

The Athenian Mercury:

Saturday, October 31. 1691.

We have received several Letters of Instances about Apparitions, &c. which we have promis'd all together, knowing that not only the Credibility of 'em may conduce to the reducing the many Profelytes of Sadducism and Hobbism amongst us, but also of great satisfaction to all our Querists in general. But first we shall give you perhaps the most diverting Relation of a Night-walker that ever was heard of, which was sent us upon our Publishing a late Answer to a Query of that Nature. — Take it in the Relators own words.

Gentlemen,

1 Relation. **R**ead in one of your Mercuries a Question, Whether it can be a Truth that one walked in his sleep? puts me in mind of one Jenny Sedgwick, a Maid Servant to one John Wetherill of a Town called Swillington in York-shire, who talked in her sleep all the Night long every Night, and sometimes would rise out of her Bed and walk about the House: One time she rose and came through the room where I lay, and by the light of the Fire I did see and observe her to take a Pot or Mugg off a Shelf, and holding it to her Mouth, said, Mr. Backhouse, you are Welcome from York, here's to you; and set down the Mugg, and returned to her Bed, but running against the Door-check awaked, and fell a crying and scolding at her Master, who lay in the same room, for pulling her out of Bed, &c. I do assure you, that none of us could sleep a whole Night for a Month or six Weeks together, 'till she rose, for laughing at her Talk. If I should write all I heard and remember, it would fill a Quire of Paper. I'll give you a few instances, (But first Note, that she never uttered any thing that was said to her, but whatever she said her self, were it good or bad, she would repeat in her sleep:) She had a Sweet-heart, a Translator by Trade, who lived at a Town called Knowstrop, about Two Miles from Leeds, and as many from Swillington; he used to take her behind him on his Horse, and bring her almost home, to ease her, which we knew not, 'till she told us in her sleep; which was thus: says she (seeing her Master) to her Friend, Cocks-foot, (a word she frequently used) yonder is my Master, if he see me he will tear me to death, I will leap off and hide my self in Blaram's Garden, (which had a very high Stile into it:) she gets out of Bed, and goes to her Masters Bed, which was very high, and gets one Legg upon his Bed, and strove to get up the other, but could not; we all laughing, the Folks of the next House heard us, at last she awoke, and cryed and scolded at her Master as before: She was no sooner in Bed and asleep again, but began to talk; says she, That was a pretty Boy you sent with the four Pears and the Sugar-candy; I eat the Pears, and hid the Candy, but if my Master find it, I'll swear 'tis none of mine: That's a good Lass, Jenny, said her Master; says she in her sleep,

You may go home and wash your Nose,
And wipe the Dew-drops from your Nose;
And mock no maidens here;
For you tread down Grass, and need not,
Wear your shoes, and speed not,
And Clout-leather's very dear;
But I need not Care, for my Sweet-heart's a Cobler.

At which we all Laughed very loud, and she louder than us all. Her Master having Latin Books, she thought he knew by them those things he jeer'd her with, and hid them one after another; but one Night in her sleep she called to a Maid of her Acquaintance, and said, Now I dare say any thing, for I have hid all my Masters Conjur-ing Books; by which means he found them. But I will only tell you one passage, perhaps worth considering of: She lived in a Tavern in Newcastle upon Tyne, and when the Scots took it, she running in a Fright down the Stairs, broke her Legg; she in her sleep began the Story of it,

calling, Mistress, Mistress, do you not see how the Blood runs at such a place? naming it; and puts her Legg out of the Bed, which was very nigh the Floor, and late up, putting her Hand into the Chamber-pot, and bathing her Legg, crying out very piteously, Oh Pain, Pain! Oh Pain, Pain! a long time, insomuch that I would have waked her, but they would not let me do it: So far as I can judge, she wept, and was really in Pain. This may serve for a little diversion, if it be of no other Use to you, that she should Dream so sensibly of a thing so long past: I was then about 12 or 13 Years of Age, and it was in the Year 1644. she lay with two Boys, her Masters Sons, they would hang about her Neck, and say, to her, Jenny, Lig down Jenney; the elder of those Boys was then about three Years old, he is now living in Thieving-lane at Westminster.

2 Relat. One Madam Bents, who lodgeth at my Lady Biram's in Bow, tells me that my Lady Gerrard and she went to Visit an ancient Gentlewoman, who has Lodgings in a House, out of which one Madam Bendish died at East-ham, about August was two Years since, they say, that the old Gentlewoman tells them, that about 7 or 8 Weeks ago Madam Bendish appear'd to her like a shadow, and talk'd with her an hour or more at a time; the Voice was low, but she could hear what she said perfectly; the Spirit bid the Old Gentlewoman tell her Son, who was Obstinate, &c. that he must read the 1st, 2d, 3d. chap. of the Proverbs, in which he might learn his Duty, &c. and told her that she had left him that House, and 150 l. per Ann. but the Executors had done him some wrong, &c. Mr. Bendish came from Cambridge, the Old Gentlewoman deliver'd her Message to him; the Spirit told her she had done as she bad her, and thanked her for it; but since that the Spirit had almost turned her out of her Bed, and gave her a blow that hurt her a little. More to the same purpose I had from Madam Bents: She also saith, that Mr. Smith, the Minister of West-ham, has been with the old Gentlewoman.

3 Relat. Madam Bents told me also, that a Gentlewoman of her Acquaintance, now living, had a Son that took ill Courses, and she being Pious was fearful about him, that he would be damn'd; the Young Man did reform, but soon after dyed; his Mother was extremely afflicted, and fear'd he was in Hell; about a Month after he dyed, (if I mistake not) the Young-man's Spirit came to his Mothers Bed, and opened the Curtains, at which she and one in Bed with her, flunk down and covered themselves; the Spirit called, Mother, Mother, and she then said, Son; it answered, Mother, you are much troubled concerning me, but I am come to tell you that I am at rest, and shall trouble you no more.

4 Relat. Another thing of like Nature a worthy Person now living in London told me of; which in short was, That one Lunt in Derby-shire, near to the Peak, had a Brother dyed, and afterwards appeared to him, and desired that his Brother would go to one with whom he had lived as a Servant, and demand some Money which was due to him, and give it to a Woman in the same Town, whom he had Promised Marriage to, and got her with Child, and then deserted both his Service and her: Lunt went to the Man, had the Money, gave it her, got her to forgive his Brother, and came home, the Spirit being with him; when they were nigh home, the Spirit bid his Brother ask what he would have done for him, (Lunt being poor) for if he asked, he could grant him, and it should not hurt him either as to Soul or Body; but Lunt would ask nothing; the Spirit thanked him for the Kindness he had done him, and vanished with such a melodious Noise that ravished Lunt, &c. There are many strange things in this Story which I omit, supposing some of you may have heard it before; if not, 'twere as I think, worth your hearing.

Quest. 1. If these things be so, it would seem we are to be Probationers in a State after this Life: But whether it be

be convenient for you to give your Thoughts of it, I know not; but should be glad to meet with them in your Mercury, I dare not presume to desire it in another way?

Bromly, by Bow,
Octob. 3. 1691.

Yours to Command,

HUGH PRESTON.

Ans. To which four Relations we Answer, That there's not one Argument amongst 'em all, that proves any thing like a future State of Tryal, or another place besides this World, to depend upon for entailing a certainty of Rewards or Punishments to Eternity — We meet (besides this) with innumerable Instances of Spirits appearing, to make or desire satisfaction, to such as they have injur'd whilst living; but for such Instances as we meet with, which seem to contradict the Scripture, as melodious Musick, or Signs of Rejoycing after such and such satisfaction, we ought to attribute it to the illusions of the Devil who brought in the Epilogue or latter part of the Scene, or else that the whole was manag'd by — The Querist sent another Question about a certain way of improving Money, which we judge not proper to concern our selves with, lest thereby we injure one of the Parties concern'd.

5 *Relat.* Dr. Donn (as we have been lately inform'd by a Person of great Note) relates, that being at *Paris*, after Dinner, in his Chamber, he saw his Wife pass by him through the Room, with a dead Child in her Arms; a Messenger was dispatched immediately to *London*, where at that instant she was deliver'd, after a hard Labour, of a dead Child, which was the instant she appeared at *Paris*, or the Spirit that represented the Vision.

6 *Relat.* An Eminent Doctor's Sister, (whom one of our Society knows very well, being then about Seventeen Years Old, in a high Pestilential Fever, in the Sickness time, fell into a short Slumber, and had this Vision: A BURIAL, the Cloth held up by four Maids, and a numerous Train of Followers, and it was buried in a Vault — She asked what Burial it was; a by-stander answered that she should dye of the *TOKENS*, and be so buried in a Vault, and have four such Maids, whom he Named, to carry her: Then appear'd three great Green glorious Balls, which rose up in a beautiful Field; the least ascended quickly out of her sight, the second and biggest fast after it, the third slower; the By-stander told her the first Ball was her self, the second was her Father, the third her Mother; she awaked, and related these Visions, and named the Maids Names; she was marked with the *Tokens* as she was told of, and dyed in few hours. But what makes this Relation more remarkable, is, *Albion's-Bread-street-Church* was shut up, the Church-wardens refused the Burial, unless her Friends would bury her in the Church-Vault, and enjoyned no People should be invited to the Burial, which was agreed on, and at Noon the Body was to be buried: At the same time came one of her Play-fellows out of the Countrey to see the deceased, and understanding the Burial was to be that day, desir'd no Persons might hold up the Cloth but her and three Maids she would bring, which were all the same Maids the deceased Named when she awaked; and without Invitation a numerous Train followed to the Church, and she was buried in the Vault accordingly.

7 *Relat.* The aforementioned Dr's. Daughter, *Mariamne* by Name, was called about Ten in the Morning audibly three times, by a Voice which she took for her Fathers: she Answer'd, and hasted down at the third Call, fearing her delay would displease him; when she came down Stairs, she asked what her Father would please to have with her; whenas she was told her Father was Discoursing with a Man a long time, and that no Body had called, unless some Body in the Street had called some Person by Name; she replied, her Name was not a Common Name, being *Mariamne*, therefore not probable; she in three dayes sickned, and was instantly delirious, and dyed.

8 *Relat.* Another tells us on his own Knowledge, That a Maid was called audibly three times, when no Body called in the House, and at that Instant the Grand-mother dyed, above a hundred Miles off, Calling upon this Maid, who is now alive in *London*.

9 *Relat.* Some little time agoe, a Person under an Extraordinary Weakness of Body and lightness of the Head,

called upon the Name of another Person, with whom he had been very intimately acquainted, to Come, twice or thrice repeated, with more than ordinary loudness, considering the Weakness he was then under, and within an hour or two after dyed, which was about five a Clock in the Morning; at six the same Morning came the Wife of the Person who was called by the Deceased, to know how he did, for that her Husband had not rested that Night, tho' very Well when he went to Bed, and wholly ignorant of the Deceased's Illness; in short, the Person so called, after that time rose not out of his Bed, but dyed that very day seven-night after.

10 *Relat.* Near *Chesham* in *Buckinghamshire*, there was one *Joseph Chambers*, who dyed out of the very House where I then lived, who after he had been buried about three dayes, as the Maid of the House was walking thro' a little Orchard adjoining to it, at a little distance she saw this *Joseph Chambers*, (in a Melancholly Posture) leaning against a Tree, in the very Cap and Dress he was laid out in; upon this the Maid runs into her Masters House, much affrighted, and told him, That if ever she saw *Joseph Chambers* in her Life, she had just now seen him. He haunted the House for several Years afterwards, and would very often in the dead of the Night rap, rap, rap, so long, and so hard at the Door, 'till he wak'd all the Family: 'Twas supposed his Errand was to discover some great Injuries he had done to the right Owner of the House where he dyed. The Maid that saw him was about a Fortnight agoe at our Booksellers House, and now lives near *Latmus* in *Buckinghamshire*.

OUR THOUGHTS UPON THE WHOLE.

That such supernatural Transactions are now believ'd in all Nations, have been credited in all Ages, those that consult the Scripture find frequent mention of 'em, nay, once from our Saviours Mouth, viz. *Handle and see me, for a Spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have.* The Roman and Grecian Histories are full of Instances, (particularly see *Plutarch's Lives*) but we have no need of Enumerations, for the next step to the disbelieving such things, is, the denial of the Souls Existence out of the Body, which is as hard to be conceived as the Nature of Spirits; and if that once is admitted, Farewell all Moral Virtues, the Dignity of our Reasons, the Expectation of Rewards and Punishments hereafter, and by Consequence an inlet to the most profligate base things whilst here, that Humane Nature can possibly stoop to: As to a more particular Answer to Relation 9. see Vol. 2. N. . Q. .

Advertisements.

THE Mourners Companion, or Funeral Discourses on several Texts, by John Shower. This Book will be Published next Monday. Printed for J. Dunton and A. Chandler.

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THE Certainty of the Worlds of Spirits, fully evinc'd by strange unquestionable Histories of Apparitions and Witches, Operations, Voices, &c. proving the Immortality of Souls, by R. Baxter. Printed for J. Salusbury at the Rising Sun in Cornhill. Where is Sold, The Duty and Blessing of a Tender Conscience, by T. Cruso, and The Mirror of Divine Love Unvail'd, by R. Fleming.

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