

THE SECRET COMMONWEALTH

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These Siths, or fairies, they call Sleagh Maith, or the Good People, it would seem, to prevent the dint of their ill attempts (for the Irish use to bless all they fear harm of) and are said to be of a middle nature betwixt man and angel, as were dæmons thought to be of old; of intelligent fluidious spirits, and light changeable bodies, (like those called astral), somewhat of the nature of a condensed cloud, and best seen in twilight. These bodies be so pliable through the subtlety of the spirits that agitate them that they can make them appear or disappear at pleasure. Some have bodies or vehicles so spongiuous, thin, and delicate that they are said by only sucking into some fine spirituous liquors, that pierce like pure air and oil. Others said more gross on the foison or substance of corns and liquors, or corn itself that grows on the surface of the earth, which these fairies steal away, partly invisible, partly preying on the grain, as do crows and mice; wherefore in this same age they are some times heard to bake bread, strike hammers, and do such like services within the little hillocks they most haunt. Some whereof of old, before the Gospel dispelled paganism, and in some barbarous places as yet, enter houses after all are at rest, and set the kitchens in order, cleansing all the vessels. Such drags go under the name of brownies. When we have plenty, they have scarcity at their homes; and on the contrary (for they are empowered to catch as much prey everywhere as they please), their robberies notwithstanding oft-times occasion great ricks of corn not to bleed so well (as they call it), or prove so copious by very far as was expected by the owner.

Their bodies of congealed air are sometimes carried aloft, otherwhiles grovel in different shapes, and enter into any cranny or cliff of the earth where air enters, to their ordinary dwellings; the earth being full of cavities and cells, and there being no place nor creature but is supposed to have other animals (greater or lesser) living in or upon it as inhabitants; and no such thing as a pure wilderness in the whole universe.

We then (the more terrestrial kind have now so numerously planted all countries), do labor for that abstruse people as well as for ourselves. Albeit, when several countries were uninhabited by us, these had their easy tillage above ground, as we now. The print of those furrows do yet remain to be seen on the shoulders of very high hills, which was done when the champaign ground was wood and forest.

They remove to other lodgings at the beginning of each quarter of the year, so traversing till Doomsday, being impotent of staying in one place, and finding some ease by sojourning and changing habitations. Their chameleon-like bodies swim in the air near the earth with bag and baggage; and at such revolution of time, seers, or men of the second sight (females being seldom so qualified) have very terrifying encounters with them, even on highways; who therefore usually shun to travel abroad at these four seasons of the year, and thereby have made it a custom to this day among the Scottish-Irish to keep Church duly every first Sunday of the quarter to sene or hallow themselves, their corns and cattle, from the shots and stealth of these wandering tribes; and many of these superstitious people will not be seen in Church again till the next quarter begin, as if no duty were to be learned or done by them but all the use of worship and sermons were to save them from these arrows that fly in the dark.

They are distributed in tribes and orders, and have children, nurses, marriages, deaths, and burials in appearance even as we (unless they so do for a mock-show, or to prognosticate some such things among us).

They are clearly seen by these men of the second sight to eat at funerals banquets; hence many of the Scottish-Irish will not taste meat at these meetings, lest they have communion with or be poisoned by them. So are they seen to carry the bier or coffin with the corpse among the middle-earth men to the grave. Some men of that exalted sight (whether by art or nature) have told me they have seen at these meetings a doubleman, or the shape of some man in two places; that is, a super-terreanean and a sub-terreanean inhabitant, perfectly resembling one another in all points, whom he notwithstanding could easily distinguish one from another by some secret tocsins and operations, and so go speak to the man his neighbor and familiar, passing by the apparition or resemblance of him. They avouch that every element and different state of being have animals resembling these of another element; as there be fishes sometimes at sea resembling monks of late order in all their hoods and dresses; so as the Roman invention of good and bad dæmons and guardian angels particularly assigned is called by them an ignorant mistake, sprung only from this original. They call this reflex-man a co-walker, every way like the man as a twin-brother and companion, haunting him as his shadow, as is oft seen and known among men (resembling the original), both before and after the original is dead, and was also often seen of old to enter a house, by which the people knew that the person of that likeness was to visit them within a few days. This copy, echo, or living picture goes at last to his own herd. It accompanied that person so long and frequently for ends best known to itself, whether to guard him from the secret

assaults of some of its own folks, or only as any sportful ape to counterfeit all his actions. However, the stories of old witches prove beyond contradiction that all sorts of people, spirits which assume light airy bodies, or crazed bodies coated by foreign spirits, seem to have some pleasure (at least to assuage from pain or melancholy) by frisking and capering like satyrs, or whistling and screeching (like unlucky birds) in their unhallowed synagogues and sabbaths. If invited and earnestly required, these companions make themselves known and familiar to men; other wise, being in a different state and element, they neither can nor will easily converse with them. They avouch that a heluo, or great-eater, has a voracious elf to be his attender, called a joint-eater or just-halver, feeding on the pith or quintessence of what the man eats; and that therefor he continues lean like a hawk or heron, notwithstanding his devouring appetite. Yet it would seem that they convey that substance elsewhere, for these sub-terranians eat but little in their dwellings; their food being exactly clean, and served up by pleasant children, like enchanted puppets. What food they extract from us is conveyed to their homes by secret paths, as some skillful women do the pith and milk from their neighbors' cows into their own chief-hold through a hair-tedder at a great distance, by airy magic or by drawing a spigot fastened to a post which will bring milk as far of as a bull will be heard to roar. The chief made of the remaining milk of a cow thus strained will swim in water like a cork. The method they take to recover their milk is a bitter chiding of the suspected enchanters, charging them by a countercharm to give them back their own, in God, or their master's name. But a little of the mother's dung stroked on the calf's mouth before it suck any does prevent this theft.

Their houses are called large and fair, and (unless at some odd occasions) unperceivable by vulgar eyes, like Richland and other enchanted islands, having fir lights, continual lamps and fires, often seen without fuel to sustain them. Women are yet alive who tell they were taken away when in child-bed to nurse fairy children, a lingering voracious image of them being left in their place (like their reflection in a mirror) which (as if it were some insatiable spirit in any assumed body) made first semblance to devour the meats that it cunningly carried by, and then left the carcass as if it expired and departed thence by a natural and common death. The child, and fire, with food and other necessaries, are set before the nurse how soon she enters; but she neither perceives any passage out, nor sees what those people do in other rooms of the lodging. When the child is weaned, the nurse dies, or is conveyed back, or gets it to her choice to stay there. But if any super-terranians be so subtle as to practice slights for procuring a privacy to any of their mysteries (such as making use of their ointments, which as Gyges' Ring makes them invisible, or nimble, or casts them in a trance, or alters their shape, or makes things appear at a vast distance, etc.), they smite them without pain, as with a puff of wind, and bereave them of both the natural and acquired sights in the twinkling of an eye (both these sights, where once they come, being in the same organ and inseparable) or they strike them dumb. The tramontains to this day put bread, the Bible, or a piece of iron, in womens' beds when traveling, to save them from being thus stolen; and they commonly report that all uncouth, unknown wights are terrified by nothing earthly so much as by cold iron. They deliver the reason to be that Hell lying betwixt the chill tempests and the fire brands of scalding metals and iron of the north (hence the loadstone causes a tendency to that point), by an antipathy thereto these odious, far-scenting creatures shrug and fright at all that comes thence relating to so abhorred a place, whence their torment is either begun or feared to come hereafter

Their apparel and speech is like that of the people and country under which they live. So are they seen to wear plaids and variegated garments in the highlands of Scotland, and Suanochs therefore in Ireland. They speak but little, and that by way of whistling, clear, not rough. The very devils conjured in any country do answer in the language of the place; yet sometimes the sub-terranians speak more distinctly than at other times. Their women are said to spin very fine, to dye, to tissue, and embroider. But whether it is as manual operation of substantial refined stuffs, with apt and solid instruments, or only curious cob-webs, impalpable rainbows, and a fantastic imitation of the actions of more terrestrial mortals, since it transcended all the senses of the seer to discern whether, I leave to conjecture as I found it.

Their men travel much abroad, either presaging or aping the dismal and tragical actions of some amongst us; and have also many disastrous doings of their own, as convocations, fighting, gashes, wounds, and burials, both in the earth and air. They live much longer than we; yet die at last, or at least vanish from that state. 'Tis one of their tenets that nothing perishes, but (as the sun and year) everything goes in a circle, lesser or greater, and is renewed and refreshed in its revolutions; as 'tis another that every body in the creation moves (which is a sort of life); and that nothing moves, but has another animal moving on it; and so on, to the utmost minutest corpuscle that's capable to be a receptacle of life.

They are said to have aristocratic rulers and laws, but no discernible religion, love, or devotion towards God, the blessed Maker of all. They disappear whenever they hear His name invoked, or the name of Jesus, (at which all do bow willingly or by constraint that dwell above or beneath within the earth, Philippians 2:10;) nor can they act aught

at that time after hearing of that sacred Name. The tabhaisver, or seer, that corresponds with this kind of familiars can bring them with a spell to appear to himself or others when he pleases, as readily as Endor witch to those of her kind. He tells they are ever readiest to go on hurtful errands, but seldom will be the messengers of great good to men. He is not terrified with their sight when he calls them, but seeing them in a surprise (as often he does) frights him extremely. And glad would he be quit of such, for the hideous spectacles seen among them; as the torturing of some wight, earnest ghostly staring looks, skirmishes, and the like. They do not all the harm which appearingly they have power to do; nor are they perceived to be in great pain, save that they are usually silent and sullen. They are said to have many pleasant toyish books; but the operation of these pieces only appears in some paroxysms of antic corybantic jolty, as if ravished and prompted by a new spirit entering into them at that instant, lighter and merrier than their own. Other books they have of involved abstruse sense, much like the Rosicrucian style. They have nothing of the Bible, save collected parcels for charms and counter-charms; not to defend themselves withal, but to operate on other animals, for they are a people invulnerable by our weapons; and albeit werewolves' and witches' true bodies are (by the union of the spirit of nature that runs through all, echoing and doubling the blow towards another) wounded at home, when the astral assumed bodies are stricken elsewhere; as the strings of a second harp, tune to one unison, sounds, though only one be struck; yet these people have not a second, or so gross a body at all, to be so pierced; but as air, which when divided units again; or if they feel pain by a blow, they are better physicians than we, and quickly cure it. They are not subject to sore sicknesses, but dwindle and decay at a certain period, all about one age. Some say their continual sadness is because of their pendulous state, as uncertain what at the last revolution will become of them, when they are locked up into one unchangeable condition; and if they have any frolic fits of mirth, 'tis as the constrained grinning of a morthead, or rather as acted on a stage and moved by another, there cordially coming of themselves. But other men of the second sight, being illiterate and unwary in their observations, learn from those; one averring those sub-terrestrial people to be departed souls, attending awhile in this inferior state, and clothed with bodies procured through their almsdeeds in this life; fluid, active, ethereal vehicles to hold them that they may not scatter, or wander, and be lost in the totum, or their first nothing; but if any were so impious as to have given no alms, they say when the souls of such do depart, they sleep in an unactive state till they resume the terrestrial bodies again. Others, that what the low country Scots calls a wraith and the Irish taibhshe or death's messenger, (appearing sometimes as a little rough dog, and if crossed and conjured in time, will be pacified by the death of any other creature instead of the sick man), is only exuvious fumes of the man approaching death, exhaled and congealed into a various likeness, (as ships and armies are sometimes shaped in the air) and called astral bodies, agitated as wildfire with wind, and are neither souls nor counterfeiting spirits; yet not a few avouch (as is said) that surely these are a numerous people by themselves, having their own polities. Which diversities of judgments may occasion several inconsonancies in this rehearsal, after the narrowest scrutiny made about it.

Their weapons are most what solid earthly bodies, nothing of iron, but much of stone, like to yellow soft flint spa, shaped like a barbed arrow-head, but flung like a dart, with great force. These arms (cut by art and tools it seems beyond human) have something of the nature of thunderbolt, subtlety and mortally wounding the vital parts without breaking the skin; of which wounds I have observed in beasts, and felt them with my hands. They are not as infallible Benjamites, hitting at a hair's-breadth; nor are they wholly unvanquishable, at least in appearance.

The men of that second sight do not discover strange things when asked, but at fits and raptures, as if inspired with some genius at that instant, which before did lurk in or about them. Thus I have frequently spoke to one of them, who in his transport told he cut the body of one of those people in two with his iron weapon, and so escaped this onset, yet he saw nothing left behind of that appearing divided; at other times he out wrestled some of them. His neighbours often perceived this man to disappear at a certain place, and about one hour after to become visible, and discover himself near a bow-shot from the first place. It was in that place where he became invisible, said he, that the sub-terrestrials did encounter and combat with him. Those who are unseen or unsanctified (called Fey) are said to be pierced or wounded with those people's weapons, which makes them do somewhat very unlike their former practice, causing a sudden alteration, yet the cause thereof unperceivable at present; nor have they power (either they cannot make use of their natural powers, or asked not the heavenly aid,) to escape the blow impendent. A man of the second sight perceived a person standing by him (found to others' view) wholly gored in blood, and he (amazed-like) bid him instantly flee. The whole man laughed at his art and warning, since there was no appearance of danger. He had scarce contracted his lips from laughter when unexpectedly his enemy leapt in at his side, and stabbed him with their weapons. They also pierce cows or other animals, usually said to be elf-shot, whose purest substance (if they die) these sub-terrestrials take to live on, viz. the aerial and ethereal parts, the most spirituous matter for prolonging of life, such as aquavitæ (moderately taken) is among liquors, leaving the terrestrial behind. The cure of such hurts is only for a man to find out the hole with his finger; as if the spirits flowing from a man's warm hand were antidote sufficient against their poisoned darts.

As birds and beasts, whose bodies are much used to the change of the free and open air, foresee storms; so those invisible people are more sagacious to understand by the books of nature things to come than we who are pestered with the grosser dregs of all elementary mixtures, and have our purer spirits choked by them. The deer scents out a man and powder (though a late invention) at a great distance; a hungry hunter, bread; and the raven, a carrion. Their brains, being long clarified by the high and subtle air, will observe a very small change in a trice. Thus a man of the second sight, perceiving the operations of these forecasting invisible people among us (indulged through a stupendous Providence to give warnings of some remarkable events, either in the air, earth, or waters) told he saw a winding-shroud creeping on a walking healthful person's legs till it come to the knee; and afterwards it came up to the middle, then to the shoulders, and at last over the head, which was visible to no other person. And by observing the spaces of time betwixt the several stages, he easily guessed how long the man was to live who wore the shroud; for when it approached his head, he told that such a person was ripe for the grave.

There be many places called fairy-hills, which the mountain people think impious and dangerous to peel or discover by taking earth or wood from them; superstitiously believing the souls of their predecessors to dwell there. And for that end (say they) a mote or mount was dedicate beside every Churchyard to receive the souls till their adjacent bodies arise, and so become as a fairy-hill; they using bodies of air when called abroad. They also affirm those creatures that move invisibly in a house and cast hug great stones, but do no much hurt because counter-wrought by some more courteous and charitable spirits that are everywhere ready to defend men, (Daniel 10:13) to be souls that have not attained their rest, thorough a vehement desire of revealing a murder or notable injury done or received, or a treasure that was forgot in their lifetime on earth, which when disclosed to a conjurer alone, the ghost quite removes.

In the next country to that of my former residence, about the year 1676, when there was some scarcity of grain, a marvelous elapse and vision strongly struck the imagination of two women in one night, living at a good distance from one another, about a treasure hid in a hill, called Sithbhruaich, or Fairy-hill. The appearance of a treasure was first represented to the fancy, and then an audible voice named the place where it was to their awaking senses. Whereupon both arose, and meeting accidentally at the place, discovered their design; and jointly digging, found a vessel as large as a Scottish peck, full of small pieces of good money of ancient coin; which halving betwixt them, they sold in dishfuls for dishfuls of meal to the country people. Very many of undoubted credit saw, and had of the coin to this day. But whither it was a good or bad angel, one of the subterranean people, or the restless soul of him who hid it that discovered it, and to what end it was done, I leave to the examination of others.

These sub-terraneans have controversies, doubts, disputes, feuds, and siding of parties; there being some ignorance in all creatures, and the vastest created intelligences not compassing all things. As to vice and sin, whatever their own laws be, sure according to ours and equity, natural, civil, and revealed, they transgress and commit acts of injustice and sin by what is above said, as to their stealing of nurses to their children, and that other sort of plaginism in catching our children away (may seem to heir some estate in those invisible dominions), which never return. For the inconvenience of their succubi, who tryst with men, it is abominable; but for swearing and intemperance, they are not observed so subject to those irregularities as to envy, spite, hypocrisy, lying, and dissimulation.

As our religion obliges us not to make a peremptory and curious search into these obstrusenesses, so that the histories of all ages give as many plain examples of extraordinary occurrences as make a modest inquiry not contemptible. How much is written of pygmies, fairies, nymphs, sirens, apparitions, which though not the tenth part true, yet could not spring of nothing! Even English authors relate of Barry Island, in Glamorganshire, that laying your ear into a cleft of the rocks, blowing of bellows, striking of hammers, clashing of armour, filing of iron will be heard distinctly ever since Merlin enchanted those subterranean wights to a solid manual forging of arms to Aurelius Ambrosius and his Britons till he returned; which Merlin being killed in a battle and not coming to loose the knot, these active Vulcans are there tied to a perpetual labour. But to dip no deeper into this well, I will next give some account how the seer my informer comes to have this secret way of correspondence beyond other mortals.

There be odd solemnities at investing a man with the privileges of the whole mystery of this second sight. He must run a tedder of hair (which bound a corpse to the bier) in a helix about his middle, from end to end; then bow his head downwards, as did Elijah (I Kings 18:42) and look back thorough his legs until he see a funeral advance till the people cross two marches; or look thus back thorough a hole where was a knot of fir. But if the wind change points while the hair tedder is tied about him, he is in peril of his life. The usual method for a curious person to get a transient sight of this otherwise invisible crew of sub-terraneans, (if impotently and over rashly sought) is to put his left foot under the seer's right foot, and the seer's hand is put on the inquirer's head, who is to look over the wizard's right shoulder, which has any ill appearance, as if by this ceremony any implicit surrender were made of all betwixt

the wizard's foot and his hand, ere the person can be admitted *a privado* to the art) then will he see a multitude of wights, like furious hardy men, flocking to him hastily from all quarters, as thick as atoms in the air; which are no non-entities or phantasms, creatures proceeding from any affrighted apprehension, confused or crazed sense, but realities, appearing to a stable man in his awaking sense, and enduring a rational trial of their being. This thorough fear struck him breathless and speechless. The wizard, defending the lawfulness of his skill, forbids such horror, and comforts his novice by telling of Zacharias as being struck speechless at seeing apparitions (Luke 1:20). Then he further maintains his art, by vouching Elisha to have had the same, and disclosed it thus unto his servant in II Kings 6:17 when he blinded the Syrians; and Peter in Acts 5:9 foreseeing the death of Saphira by perceiving as it were her winding-sheet about her beforehand; and Paul in II Corinthians 12:4, who got such a vision and sight as should not, nor could be told. Elisha also in his chamber saw Gehazi his servant at a great distance, taking a reward from Naaman (II Kings 5:26). Hence were the prophets frequently called seers, or men of a second or more exalted sight than others. He acts for his purpose also Mathew 4:8, where the Devil undertakes to give even Jesus a sight of all nations and the finest things in the world at one glance, though in their natural situations and stations at a vast distance from other. And 'tis said expressly he did let see them; not in a map it seems, nor by a fantastic magical juggling of the sight, which he could not impose upon so discovering a person. It would appear then to have been a sight of real solid substances and things of worth, which he intended as a bait for his purpose. Whence it might seem (comparing this relation of Mathew 4:8 with the former) that the extraordinary or second sight can be given by the ministry of bad as well as good spirits to those that will embrace it. And the instance of Balaam and the Pytheniss make it nothing the less probable. Thus also the seer trains his scholar by telling of the gradations of nature, ordered by a wise Providence; that as the sight of bats and owls transcend that of shrews and moles, so the visive faculties of men are clearer than those of owls; as eagles, lynxes, and cats are brighter than men's. And again, that men of the second sight (being designed to give warnings against secret engines) surpass the ordinary vision of other men, which is a native habit in some, descended from their ancestors, and acquired as any artificial improvement of their natural sight in others; resembling in their own kind the usual artificial helps of optic glasses (as prospectives, telescopes, and microscopes) without which assititious aids those men here treated of do perceive things that, for their smallness, or subtlety and secrecy, are invisible to others, though daily conversant with them; they having such a beam continually about them as that of the sun, which when it shines clear only lets common eyes see the atoms in the air, that without those rays they could not discern; for some have this second sight transmitted from father to son through the whole family, without their own consent or others teaching, proceeding only from a bounty of Providence it seems, or by compact, or by a complexional quality of the first acquirer. As it may seem alike strange (yet nothing vicious) in such as Master Greatrake, the Irish Stroker, seventh-sons, and others that cure the King's Evil, and chase away diseases and pains with only stroking of the affected part; which (if it be not the relics of miraculous operations or some secret virtue in the womb of the parent, which increases until seventh-sons be born, and decreases by the same degrees afterwards) proceeds only from the sanitive balsam of their healthful constitutions; virtue going out from them by spirituous effluxes unto the patient, and their vigorous, healthy spirits affecting the sick as usually the unhealthy fumes of the sick infect the sound and whole.

The minor sort of seers prognosticate many future events, only for a month's space, from the shoulder-bone of a sheep on which a knife never came (for as before is said, and the Nazarites of old had something of it) iron hinders all the operations of those that travel in the intrigues of these hidden dominions. By looking into the bone, they will tell if whoredom be committed in the owner's house; what money the master of the sheep had; if any will die out of that house for that month; and if any cattle there will take a trake, as if planet-struck. Then will they prescribe a preservative and prevention.

A woman (it seems an exception from the general rule) singularly wise in these matters of foresight, living in Colasnach, an isle of the Hebrides, (in the time of the Marques of Montrose his wars with the states in Scotland) being notorious among many; and so examined by some that violently seized that isle, if she saw them coming or not? She said she saw them coming many hours before they came in view of the isle. But earnestly looking, she some times took them for enemies, sometime for friends; and moreover they looked as if they went from the isle, not as men approaching it, which made her not put the inhabitants on their guard. The matter was that the barge wherein the enemy sailed was a little before taken from the inhabitants of that same isle, and the men had their backs towards the isle when they were plying the oars towards it. Thus this old scout and Delphian oracle was at least deceived, and did deceive. Being asked who gave her such sights and warnings, she said that as soon as she set three crosses of straw upon the palm of her hand, a great ugly beast sprang out of the earth near her, and flew in the air. If what she inquired had success according to her wish, the beast would descend calmly, and lick up the crosses. If it would not succeed, the beast would furiously thrust her and the crosses over on the ground, and so vanish to his place.

Among other instances of undoubted verity, proving in these the being of such aerial people, or species of creatures not vulgarly known, I add the subsequent relations, some whereof I have from my acquaintance with the actors and patients, and the rest from the eye-witnesses to the matter of fact. The first whereof shall be of the woman taken out of her child-bed, and having a lingering image of her substituted body in her room, which resemblance decayed, died, and was buried. But the person stolen returning to her husband after two years' space, he being convinced by many undeniable tokens that she was his former wife, admitted her home and had diverse children by her. Among other reports she gave her husband, this was one—that she perceived little what they did in the spacious house she lodged in until she anointed one of her eyes with a certain unction that was by her; which they, perceiving to have acquainted her with their actions, they fained her blind of that eye with a puff of their breath. She found the place full of light, without any fountain or lamp from whence it did spring. This person lived in the country next to that of my last residence, and might furnish matter of dispute amongst casuists whither, if her husband had been married in the interim of her two years' absence, he was obliged to divorce from the second spouse at the return of the first. There is an art, apparently without superstition, for recovering of such as are stolen, but think it superfluous to insert it.

I saw a woman of forty years of age, and examined her (having another clergyman in my company) about a report that past of her long fasting, [her name is not entire]. It was told by them of the house, as well as herself, that she took very little or no food for several years past; that she tarried in the fields overnight, saw and conversed with a people she knew not, having wandered in seeking of her sheep, and slept upon a hillock, and finding herself transported to another place before day. The woman had a child since that time, and is still pretty melancholious and silent, hardly ever seen to laugh. Her natural heat and radical moisture seem to be equally balanced, like an unextinguished lamp, and going in a circle, not unlike to the faint life of bees, and some sort of birds, that sleep all the winter over, and revive in the spring.

It is usual in all magical arts to have the candidates prepossessed with a belief of their tutor's skill and ability to perform their feats, and act their juggling pranks and legerdemain; but a person called Stewart, possessed with a prejudice at that was spoken of the second sight, and living near to my house, was so put to it by a seer before many witnesses that he lost his speech and power of his legs, and breathing excessively, as if expiring, because of the many fearful wights that appeared to him. The company were forced to carry him into the house.

It is notoriously known what in Killin, within Perthshire, fell tragically out with a yeoman that lived hard by who, coming into a company within an alehouse where a seer sat at table, that at the sight of the entrant neighbour, the seer starting, rose to go out of the house; and being asked the reason of his haste, told that the entrant man should die within two days; at which news the named entrant stabbed the seer, and was himself executed two days after for the fact.

A minister, very intelligent, but misbelieving all such sights as were not ordinary, chancing to be in a narrow lane with a seer who, perceiving a wight of a known visage furiously to encounter them, the seer desired the minister to turn out of the way; who scorning his reason, and holding himself in the path with them when the seer was going hastily out of the way, they were both violently cast aside to a good distance, and the fall made them lame for all their life. A little after the minister was carried home, one came to toll the bell for the death of the man whose representation met them in the narrow path some half an hour before.

Another example is: a seer in Kintyre, in Scotland, sitting at table with diverse others, suddenly did cast his head aside. The company asking him why he did it, he answered that such a friend of his, by name, then in Ireland, threatened immediately to cast a dishful of butter in his face. The men wrote down the day and hour, and sent to the gentleman to know the truth; which deed the gentleman declared he did at that very time, for he knew that his friend was a seer, and would make sport with it. The men that were present and examined the matter exactly told me this story; and withal that a seer would with all his optics perceive no other object so readily as this, at such a distance....

To encourage a further scrutiny, I crave leave to say that

1. But a few women are endued with this sight in respect of men, and their predictions not so certain.
2. This sight is not criminal, since a man can come by it unawares and without his consent; but it is certain he see more fatal and fearful things than he do gladsome.
3. The seers avouch that several who go the Siths (or people at rest and, in respect of us, in peace) before the natural period of their life expire, do frequently appear to them.

4. A vehement desire to attain this art is very helpful to the inquirer; and the species of an absent friend, which appears to the seers, as clearly as if he had sent his lively picture to present itself before him, is no fantastic shadow of a sick apprehension, but a reality and a messenger, coming for unknown reasons, not from the original similitude of itself, but from a more swift and pragmatic people, which recreate themselves in offering secret intelligence to men, though generally they are unacquainted with that kind of correspondence, as if they had lived in a different element from them.
5. Though my collections were written long before I saw my lord of Tarbett's, yet I am glad that his descriptions and mine correspond so nearly. The maid my lord mentions, who saw her image still before her, suits with the co-walker named in my account; which though some at first thought might conjecture to be by the refraction of a cloud or mist, as in the parelij, (the whole air and every drop of water being a mirror to return the species of things, were our visive faculty sharp enough to apprehend them) or a natural reflection, from the same reasons that an echo can be redoubled by art; yet it were more feasible to impute this second sight to a quality infused into the eye by an unction; for witches have a sleepy ointment that, when applied, troubles their fantasies, advancing it to have unusual figures and shapes represented to it, as if it were a fit of fanaticism, hypochondriac melancholy, or possession of some insinuating spirit, raising the soul beyond its common strain, if the palpable instances and realities seen, and innocently objected to the senses did not disprove it, make the matter a palpable verity and no deception; yet since this sight can be bestowed without ointment, or dangerous compact, the qualification is not of so bad an original. Therefore,
6. By my lord's good leave, I presume to say that this sight can be no quality of the air nor of the eyes; because (1) such as live in the same air and see all other things as far off and as clearly, yet have not the second sight; (2) a seer can give another person this sight transiently by putting his hand and foot in the posture he requires of him; (3) the unsullied eyes of infants can naturally perceive no new unaccustomed objects but what appear to other men, unless exalted and clarified some way, as Balaam's ass for a time; though in a witches eye the beholder cannot see his own image reflected, as in the eyes of other people; so that defect of objects, as well as diversities of the subject, may appear differently on several tempers and ages; (4) though also some are of so venomous a constitution by being radicated in envy and malice that they pierce and kill (like a cockatrice) whatever creature they first set their eye on in the morning; so was it with Walter Grahame, sometime living in the parish wherein now I am, who killed his own cow after commending its fatness, and shot a hare with his eyes, having praised its swiftness, (such was the infection of an evil eye), albeit this was unusual, yet he saw no object but what was obvious to other men as well as to himself; (5) if the being transported to live in another country did obscure the second sight, neither the parson nor the maid needed be much troubled for her reflex-self; a little peregrination, and going from her wonted home, would have salved her fear. Wherefore,
7. Since the things seen by the seers are real entities, the presages and predictions found true, but a few endowed with this sight, and those not of bad lives or addicted to malifices, the true solution of the phenomenon seems rather to be the courteous endeavours of our fellow creatures in the invisible world to convince us (in opposition to Sadducees, Socinians, and atheists) of a deity; of spirits; of a possible and harmless method of correspondence betwixt men and them even in this life; of their operation for our caution and warning; of the orders and degrees of angels, whereof one order, with bodies of air condensed and curiously shaped, may be next to man, superior to him in understanding, yet unconfirmed; and of their region, habitation, and influences on man, greater than that of stars on inanimate bodies; a knowledge reserved for these last atheistic ages, wherein the profanity of men's lives have debauched and blinded their understanding, as to Moses, Jesus, and the prophets (unless they get convictions from things formerly known), as from the regions of the dead: nor does the ceasing of the visions upon the seers transmigration into foreign kingdoms make his lordship's conjecture of the quality of the air and eye a whit the more probable; but, on the contrary, it confirms greatly my account of an invisible people, guardian over and careful of men, who have their different offices and abilities in distinct countries, as appears in Daniel 10:13, viz. about Israel's, Greece's, and Persia's assistant princes, whereof who so prevails gives dominion and ascendant to his pupils and vassals over the opposite armies and countries; so that every country and kingdom having their topical spirits or powers assisting and governing them, the Scottish seer banished to America, being a stranger there, as well to the invisible as to the visible inhabitants, and wanting a familiarity of his former correspondents, he could not have the favour and warnings by the several visions and predictions which were wont to be granted him by these acquaintances and favourites in his own country. For if what he wont to see were realities (as I have made appear), 'twere too great an honour for Scotland to have such seldom-seen watchers and predominant powers over it alone, acting in it so expressly, and all other nations wholly destitute of the like; though, without all peradventure, all other people wanted the

right key of their cabinet and the exact method of correspondence with them, except the sagacious active Scots, as many of them have retained it of a long time, and by surprises and raptures do often foretell what in kindness is really represented to them at several occasions. To which purpose the learned lynx-eyed Mr. Baxter, on Revelation 12:7, writing of the fight betwixt Michael and the dragon, gives a very pertinent note, viz. that he knows not but ere any great action (especially tragic) is done on earth that first the battle and victory is acted and achieved in the air betwixt the good and evil spirits; thus here it seems these were the men's guardians; and the like battles are oft times perceived in aloft in the night-time; the event of which might easily be represented by someone of the number to a correspondent on earth, as frequently the report of great actions have been more swiftly carried to other countries than all the art of us mortals could possibly dispatch it. Saint Augustine on Mark 9:4. gives no small intimation of this truth, averring that Elias appeared with Jesus on the Mount in his proper body, but Moses in an aerial body, assumed like the angels who appeared and had ability to eat with Abraham, though no necessity on the account of their bodies. As likewise the late doctrine of the pre-existence of souls, living into aerial vehicles gives a singular hint of the possibility of the thing, if not a direct proof of the whole assertion; which yet moreover may be illuminated by diverse other instances of the like nature, and as wonderful, besides what is above said. As,

8. The invisible wights which haunt houses seem rather to be some of our sub-terrestrial inhabitants (which appear often to men of the second sight,) than evil spirits or devils; because, though they throw great stones, pieces of earth, and wood at the inhabitants, they hurt them not at all, as if they acted not maliciously, like devils at all, but in sport, like buffoons and drolls. All ages have afforded some obscure testimonies of it, as Pythagoras his doctrine of transmigration; Socrates's dæmon that gave him of future dangers; Plato's classing them into various vehiculated species of spirits; Dionisius Areopagita's marshalling nine orders of spirits, superior and sub-ordinate; the poets their borrowing of the philosophers, and adding their own fancies of fountain, river, and sea nymphs, wood, hill, and mountain inhabitants, and that every place and thing, in cities and countries, had special invisible regular gods and governors. Cardan speaks of his father his seeing the species of his friend in a moon-shine night, riding fiercely by his window on a white horse the very night his friend died at a vast distance from him; by which he understood that some alteration would suddenly ensue. Cornelius Agrippa and the learned Dr. More have several passages tending that way. The Noctambulos themselves would appear to have some foreign joking spirit possessing and supporting them when they walk on deep waters and tops of houses without danger when asleep and in the dark; for it was no way probable that their apprehension and strong imagination setting the animal spirits awork to move the body, could preserve it from sinking in the depth, or falling down headlong when asleep, any more than when awake, the body being then as ponderous as before; and it is hard to attribute it to a spirit flatly evil and enemy to man, because the Noctambulo returns to his own place safe. And the most furious tribe of the dæmons are not permitted by Providence to attack men so frequently either by night or by day. For in our Highlands, as there may be many fair ladies of this aerial order which do often tryst with lascivious young men, in the quality of succubi, or lightsome paramours and strumpets, called leannain sith, or familiar spirits (in Deuteronomy 18:11); so do many of our highlanders, as if astrangling by the nightmare, pressed with a fearful dream, or rather possessed by one of our aerial neighbours, rise up fierce in the night and, apprehending the nearest weapons, do push and thrust at all persons in the same room with them, sometimes wounding their own comrades to dead. The like whereof fell sadly out within a few miles of me at the writing, hereof I add but one instance more, of a very young maid, who lived near to my last residence, that in one night learned a large piece of poetry, by the frequent repetition of it, from one of our nimble and courteous spirits, whereof a part was pious, the rest superstitious (for I have a copy of it), and no other person was ever heard to repeat it before, nor was the maid capable to compose it of herself,
9. He demonstrated and made evident to sense this extraordinary vision of our tramontaine seers, and what is seen by them, by what is said above, many having seen this same specters and apparitions at once, having their visive faculties entire; for *non est disputandum de gustu*. It now remains to show that it is not unfutable to reason nor the Holy Scriptures.

First, that it is not repugnant to reason does appear from this, that it is no less strange for immortal sparks and souls to come and be immersed into gross terrestrial elementary bodies, and be so propagated, so nourished, so fed, so clothed as they are, and breathe in such an air and world prepared for them, than for Hollanders or hollow-cavern inhabitants to live and traffic among us in another state of being without our knowledge. For Raymond de Subinde, in his third book, chapter 12, argues quaintly that all sorts of living creatures have a happy rational polity of their own, with great contentment; which government and mutual converse of theirs they all pride and plume themselves, because it is as unknown to man as man is to them. Much more, that the

son of the highest spirit should assume a body like ours convinces all the world that no other thing that is possible needs be much wondered at.

Second, the Manucodiata, or Bird of Paradise, living in the highest region of the air; common birds in the second region; flies and insects in the lowest; men and beasts on the earth's surface; worms, otters, badgers in waters; likewise Hell is inhabited at the centre, and Heaven in the circumference; can we then think the middle cavities of the Earth empty? I have seen in Weems (a place in the county of Fyfe, in Scotland) divers caves cut out as vast temples underground; the like is a county of England; in Malta is a cave wherein stones of a curious cut are thrown in great numbers every day; so I have had barbed arrow-heads of yellow flint that could not be cut so small and neat of so brittle a substance by all the art of man. It would seem therefore that these mentioned works were done by certain spirits of pure organs, and not by devils, whose continual torments could not allow them so much leisure. Besides these, I have found five curiosities in Scotland, not much observed to be elsewhere. (1) The Brownies, who in some families are drudges, clean the houses and dishes after all go to bed, taking with him his portion of food and removing before daybreak. (2) The mason word, which though some make a mystery of it, I will not conceal a little of what I know. It is like a rabbinical tradition, in way of comment on Jachin and Boaz, the two pillars erected in Solomon's Temple (I Kings 7:21) with an addition of some secret sign delivered from hand to hand, by which they know and become familiar one with another. (3) This second sight, so largely treated of before. (4) Charms, and curing by them very many diseases, sometimes by transferring the sickness to another. (5) A being proof of lead, iron, and silver, or a brief making men invulnerable. Divers of our Scottish commanders and soldiers have been seen with blue marks only after they were shot with leaden balls, which seems to be an Italian trick, for they seem to be a people too curious and magically inclined. Finally Irishmen, our northern Scottish, and our Athole Men are so much addicted to and delighted with harps and music as if, like King Saul, they were possessed with a foreign spirit, only with this difference, that music did put Saul's play-fellow asleep, but roused and awaked our men, vanquishing their own spirits at pleasure, as if they were impotent of its powers and unable to command it; for we have seen some poor beggars of them, chattering their teeth for cold, that how soon they saw the fire and heard the harp, leapt through the house like goats and satyrs. As there parallel stories in all countries and ages reported of these our obscure people (which are no dotages), so is it no more of necessity to us fully to know their beings and manner of life, then to understand distinctly the politic of the nine orders of angels; or with what oil the lamp of the sun is maintained so long and regularly; or why the moon is called a great luminary in Scripture while it only appears to be so; or if the moon be truly inhabited, because telescopes discover seas and mountains in it, as well as flaming furnishes in the sun; or why the discovery of America was looked on as a fairy tale, and the reporters hooted at as inventors of ridiculous utopias, or the first probable asserters punished as inventors of new gods and worlds; or why in England the king cures the Struma by stroking, and the seventh son in Scotland; whither his temperate complexion conveys a balsam and sucks out the corrupting principles by a frequent warm sanative contact, or whither the parents of the seventh child put forth a more eminent virtue to his production than to all the rest as being the certain meridian and height to which their vigor ascends, and from that fourth have a gradual declining into a feebleness of the body and its production. And then, (1) why is not the seventh son infected himself by that contagion he extracts from another? (2) How can continual stroking with a cold hand have so strong a natural operation as to exhale all the infections warming corroding vapors? (3) Why may not a seventh daughter have the same virtue? So that it appears, albeit, a happy natural constitution concurs, yet something in it above nature. Therefore every age has left some secret for its discovery; who knows but this intercourse bewixt the two kinds of rational inhabitants of the same earth may be not only believed shortly, but as freely entertained and, as well known, as now the art of navigation, printing, limning, riding on saddles with stirrups, and the discoveries of microscopes, which were sometimes a great a wonder and as hard to be believed.

10. Though I will not be so curious nor so peremptory as he who will prove the possibility of the philosopher's stone from Scripture (Job 28:1-2; Job 22:24-25); or the plurality of worlds from John 14:2 and Hebrews 2:3; nor the circulation of blood from Ecclesiastes 12:6; nor the tanismanical art, from the blind and lame mentioned in II Samuel 5:6. Yet I humbly propose these passages which may give some light to our subject at least, and show that this polity and rank of people is not a thing impossible, nor the modest and innocent scrutiny of them impertinent or unsafe. The legion or brigade of spirits (mentioned Mark 5:10) besought our Saviour not to send them away out of the country; which shows they were *dæmones loci*, topical spirits, and peculiar superintendents and supervisors assigned to that province. And the power over the nations granted (Revelation 2:26) to the conquerors of vice and infidelity sound somewhat to that purpose. Tobit had a dæmon attending marriage, (6:15), and in Matthew 4:5 an evil spirit came in a visible shape to tempt our Saviour, who himself denied not the sensible appearing of ghosts to our sight, but said their bodies were not composed of flesh and

bones, as ours (Luke 24:39). And in Philippians 2:10 our very sub-terranians are expressly said to bow to the name of Jesus. Elisha, not intellectually only, but sensibly, saw Gehazi when out of the reach of an ordinary view. It wants not good evidence that there are more managed by God's spirits—good, evil, and intermediate spirits—among men in this world than we are aware of; the good spirits ingesting fair and heroic apprehensions and images of virtue and the divine life, thereby animating us to act for a higher happiness, according to our improvement; and relinquishing us as strangely upon our neglect, or our embracing the deceitful siren-like pictures and representations of pleasures and gain presented to our imaginations by evil and sportful angels, to allure to an unthinking, ungenerous, and sensual life; none of them having power to compel us to any misdemeanour without our flat consent. Moreover, this life of ours being called a warfare, and God's saying that at last there will be no peace to the wicked, our busy and silent companions also being called siths, or people at rest and quiet, in respect of us; and withal many ghosts appearing to men that want this second sight, in the very shapes and speaking the same language they did when incorporate and alive with us; a matter that is of an old imprescriptible tradition (our highlanders making still a distinction betwixt *sluagh saoghalta* and *sluagh sith*, averring that the souls go to the sith when dislodged), many real treasures and murders being discovered by souls that pass from among ourselves, or by the kindness of these our airy neighbours, none of which spirits can be altogether inorganic. No less than the conceits about purgatory, or a state of rescue; the *limbus patrum et infantum*, inventions, though misapplied, yet are not chimeras and altogether groundless. For *ab origine*, it is nothing but bluish and faint discoveries of this secret republic of ours here treated on, and additional fictions of monks doting and crazied heads, our creed saying that our Saviour descended to the invisible place and people. And many divines supposing that the Deity appeared in a visible shape seen by Adam in the cool of the day, and speaking to him with an audible voice. And Jesus, probably by the ministry of invisible attendants, conveying more meat of the same kind to the five thousand that was fed by him with a very few loaves and fishes (for a new creation it was not). The Zijmjiim and Ochim, in Isaiah 13:21–22. These satyrs and doleful unknown creatures of islands and deserts seem to have a plain prospect that way. Finally, the eternal happiness enjoyed in the third heavens, being more mysterious than most of men take it to be. It is not a sense wholly adduced to Scripture to say that this sight, and the due objects of it, have some vestige in Holy Writ, but rather 'tis modestly deduced from it.

11. It only now remains to answer the obvious objections against the reality and lawfulness of this speculation.

Question 1—How do you salve the second sight from compact and witchcraft?

Answer—Though this correspondence with the intermediate unconfirmed people (betwixt man and angel) be not ordinary to all of us who are super-terranians, yet this sight falling some persons by accident, and its being con-natural to others from their birth, the derivation of it cannot always be wicked. A too great curiosity, indeed, to acquire any unnecessary art may be blameworthy; but diverse of the secret commonwealth may, by permission, discover themselves as innocently to us, who are in another state, as some of us men do to fishes, which are in another element, when we plunge and dive into the bottom of the seas, their native region; and in process of time we may come to converse as familiarly with these nimble and agile clans (but with greater pleasure and profit), as we do now with the Chino's antipodes.

Question 2—Are they subject to vice, lusts, passion, and injustice as we who live on the surface of the earth?

Answer—The seers tell us that these wandering aerial people have not such an impetus and fatal tendency to any vice as men, as not being drenched into so gross and dregy bodies as we, but yet are in an imperfect state, and some of them making better essays for heroic actions than others; having the same measures of virtue and vice as we, and still expecting advancement to a higher and more splendid state of life. One of them is stronger than many men, yet do not incline to hurt mankind, except by commission for a gross misdemeanour, as the destroying angel of Egypt and the Assyrians (Exodus 12:29, II Kings 10:35). They haunt most where is most barbarity, and therefore our ignorant ancestors, to prevent the insults of that strange people, used as rude and course a remedy such as exorcisms, donations, and vows. But how soon ever the true piety prevailed in any place, it did not put the inhabitants beyond the reach and authority of these subtle inferiour co-inhabitants and colleagues of ours. The father of all spirits, and the person himself, having the only command of his soul and actions, a concurrence they may have to what is virtuously done; for upon committing of a foul deed, one will find a demure upon his soul, as if his cheerful colleague had deserted him.

Question 3—Do these airy tribes procreate? If so, how are they nourished, and at what period of time do they die?

Answer—Supposing all spirits to be created at once in the beginning, souls to pre-exist and to circle about into several states of probationship; to make them either totally inexcusable or perfectly happy against the last day,

solves all the difficulties. But in very deed, and speaking suitable to the nature of things, there is no more absurdity for a spirit to inform an infant in body of airs than a body composed of dull and drossy earth; the best of spirits have always delighted more to appear into aerial than into terrestrial bodies. They feed most what on quintessences and ethereal essences. The pith and spirits only of women's milk feed their children, being artificially conveyed (as air and oil sink into our bodies) to make them vigorous and fresh. And this shorter way of conveying a pure aliment, (without the usual digestions) by transfusing it, and transpiring through the pores into the veins, arteries, and vessels that supply the body is nothing more absurd than an infant being fed by the navel before it is born, or than a plant, which grows by attracting a lively juice from the earth through many small roots and tendons, whose courser parts be adapted and made con-natural to the whole, does quickly coalesce by the ambient cold; and so are condensed and baked up into a confirmed wood in the one, and solid body of the flesh and bone in the other. A notion which, if entertained and approved, may show that the late invention of soaking and transfusing (not blood, but) ethereal virtual spirits may be useful both for nourishment and health, whereof is a vestige in the damnable practice of evil angels their sucking of blood and spirits out of witches' bodies (till they drew them into a deformed and dry leanness) to seed their own vehicles withal, leaving what we call the witches mark behind; a spot that I have seen as a small mole, horny, and brown-coloured; through which mark, when a large brass pin was thrust (both in buttock, nose, and roof of the mouth) till it bowed and become crooked, the witches, both men and women, neither felt a pain nor did bleed, nor knew the precise time when this was adoin to them (their eyes only being covered). Now the air being a body as well as earth, no reason can be given why there may not be particles of more vivific spirit formed of it for procreation than is possible to be of earth, which takes more time and pains to rarify and ripen it ere it can come to have a prolific virtue. And if our aping darlings did not thus procreate, their whole number would be exhausted after a considerable space of time. For though they are of more refined bodies and intellects than we, and of far less heavy and corruptive humours, (which cause a dissolution), yet many of their lives being dissonant to right reason and their own laws, and their vehicles not being wholly free of lust and passion, especially of the more spiritual and haughty sins they pass (after a long healthy life) into one orb and receptacle fitted for their degree, till they come under the general cognizance of the last day.

Question 4—Does the acquiring of this second sight make any change on the acquirer's body, mind, or actions?

Answer—All uncouth sights enfeebles the seer. Daniel, though familiar with divine visions, yet fell frequently down without strength when dazzled with a power which had the ascendant of, and passed on him beyond his comprehension (chapter 10:8–17). So our seer is put in a rapture, transport, and sort of death, as divested of his body and all its senses, when he is first made participant of this curious piece of knowledge: But it makes no wramp or strain in the understanding of any; only to the fancy's of clownish or illiterate men, it creates some affrightments and disturbances, because of the strongness of the shows, and their unacquaintedness with them. And as for their life, the persons endued with this rarity are, for the most part, candid, honest, and sociable people. If any of them be subject to immoralities, this abstruse skill is not to be blamed for it; for unless themselves be the tempters, the colonies of the invisible plantations, with which they intercommune, do provoke them by no villainy or malifice, neither at their first acquaintance nor after a long familiarity.

Question 5—Does not Satan interpose in such cases by many subtle unthought insinuations, as to him who let the fly, or familiar, go out of the box, and yet found the fly of his own putting in, as serviceable as the other would have been?

Answer—The goodness of the life, and designs of the ancient prophets and seers, was one of the best proofs of their mission.