and often spoken of. Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophecied of it, and of Christ's coming to it; the day is appointed when it will come on, though of that day and hour knoweth no man, not the angels in heaven, but the Father only: but then

the principal things that should come to pass, relative to the church, between the first and second coming of Christ to judgment, are signified to us in the book of the Revelation.

2 Sermon from 1 Chron. xii. 32,
preached Jan. 1, 1752.

3 The destruction of Antichrist is the grand leading event to the glories of this state. This is hinted at in the epistle to the church at Philadelphus, the emblem of the spiritual reign; it will be the last struggle of the beast that will cause that hour of temptation which shall come upon all the world to try the inhabitants of it: when the seventh trumpet will be sounded, which will bring on the spiritual kingdom of Christ throughout the world, he will destroy them which destroy the earth; meaning the Papists, who have destroyed the inhabitants of the earth with their false doctrine, superstitious worship, and with those bloody wars, murders, and massacres they have been at the bottom of.

3.2 And till this is done the spiritual reign cannot take place, especially in its full compass, and in all its branches, for so long as Antichrist reigns, the church will be more or less in an afflicted state: the date of the church's troubles, and of the reign of Antichrist are alike, and will expire together: the power given to the beast is to continue forty and two months; wherefore there can be no truly good and happy days, till these dates are ended.

4 The destruction of Antichrist will be by the spirit of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming; that is, by his coming in a spiritual way; or through the word of his mouth, his gospel attended by his spirit and power; which will shine out with so much lustre, splendour, light, and glory, as will chase away the darkness of popery, and enlighten the minds

of people, to see into all the fopperies, absurdities, and wickedness of that religion and cause them to cast it off: yea, even to open the eyes of the kings and princes of the earth, to behold and loath the abominations of the whore of Rome they have committed fornication with; and fill them with wrath and indignation against her, as to hate her, make her bare and desolate, and burn her with fire.

5 This work will be greatly effected by the pouring out of the seven vials of God's wrath, or the inflicting the seven last plagues upon the anti-Christian states, upon the western and eastern Antichrist, the Pope and Turk; who must be both removed to make way for the spiritual reign of Christ. These seven vials will be poured out, or those plagues inflicted by Angels; by whom we are to understand protestant kings, and princes, and generals of armies; and these will be given them by one or the first of the four beasts, or living creatures, the emblems of gospel ministers; who having some notice of the time of antichrist's destruction being at hand, will stir and animate the christian princes and potentates to take this work in hand; and who are therefore said to go forth from the temple, the church, the place of divine and spiritual worship, and where they themselves are worshippers; and from whence they have orders to go forth and do their work.

6 The first five of these vials concern the western Antichrist, and his dominions: between which, and the trumpets, there is a great correspondence, though they respect different times and persons.

6.2 The first vial will be poured out upon the earth, and designs those popish countries which are upon the continent, as France and Germany, especially the latter; and as the first trumpet brought the Goths into

Germany, so the first vial will bring great distress upon the popish party in the empire, and issue in a reformation from popery.

6.3 The second vial will be poured out upon the sea, and may intend the maritime powers belonging to the see of Rome, particularly Spain and Portugal; and as the second trumpet brought the Vandals into these places, so this vial will effect the same, and bring wars and desolations into them, and make a change in their religion.

6.4 The third vial will be poured out upon the rivers and fountains of water, which may point to those places adjacent to Rome, as Italy and Savoy; and as the third trumpet brought the Huns into those parts; so this vial will bring in large armies hither, which will cause much bloodshed, and a great revolution in church and state.

6.5 The fourth vial will be poured out upon the sun, which must denote some person or persons of great dignity and influence, and as the fourth trumpet brought destruction upon the Emperor of Rome, the sun of the empire, and upon governors under him, signified by the moon and stars; this vial will bring on the ruin of the pope of Rome, the sun of the antichristian empire, with all his cardinals, bishops, priests, etc.

6.6 The fifth vial will be poured out upon the seat of the beast, which is Rome, the seat that the devil gave to the beast, and will produce great darkness in his kingdom; though as yet it will not be utterly destroyed, which is reserved to the seventh vial.

6.7 Now these several vials as they will be so many plagues on the western Antichrist, and make so many breaches and ruins upon his states and dominions, so they will be so many gradual steps to the advancement of the glory and kingdom of Christ, and issue in the reformation of these places from popery.

6.8 The sixth vial will be poured out on the river Euphrates, which designs the Turkish empire, in the midst of which that river is; and as the sixth trumpet let loose the four angels, or heads of the Ottoman family into Europe, so this vial affects the same empire and brings destruction on it, signified by the drying up of the waters of that river, as Babylon's destruction is expressed by the drying up of her sea, Jer. li.

6.9 36, which will make way for the king, or kingdoms of the East; the kingdoms of Persia and Tartary and others, to receive and embrace the Christian religion: this is the second, or Turkish woe, which shall pass away; when the kingdoms of this world will become Christ's and his dominion will be from sea to sea, from the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Sea; and from the river Euphrates to the ends of the earth.

6.10 The seventh vial will be poured out upon the air, the whole kingdom of Satan, in all the branches of it, who is the prince of the power of the air; and this vial will clear the whole world of all the remains of Christ's enemies, pagan, papal, and Mahometon, which the other vials left or did not reach; and now will Christ's kingdom be in its full glory.

6.11 Now the heathens, papists, pagans and Mahometans, will perish out of this land and these sorts of sinners will be consumed out of the earth and such wicked ones will be no more.

7 God will make a short work in righteousness, upon the enemies of his church: as yet I take it, none of them are poured out, though some great and learned men have so thought; as yet there have been no such devastations on the continent, as in France and Germany, as to produce the above effects; nor in the countries of Spain and Portugal; nor in Italy and Savoy, and like the places near Rome, nor in the seat of the beast, Rome itself; nor

on the Pope and his cardinals; the river Euphrates is not dried up; the Ottoman empire is yet in being; the Turkish woe is not passed away; and much less the world cleared of all the enemies of Christ and his church; no, before this work is done, the outer court must be given to the Gentiles, and the witnesses must be slain.

7.2 Had they begun to be poured out at the time of the reformation, as some have thought, in all likelihood they would have been finished before now; and Antichrist would have been destroyed, and better times than we are now in would have succeeded; but, however, this we may be assured of, that as the plagues in Egypt issued in the destruction of Pharaoh, and in the deliverance of the Israelites, so these vials will end in the ruin of Antichrist, and in the salvation of the church of Christ.

7.3 As soon as these things will take place, nay, as soon as you hear of those seven plagues, immediately you hear of persons on a sea of glass, triumphing over Antichrist, having the harps of God, and singing the song of Moses and the Lamb: and no sooner it is said, that Babylon is fallen, but voices are heard in heaven ascribing salvation, glory, honour and power to God, for his judgments on the great whore; declaring that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth; that the marriage of the Lamb is come; and his bride made ready; and proclaiming them happy that are called to the marriage-supper of the Lamb; all which respect the spiritual reign of Christ, now introduced by the ruin of Antichrist.

8 There will be very large conversions every where, in the several parts of the world: in all popish countries and antichristian states; even the ten kings that have given their kingdoms to the beast, have been associates of Antichrist and reigned with him, shall withdraw from him; they and their

subjects shall revolt from him, and be converted, and embrace the pure gospel: as it will be the christian princes and potentates that will pour out the seven vials on Antichrist, they will carry the gospel with them wherever they go; or, however, the ministers of it will follow closely at their heels, way being made by the former for them; whose ministry will meet with great success every where, and those that escape the judgments of God in these nations, will not only be affrighted at them, but will be truly converted by the gospel and give glory to the God of heaven.

8.2 In the Mahometan nations, the Turkish woe being past and that empire being destroyed and way made for the gospel to be carried into the eastern kingdoms, great and large conversions will be made by it; there is a most glaring prophecy of this in Isa. lx.

8.3 7., which whole chapter concerns the spiritual and personal reign of Christ; all the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto thee, the rams of Nebaioth shall minister unto thee; they shall come up with acceptance on mine altar and I will glorify the house of my glory. Now Kedar and Nebaioth were the sons of Ishmael, Gen. xxv.

8.4 13., who settled in Arabia, the country now possessed by the Turks; so that this is a prophecy of the conversion of multitudes in those parts, whereby the interest of Christ will be increased and his church glorified.

8.5 Moreover, in all Pagan countries the gospel will make its way, and be successful; the covering and veil of blindness and ignorance, cast and spread over all people and nations, will be removed by it; not only the darkness of popery and Mahometanism, but the gross darkness of paganism shall flee away at the light and brightness of Zion's rising; the Gentiles shall come to it; the fulness and forces of them shall be brought into the church, being converted by the word: and not only vast multitudes of the

common people but great personages also; kings shall be enlightened by it; these shall come to Christ, fall down before him and worship him; these shall come into his church and become members of it; kings shall be nursing fathers and queens nursing mothers to his people; they shall bring their riches, honour, and glory into his house; and his saints shall suck the breasts of kings, be enriched, honoured and protected by them.

8.6 This will be the time when the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; not that there will be any change or alteration in the form and order of civil government, which will be the same as now; there will be kings and queens then, as at this time, as these prophecies show, it will not be until the personal reign of Christ takes place, that all rule, authority and power, will be put down: civil magistracy in the spiritual reign will continue as it is; only it will change hands, it will be entirely in the hands of christian kings and princes all the world over; and no doubt but it will be better exercised, be more orderly and regular; and that truth and righteousness will prevail every where.

8.7 But I must not forget the conversion of that considerable body of people the Jews, who have been preserved a distinct people for several hundreds of years for this purpose; the conversion of these people will be sudden and of them altogether a nation shall be born at once.

8.8 It looks as if their conversion would be like that of the apostle Paul, and he seems to hint that it will, when he says, that he, in obtaining mercy, was a pattern to them which should hereafter believe; meaning, perhaps, his own countrymen that should believe in Christ in the latter day, whose conversion would be similar to his; that as his conversion was sudden, in the midst of all his ignorance, unbelief, and rebellion, and without the

word, by the immediate power and grace of God, so will theirs be in like manner: nor is it likely that their conversion should be by means of the word, since there is such an aversion in that people to the hearing of it; and a rare thing it is to see a Jew in a Christian assembly.

8.9 But, however, all Israel shall be called, converted, and saved; there is a famous prophecy of this in Hos. iii. 4, 5., in the first of these verses it is said, the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king and without a prince; without any civil government of their own, the sceptre having departed from them many hundred years ago; and without sacrifice; daily or yearly, or on any occasion: they believing it to be unlawful to sacrifice any where but in their own land, and at Jerusalem, and on the altar of God there; and without an image, and without an ephod, and without seraphim; without any manner of idols, or idol-worship; they being not addicted to idolatry, since their return from the Babylonish captivity: and now as all these things are exactly fulfilled in them, so will in like manner that which follows: afterwards shall the children of Israel return: by faith and repentance, from their evil way, from their impenitence and unbelief, and rejection of the Messiah, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; the Messiah, the son of David, their king, as their own Targum paraphrases it; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days; in the spiritual reign of Christ; and it is hinted as in the Philadelphian state, Rev. iii.

8.10 9, then will the children of Israel appoint themselves one head, which is Christ, whom they will own and acknowledge to be their head, lord, and king; and they shall come out of the land, or countries where they are, to their own land, and great shall be the day of Jezreel: and this will make a considerable part of the glory of Christ's spiritual kingdom.

9 The light of the gospel, both in the preachers and professors of it, will be very great, clear, and distinct; the light of the moon, as in the present dispensation to which it may be compared, shall be as the light of the sun, to which that dispensation shall be like; and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days: as if the light of seven days were collected together, and shone out at once; hyperbolical expressions, setting forth the exceeding greatness of gospel light in those times: not only the watchmen, ministers of the word, shall see eye to eye, all truths clearly and distinctly, but their ideas and sentiments shall be regular and uniform; there will be an entire harmony and agreement between them; and even private Christians, common members, shall all know the Lord, and the things of the gospel, in a very clear and comfortable manner, even from the least of them unto the greatest of them; when God shall lay Zion's stones with fair colours, and her foundation with sapphires, make her windows of agates, and her gates of carbuncles, and all her borders of pleasant stones; then all her children shall be taught of God, to such a degree as they never were before, so clearly, fully and universally.

10 Brotherly love, which is now waxed cold, will be in its height and glory, agreeable to the name of this state, Philadelphia, which signifies brotherly love: there will be no more contentions, animosities, and quarrels: Ephraim shall not envy Judah on account of pre-eminence of office, gifts and grace; and Judah shall not envy Ephraim, by any haughty or overbearing carriage, or with wrangling debates and opprobrious language: the two sticks of Ephraim and Judah shall be one in the hand of the Lord; there will be perfect harmony and love, nothing to disturb, distress, and make uneasy, or tend to alienate the affections of one from another; there will be

no pricking briars nor grieving thorns among them; they will be like the first Christians, of one heart and of one mind, and of one judgment, all studying to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

11 Holiness, which becomes the house of God for ever, will now adorn every member in it; nor will there be such immorality in the world as at this present time: holiness will be as common as profaneness is now; in that day there shall be upon the bells of the horses holiness to the Lord—yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah, shall be holiness unto the Lord of hosts: Christ therefore takes his titles in writing to the church at Philadelphia, the emblem of the spiritual reign, suitable to its state; as truth and holiness shall then prevail, he addresses it thus, these things saith he that is holy, he that is true; truth and holiness go together; truth influences the heart, and that the life and conversation.

12 There will be great peace and prosperity of all kinds, inward and outward, spiritual and temporal; in these days of the Messiah's spiritual reign, shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth: as the saints will enjoy great peace of conscience and tranquillity of mind so they will have nothing to disturb them without; there will be no more persecution; there will be none to hurt or destroy in all the Lord's holy mountain, as there will be no discord among themselves, so no distress from any enemies, violence shall no more be heard in their land, nor wasting and destruction within their border. O happy, halcyon days! I go on to observe,

13 There will be a personal appearance of the Son of God, and a glorious one it will be: he will personally appear; the Lord himself shall descend, not by his spirit, or by the communication of his grace, or by his gracious

presence, as before; but in person he will descend from the third heaven, where he is, in our nature, into the air, where he will be visible; every eye shall see him, when he cometh with clouds, or in the clouds of heaven, which will be his chariot; he will descend on earth et the proper time; and his feet shall stand on the Mount of Olives; on that spot of ground from whence he ascended to heaven. Job seems to have this descent of his in view when he says, he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; which seems to respect not so much his first coming as his second; since it is connected with the resurrection of the dead.

14 This appearance of Christ will be a very glorious one: it is called the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

15 Happy are those that belong to this city, who are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; whose citizenship is in heaven, and they have a right to enter in through the gates into the holy city, the new Jerusalem; but miserable will these be that will be without, for without are dogs: and then he that is unjust, will be unjust still; and he that is filthy, will be filthy still; and he that is righteous, will be righteous still; and he that is holy, will be holy still.

16 Sermon from Psalm lxxxvii. 3, preached Dec. 27, 1752.

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AN EXTRAORDINARY PREDICTION RELATED BY MR. JOHN WESLEY

✦

1 An Extraordinary Prediction relating to the Downfall of the House of Bourbon and the House of Austria.

2 RELATED BY MR. JOHN WESLEY.

3 A LITTLE before the conclusion of the late war in Flanders, one who came from thence gave us a very strange relation; I knew not what judgment to form of this, but waited till John Haim should come over, of whose veracity I could no more doubt than of his understanding.

3.2 The account he gave was this; Jonathan Pyrah was a member of our society in Flanders, I knew him some years, and knew him to be a man of an unblameable character.

3.3 One day he was summoned to appear before the Board of General Officers; one of them said, What is this we hear of you? we hear you have turned Prophet, and that you foretell the downfall of the bloody house of Bourbon, and the haughty house of Austria; we should be glad if you were a real Prophet, and if your prophecies came true; but what sign do you give to convince us you are so, and that your predictions will come to pass?

3.4 He readily answered, Gentlemen, I give you a sign: to-morrow, at twelve o'clock, you shall have such a storm of thunder and lightning as you never had before since you came into Flanders. I give you a second

sign: as little as any of you except any such thing, as little appearance of it as there is now, you shall have a general engagement with the French within three days.

3.5 I give you a third sign: I shall be ordered to advance in the first line; if I am a false Prophet I shall be shot dead at the first discharge, but if I am a true Prophet I shall only receive a musket-ball in the calf of my left leg.

3.6 At twelve the next day there was such thunder and lightning as they never had in Flanders; on the third day, contrary to all expectation, was the general battle of Fontenoy; he was ordered to advance in the first line, and at the very first discharge he did receive a musket-ball in the calf of his left leg.

4 When the war was over he returned to England, but the story was got here before him, in consequence of which he was sent for by the countess of Stair, and several other persons of quality, who were desirous of hearing so surprising an account from his own mouth. He could not bear so much honour; it quite turned his brain. In a little time he went stark mad, and so he continues to this day, living still, as I apprehend, on Wibsey Moor Side, within a few miles of Bradford.

5 So much for this military Prophet. Mr. Wesley remarks in a note that he is since dead; but we are not able to ascertain whether there be any account of him and his predictions in the papers or other periodical publications of that time. If any gentleman is in possession of information on this subject, the intelligence is worth communicating to the public.

[6] Part of this prophecy being fulfilled, the objects in view to be obtained by a publication are, what was the exact prophecy? whether the several circumstances mentioned did take place.

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THE LIFE AND PROPHECIES OF MOTHER SHIPTON

✦

1 IN the second year of the reign of Henry VII., which was the year 1486, there lived a woman called Agatha Shipton, at a place called Knaresborough, in Yorkshire. She came of poor parentage, who died and left her, at the age of fifteen, destitute.

1.2 After their decease, she still lived in the old house; but being now deprived of those helps she formerly enjoyed, she was obliged to seek relief from the parish; which she did, but with so much regret and grief, that she seemed in her begging rather to command alms, than in a humble manner to desire it.

2 Satan looked on her poverty to be great, and knowing her evil inclination (for you must understand that Satan is a good scholar), and perceiving that she was willing to accept of any proposition to change her condition, he, one time, as she was sitting melancholy under a tree by a river side, accosted her in the form of a very handsome young man. “Pretty maid,” said he, “why so sad? thy age is too tender for thy head to be troubled with the cares of the world; come, tell me what is the matter, and if it lie within my power to assist thee, as I am sure it doth, thou shalt not want a friend of me.”

3 Agatha cast up her eyes, and seeing a face so lovely, could not suspect Satan hid in that comely shape, whereupon, in a lamentable tone, she expressed all that troubled her, informing him of her great wants, and that,

not knowing how to work, she could not provide what her necessities required.

3.2 "Pish," said Satan "this is nothing; be ruled by me, and all shall be well." She told him she would. Hereupon, he ordered her to meet him at the same place the next day, and he would bring some friends along with him; for he told her he resolved to marry her. She promised him she would; and accordingly they met.

3.3 He came riding upon a stately horse, with a pillion behind him for his spouse, attended by a great many gallants (as they appeared), well mounted, and in a noble equipage.

4 Satan's attendants soon conveyed his mistress behind him; she not in the least doubting the reality of all she saw.

5 They needed neither switch nor spur to hasten them forward, the horses were fiery enough of themselves, and ran with that swiftness, that the wind could not overtake them in their full speed: soon they arrived at their journey's end, where seemed to be a very stately house, with a pair of great gates, which, at their approach, was opened by a porter in his livery gown. Alighting, she went in, where she saw a great many servants, who seemed, at the sight of her and their master, to show much respect and obeisance.

6 Now did Satan command rich garments to be brought, which she was immediately clothed with; and being thus richly attired, she was ushered into a great hall, where was a long table, furnished with all the varieties the whole world could afford; at the upper end of which table she was placed,

next to her intended husband: all the rest of the guests placed themselves as they thought fit. As they had the choicest cheer, so they had the best of wines, and sweetest music.

7 Dinner being ended, they fell to dancing; and now Satan told her he was no mortal, but spirit, immaterial, and not burdened by a body, nor hindered by any material thing; "So that I can, when I please, pierce through the earth, and ransack its treasures, and bring what precious thing I please from thence to bestow on those that serve me. I know all rare arts and sciences, and can teach them to whom I please. I can disturb the elements, stir up thunders and lightnings, destroy the best of things which were created for the use of man, and can appear in what shape or form I please.

7.2 It will take too long to describe my power, or tell you what I can do; but I will only tell thee what thou shalt do. That being done, I will give thee power to raise hail, tempests, with lightning and thunder; the winds shall be at thy command, and shall bear thee whither thou art willing to go, though ever so far off, and shall bring thee back again when thou hast a mind to return. The hidden treasures of the earth shall be at thy disposal and pleasure, and nothing shall be wanting to complete thy happiness here.

7.3 Thou shalt, moreover, heal or kill whom thou pleaseth; destroy or preserve either man or beast; know what is passed, and assuredly tell what is to come." Here note, by the way, Satan is a liar from the beginning, and will promise more by ten millions than he knows he is capable of performing, to the intent that he may ensnare a soul.

8 This poor ignorant wretch easily believed what this grand deceiver of mankind told her, and being ravished with the thoughts of being so highly preferred, she condescended to all Satan would have her do, whereupon he bid her say after him in this manner: Raziel ellimiham mir amwish ziragia Psonthonphanchia Raphaelel have run a tapinot am becaz mitzphecat jarid cuman hapheah Gabriel Heydon turris dungeonis philonomostarkes sophecord hankim.

8.2 After she had repeated these words after him, he bid her say after him again: Kametzeatuph Odel Pheraz Tumbag in Gall Flemmugen Victow Denmarkeonto. Having finished his last wicked speech, which even the chief of his minions understood not, and of which none but Satan himself can pick out the meaning, it thundered so horridly that every clap seemed as if the vaulted roof of heaven had cracked, and was tumbling down on her head; and withal, that stately palace, which she thought she was then in, vanished in a thrice; so did her sumptuous apparel: and now her eyes being opened, she found herself in a dark dolesome wood, a place, which, from the creation, had scarce ever enjoyed the benefit of one single sun-beam.

8.3 Whilst she was thinking in what course to steer, in order to return, two flaming fiery dragons appeared before her, tied to a chariot, and as she was consulting with herself what was best to be done, she was insensibly hoisted into it, and with speed unimaginable, conveyed through the air to her own poor cottage.

9 Being come home, the neighbours flocked around her, having missed her for two or three days, shrewdly suspecting some mischief had befallen her; but when they beheld her face, they were all amazed to see such a strange

alteration in her countenance in so short a time!

9.2 Before she met Satan she looked healthy, but now that red plumpness had vanished, there was nothing to be seen but a pale shrivelled skin on her cheek, which, for want of flesh seemed to fall into her mouth, to be devoured by her hunger-starved jaws.

9.3 Those about her, who were charitable-minded, pitied her, comforted, and gave her money, which, with a great deal of disdain and scorn, she threw at them, saying, she wanted not, nor stood in need of their alms, "for here," said she, "is money enough," plucking her hand out of her pocket; the people near her discovered that what was in her hands was nothing else but some aspen-leaves, and notwithstanding they endeavoured to persuade her that she was mistaken in supposing that to be money, yet she would not believe them, so strong a power had Satan gotten over her already.

10 In fine, she bid them all begone, for now she began to take little delight in human society; it was not long that they had left her, before Satan came in to see her, in the same handsome young form as he first appeared unto her, telling her that he came to supply the company of those she had wisely dismissed; that she needed not the society of any human creature, for he would not fail to be constantly with her: always bringing with him what should not only serve for a bare livelihood, but be her delight, pleasure, and satisfaction: hereupon, by Satan's command, there instantly seemingly appeared a complete noise of music, with a great variety of dishes of meat of the choicest and most pleasing sort, which so ravished Agatha that she fell to the ground in a profound and deep trance.

10.2 One of the neighbours coming in at this time, wondered to see Agatha lying on the floor motionless; however, out of pity, she endeavoured to awaken Agatha; but using what means she could, it all signified nothing; she shook and pinched her, yet still she lay insensible.

10.3 This woman being strangely amazed, ran out among the rest of the neighbours, crying out poor Agatha Shipton was suddenly struck dead, and desired them to go into the house with her, and be eye-witnesses of the truth; whereupon several went, and found what this woman said to be seemingly true; but one wiser than the rest, stooped down, and perceiving that she breathed, said, “Friends, ye are all mistaken; Agatha is not dead, but in a trance, or else she is bewitched.”

10.4 She had scarcely uttered these words before Agatha began to stir, and soon after, raising herself on her legs, cried out in a very distracted tone, “What do you here, vile wretches! Cannot I enjoy my pleasures, but ye must be eaves-dropping? Get ye gone, ye have nothing to do here;” and hereupon she fell a dancing; which they wondered at because they could hear no music.

10.5 At length, Agatha turned about, and seeing they were not gone, said, “If you are resolved thus to disturb me, and will not go, I will make ye.” This somewhat affrighted them, for they now verily believed she was a witch, and as they were hastening away, with all imaginable speed, a sudden strong wind hoisted them to a great height into the air, falling all to the ground again without the least harm, the men were like overgrown goats, with large horns on their heads, and the women riding on their backs, which sight, as they produced inexpressible wonder, so amidst their amazement they could not but burst out into excessive laughter.

11 This wonderful and unexpected exploit was instantly noised all about the country, and occasioned a great resort of people to the place where Agatha lived; which so perplexed her by their undesired visits, that she resolved within herself to be revenged on some of them; which by Satan's help she effected: one had a horse that died suddenly, and being opened, there was found in his stomach fish-hooks and hair, instead of hay and oats; another going to sit down at table with persons of good quality, at dinner-time, and thinking himself very spruce and fine, had in an instant his ruff pulled off his neck, and the seat of a house of office clapped on in its place: he that sat next to him breaking out in a great laughter at the sight thereof, was served a little better, for his hat was invisibly conveyed away, and the kitchen pan put on instead thereof; a modest young gentlewoman, who did sit at the table at that time, and was come on no other errand but to see this young witch, which was so much talked of, looking on these two worthy spectacles of laughter, endeavouring all she could to refrain from laughing, but could not for above a quarter of an hour: this made them all laugh so extremely, that the master of the house was alarmed, and being desirous to share with his guests in their mirth, came running upstairs as fast as his legs could carry him; when about to enter the door, he could not, and no wonder, since the oldest man living never saw a larger pair of horns than he had on his head.

12 Whilst they were gazing one on another, more than half distracted, they were reduced to the same condition they were in before; after which there followed a noise, as if a hundred persons were laughing together, but nothing at all was seen.

13 These persons fearing something worse might befall them if they stayed any longer, made all the haste they could to be gone. Agatha knowing their intent, resolved to take her farewell of them by serving them one trick more, which was this: As they were about to mount on horseback, they were pelted with rotten apples and filth.

13.2 As they rode through the town, such as thought they rode singly, were all observed to have behind them, each man, a deformed old woman; and as their faces differed all one from another, so did their habits, which were all tattered and ragged, and patched with a hundred colours.

13.3 Fear, shame, and the hooting of the people, made them put spurs to their horses, neither did they forbear the whip, nor anything that might add speed to their horses' heels, so that it may be said, they rather flew than rode.

14 Coming home, they declared what wonderful things they had seen performed, though by a young one, yet as they believed, the greatest witch in the world. This news being so generally spread, came at length to the ears of the justices, who now thought it high time to question and bring to examination a person that was so much talked of, and might, if let alone, do a great deal of mischief.

14.2 Accordingly two stout fellows were despatched for her; they soon found her, and nothing daunted by her witcheries, they resolutely carried her before the justice, where being brought, she, not a jot daunted, told him that she had more authority than he, and that notwithstanding his power, she could command one that could overrule him; that she was a princess, and could have at her back a thousand spirits of the air, and as

many of the earth and water; that she could raise a tempest presently that should overturn his house about his ears, “and that you may know it lies not in your power to detain me, three words will procure my liberty.”

14.3 Hereupon, she said, “Updraxi, call Stygician Helluox!” She had scarce uttered the last word, before there came in a horrid winged dragon, which immediately took her up, and carried her away from the amazed justice and the attendants about him, half dead with fear.

15 This so affrighted all that heard of it, that none would undertake to meddle with her more, so that she had a considerable time of respite. But she now began to be more admired than before, being discovered to be enceinte. The people could not tell what to think, or who could be the father.

15.2 While people were generally passing their verdict on Agatha, she was once taken and brought before a justice, and amongst other questions, was asked, whether she was enceinte? She acknowledged it; nay, further, that the father was no mortal wight.

15.3 The justice gave no credit to what she said, as looking on her as an ignorant seduced woman; and so asked her what bail she could produce, intending to defer the business until she was delivered.

15.4 In this very nick of time, two gentlemen, as they appeared by their habits, voluntarily proffered themselves, but as soon as accepted for bail, vanished; however, Agatha had permission to go home.

16 In course of time was born, Mother Shipton, which proved the conclusion of her miserable life. But her entry into the world was such a terror to all that beheld her, that several credible person then presented, have several times confessed that they have never beheld the like: such strange and

horrible noises, that the persons about her could scarcely find so much courage in themselves as to continue in the place where she was; much less when they beheld the strange and unparalleled physiognomy of the child, which was so misshapen, that it is altogether impossible to express it fully in words, or the most ingenious to describe her in colours, though many persons of eminent qualifications in that art have often attempted it, but without success; therefore, according to the best observations of her, take this true, though not full, account of her features and body.

16.2 She was of an indifferent height, but very morose and big-boned; her head very long, with very great goggling, but sharp and fiery eyes; her nose of an incredible and unproportionable length, having in it many crooks and turnings, adorned with many strange pimples of divers colours, as red and blue mixed, which, like vapours of brimstone, gave such a lustre to the affrighted spectators in the dead time of the night, that one of them confessed several times, that her nurse needed no other light to assist her in the performance of her duty: her cheeks were of a black swarthy complexion, much like a mixture of the black yellow jaundice, wrinkled, shrivelled and very hollow; insomuch that as the ribs of her body, so the impression of her teeth was easily to be discerned though both sides of her face, answering one side to the other, like the notches in a valley, excepting only two of them, which stood quite out of her mouth, in imitation of the tusks of a wild boar, or tooth of an elephant, a thing so strange in an infant, that no age can parallel: her chin was of the same complexion as her face, turning up her mouth; and shrieks being heard from an unknown cause, as if there had been more than an ordinary correspondence between her teeth and it.

16.3 Her neck was so strangely distorted, that her right shoulder was forced to be a supporter to her hood, it being propped up by her chin, so that the right side of her body stood lower than her left, like the reeling of a ship that sails with a side wind; again, her left side was quite turned the contrary way, as if her body had been screwed together piece after piece, and not rightly placed; her left shoulder hanging just perpendicular to the bottom of the back.

16.4 Her legs were very crooked and misshapen; the toes of her feet looking towards her left side, so that it was very hard for any person (could she have stood up) to guess which road she intended to steer her course, because she never could look that way she resolved to go.

17 After she had remained under the care of the nurse for a space of a month or thereabouts, she was put out to nurse at the charge of the parish to a poor woman hard by in the town, where she continued for the space of half a year or thereabouts, the house not being in any way disturbed at all, till at last her nurse having been abroad with the chief of the parishioners, either to procure something of their charity for her subsistence and the maintenance of her family, or else to fetch her money from the overseers of the poor for nursing the child; and returning home to her house she found her door wide open, at which she, much amazed and affrighted, ran to her next neighbour and acquainted her she was quite undone, for her house was broken open and robbed.

17.2 The man immediately rose from his dinner, accompanied by his wife and also a labouring man. Approaching the door, they endeavoured to enter, but before they could all get in a very strange noise was heard in the next room to them, as if it had been a concert of cats, which so af-

frighted them that they all ran towards the door, endeavouring to get out again, but in vain; for at their approach there were great long yokes put about their necks, in the form of a cross or turnstile, so that they could not possibly return; and while they were thus striving and crying out for help, their yokes at last fell off, and a staff was laid upon the men's shoulders, upon which an old woman presented herself, sometimes hanging by the heels and sometimes by the toes.

17.3 These sports continued for the space of half an hour, so that the poor men were never more tired nor less pleased at anything than in being constrained to humour this piece of activity.

18 After they had got a discharge from this their new employment, the house being now quiet, and they had a little recovered their senses, missing the woman they ran further into the house, where they found them in a room in which stood a pair of yarwingles made in the form of a cross.

18.2 The two women were forced to take the four ends thereof in their hands, and so danced round about one after the other until they were almost tired to death, carrying upon their shoulders an imp in the likeness of a monkey or ape, which hung close upon them; and whenever they slacked their pace, these spirits pricked them forward, continuing this for a considerable time, till at length they vanished quite out of sight, leaving these poor wretches no less weary than astonished, and who, perceiving themselves at liberty, ran to several of the neighbours, acquainting them with what had happened, and causing great amazement amongst them; and immediately the whole town was in an uproar.

18.3 The minister and several of the most eminent of the inhabitants consulted together upon the occasion what to do in the business; some of them threatening the informers, others thinking they were distracted, but at last they resolved to go to the house; yet when they came near there arose a dispute who should first enter, which at last was agreed upon; and the parson, with his congregation attending him in the rear, entered the door quivering and shaking, whereupon there was suddenly a noise like the treading of people on stones, though the house had no other but an earthen floor; and very sweet musical harmony of several notes was heard, and all presently vanished again.

18.4 The minister and inhabitants entered, and searching the house, missed the child; one of them looking up the chimney, saw the cradle wonderfully hanging up, three yards high, without any support; this was as strangely conveyed down again. They encouraged the nurse, left her in the house (though affrighted), and departed.

19 Mother Shipton's nurse was, after this, sometimes in great perplexity, not knowing what was become of her for days together; but when she was in her greatest scare after her, she saw her oftentimes drop suddenly through the roof of the house.

19.2 Going out, upon her return she many times found her child stretched out to a prodigious length, taller than the tallest living, and at other times as much shortened. The poor woman's work for the major part, was only to rectify what these spirits disordered about her house.

19.3 The chairs and stools would frequently march up stairs and down, and they usually played at bowls with the trenches and dishes: sometimes at dinner the meat would be removed before she could touch a bit; which

things, as they much troubled the nurse, so they gave great satisfaction to Mother Shipton, as it appeared by her monstrous smiles.

19.4 Now and then, to pacify her nurse, when she saw her much vexed, she would say, “Be contented; there is nothing here that will harm you.”

20 To be short, the nurse was so continually terrified by these apparitions, that she resolved to complain to the parish; and, having made known the truth of what had passed, in commiseration to the almost distracted woman, they removed Mother Shipton to another place, where she was put to school, being of an age fit for it.

21 By this time Mother Shipton was grown a lusty girl, and as she was left to the care of the parish, so the parish took care that she should have the common sort of learning, that is to say, reading and writing, bestowed upon her. Coming to school her mistress began to instruct her as other children, beginning with three or four letters at first; but to the amazement and astonishment of her mistress, she exactly pronounced every letter in the alphabet without teaching; her mistress then showed her a primer, which she read at first sight as well as any in the school, and so on with every book that was shown her.

22 As this produced wonder in her schoolmistress, so it caused hatred and envy in her comrades; some flouted her for her monstrous long nose, others endeavoured to beat her, and all strove to harm her; but she valued them not, revenging herself on every one of them that intended her harm.

22.2 Some were pinched, and yet no hand seen that did it; others struck speechless when they were about to say their lessons, not being able to utter a word; none escaped from being served one scurvy trick or other.

22.3 This so enraged the parents of these children, looking on Mother Shipton as the sole cause thereof, that she was discharged from the school, and so left to the wide world.

22.4 The singularities of Mother Shipton now began to be talked of everywhere; she was often seen, when alone, to laugh heartily; at other times to talk to herself; uttering very strange riddles, which occasioned some of the more sober sort to converse with her, receiving such strange things from her, as required a long study to find out the meaning.

23 Never a day passed, wherein she related not something very remarkable, and that required the most serious consideration. And now it was that people flocked far and near (her fame was so great), to be resolved of their doubts, all returning wonderfully satisfied in the explanations she gave to their questions.

24 And now Mother Shipton, beginning to grow famous in the world for her notable judgment in things to come, there resorted to her house a number of people of all sorts, both old and young, rich and poor, especially young maidens, who have always a great desire to know when they shall be married, as also, what manner of husbands they shall have, to which she gave such satisfactory answers, both for the person and time, that no sooner could a young maid get into her teens, but she would presently trot to Mother Shipton's, to be resolved of her doubt.

24.2 Now though she was not mercenary herself, but refused great gifts when proffered unto her; yet did she keep a young wench, who, rather than fail, if they forgot to open their purse to her, would remember to

open her mouth to them, and tell them, that neither Dame Shipton nor she could be maintained with thanks, but that the belly required meat to feed it; and that it was money that made the mare to go.

24.3 One day, there came a certain young heir thither, whose father was sick, to be resolved by her whether he should live or die; but Mother Shipton could by no means be wrought upon to tell him anything; whereupon he proffered the maid great store of money, if she could by any means persuade the dame to fulfil his request; the wench, greedy of money, promised him fair; that if he would come the next morning, he would be certain to be resolved; in the meantime, she importuned her dame with the most cunning rhetoric that she could invent; but she was deaf to all entreaties, and would by no means be induced thereto, whereupon the wench resolved with herself, rather than lose the money, to give him an answer of her own invention; when the next morning came she performed her part in these words:—

25 "The grave provided hath a room:
Prepare for death, thy hour is come."

26 The young gentleman having received this answer, went away very joyful, hoping presently to reap the golden crop which his father had sown, and to be in an instant possessor of all his vast estate; but the sequel proved quite contrary; for by the time he came home, great hopes of amendment appeared in his father, who each day grew better and better, so that in a short time he became perfectly well.

26.2 This unexpected recovery of the old man struck such a damp into the young heir, that he presently took to his bed, fell extremely ill, and in a short time grew so much worse that all the symptoms of a dying man ap-

peared in him; the old man having no more children, was very desirous of his life; and to know whether he should recover, he sent to Mother Shipton, who, knowing by her art what her maid had done, severely chid her for the same, threatening to turn her out of her service.

26.3 In the meantime the messenger was come to her house, who having delivered his errand returned back with this answer:—

27 "For other's death who do gape out,
Their own, unlook'd for, comes about."

28 The old man having received this answer, was much troubled, thinking his own death predicted thereby, not imagining what his son had done: but he was soon quieted of that suspicion, for within two days the young man died; when a servant (who knew the circumstance) informed him of the truth of the whole matter.

29 At divers other times, when persons of quality came to visit her, she delivered the following prophecies:

30 "Before the Ouse Bridge and Trinity Church meets, they shall build it in the day and it shall fall in the night, until they get the highest stone of Trinity Church the lowest stone of Ouse Bridge."

31 This came to pass; for Trinity steeple in York was blown down with a tempest, and Ouse Bridge broken down with a flood, and what they did in the day time in repairing the bridge fell down in the night, till at last they laid the highest stone of the steeple for the foundation of the Bridge.

32 "A time shall happen when a ship shall come sailing up the Thames, till it comes against London, and the master of the ship will ask the captain why he weeps, since he has made so good a voyage. And he will say, and

what a good city this was, none in the world comparable to it, and now there's scarce a house left, that can let us drink for our money."

33 These last words were sadly verified after the dreadful fire of London in 1666, when there was not a house left along the Thames side from the Tower to the Temple.

34 About this time, some differences arising betwixt King Henry VIII. and the French king, great preparations for war were made in England, the drums beating in every county to summon voluntary valour to express itself in defence of their king and country.

34.2 Many heroic spirits who made honour their aim, not dreading dangers, now came forward, and indeed, so many appeared under Mars' banner, that he who was furnished with limbs and an estate, and declined the service, was called a coward.

34.3 There was then living in the North a young heir, who was newly come to his estate; one whose tongue was all fire, and his heart all ice; who would kill thousands by his words, but durst not venture to do anything in deeds; this gallant being by some of his equals pricked on to make his appearance in the field of Mars, and not to lie sleeping at home, when fame summoned him forth to action, knew not what to do in this case; loath was he to lose his loved life; and yet the aspersion of a coward, even to a coward himself, is of all things most odious; he therefore promised that none should be more willing than he to spend his blood in the quarrel of that country from whence he received his dear life; but yet he resolved within himself not to set one step forward in that path of danger till he had first consulted with Mother Shipton, concerning what success he should have in his journey; if it was bad, he resolved by a feigned sick-

ness to evade it; thinking it no good policy for a man to part with that life in an instant, which with great cost and care had been many years in bringing up.

35 Hereupon he hastened to our Northern Prophetess, acquainted her with his condition, and very earnestly desired of her (as she to whom nothing was hid) that she would unfold to him whether good or bad fortune should be his attendant in this his expedition. Mother Shipton, though she perceived his sheepish courage to be very unanswerable to that of a soldier, yet foreknowing what would come to pass, returned him the following answer: which without more ado, fully satisfied him to proceed, and performed what he had promised.

36 "When the English Lion shall set his paw on the Gallic shore, then shall the Lilies begin to drop for fear. There shall be much weeping and wailing amongst the ladies of that country: because the princely Eagle shall join with the Lion, to tread down all that shall oppose them; and though many sagittaries shall appear in defence of the Lilies, yet shall they not prevail; because the dull animal of the North shall be put to confusion; and though it be his will, yet shall cause great shame unto them.

36.2 Now shall the mitred Peacock first begin to plume, whose train shall make a great show in the world for a time, but shall afterwards vanish away, and his honour come to nothing; which shall take its end at Kingston."

37 Explanation.

[38] By the "English Lion" was meant the King of England; and by setting his "paw on the Gallic shore," the landing of his army in France; by the "Lily beginning to drop for fear," was signified the great trouble and perplexity of the French, the Lilies being the arms of France; the "weeping and wailing amongst the ladies of that country," denotes the miseries and destruction incident to war; by the "princely Eagle joining with the Lion, and treading down all that shall oppose them," is meant the German Emperor (whose arms were the Eagle) who joined in amity with King Henry, and served him in his wars; by the "sagittaries that appeared in defence of the Lilies," were meant the French cavalry, the chief strength of France, consisting of horsemen, who appeared like sagittaries, that is to say, half men and half horses; and whereas it was said, "yet they should not prevail," it fell out so accordingly; for notwithstanding all the opposition of the French armies, King Henry proceeded on vigorously, conquering and taking several towns of importance. But to come to that which most nearly concerns the matter, viz., the success of our young heir in his expedition, which was hinted forth unto him in these words: "Because the dull animal of the North shall put them to confusion, and though it be against his will, yet shall cause great shame unto them;" by the dull animal of the North was meant this fresh-water soldier, who, according to the Prophecy, put the Frenchmen to confusion and great shame; for passing the seas with King Henry, being mounted on a stately horse, as both armies confronted each other, he being at the head of the battle, just before the charge, somebody striking his horse, he carried him upon the enemy with such violence, as put their front in some disorder, which being perceived by our men, they presently so seconded him that the French ran away, leaving the English a glorious victory, purchased with little cost.

39 By this means was Mother Shipton's predictions fulfilled, to the disgrace of the French, and great praise to the young gallant; for the rest of the Prophecy the interpretation runs thus:—

40 By the "mitred Peacock," was intended Cardinal Wolsey, signified by that bird, because of his great pride, who, being but a poor butcher's son of Ipswich, in Suffolk, grew to such a height, that he thought himself superior to the chief nobles of the land, living in such splendour as not to be paralleled; according to the new Prophecy, "whose train shall make a great show in the world;" and whereas it is said, "the peacock should then begin to plume," so it was, that when King Henry had taken the city of Tournay, in France, he made Wolsey bishop thereof, who soon after rose to the highest degree of honour a subject could be capable of, which afterwards (as the Prophecy says) "vanished away, and his great honour came to nothing."

40.2 And lastly, whereas it said, he should "have his end at Kingston." The cardinal being told of this prophecy, would never pass through the town of Kingston, though lying directly in the road from his own house to the court; but afterwards being arrested for high treason, by the Earl of Northumberland, and Sir Anthony Kingston, the Lieutenant of the Tower, sent unto him, his very name (remembering the prophecy) struck such a terror to his heart that he soon after expired.

41 Mother Shipton had now got a name far and near for a cunning woman, or a woman of foresight, that her words were counted oracles, nor was she visited only by private persons, but advised with by people of the greatest quality.

41.2 Among which number at that time was Cardinal Wolsey; when it was reported that he intended to live at York, she publicly said, "He should never come thither," which, coming to his ears, and being offended, he caused three lords to go to her, who came disguised to Dringhouses, near York, where leaving their men, they took a guide to Mother Shipton's, and knocking at the door, she called from within, "Come in, Mr.

41.3 Besley (the guide), and these noble lords with you," which surprised them, that she should know them; for when they came in she called each of them by their names, and treated them with ale and cakes; whereupon, said one of the lords, "If you knew our errand you would not make so much of us; you said the cardinal should never see York."

41.4 "No," said she, "I said he might see York but never come at it." "Well," said the lords, "when he does come thou shalt be burnt." Then, taking off her linen handkerchief from her head, she said, "If this burns," and immediately flung it into the fire, but it did not burn; and after it had laid in the flames a quarter of an hour, she took it out again not so much as singed.

41.5 One of the lords then asked her what she thought of him. "My lord, the time will come when your lordship will be as low as I am, and that is low indeed," which proved true, for shortly after he was beheaded.

42 Nor was her speech of the cardinal less verified; for coming to Cawood, he went to the top of the tower and asked where York was, which being shown him, he inquired how far it was thither. For, quoth he, "There was a witch said I should never see York."

42.2 "Nay," said one present, "your eminence is misinformed; she said, you might see it, but never come at it." Then he vowed to burn her when he came there, which was but eight miles distant; but, behold, he was immediately sent for back by the king, and never returned.

43 Mother Shipton's prediction coming thus effectually to pass, spread her fame far wider than it was; insomuch that many who before looked upon her as a crack-brained woman, now began to admire her, and to esteem her words as oracles.

43.2 And as the nature of English people is rather to desire to know what is to come, than to seek to rectify aught that is done amiss, so the greatest part of her visitants came only to be acquainted with what she knew would come to pass; of which number was the Abbot of Beverley, who fearing the downfall of religious houses, and a change of the religion then professed, putting on counterfeit clothes, came to Mother Shipton's, and knocking at the door, she being within, called to him, and said: "Come in, Mr. Abbot, for you are not so much disguised but the fox may be seen through the sheep's skin.

43.3 Come take a stool and sit down, for you shall not go away unsatisfied of what you desire," and thereupon she began to utter forth her Prophecies in this sort:—

44 "When the cow doth wive the bull,
Then, oh! priest, beware thy skull!
And when the lower shrubs do fall,
The great trees quickly follow shall.
The mitred Peacock's lofty pride
Shall to his master be a guide.

And one great court to pass shall bring
What was ne'er done by any king.
The poor shall grieve to see that day,
And who did feast, must fast and pray.
Fate so decreed their overthrow,
Riches brought pride, and pride brought woe."

[45] These prophecies were thus explained: by the "Cow," was made King Henry, by reason of the Earldom of Richmond, which was his inheritance; and the "Bull," betokened Anne Boleyn, whom the king took to wife in the room of Queen Catherine; her father gave the black bull's head in his cognizance; and when the king had married Queen Anne, then was fulfilled the second line of the prophecy, viz., "Then, oh! priest, beware thy skull!" for what a number of priests, religious and secular, lost their heads, for offending against the laws, made to bring this matter to pass.

[46] Cardinal Wolsey (who was intended by the "mitred Peacock"), in the height of his pride and vastness of his undertakings, intending to erect two colleges, one at Ipswich, where he was born, the other at Oxford, where he was bred; and finding himself unable to endow them at his own charge, he obtained licence of Pope Clement VII. to suppress forty small monasteries in England, and to lay their old lands to his new foundations, which was done accordingly, and the poor people that lived in them were turned out of doors. Many of the clergy were very much against this action of Wolsey, especially John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, alleging for the same an apologue of Æsop, that "the iron head of the axe craved a handle of the wood of oaks, only to cut off the boughs of the trees: but when it was a complete axe it felled all the wood;" applying it, that the suppressing

of those smaller houses would prove destructive to all the rest, which came to pass accordingly; for King Henry, seeing the cardinal's power to extend so far as to suppress these lower shrubs, he thought his prerogative might stretch so far as to fell down the great trees; and soon after dissolved the priory of Christ Church, near Aldgate, in London (now known by the name of Duke's Place), the richest in lands and ornaments of the priories in London or Middlesex; which was a forerunner of the dissolution of the rest; and that not long after came to pass.

47 By the "Great Court," is meant the Parliament, the supremest court of England; which, in the twenty-seventh year of King Henry's reign, to support the king's states, and supply his wants, conferred on the crown all religious houses which were not able clearly to expend above two hundred pounds a year; the great ones not long after following the same fortune of the smaller, which was not done (though attempted) by any king before.

48 By the dissolution of these houses, many thousands were driven to seek their fortunes in the wide world, and became utterly exposed to want; when monkish profession was without possession, many a young man proved an old beggar, and many forced to fast for want of victuals, who formerly had it provided for them to their hands.

49 The great riches and pride of the monks and friars, was, no doubt, the main cause of their overthrow; for whatsoever was the pretence, questionless profit was the rope which pulled these religious houses down.

50 All those things coming to pass before the abbot died, caused him to have a great esteem of Mother Shipton, and to value her prophecies more than ordinary conjectures; though at first he could not tell what to make of

her ambiguous lines, which, like the oracles delivered at Delphos, rather brought one into a labyrinth of confused conjectures than satisfied the expectation, until by the clue of time, the riddles were manifest; and that which at first seemed so hard, now appeared to the understanding as easy; however, he at present kindly thanked Mother Shipton, and liberally rewarded her maid, much admiring that she could be so clear-sighted as to see through his counterfeit dress; resolving afterwards to be more informed by her concerning future events, he at that time took his solemn leave of her, and returned home.

51 Not long had the abbot been at home, but his abbey was visited by some instrument employed by the Lord Cromwell for that purpose. He who knew what was intended by this compliment thought it not safe to strive against the stream, and therefore quietly surrendered his monastery into the king's hands.

51.2 And now perceiving Mother Shipton's prophecies plainly fulfilled in the downfall of those houses, which were judged to be impregnable against all the assaults of malice and time, considering the strange revolution of so short a space, he was very desirous to be more fully informed of the future.

51.3 In this resolution he repairs again to Mother Shipton, whom he now accosts more familiarly than he did before, making himself plainly known unto her; telling her that as what she had formerly spoken he had found to be true in the event, so his judgment persuaded him she was not ignorant of those things which were in the future to ensue; and therefore desired she would not be nice in imparting her foreknowledge to him; for

which great favour, though it were more than his deserts could command, yet should there never in him be wanting a grateful tongue to acknowledge, and a grateful heart to be thankful unto her, for so great a favour.

52 "Mr. Abbot," said she, "leave off complimenting, as it is more fit for courtiers and lovers, and not agreeable to an old woman, who will neither flatter nor be flattered by any; and for what you came about, I shall not be squeamish to fulfil your request; let me therefore desire you to lend me your attention;" and thereupon, after some short pause, she thus began—

53 "A prince that never shall be born,
Shall make the shaved heads forlorn,
Then shall commons rise in arms,
And woman's malice cause much harms."

54 These lines being prophecies of the actions in King Edward's reign, for the reader's benefit we will unfold the meaning of them by themselves, that we may not too much burden his memory; but by variety add a pleasure to the reading of them.

55 By the "Prince that never shall be born," is meant King Edward VI., of whom all reports agree that he was not naturally delivered into the world, but that his mother's body was opened for his birth, that she died of the operation the fourth day following: and by "shaved heads," is understood the monks, friars, etc., who are said to become "forlorn;" the Reformation beginning with the commencement of King Edward's reign.

56 King Edward set out certain injunctions for the reformation of religion; as the commissioners passed to divers places for the establishing of them, much scorn was passed upon them, and the farther they went from

London, as the people were more uncivil, so did they the more rise into insolence and contempt; for in Cornwall, the commons flocked together, having killed one of the commissioners, and although justice was done upon the offenders (the principal of them being executed in several places), yet could not their boldness be beaten down by that severity, but that the mischief spread farther.

56.2 In Wiltshire and Somersetshire, where the people, supposing that a Commonwealth could not stand without commons, beat down enclosures, and laid parks and fields bare. The like commotions followed in Suffolk, Hampshire, Kent, Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, and Rutlandshire, but the greatest of all was in Devonshire, and Norfolk.

57 “A virtuous lady then shall die,
For being raised up too high;
Her death shall cause another’s joy,
Who shall the kingdom much annoy.
Mitres shall rise, mitres come down,
And streams of blood shall Smithfield drown.
England shall join in league with Spain,
Which some to hinder strive in vain,
The Lioness from life retires,
And pontifical priest expires.”

58 The Lady Jane Gray, assuming the title of Queen upon her, for her offence lost her head. This Lady Jane was a woman of most rare and incomparable perfections; for besides her excellent beauty, she was the mirror of her time for religion and education, in the knowledge of the liberal sciences and skill in languages; and far exceeded all of her sex and years.

[59] The death of the Lady Jane was supposed to be a rejoicing to Queen Mary, and who, by restoring Popery, and the persecutions that the professors of the Gospel suffered in her time, is said to bring the kingdom to much annoy.

[60] By the "Mitres," are meant the bishops, who in the change of religion found great change; very few keeping their seats wherein they had been seated by King Edward VI.

[61] Great was the number of martyrs burned in Smithfield in this queen's reign, under the bloody hands of Bonner, Bishop of London, and Dr. Story, Dean of St. Paul's; the first persecuting by wholesale, the second by retail; the names of all those who in this place thus testified their faith by the loss of their lives, would be too long here to recite; the chief of them were Mr. John Rogers, Mr. John Bradford, Mr. Robert Glover, etc.

[62] Queen Mary intended to match herself with Philip, King of Spain; the news thereof of being spread amongst the people, was by them ill-resented, as dreading to be under the yoke of a stranger; but all to no purpose, for soon afterwards they were married, to the mortification of the English.

[63] By the "Lioness" is meant Queen Mary, who having reigned five years and some odd months, died of a dropsy.

[64] The "pontifical priest" signifies Cardinal Pole, who expired within a few hours after the death of Queen Mary. This prelate was of princely extraction, his mother, Margret, being daughter to George Duke of Clarence; when he was young, he was brought up together with Queen Mary, and being a zealous Catholic, during King Edward's reign, suffered a voluntary

exile for the same; when the marriage between Prince Philip and Queen Mary was made up, he returned into England, and was made Archbishop of Canterbury, but was more moderate than some of his fellow bishops, having a favourable inclination towards the Protestants.

65 “The Lion fierce being dead and gone,
A maiden Queen shall reign anon.
The Papal power shall bear no sway,
Rome’s creed shall hence be swept away.
The western monarch’s wooden horses
Shall be destroyed by the Drake’s forces.
More wonders yet! a widowed Queen
In England shall be headless seen.
The Harp shall give a better sound.
An Earl without a head be found.
Soon after shall the English Rose
Unto a male her place dispose.”

66 These lines being a prophecy of the most remarkable actions during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, are to be interpreted after this manner:

67 Queen Mary is here meant, not so much for the cruelty done by her, as by the bishops and priests under her; in respect to the blood that was shed, and the persecutions then suffered, she is here termed a fierce “Lion;” after whom is said, “A maiden Queen to reign anon,” meant by Queen Elizabeth, one who was the mirror of her age and sex, who for above forty years managed the affairs of this kingdom; having, when she began, few friends that durst help, and leaving no foes when she died that could hurt

her; acting her part so well whilst here she reigned, that history can scarce afford us one prince to be matched to her fame in all considerable particulars.

68 Soon after the queen coming to the crown, a Parliament began at Westminster, wherein the laws of King Henry VIII. against the see of "Rome" were renewed, and those of King Edward VI. in favour of the Protestants revived, and the laws by Queen Mary made against them, repealed.

69 Uniformity of prayer and administration of sacrament were enacted, and the queen acknowledged to be the only and supreme governor of her kingdom. The people in each place beating down superstitious pictures and images, which misguided zeal had set up.

70 By the "western monarch's wooden horses," is meant the King of Spain's great Armada, by them termed invincible, though the success of it answered not the name; being by Sir Francis Drake and others fought with and really vanquished; most of it sunk, and the rest, destitute and scattered, being chased by our ships into the northern latitudes, and there left to be pursued by hunger and cold; a victory so remarkable, that neither time nor age will ever wear the remembrance thereof away.

71 The "widowed Queen" signifies the Queen of Scots, the mother of King James, who was beheaded at Fotheringhay Castle, some say by the privity, others say to the great discontent of Queen Elizabeth; a lady of sharp wit, undaunted spirit, comely person, beautiful face, and majestic presence; a fluent orator, and an excellent poetess, as appears by several things of her writing now extant; she was beheaded on the 8th of February, 1587, and

was first buried in the choir of Peterborough; and afterwards by her son, King James, solemnly removed from thence to Westminster, where, in the south side of the chapel of King Henry VII. he erected a stately monument to her memory.

72 "The Harp" signifies Ireland, as being the arms of that country, when Queen Elizabeth, by reducing it to a better obedience, made it give a better sound, that is, made it more civilized and profitable to the exchequer than it ever was before.

73 "An Earl without a head be found." This was spoken of the Earl of Essex, one who was the favourite of the queen and darling of the people (two things which seldom come together), and yet could not both of them protect him from the scaffold, but thereon he lost his head.

74 By the "English Rose" is meant Queen Elizabeth, as we said before, by whose death the right and title to the crown came to James VI., King of Scotland, as lineally descended from Margaret, eldest daughter to King Henry VII., the male issue failing by the death of Queen Elizabeth; and here is to be remembered the policy of King Henry VII., who having two daughters, married the eldest of them to the King of Scotland, and the youngest to the King of France, that if his male issue should happen to fail, as it afterwards did, then Scotland might wait upon England as the greater kingdom, and not England upon France as the lesser. Besides, there was an old prophecy which intimated King James coming to the English crown; for when King Edward I. harassed Scotland, amongst other things he brought from thence their royal chair (still preserved at the Abbey, in Westminster), upon which chair these verses were written:

75 "If Fates go right, where'er this chair is pight,
The regal race of Scots shall rule that place."

76 Which by the coronation of King James there performed, made good the words of the prophecy.

77 "The Northern Lion over Tweed,
The maiden Queen shall then succeed,
And join in one, two mighty States;
Janus then shall shut his gates;
Hell's power, by a fatal blow,
Shall seek the land to overthrow,
Which by mistake shall be reverst,
And heads from shoulders be disperst.
The British Olive next shall twine
In marriage with the German Vine."

78 Next follows the remarkable actions of King James's reign, predicted in the foregoing lines, which may be thus explained:

79 By the "Northern Lion" is meant King James, and by the "maiden Queen," Queen Elizabeth, whom King James, being King of Scotland, succeeded to the English crown, joining thereby the two nations of England and Scotland, which had often been attempted before.

80 The lines "Hell's power," etc., have reference to the Gunpowder Plot, which was planned to blow up the Parliament House with gunpowder—king, princes, peers, bishops, judges, knights, and burgesses, being all designed to destruction.

80.2 To bring the purpose about, a vault was hired under the Parliament House, wherein were stowed thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, with several iron bars, to make the force of the fire more effectual, all which were covered with billets and coals.

80.3 The 5th of November, the day of Parliament first sitting, was the time appointed to put this design in execution; but Providence had ordered it otherwise, that those who intended mischief should taste the effects of it.

80.4 In the evening before, Lord Monteagle received a strange letter from an unknown hand, without date or name to it, and which, when it was opened, was even still sealed. The letter being communicated to the king, he commanded the rooms under the Parliament House to be searched, where the mystery of iniquity was quickly discovered.

80.5 Some of the traitors were taken in London, others in the country; the hands of justice overtaking them, they became its examples, and tasted of that cup which they intended others should have drunk of.

81 By the “British Olive” is meant the Lady Elizabeth, daughter of King James; and by the “German Vine” the most illustrious Prince Frederic, Count Palatine of the Rhine. This Lady Elizabeth was enriched with all the endowments of both body and mind which make to the completing of a princess; most dearly beloved of the English, as one that deserved well of all. They were married with great solemnity at Westminster, February 14, 1602.

82 Mother Shipton having proceeded thus far with her prophecies, broke up abruptly with a deep sigh, the tears trickling down her cheeks, accompanied by a wringing of her hands, as if some extraordinary mischance had

befallen her.

82.2 The abbot wondered greatly what should be the cause of this sudden alteration, having observed all along before a settled composedness in her countenance, and now to break out in such exclamations.

82.3 He therefore said unto her, "Mother Shipton, it is more than some extraordinary matter which hath made you break out into this sudden passion; and if it may not be troublesome unto you, I shall desire that, as hitherto you have not been scrupulous in revealing those secrets unto me, which have wrought in me both wonder and amazement, so that you will not so abruptly break off as to leave me in suspense of the cause of your sorrow."

82.4 "Ah! Mr. Abbot," said she, "who can with dry eyes repeat what must next ensue, or but think upon it without a heart full of agony? to see virtue trampled on, and vice exalted; beggars on horseback, and princes on foot; the innocent condemned, and the bloodthirsty go scot free; but since my promise binds me to fulfil your request, I shall proceed from where I left off:

83 "The crown then fits the White King's head,
Who with the Lilies soon shall wed;
Then shall a peasant's bloody knife
Deprive a great man of his life.
Forth from the North shall mischief blow,
And English hob shall add thereto.
Then shall the Council great assemble,

Who shall make great and small to tremble,
The White King then (O grief to see!)
By wicked hands shall murdered be."

[84] By the "White King," is meant King Charles I., so called not only in respect of the purity and uprightness of his life, signified by white; but also at the time of his coronation he was clothed in white. He had, previous to the death of King James, married the Lady Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV., King of France; who is hereupon said to wed the "Lilies," the lilies being the arms of France.

[85] By the "great man," who was to lose his life by a bloody knife, was meant the Duke of Buckingham, the greatest man in favour of those times, and (as is commonly seen) most hated of the people, who laid the blame of all miscarriages in state upon him; being made general for the relief of Rochelle (then besieged by the French forces), before he embarked at Portsmouth, he was stabbed by one Felton, an officer in his army; who, so far from flying for the same, though he might pass away undiscovered, boldly avowed himself to be the man that did it. He was hanged in chains at Portsmouth, in the year 1627.

[86] The next part of this prophecy alludes to that ancient proverb, "From the cold 'North' all ills come forth," and may be understood of our troubles commencing in 1630, taking their original rise from Scotland, and fermented by several factious spirits in England, the venom of which poison so infected the veins of the English, that it broke forth into a most bitter war, and ended not but with the deaths of many thousands of people.

87 By the "great Council" is meant the long-lasting Parliament, as known to all posterity for the remarkable transactions therein. By them fell the wise Strafford, and Reverend Laud; by them was Episcopacy voted down, and Presbytery voted up; by them was the common-prayer denied, and the Directory exalted; by them was the Church and State turned topsy-turvy; but this cannot be reported of all amongst them; many of them hated their doings, dissented from them, and suffered by them.

88 The "White King by wicked hands," etc., alludes to the beheading of King Charles I., who was the principal victim of these savage wars.

89 "The White King dead, the Wolf shall then
With blood possess the Lion's den.
But Death shall hurry him away;
Confusion shall awhile bear sway;
But Fate to England shall restore
A king to reign as heretofore.
Great death in London shall be though,
And men on tops of houses go."

90 By the "White King," as we said before, is meant King Charles I., and, by the "Wolf," Oliver Cromwell, whose ambition was such that he left no means unattempted until he had got into the "Lion's den," that is to say, until he had attained the sole government.

91 "But Death shall hurry him away."

92 Very remarkable was the day in which the Protector died, being September 3, 1658, wherein the wind was so violent, that it overthrew many houses, tore up many trees by the roots, tumbled down chimneys,

and unroofed barns and stables; but it is a very ill wind that blows none good, so with all the hurt this wind did, it made recompense to some folks who had lost their estates in the civil wars, by blowing this Oliver away.

93 "But fate to England shall restore
A king to reign as heretofore."

94 Which part of the prophecy was fulfilled in the restoration of King Charles II., which put a period to all the Commonwealth, and restored the land to its ancient government.

95 "Great death in London," verified by the great plague in London, in 1665, which, for number, was the greatest that hath been known in these latter centuries of years.

96 "And men on tops of houses go." This was suddenly fulfilled in that great conflagration of fire which happened in London, September 2, 3, and 4, 1666, by which so many houses were destroyed, that men afterwards, in the ruins, went on the tops of those houses whose lofty structures not long before seemed to brave the sky.

97 It will be observed that some of the following prophecies of Mother Shipton relate to the present time, while others more closely concern the future. We will leave them to the reader's own interpretation:—

98 I.
Ploughed with swords the earth shall be,
And blood will mingle with the sea.

99 II.

Soon as the fiery year has passed.
Peace again shall come at last.

100 III.

Great accidents the world will fill,
And carriages without horses go;
Whilst, in the twinkling of an eye,
Around the world our thoughts shall fly.

101 IV.

In England, now will come to pass
A house that shall be built of glass.

102 V.

State and State, in most deadly strife,
Will fight and seek each other's life;
Then, when the North divides the South,
The Eagle will build in the Lion's mouth.

103 VI.

Three tyrant rulers France shall see,
And each of a different dynasty.
But when the greater fight be done,
France and England shall be as one.

104 VII.

In the water shall iron float,
The same as now a wooden boat.

More wonders still shall water do,
And England yet admit a Jew.

105 VIII.

Gold and riches will be shown
In a land that's not now known.

106 IX.

Under rivers man shall walk,
Shall ride, shall sleep, and shall talk.

107 X.

A river and a town shall be on fire.

108 The following remarkable Prophecy, which is known as "Mother Shipton's prophecies," was first published in 1448, and republished in 1641. It will be seen that the events it predicts have come to pass, except that contained in the last two lines, which is still in the future.

109 XI.

Over a wild and stormy sea,
Shall a noble sail,
Who to find, will not fail,
A new and a fair countree.
From whence he shall bring
A herb and a root
That all men shall suit,
And please both the ploughman and the king.
And let them take no more than measure.

Both shall have the even pleasure.
The world to an end shall come
In eighteen hundred and eighty-one.

110 Here follow other Prophecies which Mother Shipton stated at various times in her life to different persons:—

111 The first coming in of the King of the Scots (James I.) shall be at Holgate Town, but he shall not come through the bar. And when the King of the North shall be at London Bridge, his tail shall be at Edinburgh.

112 This was fulfilled in the following manner—When King James arrived there was such a multitude of people at Holgate bar to behold him, that to avoid the danger of the crush he was forced to ride another way. When King James was at London, his children were at Edinburgh, preparing to come into England.

113 Water shall come over Ouse Bridge, and a windmill shall be set upon a Tower, and a Elm Tree shall lie at every man's door. At that day women shall wear great hats and great bands.

114 This was verified by the conducting of water into York streets through bored Elms; and the Conduit-house had a windmill on the top that drew up the water.

115 When there is a Lord Mayor living in Minster-yard in York, let him beware of a stab.

116 A Lord Mayor, whose house was in Minster-yard, was stabbed by an assassin in three places, which caused his death.

117 When two Knights shall fall out in the York Castle-yard, they shall never live kindly all their after lives.

118 Sir Thomas Wentworth and Sir John Savile in choosing Knights for the Shire in the Castle-yard at York, did so fall out, that they were never after well reconciled.

119 When all Colton-hag hath borne crops and corn for seven years; seven years after that you shall hear news.

120 Colton-hag in Mother Shipton's time was a woodland ground full of trees, which some long time after her death was cultivated and bore crops and corn for seven years; and the seven years after that, was the year of the coming in of the Scots, and their taking of Newcastle.

121 You shall have a year of pining hunger, and then a dearth without corn. You shall not know of the war over-night, yet you shall have it in the morning; and when it comes it shall last three years.

122 Between Calder and Aire
Shall be great warfare,
When all the world is aloft,
It shall be called Christ's Croft.

123 Calder and Aire are two rivers in Yorkshire; and this Prophecy relates to the Civil War in the time of Charles I.

124 When the battle of warfare begins, it shall be where Crookback Richard made his fray.

125 It was near Leicester where Richard the Third was slain in battle. There Colonel Hastings was one of the first in arms at the commencement of the civil war. Or it may thus be understood—That as King Richard began his march from Nottingham when he first set out against the Earl of Richmond, so also should these wars take rise from thence. And indeed at Nottingham, on Aug. 25th, 1640, Charles I. set up his standard, and there continued it to little purpose.

126 They shall say to warfare for your King for half-a-crown a day, but stir not. They will say to warfare for your King on pain of hanging,
but stir not.

127 At the time of the Civil War in 1642, many Lords promised two shillings and sixpence a day for each horseman who would join the King's service.

128 For he that goes to complain,
Shall not come back again.

129 This seems to refer to the Welsh and the Irish serving the King, for very few lived to return back again to their own country.

130 The following Prophecies by Mother Shipton, (extracted from Lilly's collection, with his remarks,) being rather quaint in the composition, are left for the reader to decypher.

131 (a) There will be a great battel between England and Scotland, and they will be pacified for a time; and when they come at (b)
Bramma-moore they fight, and are again pacified for a time: Then there will be a great battel between England and Scotland at (c)
Knavesmore: Then they will be pacified for a while: Then there will be a

great battel between England and Scotland at (d) Storktonmore;
then will Ravens sit on the (e) Crosse, and drink as much blood of Nobles as of the Commons. Then wo is me, for London shall be destroyed.

132 (a) God I hope will prevent this threatened mischief. (b) Brammish is a river in Northumberland. (c) I conceive it should be Knaresborough, by which the river Nidd runs. (d) Storkton I conceive mistaken for Stanemore, in Richmondshire. (e) It is to be noted and admired, that this Crosse in the North in Mother Shipton's days, was a tall stone Crosse which ever since hath been by degrees sinking into the ground, and is now (1640) sunk so low, that a Raven may sit upon the top of it and reach her bill to the ground.

133 Then will come a woman with one eye, and she shall tread in men's blood to the knee; and she shall meet a man leaning on a staff, and shall say to him, What art thou? and he shall say, I am King of the Scots. And she shall say, Go with me to my house, for there are three Knights. And he will go up with her, and stay there three days and three nights. Then will England be lost; and they will cry twice in one day, England is lost. Then there will be three Knights in Petergate in York, and the one shall not know of the other. There shall be a child born in Pomfret with three thumbs, and these three Knights will give their horses to this (f) child with three thumbs to hold, whilst they win England again: then come in Clubs and Clouted shoes, and they with the three Knights win England again: and all Noble blood shall be gone but one, and they shall carry him to Sheriff Hutton's Castle, six miles from York, and he shall die there;

and they shall chuse their Earl in the field, and hang their horses on a thorn, and rue the time that ever they were born to see so much blood shed.

134 (f) There was a child not many years since born at Pomfret with three thumbs, and credibly reported.

135 (g) Then they will come to York to besiege it; and they shall keep them out for three days and three nights: and a peny-loaf shall be within the Bar at half a Crown, and without the Bar at a peny; and they will swear, if they will not yield, to blow up the Town-walls.
Then they will let them in: and they will hang the Maior, Sheriffs, and Aldermen. There will three Knights go into Crouch-Church, and but one of them come out again; and he will cause Proclamation to be made, That any man may take House, Tower, or Bower, for One and twenty yeers. And while the world endureth, there shall never be warfare again, nor any more (h) Kings or Queens; but the Kingdom shall be governed by three lords; then York shall be London.

136 (g) This is yet unacted. (h) All old Prophecies do intimate a final subversion of the Monarchy in England.

137 After this, shall be a white Harvest of Corn gotten in by women.
Then shall be in the North, that one woman shall say to another, Mother, I have seen a man to day. And for one man there shall be a thousand women. There shall be a man sitting on Saint James church hill, weeping his fill.

138 The time will come when England shall tremble and quake for fear of a (i) Dead-man, that shall be heard to speak: Then will the Dragon give the Bull a great snap; and when this battel is done they will all go to London Town.

139 (i) This Dead-man hath not yet appeared, but is at hand doubtless.

140 Here follow other Prophecies she uttered, which because they concern Future Times we shall leave to the Interpretation of the reader.

141 I.

The Fiery Year as soon as o'er,
Peace shall then be as before;
Plenty everywhere is found,
And men with Swords shall plough the Ground.

142 II.

The time shall come, when seas of Blood,
Shall mingle with a greater Flood.

143 III.

Great noise there shall be heard, Great Shouts and Cries,
And Seas shall Thunder louder than the Skies;
Then shall three Lions fight with three, and bring,
Joy to a People, Honour to their King.

144 Mother Shipton, the authoress of these Prophecies, continued for years esteemed as the Sybil or Oracle of her time; and though she was generally believed to be a Witch, yet all persons that either saw or heard of her, held her in great esteem, and her memory is much honoured by those of her own country, especially in Yorkshire.

144.2 A long time before her death, she foretold the day and hour she was to take her departure; and the time approaching which she had Prophecied, and which was in the year 1561; she took solemn leave of her friends, who were all greatly attached to her, laid down on her bed, and died, at the good old age of 75 years.

144.3 Many more "Prophecies" are current in Yorkshire as of her utterance, but the Publisher being unable to find them either properly authenticated, or in any old works, they have been omitted, being desirous of not adding anything which might tend to destroy her sterling reputation.

145 A stone was erected to her memory near Clifton, about a mile from the city of York, upon which was the following inscription:

146 Here lyes she who never ly'd
Whose skill often has been try'd;
Her prophecies shall still survive,
And ever keep her name alive.

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PROPHECIES OF MARTHA, THE GIPSY

✦

1 London may appear an unbefitting scene for a story so romantic as that which I have here set down: but, strange and wild as is the tale I have to tell, it is true; and, therefore, the scene of action shall not be changed; nor will I alter or vary from the truth, save that the names of the personages, in my domestic drama shall be fictitious.

2 To say that I am superstitious would be, in the minds of many wise personages, to write myself down an ass; but to say that I do not believe that which follows, as I am sure it was believed by him who related it to me, would be to discredit the testimony of a friend, as honourable and as brave as ever trod the earth. He has been snatched from the world, of which he was a bright ornament, and has left more than his sweet suffering widow and his orphan children affectionately to deplore his loss.

3 It is, I find, right and judicious most carefully and publicly to disavow a belief in supernatural visitings: but it will be long before I become either so wise or so bold as to make any such unqualified declaration. I am not weak enough to imagine myself surrounded by spirits and phantoms, or jostling through a crowd of spectres, as I walk the streets; neither do I give credence to all the idle tales of ancient dames, or frightened children, touching such matters: but when I breathe the air, and see the grass grow under my feet, I cannot but feel that HE who gives me ability to inhale the one, and stand erect upon the other, has also the power to use for special

purposes such means and agency, as in his wisdom he may see fit; and which, in point of fact, are not more incomprehensible to us than the very simplest effects which we every day witness, arising from unknown causes.

4 Philosophers may pore, and in the might of their littleness, and the erudition of their ignorance develope and disclose, argue and discuss; but when the sage, who sneers at the possibility of ghosts, will explain to me the doctrine of attraction and gravitation, or tell me why the wind blows, why the tides ebb and flow, or why the light shines—effects perceptible to all men—then will I admit the justice of his incredulity—then will I join the ranks of the incredulous. However, a truce with my views and reflections: proceed we to the narrative.

5 In the vicinity of Bedford-square lived a respectable and honest man, whose name the reader will be pleased to consider Harding. He married early: his wife was an exemplary woman, and his son and daughter were grown to that companionable age, at which children repay, with their society and accomplishments, the tender cares which parents bestow upon their offspring in their early infancy.

6 Mr. Harding held a responsible and respectable situation under the government, in Somerset House. His income was adequate to his wants and wishes; his family a family of love: and, perhaps, taking into consideration the limited desires of what may be fairly called middle life, no man was ever more contented, or better satisfied with his lot than he.

7 Maria Harding, his daughter, was a modest, unassuming, and interesting girl, full of feeling and gentleness. She was timid and retiring; but the modesty which cast down her fine black eyes could not veil the intellect

which beamed in them.

7.2 Her health was by no means strong; and the paleness of her cheek—too frequently, alas! lighted by the hectic flush of our indigenous complaint—gave a deep interest to her countenance. She was watched and reared by her tender mother, with all the care and attention which a being so delicate and so ill-suited to the perils and troubles of this world demanded.

8 George, her brother, was a bold and intelligent lad, full of rude health, and fearless independence. His character was frequently the subject of his father's contemplation; and he saw in his disposition, his mind, his pursuits, and propensities, the promise of future success in active life.

9 With these children, possessing as they did the most enviable characteristics of their respective sexes, Mr. and Mrs. Harding, with thankfulness to Providence, acknowledged their happiness, and their perfect satisfaction with the portion assigned to them in this transitory world.

10 Maria was about nineteen, and had, as was natural, attracted the regards, and thence gradually chained the affections, of a distant relative, whose ample fortune, added to his personal and mental good qualities, rendered him a most acceptable suitor to her parents, which Maria's heart silently acknowledged he would have been to her, had he been poor and penniless.

11 The father of this intended husband of Maria was a man of importance, possessing much personal interest, through which George, the brother of his intended daughter-in-law, was to be placed in that diplomatic seminary in Downing-street, whence, in due time, he was to rise through all the

grades of office, (which, with his peculiar talents, his friends, and especially his mother, was convinced he would so ably fill,) and at last turn out an ambassador.

12 The parents, however, of young Langdale and of Maria Harding were agreed, that there was no necessity for hastening the alliance between their families, seeing that the united ages of the couple did not exceed thirty-nine years: and seeing, moreover, still, that Mrs. Langdale, who was little more than six-and-thirty years of age herself, had reasons, which she also meant to be private, for seeking to delay as much as possible a ceremony, the result of which, in all probability, would confer upon her, somewhat too early in life to be agreeable to a lady of her habits and propensities, the formidable title of grand-mamma.

13 How curious it is, when one takes up a little bit of society (as a geologist crumbles and twists a bit of earth in his hand, to ascertain its character and quality,) to look into the motives and manœuvrings of all the persons connected with it; the various workings, the indefatigable labours, which all their little minds are undergoing to bring about divers and sundry little points, perfectly unconnected with the great end in view; but which for private and hidden objects, each of them is toiling to carry.

13.2 Nobody, but those who really understood Mrs. Langdale, understood why she so readily acquiesced in the desire of her husband to postpone the marriage for another twelvemonth.

13.3 A stranger would have seen only the dutiful wife according with the sensible husband; but I knew her, and knew that there must be something more than met the eye, or the ear, in that sympathy of feeling be-

tween her and Mr. Langdale, which was not upon ordinary occasions so evidently displayed.

14 Like the Waterman who pulls one way and looks another, Mrs. Langdale aided the entreaties and seconded the commands of her loving spouse, touching the seasonable delay of which I am speaking; and it was agreed, that immediately after the coming of age of Frederick Langdale, and not before, he was to lead to the hymeneal altar the delicate and timid Maria Harding.

15 The affair got whispered about; George's fortune in life was highly extolled—Maria's excessive happiness prophesied by everybody of their acquaintance; and already had sundry younger ladies, daughters and nieces of those who discussed these matters in divan after dinner, began to look upon Miss Harding with envy and maliciousness, and wonder what Mr. Frederick Langdale could see in her: she was proclaimed to be insipid, inanimate, shy, bashful, and awkward: nay, some of her female friends went so far as to discover that she was absolutely awry.

16 Still, however, Frederick and Maria went loving on; and their hearts grew as one; so truly, so fondly were they attached to each other. George, who was somewhat of a plague to the pair of lovers, was luckily at Oxford, reading away till his head ached, to qualify himself for a degree, and the distant duties of the office whence he was to cull the bunches of diplomatic laurels, and whence were to issue rank and title, and ribbons and crosses innumerable.

17 Things were in this prosperous state, the bark of life rolling gaily along before the breeze, when as Mr. Harding was one day proceeding from his residence, to his office in Somerset-place, through Charlotte-street, Bloomsbury, he was accosted by one of those female gypsies who are found begging in the metropolis, and especially in the particular part of it in question: ‘Pray remember poor Martha, the gipsy,’ said the woman: ‘give me a halfpenny for charity, sir, pray do.’

18 Mr. Harding was a subscriber to the Mendicity Society, an institution which proposes to check begging by the novel mode of giving nothing to the poor: moreover, he was a magistrate—moreover, he had no change; and he somewhat sternly desired the woman to go about her business.

19 All availed him nothing; she still followed him, and reiterated the piteous cry, ‘Pray remember poor Martha, the gipsy.’

20 At length, irritated by the perseverance of the woman—for even subordinates in government hate to be solicited importunately—Mr. Harding, contrary to his usual custom, and contrary to the customary usages of modern society, turned hastily round, and fulminated an oath against the supplicating vagrant.

21 ‘Curse!’ said Martha; ‘have I lived to this? Hark ye, man—poor, weak, haughty man! Mark me, sir—look at me!’

22 He did look at her; and beheld a countenance on fire with rage. A pair of eyes blacker than jet, and brighter than diamonds, glared like stars upon him; her black hair dishevelled, hung over her olive cheeks; and a row of

teeth whiter than the driven snow displaying themselves from between a pair of coral lips, in a dreadful smile, a ghastly sneer of contempt which mingled in her passion.

22.2 Harding was riveted to the spot; and, affected partly by the powerful fascination of her superhuman countenance, and partly by the dread of a disturbance in the street, he paused to listen to her.

23 'Mark me, sir,' said Martha; 'you and I shall meet again. Thrice shall you see me before you die. My visitings will be dreadful; but the third will be the last!'

24 There was a solemnity in this declaration which struck to his very heart, coming too as it did only from a vagrant outcast. Passengers were approaching; and wishing, he knew not why, to soothe the ire of the angry woman, he mechanically drew from his pocket some silver, which he tendered to her.

25 'There, my good woman—there,' said he, stretching forth his hand.

26 'Good woman!' retorted the hag, 'Money now? I—I that have been cursed! 'tis all too late, proud gentleman—the deed is done, the curse be now on you.' Saying which, she huddled her ragged red cloak about her shoulders, and hurried from his sight, into the deep and dreary recesses of St. Giles's.

27 Harding experienced, as she vanished from his eye, a most extraordinary sensation: he felt grieved that he had spoken so harshly to the poor creature, and returned his shillings to his pocket with regret. Of course, fear of the fulfilment of her predictions did not mingle with any of his feelings on the occasion; and he proceeded to his office in Somerset-place, and per-

formed all the arduous official duties of reading the opposition newspapers, discussing the leading politics of the day with the head of another department, and signing his name three times, before four o'clock.

28 Martha the gipsy, however, although he had 'poophoohed' her out of his memory, would ever and anon flash across his mind; her figure was indelibly stamped upon his recollection; and though, of course, as I before said, a man of his firmness and intellect could care nothing, one way or another, for the maledictions of an ignorant, illiterate gipsy, still his feelings —whence arising I know not—prompted him to call a hackney-coach, and proceed en voiture to his house rather than run the risk of again encountering the metropolitan sibyl, under whose forcible denunciation he was actually labouring.

29 There is a period in each day of the lives of married people, at which, I am given to understand, a more than ordinarily unreserved communication of facts and feelings takes place; when all the world is shut out, and the two beings, who are in truth 'but only one,' commune together freely and fully upon the occurrences of the past day. At this period, the else sacred secrets of the drawing-room coterie, and the tellable jokes of the after-dinner convivialist, are mutually interchanged by the fond pair, who, by the barbarous customs of uncivilized Britain, have been separated during part of the preceding evening.

30 Then it is, that the husband informs his anxious consort how he has forwarded his worldly views with such a man—how he has carried his point in such a quarter—what he thinks of the talents of one, of the character of another; while the communicative wife gives her views of the same subjects, founded upon what she has gathered from the individuals compos-

ing the female cabinet, and explains why she thinks he must have been deceived upon this point, or misled upon that. And thus, in recounting, in arguing, in discussing, and descanting, the blended interests of the happy pair are strengthened, their best hopes nourished, and perhaps eventually realized.

31 A few friends at dinner, and some refreshers in the evening, had prevented Harding from saying a word to his beloved Eliza about the gipsy; and perhaps, till the 'witching time' which I have attempted to define, he would not have mentioned the circumstance, even had they been alone.

31.2 Most certainly he did not think the less of the horrible vision; and when the company had dispersed, and the affectionate couple had retired to rest, he stated the circumstance exactly as it had occurred, and received from his fair lady just such an answer as a prudent, intelligent, and discreet woman of sense would give to such a communication.

31.3 She vindicated his original determination not to be imposed upon —wondered at his subsequent willingness to give to such an undeserving object, particularly while he had three or four soup tickets in his pocket— was somewhat surprised that he had not consigned the bold intruder to the hands of the beadle—and, ridiculing the impression which the hag's appearance seemed to have made upon her husband's mind, narrated a tour performed by herself and some friends to Norwood, when she was a girl, and when one of those very women had told her fortune, not one word of which ever came true—and, in a discussion of some length, animadverting strongly upon the weakness and impiety of putting faith in the sayings of such idle creatures, she fell fast asleep.

32 Not so Harding: he was restless and worried, and felt that he would give the world to be able to recall the curse which he had rashly uttered against the poor woman. Helpless as she was and in distress, why did his passion conquer his judgment? Why did he add to the bitterness of refusal the sting of malediction?

32.2 However, it was useless to regret that which was past—and, wearied and mortified with his reflection, he at length followed his better half into that profound slumber, which the length and subject of his harangue had so comfortably ensured her.

33 The morning came, and brightly beamed the sun—that is, as brightly as it ever beams in London. The office-hour arrived; and Mr. Harding proceeded, not by Charlotte-street, to Somerset-house, such was his dread of seeing the ominous woman.

33.2 It is impossible to describe the effect produced upon him by the apprehension of encountering her: if he heard a female voice behind him in the street, he trembled, and feared to look round, lest he should behold Martha.

33.3 In turning a corner he proceeded carefully and cautiously, lest he should come upon her unexpectedly; in short, wherever he went, whatever he did, his actions, his movements, his very words, were controlled and constrained by the horror of beholding her again.

34 The malediction she had uttered rang incessantly in his ears; nay, such possession had it taken of him, that he had written the words down, and sealed the document which contained them. ‘Thrice you shall see me before you die. My visitings will be dreadful, but the third will be the last.’

35 ‘Calais’ was not more deeply imprinted on our Queen’s heart, than these lines upon that of Mr. Harding; but he was ashamed of the strength of his feelings, and placed the paper wherein he had recorded them at the very bottom of his desk.

36 Meanwhile Frederick Langdale was unremitting in his attentions to Maria; but, as is too often the case, the bright sunshine of their loves was clouded. Her health, always delicate, now appeared more so, and at times her anxious parents felt a solicitude upon her account, new to them; for decided symptoms of consumption had shown themselves, which the faculty, although they spoke of them lightly to the fond mother and to the gentle patient, treated with such care and caution, as gave alarm to those who could see the progress of the fatal disease, which was unnoticed by Maria herself, who anticipated parties, and pleasure, and gaieties, in the coming spring, which the doctors thought it but too probable she might never enjoy.

37 That Mr. Langdale’s ‘punctilio,’ or Mrs. Langdale’s excessive desire for apparent juvenility, should have induced the postponement of Maria’s marriage, was, indeed, a melancholy circumstance.

37.2 The agitation, the surprise, the hope deferred, which weighed upon the sweet girl’s mind, and that doubting dread of something unexpected, which lovers always feel, bore down her spirits, and injured her health; whereas, had the marriage been celebrated, the relief she would have experienced from all her apprehensions, added to the tour of France and Italy, which the happy couple were to make immediately after their union, would have restored her health, while it ensured her happiness. This, however, was not to be.

38 It was now three months since poor Mr. Harding's rencontre with Martha; and habit, and time, and constant avocation, had conspired to free his mind from the dread she at first inspired.

38.2 Again he smiled and joked, again he enjoyed society, and again dared to take the nearest road to Somerset House; nay, he had so far recovered from the unaccountable terror he had originally felt, that he went to his desk, and selecting the paper wherein he had set down the awful denunciation of the hag, deliberately tore it into bits, and witnessed its destruction in the fire, with something like real satisfaction, and a determination never more to think upon so silly an affair.

39 Frederick Langdale was, as usual, with his betrothed, and Mrs. Harding enjoying the egotism of the lovers, (for, as I said before, lovers think their conversation the most charming in the world, because they talk of nothing but themselves) when his curricle was driven to the door to convey him to Tattersall's, where his father had commissioned him to look at a horse, or horses, which he intended to purchase; for Frederick was, of all things in the world, the best possible judge of a horse.

40 To this sweeping dictum, pronounced by the young gentleman himself, Mr. Harding, however, was not willing to assent; and therefore, in order to have the full advantage of two heads, which, as the proverb says, are better than one, the worthy father-in-law elect, proposed accompanying the youth to the auctioneer's yard at Hyde-Park Corner, it being one of those few privileged days when the labourers in our public offices make holiday.

40.2 The proposal was hailed with delight by the young man, who, in order to show due deference to Mr. Harding, gave him the reins, and bowing their adieus to the ladies at the window, away they went, the splendid cat-

tle of Mr. Langdale prancing and curvetting, fire flaming from their eyes, and smoke breathing from their nostrils.

41 The charioteer, however, soon found that the horses were somewhat beyond his strength, even putting his skill wholly out of the question, and in turning into Russell-street, proposed surrendering the reins to Frederick.

41.2 By some misunderstanding of words in the alarm which Harding felt, Frederick did not take the reins which he (perfectly confounded) tendered to him in great agitation.

41.3 They slipped over the dashing iron between the horse, who thus freed from restraint, reared wildly in the air, and plunging forward, dashed the vehicle against a post, and precipitated Frederick and Harding on the curbstone; the off-horse kicked desperately as the carriage became entangled and impeded, and struck Frederick a desperate blow on the head.

41.4 Harding, whose right arm and collar-bone were broken, raised himself on his left hand, and saw Frederick weltering in his blood, apparently lifeless before him.

41.5 The infuriated animals again plunged forward with the shattered remnant of the carriage, and as this object was removed from his sight, the wretched father-in-law beheld, looking upon the scene with a fixed and unruffled countenance—MARTHA, THE GIPSY.

42 It was doubtful whether the appearance of this horrible vision, coupled as it was with the verification of her prophecy, had not a more dreadful effect upon Mr. Harding, than the sad reality before him. He trembled, sickened, fainted, and fell senseless on the ground.

43 Assistance was promptly procured, and the wounded sufferers were carefully removed to their respective dwellings. Frederick Langdale's sufferings were much greater than those of his companion, and, in addition to severe fractures of two of his limbs, the wound upon his head presented a most terrible appearance, and excited the greatest alarm in his medical attendants.

44 Mr. Harding, whose temperate course of life was greatly advantageous to his case, had suffered comparatively little: a simple fracture of the arm, and dislocation of the collar-bone (which was the extent of his misfortune,) were, by skilful treatment and implicit obedience to professional commands, soon pronounced in a state of improvement; but a wound had been inflicted which no doctor could heal.

44.2 The conviction that the woman, whose anger he had incurred, had, if not the power of producing evil, at least the power to foretell it, and that he had twice again to see her before the fulfilment of her prophecy, struck deep into his mind; and although he felt himself more at ease when he had communicated to Mrs.

44.3 Harding the fact of having seen the gipsy at the moment of the accident, it was impossible for him to rally from the shock which his nerves had received. It was in vain he had tried to shake off the perpetual apprehension of again beholding her.

45 Frederick Langdale remained for some time in a very precarious state. All visitors were excluded from his room, and a wretched space of two months passed, during which his affectionate Maria had never been al-

lowed to see him, nor to write to, nor to hear from him. While her constitution was gradually giving way to the constant operation of solicitude and sorrow.

46 Mr. Harding meanwhile recovered rapidly, but his spirits did not keep pace with his mending health; the dread he felt of quitting his house, the tremor excited in his breast by a knocking at the door, or the approach of a footstep, lest the intruder should be the basilisk Martha, were not to be described; and the appearance of his poor Maria did not tend to cheer the gloom which hung over him.

47 When at length Frederick was sufficiently recovered to receive visitors, Maria was not sufficiently well to visit him: she was too rapidly sinking into an early grave, and even the physician himself appeared desirous of preparing her parents for the worst, while she, full of the symptomatic prospectiveness of disease, still talked anticipatingly of future happiness, when Frederick would be sufficiently re-established to visit her.

48 At length, however, the doctors suggested a change of air—a suggestion instantly attended to, but, alas! too late; the weakness of the poor girl was such, that upon a trial of her strength it was found inexpedient to attempt her removal.

49 In this terrible state, separated from him whose all she was, did the exemplary patient linger, and life seemed flickering in her flushing cheek; and her eye was sunken, and her parched lip quivered with pain.

50 It was at length agreed, that on the following day Frederick Langdale might be permitted to visit her;—his varied fractures were reduced, and the wound on the head had assumed a favourable appearance.

50.2 The carriage was ordered to convey him to the Hardings at one, and the physicians advised by all means that Maria should be apprized of and prepared for the meeting the day previous to its taking place.

50.3 Those who are parents, and those alone, will be able to understand the tender solicitude, the wary caution with which both her father and mother proceeded in a disclosure, so important as the medical men thought to her recovery—so careful that the coming joy should be imparted gradually to their suffering child, and that all the mischiefs resulting from an abrupt announcement should be avoided.

51 They sat down by her—spoke of Frederick—Maria joined in the conversation—raised herself in her bed—by degrees, hope was excited that she might soon again see him—this hope was gradually improved into certainty—the period at which it might occur spoken of—that period again progressively diminished: the anxious girl caught the whole truth—she knew it—she was conscious that she would behold him on the morrow—she burst into a flood of tears and sank down upon her pillow.

52 At that moment the bright sun, which was shining in all its splendour, beamed into the room, and fell strongly upon her flushed countenance.

53 ‘Draw down the blind, my love,’ said Mrs. Harding to her husband. Harding rose and proceeded to the window.

54 A shriek of horror burst from him—‘She is there!’ exclaimed the agitated man.

55 ‘Who?’ cried his astonished wife.

56 ‘She—she—the horrid she!’

57 Mrs. Harding ran to the window and beheld, standing on the opposite side of the street, with her eyes fixed attentively on the house—MARTHA, THE GIPSY.

58 'Draw down the blind, my love, and come away; pray come away,' said Mrs. Harding.

59 Harding drew down the blind.

60 'What evil is at hand? What misery is impending?' sobbed Harding.

61 A loud scream from his wife, who had returned to the bedside, was the horrid answer to his painful question.

62 Maria was dead!

63 Twice of the thrice he had seen this dreadful fiend in human shape; each visitation was (as she had foretold) to surpass the preceding ones in its importance of horror.—What could surpass this?

64 There, before the afflicted parents, lay their innocent child stretched in the still sleep of death; neither of them believed it true—it seemed like a dreadful dream. Harding was bewildered, and turned from the corpse of his beloved to the window he had just left.—Martha was gone—and he heard her singing a wild and joyous air at the other end of the street.

65 The servants were summoned—medical aid was called in—but it was all too late! and the wretched parents were doomed to mourn their loved, their lost Maria! George, her fond and affectionate brother, who was at Oxford, hastened from all the academic honours which were awaiting him, to follow to the grave his beloved sister.

66 The effect upon Frederick Langdale was most dreadful: it was supposed he would never recover from a shock so great, and at the moment so unexpected; for, although the delicacy of her constitution was a perpetual source of uneasiness and solicitude, still the immediate symptoms had taken rather a favourable turn during the last few days of her life, and had re-invigorated the hopes which those who so dearly loved her entertained of her eventual recovery. Of this distressed young man I never indeed heard anything, till about three years after, when I saw it announced in the papers that he was just married to the only daughter of a rich west-country baronet, which event, if wanted to work another proverb here, would afford me a most admirable opportunity of doing so.

67 The death of poor Maria, and the dread which her father entertained of the third visitation of Martha, made a complete change in the affairs of the family. By the exertion of powerful interest, he obtained an appointment for his son to act as his deputy in the office which he held, and having achieved this desired object, resolved on leaving England for a time, and quitting a neighbourhood in which he must be perpetually exposed to the danger which he was now perfectly convinced was inseparable from his next interview with the weird woman.

68 George, of course, thus checked in his classical pursuits, left Oxford, and at the early age of nineteen commenced active official life, not certainly in the particular department which his mother had selected for his debût; and it was somewhat observable, that the Langdales, after the death of Maria, not only abstained from frequent intercourse with the Hardings

during their stay in England, but that the mighty professions of the purse-proud citizen dwindled by degrees into an absolute forgetfulness of any promise, even conditional, to exert an interest for their son.

69 Seeing this, Mr. Harding felt that he should act prudentially, by endeavouring to place his son where in the course of time, he might perhaps attain to that situation, from whose honourable revenue he could live like a gentleman, and 'settle comfortably.'

70 All the arrangements which the kind father had proposed, being made, the mourning couple proceeded on a lengthened tour of the continent; and it was evident that his spirits mended rapidly, when he felt conscious that his liability to encounter Martha had decreased. The sorrow of mourning was soothed and softened in the common course of nature, and the quiet domesticated couple sat themselves down at Lausanne, 'the world forgetting, by the world forgot,' except by their excellent and exemplary son, whose good qualities, it seems, had captivated a remarkable pretty girl, a neighbour of his, whose mother seemed to be equally charmed with the goodness of his income.

71 There appeared, strange to say, in this love affair, no difficulties to be surmounted, no obstacles to be overcome; and the consent of the Hardings (requested in a letter, which also begged them to be present at the ceremony, if they were willing it should take place,) was presently obtained by George; and at the close of the second year, which had passed since their departure, the parents and son were again assembled in that house, the sight of which recalled to their recollection their unhappy daughter, and her melancholy fate, and which was still associated most painfully in the mind of Mr. Harding with the hated Gipsy.

72 The charm, however, had, no doubt, been broken. In the two past years, Martha was probably either dead or gone from the neighbourhood. Gypsies were a wandering tribe—and why should she be an exception to a general rule?—and thus Mrs.

72.2 Harding checked the rising apprehensions and renewed uneasiness of her husband; and so well did she succeed, that when the wedding-day came, and the bells rang, and the favours fluttered in the air, his countenance was lighted up with smiles, and he kissed the glowing cheek of his new daughter-in-law with warmth, and something like happiness.

73 The wedding took place at that season of the year when friends and families meet jovially and harmoniously, when all little bickerings are forgotten, and when, by a general feeling founded upon religion, and perpetuated by the memory of the blessings granted to the world by the Almighty, an universal amnesty is proclaimed; when the cheerful fire, and teeming board, announce that Christmas is come, and mirth and gratulation are the order of the day.

74 It unfortunately happened, however, that to the account of Miss Wilkinson's marriage with George Harding, I am not permitted, in truth, to add, that they left town in a travelling carriage and four, to spend the honeymoon. Three or four days permitted absence from his office, alone, were devoted to the celebration of the nuptials, and it was agreed that the whole party, together with the younger branches of the Wilkinson's, their cousins and second cousins, etc., should meet on twelfth-night to celebrate, in a juvenile party, the return of the bride and bridegroom to their home.

75 When the night came, it was delightful to see the happy faces of the smiling youngsters: it was a pleasure to behold them pleased—a participation in which, since the highest amongst us, and the most accomplished prince in Europe, annually evinces the gratification he feels in such sights, I am by no means disposed to disclaim.

75.2 And merry was the jest, and gaily did the evening pass; and Mr. Harding, surrounded by his youthful guests, smiled, and for a season forgot his care; yet, as he glanced around the room, he could not suppress a sigh, when he recollected, that in that very room his darling Maria had entertained her little parties on the anniversary of the same day in former years.

76 Supper was announced early, and the gay throng bounded down stairs to the parlour, where an abundance of the luxuries of middle life crowded the board. In the centre appeared the great object of the feast—a huge twelfth-cake; and gilded kings and queens stood lingering over circles of scarlet sweet-meats, and hearts of sugar lay enshrined with warlike trophies of the same material.

77 Many and deep were the wounds the mighty heap received, and every guest watched with a deep anxiety the coming portion, relatively to the glittering splendour with which its frosted surface was adorned. Character cards, illustrated with pithy mottoes, and smart sayings, were distributed; and by one of those little frauds which, in such societies, are always tolerated, Mr.

77.2 Harding was announced as king, and the new bride as queen; and there was such charming joking, and such harmless merriment abounding, that he looked to his wife with an expression of content, which she had of-

ten, but vainly, sought to find upon his countenance, since the death of his dear child.

78 Supper concluded, the clock struck twelve, and the elders looked as if it were time for the young ones to depart. One half-hour's grace was begged for by the 'King,' and granted; and Mrs.

78.2 George Harding on this night was to sing them a song about 'poor old maidens'—an ancient quaintness, which, by custom and usage ever since she was a little child, she had annually 'performed' upon this anniversary; and, accordingly, the promise being claimed, silence was obtained, and she, with all that show of tucker-heaving diffidence which is so becoming in a pretty plump downy-cheeked girl, prepared to commence the venerable chaunt, when a noise resembling that produceable by the falling of an eight-and-forty pound shot, echoed through the house.

78.3 It appeared to descend from the very top of the building, down each flight of stairs rapidly and violently. It passed the room in which they were sitting, and rolled its impetuous course downwards to the basement. As it seemed to leave the hall, the parlour door was forced open, as if by a rude gust of wind, and stood ajar.

79 All the children were in a moment on their feet, huddled close to their respective mothers in groups. Mrs. Harding rose and rang the bell to inquire the meaning of the uproar. Her daughter-in-law, pale as ashes, looked at George; but there was one of the party who moved not, who stirred not; it was the elder Harding, whose eyes first fixed steadfastly on the half-opened door, slowly followed the course of the wall of the apartment to the fire-place;—there they rested.

80 When the servants came, they said they had heard the noise, but thought it proceeded from above. Harding looked at his wife; and then turning to the servant, observed carelessly, that it must have been some noise in the street, and desiring him to withdraw, entreated the bride to pursue her song.

80.2 She did; but the children had been too much alarmed to enjoy it, and the noise had in its character something so strange and so unearthly, that even the elders of the party, although bound not to admit anything like apprehension before their offspring, felt extremely well pleased when they found themselves at home.

81 When the guests were gone, and George's wife lighted her candle to retire to rest, her father-in-law kissed her affectionately, and prayed God to bless her. He then took a kind leave of his son, and putting up a fervent prayer for his happiness, pressed him to his heart, and bade him adieu with an earnestness which, under the common-place circumstance of a temporary separation, was inexplicable to the young man.

82 When Harding reached his bed-room, he spoke to his wife, and entreated her to prepare her mind for some great calamity.

83 'What it is to be,' said Harding, 'where the blow is to fall I know not; but it is over us this night!'

84 'My life!' exclaimed Mrs. Harding, 'what new fancy is this?'

85 'Eliza, love!' answered her husband, in a tone of unspeakable agony, 'I have seen her for the third and last time.'

86 'Who?'

87 ‘MARTHA, THE GIPSY.’

88 ‘Impossible,’ said Mrs. Harding, ‘you have not left the house to-day.’

89 ‘True, my beloved,’ replied the husband; ‘but I have seen her. When that tremendous noise was heard at supper, as the door was supernaturally opened, I saw her. She fixed those dreadful eyes of her’s upon me; she proceeded to the fire-place, and stood in the midst of the children, and there she remained till the servant came in.’

90 ‘My dearest husband,’ said Mrs. Harding, ‘this is but a disorder of the imagination!’

91 ‘Be it what it may,’ said he, ‘I have seen her. Human or superhuman—natural or supernatural—there she was. I shall not strive to argue upon a point where I am likely to meet with little credit: all I ask is, pray fervently, have faith, and we will hope the misfortune, whatever it is, may be averted.’

92 He kissed his wife’s cheek tenderly, and after a fitful feverish hour or two fell into a slumber.

93 From that slumber never awoke he more.—He was found dead in his bed in the morning.

94 ‘Whether the force of imagination, coupled with the unexpected noise, produced such an alarm as to rob him of life, I know not,’ said my communicant; ‘but he was dead.’

95 The story was told me by my friend Ellis in walking from the City to Harley-street late one evening; and when we came to this part of the history we were in Bedford-square, at the dark and dreary corner of it where

Caroline-street joins it.

96 'And there,' said Ellis, pointing downward, 'is the street where the circumstance occurred.'

97 'Come, come,' said I, 'you tell the story well, but I suppose you do not expect it to be received as gospel.'

98 'Faith,' said he, 'I know so much of it that I was one of the twelfth-night party, and heard the noise.'

99 'But you did not see the spectre?' cried I.

100 'No,' replied Ellis, 'I certainly did not.'

101 'Nor anybody else,' said I, 'I'll be sworn.'—A quick footstep was just then heard behind us.—I turned half round to let the person pass, and saw a woman enveloped in a red cloak, whose sparkling black eyes, shone upon by the dim lustre of a lamp above her head, dazzled me.—I was startled —'Pray remember old MARTHA, THE GIPSY,' said the hag.

102 It was like a thunder-stroke.—I instantly slipped my hand into my pocket, and hastily gave her three from a five-shilling piece.

103 'Thanks, my bonny one,' said the woman, and setting up a shout of contemptuous laughter she bounded down Caroline-street towards Russell-street, singing, or rather yelling a wild air.

104 Ellis did not speak during this scene—he pressed my arm tightly, and we quickened our pace. We said nothing to each other till we turned into Bedford-street, and the lights and passengers of Tottenham-court-road reassured us.

105 ‘What do you think of that?’ said Ellis to me.

106 ‘Seeing is believing,’ was my reply.

107 I have never passed that dark corner of Bedford-square in the evening since.

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REMARKABLE FULFILMENT OF A PREDICTION

✦

1 A certain German author relates the following:

2 In my younger days, there was a dinner given in the Florenburg Westphalen, where I was born, on the occasion of a baptism to which a clergyman was invited. During dinner, the conversation turned upon the gravedigger of the place, who was well known on account of his second-sight; for, as often as he saw a corpse, he was always telling that there would be a funeral from such and such a house.

2.2 Now, as the event invariably took place, the inhabitants of the house he indicated were placed by the man's tale in the greatest anxiety.

3 This man's prophecying was an abomination to the clergyman. He therefore forbade him, but all to no purpose; for the poor dolt, although he was a drunkard, and a man of low and vulgar sentiments, believed firmly that it was a prophetic gift of God, and that he must make it known, in order that the people might still repent.

3.2 At length the clergyman gave him notice that, if he announced one funeral more, he should be deprived of his place, and expelled from the village. This availed—the gravedigger was silent from that time forward.

3.3 Half a year afterward, in the autumn of 1745, the gravedigger came to the clergyman, and said to him: 'Sir, you have forbidden me to announce any more funerals, and I have not done so since, nor will I do it any

more; but I must tell you something that is particularly remarkable, that you may see that my second sight is really true. In a few weeks a corpse will be brought up the meadow, which will be drawn on a sledge by an ox.'

3.4 The clergyman seemingly paid no attention to this, but listened to it with indifference, and replied: 'Only go about your business, and leave off such superstitious follies. It is sinful to have anything to do with them.'

4 Some weeks after a strong body of Austrian troops passed through the village on their way to the Netherlands. While resting there a day, the snow fell nearly three feet deep. At the same time, a woman died in another village of the same parish. The military took away all the horses out of the country to drag the waggons.

4.2 Meanwhile the corpse lay there, no horses came back; the body began to putrify; they were, therefore, compelled to make a virtue of necessity—to place the corpse upon a sledge, and harness an ox to it.

5 In the meantime the clergyman, and the teacher with his scholars, proceeded to the village to meet the corpse; and, as the funeral came along the meadow in this array, the gravedigger came up to the clergyman, pulled him by the gown, pointed with his finger toward the sledge, and said not a word.

6 Such was the tale as related by the clergyman. I was well acquainted with the good man, and he was incapable of telling an untruth, much less in a matter which contradicted all his principles.

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PROVIDENTIAL FOREBODING

✦

1 IN the ‘Museum of Wonders,’ Vol. II., page 153, there is a striking presentiment related, which Madame de Beaumont received from the lips of a credible person. This individual had a friend in the country, who, being unmarried, committed his domestic concerns to the care of an housekeeper who had been with him for many years.

1.2 When his birthday arrived, he made many preparations for celebrating it, and told his housekeeper in the morning to clean out a certain arbour in the garden, which he named, because, as the weather was fine, he intended to pass the day in it with his guests.

1.3 She seeming quite amazed at this, told and entreated him to receive his guests in a room, for she had last night in her dream a presentiment that the arbour would that day be struck by lightning.

1.4 He laughed at the assertion, as there was no appearance of a storm coming on that day, and he told her not to mind her foolish dream, and to prepare the arbour for the reception of his guests. She did as she was ordered, the guests arrived, and as the day was fine, made themselves merry.

1.5 But in the meantime clouds gathered in the distant horizon and were at last powerfully driven to that place by the wind. The company were so intent on their entertainment that they did not in the least observe it: but scarcely was the housekeeper aware that the storm was approaching, than she begged her master to leave the arbour with his company, for she could not divest herself at all of the idea of the lightning striking it.

1.6 At first they would not listen, but at last, when she continued her entreaties and the thunder commenced to approach with great violence, they suffered themselves to be induced to leave the arbour.

1.7 Hardly had they reached the room when they heard a heavy crash of thunder, and the quick following lightning struck the arbour and dashed everything that had been left in it to pieces.

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WONDERFUL PRESENTIMENT

✦

1 Madame Beaumont relates the following:

2 My whole family still remember an accident from which my father was preserved by a presentiment of danger. On one occasion, he agreed with a party to sail to Port St. Osmer.

2.2 When it was time to go on board, an aunt of my father's, who was deaf and dumb, uttered a kind of howl, placed herself at the door, blocked up the way with her arms, struck her hands together, and gave him, by signs, to understand that she conjured him to stay at home.

2.3 My father, who had promised himself much pleasure from this excursion, only laughed at her entreaties; but the lady fell at his feet, and manifested such signs of poignant grief, that he at length determined to yield to her entreaties, and postponed his excursion to Port St. Osmer until some other day.

3 He therefore endeavoured to detain the rest also; but they laughed at him for being so easily persuaded, and set sail. Scarcely had the vessel proceeded half the distance, before those on board of it had the greatest reason to repent that they had not followed his advice. Some serious accidents happened to the vessel, so that it broke to pieces; several lost their lives, and those who saved themselves by swimming were so much terrified at their narrow escape, that they, with difficulty, got the better of it.

4 By some written statements the dumb afterwards made, it was shown that, in the night preceding, she had an awful and life-like dream, in which it seemed that the excursion-boat, which would set sail on the following day for Port St. Osmer, would be wrecked; and that most of the persons on board would either get drowned or barely escape.

4.2 The warning angel found that he could influence no one more effectually than the deaf and dumb aunt; he therefore selected her for the execution of his commission. My father, all his life, was profoundly thankful, both to her and the guardian angel, for this providential warning and foreboding.

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