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'Eleonore's subconscious mind had become obsessed with 'Dracu'.'

Journal of Vampirology, vol. 5, no. 1. Copyright © 1988 by John L. Vellutini. All rights reserved. Subscription rates: \$10.00 for five issues. Single copies: \$2.00 each. Send check or money order to John L. Vellutini, P.O. Box 881631, San Francisco, CA, 94188-1631. Sorry, no back issues available. The front cover is an illustration of a young woman being menaced by a "monstrosity," or so the inscription reads. From Harry Price, Poltergeist Over England, London, Country Life Ltd., 1945. So, too, the illustration above. The illustration on page 18 is a fanciful depiction of an incubus (circa 19th century). Incidentally, had I access to Price's book on poltergeists prior to writing my article, I would have learned that Eleonore Zagun's "mediumistic" powers abruptly ceased at the time of her first menses. Eleonore was subsequently apprenticed to a Viennese firm for hairdressers, gained certification and returned to Romania where she opened a successful hairdressing concern of her own. Now, aren't you glad you didn't skip the credits to the Journal this time ...

EDITORIAL

Many were the times when, over the past months, I debated whether to continue or cease publication of the Journal. I have decided in favor of the former, as this issue attests. Although my personal problems still persist, I am going to attempt to publish five issues this year. This issue is devoted to the paranormal implications of vampirism. Apart from my own contribution, I have chosen to reprint an excerpt from Ethelbert Forbes Skertchly's "Cagayan Sulu, Its Customs, Legends and Superstitions," first published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, vol. lxx, no. 1, 1896. There is a bizarre epilogue to Skertchly's narrative, if Michael Hervey's account in Strange Happenings (Ace Books, 1966) can be trusted. Although Hervey cites no authorities for his tale, I have chosen to reprint a portion of it. Tentatively scheduled for next issue will be an article on the African origins of vampirism.

See you next time. (Hopefully.)

THE PARANORMAL ASPECTS OF VAMPIRISM (by John L. Vellutini)

During the latter part of the 17th and early 18th centuries instances of purported vampirism were said to have reached epidemic proportions. Although the peasantry believed vampires to be the reanimated corpses of recently deceased individuals, the intelligentsia of the day dismissed most of these accounts as due to premature burial or the remarkable preservative properties of certain soils. The supernatural aspects were attributed to mere superstition, aided and abetted by the religious belief current in that day that the bodies of those who died under the ban of excommunication did not decompose in their graves. Indeed, some writers maintained that the Orthodox faith had manufactured the entire affair as a means of strengthening their religious domination over the peasantry of the region.

Although this skepticism persisted among historical scholars through the 19th century, this view was not without its detractors. Coinciding with the rise of spiritualism in Europe and the United States, a growing number of occultists and theosophists now asserted that vampirism was no idle superstition but a grim reality, a reality that persisted into the present day. One of the earliest proponents of this view was Adolphe D'Assier, a professor of mathematics at the Bordeaux Academy of Sciences, who, in his Essai sur l'Humanité Posthume et le Spiritisme (1883), wrote thusly concerning vampirism: "It is one of those cases where the fluidic being [i.e., the astral, or etheric, body], instead of abandoning the body from which death has just separated it, persists in stopping with it and in living with a new life, in which the parts are reversed; the corpse being unable to leave its last dwelling-place, it is the phantom that assumes charge of the functions which the former performed previously. Thenceforth the struggle for existence continue beyond the tomb with the same tenacity, the same brutal and selfish ferocity, one might say cynicism, as in living nature. The spectre is seen to come as a nocturnal marauder, like a malefactor, on behalf of its old landlord; it enters a habitation, goes straight to the one selected as a victim, springs at his throat like a jaguar or a wild cat, and does not relinquish its prey until it has imbibed his blood." (1)

D'Assier then describes how the blood is transmitted from the vampire's "phantom" to its "old landlord" lying recumbent in its grave: "Let us now examine what becomes of the blood aspired by the spectre. We find here a repetition of what we have observed several times in the preceding chapters in connection with the living phantom. Its structure is bound so intimately with that of the body of which it is the image, that all absorption of liquid by the former passes at once into the organs of the latter. It must be the same in the phenomena of posthumous vampirism, since the post-sepulchral phantom is the con-

tinuation of the living phantom. All the blood swallowed by the spectre passes instantly into the organs of the corpse which it has just left, and to which it returns as soon as its poaching work is finished. The constant arrival of this vivifying liquid, which at once disseminated itself through the circulation, prevents putrefaction, preserves in the limbs their natural suppleness, and in the flesh its fresh and reddish tint. Under this action is seen to continue a sort of vegetative life which causes the hair and nails to grow, forms a new skin as the old one dries up, and, in certain cases, favors the formation of adipose tissue, as has been proved by the exhumation of certain vampires. Persons who had known them [i.e., the deceased] found them plump and fleshy to a degree far beyond that they had at the time of their decease. Popular instinct divined that there was but one way to break this strange association of the spectre and the corpse; it was to reduce to nothing one of them. Powerless to attack the phantom, they disinterred and burned the body. The remedy was infallible; for from that moment the vampire ceased his dreadful existence." (2)

According to Z.T. Pierart, a French occultist and contemporary of D'Assier: "As long as the astral form is not entirely liberated from the body there is a liability that it may be forced by magnetic attraction to re-enter it. Sometimes it will be only half-way out when the corpse, which presents the appearance of death, is buried. In such cases the terrified astral soul re-enters its casket, and then one of two things happen: the person buried either writhes in agony of suffocation, or, if he has been grossly material, becomes a vampire. The bi-corporeal life then begins. The ethereal form can go where it pleases, and as long as it does not break the link connecting it with the body can wander visible or invisible and feed on its victims. It then transmits the results of the suction by some mysterious invisible cord of connexion to the body, thus aiding it to perpetuate the state of catalepsy." (3)

This "invisible cord of connexion" to which M. Pierart alludes is equivalent to the silver cord of Eastern doctrine and serves as a vital link between the physical corpus, whether living or dead, and the astral self. According to Benjamin Walker, in his Beyond the Body, the astral cord "is extremely strong and elastic, can move things at a distance, cure disease at a touch, and even kill ... It is infinitely ductile and may extend to apparently infinite length without breaking or weakening. The strength of the cord is extraordinary and remains constant in all circumstances." (4)

Walker also makes the suggestive statement that the astral cord occasionally takes on "a faint luminous glow." (5) Perhaps this feature has contributed, in part, to the existence of those inexplicable glows of light known familiarly as will-o'-wisps, or scientifically as ignes fatui, which possess a sinister reputation in European folklore and elsewhere. According to Jan Máchal, the Slavs believe that "the souls of the deceased often appear as jack-o'-lanterns flickering about in churchyards or morasses, leading people astray in swamps and ponds, or strangling and stupefying them." (6) African witches are commonly believed to emit a certain light while on their nocturnal forays. According to M.J. Field, in her Religion and Medicine of the Gâ: "witches who do not travel to their meeting-place on animals do so by 'flying.' The flight through the air of a witch's susuma [i.e., astral body] is frequently believed to be accompanied by a fiery glow, and many people claim to have seen balls of fire about the size of a man's head shooting out sparks and brightening and dimming from moment to moment. Usually such a ball is stationary in the air at varying heights, and if disturbed it breaks into sparks and disappears." (7) E.L. Rapp, citing an Akan informant, relates: "A witch in action can be seen as a glowing lantern which at intervals sparks like a burning fire. A witch glows from midnight until early morning." (8) Lastly, John Middleton, in his Lugbara Religion, writes: "All witches can be known at night in that they have a light glowing at their wrists and backs of hands and at their anus ... They are axiomatic attributes, and so all suspected witches are said to have them." (9) This characteristic glow is also common to Asiatic witches and, in particular, that fearful class of beings that comprise the viscera suckers. As described in a previous issue of the Journal, these creatures consist of "bodiless heads, capable of

flight, with intestines trailing from the stump of the neck. These dependent eviscera, their most unusual feature, are sometimes said to be phosphorescent and thus, as in Thai culture, the native term for glow worms is equally applied to these creatures." (10)

Disincarnate entities and malicious elementals are also reputed to be responsible for attacks on humans. Ludovico Sinistrari, in his *De Daemonialitate et Incubis, et Succubis* (circa 1700), evinces numerous instances of demonic assaults on humans, emphasizing those in particular which involve sexual congress. This Catholic theologian also believed that human progeny could result from such unholy unions. He writes: "The chil dren thus begotten by Incubi [i.e., male spirits] are tall, very hardy and bloodily bold, arrogant beyond words, and desparately wicked. Thus writes Malvenda; as for the cause, he gives it from Franciscus Valesius: 'what Incubi introduce into the womb, is not any ordinary human semen in normal quantity, but abundant, very thi ck, very warm, rich in spirits and free from serosity. This, moreover, is an easy thing for them, since they merely have to choose ardent, robust men, whose semen is naturally copious, and with whom the Succubus [i.e., a female spirit] has connexion, and then women of a like constitution, with whom the Incubus copulates, taking care that both shall enjoy a more normal orgasm, for the more abundant is the semen the greater the venereal excitement.'" (11) Sinistrari lists the following individuals as having a demonic sire: Alexander the Great, Caesar Augustus, Merlin the Magician, Martin Luther and Plato. (12)

Although many of Sinistrari's accounts may seem apocryphal in nature, there does exist some corroborative evidence from contemporary sources. Ralph Shirley, writing in the *Occult Review*, describes a curious instance of a vampire-cum-incubus: "It may be doubted indeed, in spite of the lack of records, whether vampirism in one form or another is quite absent from the conditions of modern civilization, as is commonly supposed. Although we are not to-day familiar with the Slavonic type of vampire that sucks the blood of its victims, producing death in two or three days' time, strange cases come to light occasionally when people are the victims, by their own confession, of something of a very similar nature, the vampire in these cases being an entity in human form who indulges in intercourse with the opposite sex. Such cases are to-day, generally speaking, promptly consigned to one of our lunatic asylums and do not reach the public ear. I happened, however, quite recently to hear an instance of the kind. The victim had been engaged to a young man, the family, on account of the man's antecedents, not approving of the engagement, but not being actively hostile. The man died suddenly, and the girl was prostrated with grief. Shortly after, however, she recovered her normal cheerfulness, and somewhat later confessed to her mother that she was visited by her former lover in physical form. She subsequently became engaged to another man, but owing to threats, as he said, of her deceased lover, the engagement was broken off. The last time I heard of the young lady in question she was stated to be consumptive. Naturally, these things do not get into the papers, and obviously the ordinary medical man will put down instances of the kind as pure hallucination. Still, if we have any belief in the philosophy of the occultist, they are bound to give us pause and make us hesitate before saying that vampirism is entirely a thing of the past." (13)

A female medium once informed Brad Steiger, the author of numerous books on paranormal phenomena: "I had a spirit lover when I was much younger, and I wish that I had never allowed it to come into me. You see, I can no longer be satisfied by a mortal man. Sexual intercourse with my spirit lover was beyond description. I have never achieved such orgasms with any man in the flesh. When I got married, you know, I was disappointed. I tried not to blame my husband, but he just couldn't compare. You see, my spirit lover's penis could expand and enlarge itself until it filled my entire vagina, almost to the point of pain. But, oh, what pain, what delicious pain! And the act of intercourse could continue until I had come and come and was sexually satisfied to the point of exhaustion. With a mortal man, a woman gets one, may two or three chances a night to come. If the man comes first or is tired, you're out of luck. It's not that way at all with a spirit lover. He just keeps on and on until you're completely satisfied." (14)

Steiger also relates another bizarre instance, this one involving a college student and his date. After wining and dining the latter, the student then drove both of them to a secluded area to ensure a certain intimacy. "Carol had her eyes closed in what I thought was the moment of female abandonment, but when I saw what was in the back-seat, I was ready to abandon the car! It was kind of shimmering, but it did have a kind of form and shape to it, and it had the damndest pair of red eyes you could imagine ... And then there came this god-awful stench, like someone had just opened the floodgates of a cesspool." (15) Needless to say, the student departed in haste, while his date remained all the while in what appeared to be a trance-like state. In discussing this episode later with a fraternity brother, the student learned that others who had dated her experienced similar phenomena but only only when sex was anticipated. (16)

One is also reminded of Frank DeFelitta's The Entity (1978), a fictional account purportedly based on a true incident, in which a woman was repeatedly assaulted by an astral rapist over a period of months. After one such attack, a physical examination revealed "raw red bruises [which] lined the neck down to the shoulder. Several pinched areas. Tiny puncture marks ... Around the nipples were angry red and brown areas, indented impressions of tiny teeth." (17) The woman described her assailant as being muscular in appearance and having slanted, or almond-shaped eyes. His appearances were often accompanied by a strong earthy, if not foul, smell. This Asiatic cast to her attacker, who she initially describes as being "Chinese," is extremely suggestive, as UFO occupants are often described as possessing similarly shaped eyes. All attempts at alleviating the woman's harrowing experiences at the hands of this unseen assailant proved unsuccessful and she was eventually institutionalized.

The curious case of Clarita Villaneuva, a Philippine prostitute, who was bitten all over her body by a similarly invisible attacker in full view of witnesses, is strongly reminiscent of the above. Clarita described her assailant, visible only to herself, as a man wearing a cape, with big bulging eyes and possessing the ability to float in mid-air. (18) Another account claims that Clarita was besieged by not one but two unseen assailants who alternated in molesting her. "She described one as a big, black hairy human-like fellow, very tall, with two sharp canine teeth and a long beard like a Hindu. She said his feet were three times the size of normal human feet. The other creature was very small, about two or three feet tall, and also black, hairy, and ugly." (19) Although most accounts claim the attacks on Clarita disappeared as inexplicably as they had appeared, Lester Sumrall, an American evangelist who personally witnessed some of the phenomena associated with the attacks, claims that the abusive visitations did not cease until a rite of exorcism had been performed. (20)

During the 1920's Eleonore Zagun, a Romanian peasant girl, caused quite a sensation in parapsychological circles with her purported "mediumistic" powers. Actually, the latter were more in the nature of poltergeist phenomena as when objects were seen to move inexplicably in her presence, some even disappearing or reappearing in full view of witnesses. Needles and pins had an especial affinity for Eleonore's flesh. "In addition, on the same evening this type of phenomenon took this turn: that real needles were stuck into Eleonore's hand, for the most part being thrust horizontally through the upper layer of the skin so that the point would emerge again. How or whence these needles came was not to be observed. A movement of shrinking, a cry, and the needle would be there; Eleonore would hold her hand out to me for me to pull it out. These needle stabblings were repeated during the next day, with amazing frequency, becoming a great torment to the poor child. On the day following this alone, twenty-eight needles were thus struck into her left hand, mainly in the ball of the thumb." (21)

Perhaps more remarkable than this were the various scratches and bite-marks that would inexplicably appear on her flesh at any given moment. According to Harry Price, who personally witnessed some of these phenomena: "The stigmatic marks and abrasions which appear on various portions of Eleonore's body are, I think, the most interesting

of the phenomena said to occur with this medium. I saw several of them during the periods I kept the girl under observation. The marks are of several varieties, including teeth-marks; long scratches; oval, annular, elliptical, and other marks of varying shapes. The teeth-marks, it must be admitted, are similar to those made by Eleonore's own teeth; and tests carried out prove that if Eleonore bites her own arm, identical teeth-marks to those alleged to be abnormal are found, except the number of teeth indentations vary. But no one has seen Eleonore play pranks of this description, although she has been kept under observation for days by different investigators. Teeth-marks have never been found on any part of her body not accessible to the medium's mouth; they invariably appear on her arms or hands. This applies also to the scratches and other markings which appear on her chest, arms, wrists, and hands. But she has never been caught making these marks, some of which must be exceedingly painful. The marks are always sore afterwards.

"A peculiarity about the markings -- both abnormal and normal -- is the rapidity with which the resultant weals arise, and the whiteness and the thickness of the ridges forming the weals. This I have witnessed over and over again. Eleonore will perhaps be playing with a ball when suddenly she will give a sharp cry of pain and immediately come over to us to roll up her sleeve or uncover her chest, when the progress of the phenomenon can be witnessed. The teeth-marks are at first visible as red indentations on a white ground -- the white ground gradually becoming red at the same time as the indentations become white, rising in a thick ridge above the level of the flesh. The ridge becomes white in the course of a few minutes, and rapidly disappears. Indentations and teeth-marks made in the fleshy part of Eleonore's hand in a normal manner act in exactly the same way. 'Scratches' and other marks of alleged abnormal origin produce thick white weals in the course of a few minutes, afterwards rapidly disappearing." (22)

Eleonore claimed that the phenomena were the work of a creature she self-styled "Drakul," the Romanian word for "devil," with which she was on intimate terms. What became of this lowly Romanian girl in her later years I have yet to determine.

Among the Orthodox and Moslem Gypsies of Eastern Europe it is believed that the vampire possesses a strong desire for female companionship. "Thus in Prodrima they think that immediately he rises from the grave he goes, if a married man, to his former wife to spend the night with her in [sexual] intercourse. If he was an adult but unmarried man he would visit any young and pretty woman, usually a country widow or divorcée, for this purpose. In village and town settlements, however, the Moslem Gypsies think that a vampire goes for [sexual] intercourse to that woman for whom he had a fancy when alive, be she widow, divorcée or a married woman with a living husband. She does not speak of this affair to anyone, but only scream aloud when the vampire is with her while the rest of the family sit in silence." (23)

These sexual importunities soon take their toll. According to an informant of T.P. Vukanović: "The vampire disturbs her from early dawn till cock-crow, and she 'looks like a corpse, as if she were enchanted; you can spot her instantly. She is terrified; she neither eats nor drinks, becomes emaciated; one night seems to her as long as a year.'" (24) Eventually, it is believed that the woman will sicken and die.

Nonetheless, it is equally believed that human progeny can result from such unions. "In Novopazarski-Sandzak these Gypsies believe that a vampire can come to his wife at night and procreate a 'child,' known as a 'Vampijerović.' In Kosovo-Metohija the Orthodox Gypsies call such, supposed to be born of a Gypsy mother and vampire father through their intercourse after the husband's death, Vampirić ('little vampire'), the child born posthumously. If it is a boy he is named Vampir, if a girl Vampiresa; and by the Moslem Gypsies of these regions Dhampir and Dhampiresa ..." (25) Others believe that sons are solely the product of these unions. Ironically, children born in such a manner possess the power to detect and thereby kill vampires. Not all such unions are so productive, as the child is occasionally born without bones and has the texture of "jelly."

Brad Steiger, in his Haunted Lovers, recounts a singular instance of a woman who claimed to have become impregnated by her deceased husband: "My husband was taken from me shortly after we were married. Our greatest desire had been to have children, and now that desire would be denied us. I knew that I might remarry, but I sincerely did not want to. I loved John with all my heart, and I had wanted only to bear his children and be a good wife to him." On retiring to bed one evening, "I felt his arms around me and I knew that those were his lips at my neck. I turned and beheld a very dim, wispy outline of my husband. His eyes were very easy to distinguish, and I indentified him by those sparkling, lively green eyes. Later, when we lay down together, I knew without a doubt that it was John who was making love to me in his spirit body." Her menses ceased shortly afterwards and her abdomen began to swell appreciably. She quit her job as a secretary and went to live with friends who were practicing spiritualists. After a lapse of nine months, she was seized with "labor pains" and her friends aided in her delivery. "When the baby was delivered, I could only see a tiny, smoky-looking glob, but I could see the image of John standing there, all smiles. My friends' guides told me that my baby would be taken to the spirit world where he would receive the best of care. Since that time, I have spoken to both my husband and my son on several different occasions when I have attended séances. It is so comforting to me to know that someday I will be able to join my family in the beyond." (26)

It should not be assumed that men are exempt from such astral visitations. Franz Hartmann, in his article entitled "Vampires," recounts such an instance: "A miller at D-- had a healthy servant boy, who, soon after entering service, began to fail. He had a ravenous appetite, but nevertheless grew daily more feeble and emaciated. Being interrogated, he at last confessed that a thing which he could not see, but which he could plainly feel, came to him every night and settled upon his stomach, drawing all the life out of him, so that he became paralyzed for the time being, and could neither move nor cry out. Thereupon the miller agreed to share the bed with that boy, and proposed to him that he should give him a certain sign when the vampire arrived. This was done, and when the sign was given the miller grasped an invisible but very tangible substance that rested upon the boy's stomach, and, although it struggled to escape, he grasped it firmly and threw it into the fire. After that the boy recovered, and there was an end of these visits." (27) Oddly enough, Montague Summers, in citing this example from Hartmann's article, has the miller claim that the creature was "elliptical in shape, and to the touch feeling like gelatine," and further adds these features "suggest an ectoplasmic formation." (28)

Dion Fortune, in her Psychic Self-Defence, also recounts a curious and convoluted tale of vampirism involving a teenaged youth and his cousin who had been invalidated home during World War I. The former had been the focal point of certain inexplicable phenomena which he attributed to the actions of a "ghost" who assailed him. This invisible entity was finally laid to rest by Z., a colleague of Fortune's who was an adept at magic. The following story was then elicited: "The boy, whom we will call D., was in the habit of going to sit with a cousin who had been invalidated home from France suffering from alleged shell-shock. This young man was another scion of a worn-out stock, and it transpired that he had been caught red-handed in that unpleasant perversion called necrophilia. According to the story elicited from the parents of D., this vice was not uncommon on certain sections of the Front, as were also attacks on wounded men. The authorities were taking drastic steps to put it down. Owing to family influence the cousin of D. was able to escape incarceration in a military prison, and was placed in the care of his family as a mental case, and they put him in the charge of a male nurse. It was while the male nurse was off duty that the unfortunate young D. was misguidedly employed to sit with him. It also came out that relations between D. and his cousin were of a vicious nature, and on one occasion he bit the boy on the neck, just under the ear, actually drawing blood ... What may have been the exact percentage of neurotic taint, vice, and psychic attack, it is difficult to say, nor is it easy to decide which was the predisposing cause that opened the door to all the trouble, but one thing stood out clearly to all

beholders, that with the dispatch of the psychic visitant, not only did D.'s condition clear up immediately, but after a short, sharp upheaval the cousin also recovered ...

"[Z's] opinion concerning the case, though there was no means of obtaining independent confirmation of this, was that some Eastern European troops had been brought to the Western Front, and among these were individuals with the traditional knowledge of Black Magic for which South-Eastern Europe has always enjoyed a sinister reputation among occultists. These men, getting killed, knew how to avoid going to the Second Death, that is to say, the disintegration of the Astral Body, and maintained themselves in the etheric double by vampirising the wounded. Now vampirism is contagious; the person who is vampirised, being depleted of vitality, is a psychic vacuum, himself absorbing from anyone he comes across in order to refill his depleted resources of vitality. He soon learns by experience the tricks of a vampire without realising their significance, and before he knows where he is, he is a full-blown vampire himself, vampirising others. The earth-bound soul of a vampire sometimes attaches itself permanently to one individual if it succeeds in making a functioning vampire of him, systematically drawing its etheric nutriment from others, for, since he in his turn is re-supplying himself from others, he will not die from exhaustion as victims of vampires do in the ordinary way.

"Z. was of the opinion that D.'s cousin was not the primary vampire in the case, but himself a victim. Being a youth of unstable morale, he speedily acquired the vampire tricks, and the earth-bound soul of some Magyar magician exploited him. Through this act of biting and drawing blood from the neck of his cousin, this entity became transferred to young D., preferring pastures new to the depleted resources of its previous victim. Probably it alternated between the two, for it was not constantly with D." (29)

A. Osborne Eaves, in his obscure treatise on psychic vampirism, amplifies the above in greater detail: "Of the entities who inhabit these regions [i.e., the astral planes] there are many, and among the human and living (i.e., living human beings) in addition to the lowest among mankind, are the Black Magician and his pupils -- members of the Dugpa, Obeah, and Voodoo schools and others. Among the 'dead' is the ordinary person, but he does not stay there long, the atmosphere not being conducive to tranquility or happiness. Generally speaking, the lowest class of man preponderates, the length of time they remain depending on many circumstances, and varying in duration. In the case of suicides, seeing they have not accomplished their end, viz., to put an end to existence, the return for earth-life grows upon them with terrible zest.

It is here that one of the dangers of Vampirism occurs. If the experience they seek cannot be obtained without a physical body only two courses are open for them. One is to do so vicariously. To do this they must feed on the emanations arising from blood and alcohol; public houses and slaughter-houses are thronged with these unhappy creatures, which hang about and feed thus. From this standpoint the habit of offering blood-sacrifices to propitiate entities, as found recorded in some of the world-scriptures becomes luminous, and the history of magic teems with such examples. Not content, however, with thus prolonging their existence on the lower levels of the astral plane, the entities lure on those human beings whose tastes are depraved, causing them to go to all kinds of excesses, enticing them on in sensuality and vice of every kind. Each time a man yields to temptation the supremacy over him which these creatures hold becomes the stronger; they gain possession of his will, till at length they control him altogether. How many men, who have hitherto lived a blameless life, have on the spur of the moment committed some heinous crime, and the public have marvelled how they came to do it. The explanation offered after the commission of the crime has often been to the effect that they could not tell what possessed them to do it, but they felt a sudden impulse sweep over them and they obeyed it. Here, without doubt, is the genesis of the conception of a tempter, and one feels more inclined to pity than to blame in many cases." (30)

Franz Hartmann writes: "Persons obsessed by a vampire may be very intellectual and refined, but they are always sensually inclined people, and usually given to secret vices. To a sensitive person the shake of their hands feels clammy and cadaverous. If you are for a long time in their presence you will feel exhausted; it is as if they were drawing strength from you. It is also very likely that after you leave them you will be for a few days in a very bad humour, liable to quarrel and to find fault, and not unfrequently it happens that a person having been in company of such a 'medium' will feel strongly inclined to commit suicide. Many are even driven to suicide by such vampires, without knowing the source of that influence. Moreover, the abstraction of vitality does not necessarily cease upon leaving the presence of the 'medium'; the connection once formed the vampire will follow you to any distance and abstract life from you. A case is known to me in which a previously healthy young lady, after visiting such an obsessed person, experienced a continual loss of vitality, causing a waste of flesh amounting to about three pounds per week." (31)

Colin Wilson, in his Space Vampires, posits that these entities or elementals that "ob-
sess" individuals are in actual fact extraterrestrials. As one scientist exclaims: "So you see why I am so fascinated by your discovery -- these space vampires? It follows logically from my theory that there must be certain creatures who can drain the life-blood of fellow creatures -- or rather, their vital forces. I am convinced that is the meaning of the old legends of the vampire -- Dracula and so forth. And you must have noticed very often that certain people seem to drain your vitality -- usually rather dreary, self-pitying people. They are also vampires." (32) On questioning one of these alien beings, the scientist learns: "It is true that we had become destroyers of life. But we had no alternative. We were like soldiers lost in the desert; we had to take whatever we could find ... We decided to try the experiment of living off natural foods, to see what happened. The result was that we aged at the normal rate. So it was now clear that if we wanted to stay alive [i.e., immortal], we had no choice. We had to continue to drain the vital energies of other creatures. We learned to do this without actually destroying them -- in the way that human beings have learned to milk cows. This was not only more humane, but it also prevented us from destroying our own food supply." (32)

Lastly, another potential form of vampirism exists, one which is exclusive to the living but which has many features in common with the occult origins of traditional forms of vampirism. That is, vampirization via one's astral double. Popular belief ascribes this ability to human witches in many parts of the world. According to Ralph Shirley, in his The Mystery of the Human Double: "If we accept the belief in an astral (or etheric) form to which the consciousness can, under certain circumstances and by the adoption of certain methods, be transferred at will, we go far to explain the many of the freely volunteered confessions of the accused at the witch trials of the past which apart from some such hypothesis leave us totally at a loss for any plausible explanation. That their experiences were a reality to many of those on trial for witchcraft the evidence leaves no manner of doubt. That the accused in such cases made no distinction between their sensations in their physical and in their astral or etheric bodies is in the highest degree probable. Devoid of all knowledge of theosophical conceptions and of psychical theory it was but natural that they should confuse their alternating in the body and out of the body existences, and that one should appear to them just as real and as actual as the other. Even the dreamer, when a dream is exceptionally vivid, cannot always determine whether what he recalls has taken place in the physical world or is merely part and parcel of his dream life. It can hardly be doubted to-day that the methods adopted by the witches of the past had for their object the extrusion of the astral body from its physical envelope, and it was a knowledge of certain recipes of a presumably occult character that enabled them to compound the unguents that set in motion the phantasmagorical phenomena of the witches' Sabbath." (33)

African witches, in particular, possess this ability to a high degree. P. Amaury Talbot, in his The Peoples of Southern Nigeria, discusses this matter in great detail: "As

in Europe, it is more than probable that a large proportion of the [African] witchcraft occurrences take place in the astral world, in dreams, etc., while the physical bodies are lying on their beds at home ... The belief has no doubt partly arisen from the fact of bilocation, viz. that the 'doubles' of persons are occasionally seen at a distance from their normal bodies, and it is probable that with negroes the connection between the physical and astral forms is loose and that such apparitions occur not only more frequently than in Europe, but are also apparent to a much larger proportion of people. It may even be possible that some evil persons can consciously direct these soul-bodies and can harm the ethereal shapes of their enemies. Though the actual vampirism, the sucking of blood, and the metamorphosis, for the purpose of doing so, into flies and other creatures, are believed in, as among the present-day peoples of the Balkans, it is often held that the actual attack is made on the ethereal body and that the physical frame suffers only in sympathy with this." (34)

S.F. Nadel, in discussing the practice of witchcraft among the Nupes of West Africa, describes this process in rather succinct terms: "When the witch attacks a person at night in his sleep, it is always his ravi or anima she feeds on, thus causing the body (na-ka) to fall ill and waste away. But when the witch takes her victim to the gathering place, where all other witches feast on him, it is only his shadow soul or fifingi that is brought along and devoured, not the person in the flesh, who remains asleep in his house ... It is only [the witches'] fifingi which go on these nightly excursions, their bodies, like those of the victims, remaining asleep in their homes. Thus, ultimately, it is a shadow which feeds on shadows, a shadow (of the dreamer) which sees a shadow (the witch), and it is invisible beings who meet at night, when no one is abroad, to commit invisible crimes." (35)

In E.F. Skertchley's account concerning the Berbalangs of the Cagayan Sulu, the possibility emerges -- a rather unpleasant one, at that -- that entire communities may possess this ability. (36) I have referenced other works for comparable parallels but have found none to date. I have, however, uncovered several allusions to "group metamorphosis," of which the following examples attest: "In the Awka region the power of metamorphosis, called Iri-Ano, 'turn into animal,' has descended to certain 'quarters' of towns, and is possessed by all their inhabitants, whether good or bad. In these places everyone, willing or unwilling, has to perform the metamorphosis ... Among the Alensaw and Okobo all, and among Ekkpafia nearly all, can and do metamorphose. At the Alensaw town of Aja they all change into leopards, at the next town into snakes, while the Okobo turn into leopard, crocodile and [hyena]. Of the Isi-Okpo Ikwerrri one part turns into snakes, the other into leopards; all have this power from birth ... The same beliefs exist among the Ibo of Owerri Division. More often than not the power descends to certain families and not to whole 'quarters.' The Uzuzu-Uzuama, however, usually change into elephants, and some of these, and Mboaha and Oratta, into leopards. One whole 'quarter' in the Oru clan, called Umu-Agu-Nta (Sons-leopards-small) metamorphose into leopards ... At the Ikwerrri town of Uma-Agwaw, 'Sons of the Snakes,' some change into snakes, some into leopards ... Among the inhabitants of Okigwi District the power -- called, as by most Ibo, Ehihi -- is inborn in the people of those 'quarters,' of which the tutelary jujus themselves assume the shape of animals. If the Alose changes into a leopard, then all his people can do the same. The favourite affinities are python, bush-pig, antelope and monkey. All men do not go out on the same night, but individually as it suits their convenience. A child is able to do this soon after it begins to walk and talk; if the 'quarter' people change into leopards, the children will turn into spotted rats. They take no 'medicines,' but when they lie down they say to themselves, 'I will go out to-night ...' Among the Okposi Awhawzara and Awhawfia, as well as the Ngbo and Ikwo, the faculty, called Ehihi Madu, cannot be bought and is only inborn in the people of certain 'quarters,' in which one whole family must change into the same animal ... Nearly all Keaka are supposed to possess 'affinities.' They are thought often to pass into the fetus when a man has intercourse with a pregnant woman, especially if he has just made the 'medicine,' usually called Ejang. At other times the power is given to the children, when they are able to walk. Sometimes both parents present a child with an 'affinity' and in

this case, the father's were-animal would reside on the right side of the abdomen and the mother's on the left .." (37)

What are we to make of all this? Admittedly, the occult explanations concerning vampirism appear at first quite attractive, answering as they do all the insolubles associated with this inexplicable and complex phenomenon. Yet, since there exists little concrete evidence outside of human testimony to support such contentions, is it wise then to accept such explanations at face-value? For instance. One of the major failings of these theories, apart from their lack of scientific verisimilitude, is that they all treat vampirism as if it were a phenomenon exclusive in itself, ignoring such contributing factors as mental illness, the prevalence (and ignorance) of disease, the incidence of premature burial, the preservative nature of certain soils, the social unrest of the times, the influence of organized religion in fostering this belief, all of which predisposed the credulous peasant to believe in its existence. Even belief itself, regardless of its degree of illogicality, can kill. "Voodoo death," for instance, is a little understood phenomenon involving the inexplicable deaths of individuals who, for whatever reason, live in fear of their pending demise and, like some self-fulfilling prophecy, do die. Clinical tests performed prior to or after death generally reveal nothing abnormal. It is a classic example of the power of negative suggestion. The phenomenon is not limited to primitive societies, such as the Australian Aborigines, and is found in more civilized climes. It seems to be intimately associated with depressed states and may involve the suppression of the parasympathetic nervous system. J.C. Barker has devoted an entire book to the subject, aptly titled Scared to Death (1968). What makes the book all the more convincing is that most of the examples cited are drawn from contemporary society rather than ethnological accounts.

Nonetheless, let us discuss some of these occult theories at greater length. Take, for instance, the matter of astral projection. Both D'Assier and Pierart attribute this ability to the vampire, accepting without question the existence of such a dubious creature. Yet neither man adduces any convincing evidence to this effect. D'Assier's description of a vampire, citing as he does its plumpness, the growth of hair and nails, the development of "new skin" and the formation of adipose tissue, simply betrays his ignorance of the processes involved in bodily decomposition. The plumpness, actually swelling, is due to the build up of gases within the deceased corpus, the growth of hair and nails is not unusual, the extremities being the last to feel the deleterious effects of decomposition, the formation of "new skin" is due to skin slip, itself due to the accumulation of liquids or gases in the tissue, which exposes the dermis underneath, while the development of adipocere through a process known as saponification is not altogether rare in corpses, retarding as it does the progress of putrefaction. The contention that the vampire's astral double can exsanguinate its victims with phantom fangs like some "wild cat" and then transfer the bloody repast to its corpus in the grave strikes one as the stuff of nonsense. Perhaps, as African s believe concerning witches, the vampire's "shadow" simply feeds upon the "shadow" of its victim. Nonetheless, I find it difficult to countenance the possibility that the vampire of traditional belief ever possessed such an ability, let alone existed in its own right. This same disbelief might also be applied to those accounts attesting to sexual intercourse between humans and demonic entities, but more on that below.

The possibility of astral projection and travel among the living cannot be so readily dismissed, as many cultures throughout the world profess a belief in this ability. Even your skeptical editor is chagrined to admit at having experienced several out-of-the-body occurrences in the past. Yet granted this possibility, I doubt very much that anyone in the astral state can in some manner cause serious harm to others. It should be noted, in all fairness, that this ability in most cultures is generally ascribed to witches and wizards who, in this astral state, molest the living, causing them to sicken and die. It should also be noted that astral projection in these cultures is often accomplished following the topical application of some "medicine" to the skin. Although the ingredients are kept a close secret, it is speculated that European witches in the past used salves

consisting of certain narcotic and stimulatory herbs, as aconite, belladonna, hemlock and henbane, to facilitate their flight through the air. (38) Perhaps these "medicines" can expedite astral projection, although it seems just as likely one may be dealing with hallucinatory phenomena induced by botanigens.

Psychic vampirism represents another matter. Many of us have encountered certain persons who have left us feeling emotionally and physically drained afterwards. Is it possible these individuals have the ability, whether consciously applied or not, to absorb our bio-energies? I think not. What the "victim" experiences during and following such encounters is more mental exhaustion than anything else. Many of these so-called psychic vampires are nothing more than boors who enjoy a captive audience as much as they do the sound of their own voices. Others are simply persons who typify the adage that misery loves company and are seeking a sympathetic ear. The mental effort involved in maintaining an attentive pose with such individuals when in actual fact we are secretly bored silly is what proves so debilitating. As for whether the aged can vampirize the young, a topic not discussed above, to ensure their longevity seems more anecdotal than real. Hartmann, however, does cite a purported instance of this that came to his attention: "I know of an old lady, a vampire, who thus ruined the health of a lot of robust servant girls, whom she took into her service and made them sleep in her room. They were all in good health when they entered, but soon they began to sicken, they became emaciated and consumptive, and had to leave the service. Two of them died shortly after." (39) Nothing unusual here. This is obvious a case of infectious tuberculosis, a disease that was as common in the 19th century as is cancer today. (40)

But what of Carlotta (the woman in The Entity), Clarita Villaneuva, Eleonore Zagun, the miller's servant and the teenaged youth of Fortune's account? Do their experiences suggest the existence of disencarnate entities? Perhaps. Yet psychological thought suggests a more rational source of origin, i.e., the human brain. And, like some magic wand, this convoluted mass of gray matter is capable of producing a wide variety of seemingly inexplicable phenomena itself. Apart from its limitless capacity for credulity and self-deception, it may also be largely responsible for such little understood faculties as esp, telepathy and psychokinesis. (41) Poltergeist phenomena may also have its source of origin the human brain, perhaps engendered by such negative stimuli as hatred, self-loathing and sexual repression.

The aforementioned three women may all have been victims of self-generated poltergeist phenomena. For instance, all three were beset by male entities who physically abused them in a violent, if not a decidedly sexual, manner. Clarita was a known prostitute and Carlotta had had several affairs. Although it might be stretching a point to assume that Eleonore, a prepubescent girl who presumably had no knowledge of and experience in sexual matters, may have harbored rape fantasies which she in turn externalized through paranormal means, this contention is not without some merit. It should be noted, as Price does, that the tooth impressions left by her unseen assailant on Eleonore's flesh closely approximated those impressions taken of her own teeth. Nor did these bites ever occur in areas which were not accessible to Eleonore's mouth. Although outright fraud was never alleged in Eleonore's case, it could be that she, as well as the two other women, are the psychic equivalents of "cutters," individuals who have a compulsive desire to harm, if not mutilate, themselves. Admittedly, there does not appear to be anything outwardly abnormal in Eleonore's psychological make-up, yet one wonders. After all, she had been stigmatized as a witch by the village people, placed in an asylum for the insane and later exhibited throughout Europe as the latest parapsychological wonder. Perhaps this less than ideal childhood had a traumatic effect on the thirteen-year-old. Indeed, one might look askance at any child whose invisible playmate was nicknamed the "Devil" and whose flesh served as a pin-cushion after a fashion. Hardly the stuff of Calvin and Hobbes.

Perhaps these women had a bit of the hysteric in them. Anyone who has ever researched this subject is aware of the diversity of phenomena that individuals suffering from this affliction either experience or produce. (42) Apropos of Eleonore Zagon, Otto Snell, in his Hexenprozess und Geistesstoerung (1891), mentions that hysterical women frequently stick needles into their breasts, genitals and other bodily areas. (43) The foul odor that often accompanies paranormal phenomena, a feature characteristic of Carlotta's spectral rapist and the college student's date, is also common to hysterics. According to R.E.L. Masters, in his Eros and Evil: "Less familiar to most persons is the fact that the mentally ill are sometimes able, by an inadequately understood process, to give off a variety of body odors. The process is almost always unconscious, but it has sometimes been claimed that certain individuals (accomplished Yogins, for example) are able to control the production ... Those tormented by sexual guilt, typically, when they produce olfactory phenomena, emanate fecal stenches (the unconscious making the equation of sex with filth and representing filth with feces) ... Among others of the mentally ill who produce body odors on the one hand and are subject to olfactory hallucinations on the other, are schizophrenics whose hallucinations may additionally be haptic (tactile), visual, and auditory. Schizophrenics share with hysterics a variety of symptoms relevant to the study of witchcraft phenomena and there is no reason to doubt that the ranks of the witches probably included a fair number of schizophrenics." (44) The pathetic example of the woman who claimed she had become impregnated by her dead husband is nothing peculiar, as both men and women alike can suffer from hysterical, or non-existent, pregnancies.

Purpura, a hemorrhagic disease characterized by excessive bruising and whose etiology may be largely psychosomatic in nature, is another possibility that should not be overlooked. Chronic nightmare activity, particularly that characterized by visual phenomena and a paralysis of being, may also be a contributing factor. Sometimes sufficiently severe to cause death, these nightmares (known in some cultures as "Old Hag" attacks) may have provided the basis of the belief in incubi and succubas. (45) Perhaps the miller's servant in Hartmann's account experienced a succession of these nightmare attacks. Perhaps, too, the miller, wishing to disabuse the boy of these nightly occurrences, deliberately humored the child in his beliefs and when the latter claimed he was being attacked yet again the miller simply pretended to grasp some solid object and throw it in the fire. The effect of this little psychodrama proved successful as the boy was exorcized of his demon. The historic incidence of child abuse, its prevalency only now being recognized, may also be a silent contributing factor in some of the cases outlined above, as individuals who have suffered in this manner often develop abnormal behavioral patterns, such as multiple personalities, later in life. Ironically, it is the occultists themselves, such as Eaves, Fortune and Hartmann, who provide further confirmation of the psychological approach, as each maintains that those who are most susceptible to psychic vampirism are by nature dissolute, depraved, given to secret vices, etc.

Although some of the occult theories concerning vampirism outlined above may prove correct, either wholly or in part, someday, the unquestioning acceptance of them in the face of rational alternatives seems, in my opinion, an unnecessary exercise in futility and can only retard future attempts at gaining any lasting understanding of the vampire legend.

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 2. Ibid., pp. 280-281.
 3. Cited in Montague Summers, The Vampire: His Kith and Kin, NY, E.P. Dutton, 1929, p. 195.
 4. Benjamin Walker, Beyond the Body, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. 56, 57.
 5. Jan Máchal, "Slavic Mythology," in Vampires of the Slavs, ed. Jan L. Perkowski, Cambridge, MA, Slavica Publishers, 1976, p. 24.
 6. Walker, loc. cit. (Oops! Footnotes 5 and 6 should be reversed.)

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24. Ibid., p. 218.
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26. Steiger, op. cit., pp. 85-86.
27. Franz Hartmann, "Vampires," Borderland, 1896, vol. 3, no. 3, p. 355.
28. Summers, op. cit., p. 164.
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30. A. Osborne Eaves, "Modern Vampirism," in Vampires of the Slavs, op. cit., p. 145.
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- 32a. Colin Wilson, The Space Vampires, NY, Pocket Books, 1977, p. 59.
- 32b. Ibid., pp. 189-190.
33. Ralph Shirley, The Mystery of the Human Double, New Hyde Park, NY, University Books, 1965, pp. 171-172.
34. P. Amaury Talbot, The Peoples of Southern Nigeria, London, Frank Cass, 1969, vol. II, pp. 205-206.
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36. Skertchly's account concerning the Berbalangs provides the basis of a short story by Andrew Lang. Entitled the "Adventure of the Fair American," the Berbalangs attack a ship carrying rare zoological specimens and succeed in killing a bunyip, a mylodon and the fabled Loch Ness Monster. But see Andrew Lang, The Disentanglers, NY, AMS Press, 1970 (1902), pp. 195-243.
37. Talbot, op. cit., pp. 235, 236, 237, 238, 243-244.
38. But see Montague Summers, The Werewolf, New Hyde Park, NY, University Books, 1966, pp. 291-292, and Masters, op. cit., pp. 150-155.
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40. Unless these illnesses were due to a covert act of poisoning on the old woman's part.
41. Andrew Lang, in his The Making of Religion (1898), claims that these faculties were possessed by primitive man to a high degree and provided the basis of religious thought.
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43. Cited in Masters, op. cit., p. 286.
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CAGAYAN SULLU, ITS CUSTOMS, LEGENDS AND SUPERSTITIONS
(by Ethelbert Forbes Skertchly)

Cagayan Sulu is a small island situated about eighty miles off the N.E. coast of Borneo. It has only been visited by about three expeditions, none of which spent more than a day or two at the place. It may be looked upon as the most southernly of the Philippines or the most northernly of the Bornean group. The island is of volcanic origin, and contains several extinct volcanoes, one of which, Mount Ledan, rises to a height of 1,105 feet ...

In the centre of the island is a small village of inhabitants of which owe allegiance to neither of the two chiefs. These people are called "Berbalangs," and the Cagayans live in great fear of them.

These Berbalangs are ghouls and must eat human flesh occasionally or they would die. You can always tell them because the pupils of their eyes are not round but just narrow slits like those of a cat.

They dig open the graves and eat the entrails of the corpses; but in Cagayan the supply is limited, so when they feel the craving for a feed of human flesh they go away into the grass, and having carefully hidden their bodies hold their breath and fall into a trance. Their astral bodies are then liberated in the form of heads with the feet attached to the ears as wings. They fly away, and entering a house make their way into the body of one of the occupants and feed on his entrails, when of course he dies in fearful agony.

The Berbalangs may be heard coming, as they make a moaning noise which is loud at a distance and dies away to a feeble wail as they approach. When they are near you the sound of their wings may be heard and the flashing lights of their eyes can be seen like dancing fire-flies in the dark.

Should you be the happy possessor of a cocoa-nut pearl you are safe, but otherwise the only way to beat them off is to cut at them with a kris, the blade of which has been rubbed with the juice of a lime. If you see the lights and hear the moaning in front of you, wheel suddenly round and make a cut in the opposite direction. Berbalangs always go by contraries and are never where they appear to be.

The cocoa-nut pearl, a stone like an opal sometimes found in the cocoa-nut, is the only really efficacious charm against their attacks and it is only of value to the finder, as its magic powers cease when it is given away. When the finder dies the pearl loses its lustre and becomes dead.

The juice of limes sprinkled on a grave will prevent the Berbalangs from entering it, so all the dead are buried either under or near the houses and the graves are sprinkled daily with fresh lime-juice.

Having heard so much about the Berbalangs I was naturally anxious to see them, but could get no one to go as a guide, till after two or three days Hadji Mahomet's eldest son, Matali, volunteered to accompany me.

He made the offer at about three o'clock one afternoon, and for fear of his courage deserting him we set out at once.

We arrived in sight of the village about five o'clock, but Matali would not approach within half a mile and tried to persuade me not to go nearer. Finding I was determined to go, however, he begged me to take his kris and a few limes and told me to accept no food unless I first sprinkled it with lime-juice, as the Berbalangs were in the habit of

setting food before strangers, which had the appearance of curried fish, but was in reality human flesh, and should I once eat this my soul would be destroyed and I should become a Berbalang. If, however, before eating I sprinkled the food with lime-juice it would resume its natural shape, and I should be able to see whether it was wholesome or not.

Taking the kris and limes and leaving Matali praying for my safety, I soon arrived at the village. It consisted of about a dozen houses of the ordinary native type; but with the exception of a few fowls and a solitary goat there was no living thing to be seen. I was surprised at this and entered several of the houses, but all were alike deserted. Everything was in perfect order, and in one house some rice was standing in basins, still quite hot, as though the occupants had been suddenly called away when about to begin their evening meal. Thinking perhaps that they had run away I halooed but received no reply, and though I made a thorough search of the vicinity could discover no one.

I returned to Matali, and on telling him of the deserted state of the village, he turned pale and implored me to come back at once as the Berbalangs were out and it would be dangerous to return in the dark.

The sun was setting as we started on our homeward way, and before we had covered half the distance it was quite dark. There was not a breath of air stirring, and we were in the middle of an open valley with no trees about, when we heard a loud moaning noise like something in pain. Matali immediately crouched down in the long grass and pulled me down beside him: he said the Berbalangs were coming down the valley and our only chance was that they might pass us by without seeing us. We lay hidden there while the moaning sound grew fainter, and Matali whispered that they were coming nearer.

Presently the sound died away to a faint wail and the sound of wings became audible, while a lot of little dancing lights, like fireflies only reddish, passed over us. I could feel Matali's grip tighten on my arm, and I felt a nasty creepy sensation about the roots of my hair, but after the lights had passed, the noise of wings ceased, the moaning grew louder, and Matali told me they had gone by, and for the time being we were safe.

We continued on our way down the valley, and on passing an isolated house at some distance from the path the moaning grew faint again and Matali said the Berbalangs had certainly gone into the house, and he trusted that Hassan, the owner, had a cocoa-nut pearl to protect him.

We shortly after arrived at the Hadji's village and were congratulated on our lucky passage.

Now I knew Hassan, to whose house the Berbalangs had gone, and decided to call on him the next day and see what account he had to give of the night's occurrences.

Accordingly, shortly after day-break, I started off alone, as I could get no one to accompany me, and in due course came to Hassan's house. There was no sign of anyone about so I tried the door but found it fastened. I shouted several times but no one answered, so, putting my shoulder to the door I gave a good push and it fell in. I entered the house and looked round but could see no one, going further in I suddenly started back, for huddled up on the bed, with hands clenched, face distorted, and eyes staring as in horror, lay my friend Hassan -- dead.

I have stated above the facts just as they occurred, and am quite unable to give any explanation of them.

(Received July 6th; Read 4th November, 1896)

THE BERBALANGS WILL GET YOU, IF YOU DON'T WATCH OUT!
(by Michael Hervey)

It is not often nowadays that a new island or a lost tribe comes to light, but in 1896 a Mr. Forbes Skertchley [sic throughout], originally of Hong Kong, startled the world with an announcement to the effect that he had discovered a tiny, remote island called Cagayan in the Pacific which was inhabited by a strange people called the Berbalangs. In his report [with which Hervey takes some liberties; compare Skertchly's account] to the Anthropological Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal he states:

"These Berbalangs are ghouls. They dip [sic] open the graves and eat the entrails of the corpses; but in Cagayan the supply of cadavers is limited, so when they feel the craving for human flesh they go away into the grass, and having carefully hidden their bodies, hold their breath and fall into a trance. Their astral bodies are then liberated, whereupon they fly away, and entering a house they invade the body of one of the occupants and feed on his entrails.

"You can always tell them because the pupils of their eyes are not round, but just narrow slits like those of a cat. They may be heard coming, as they always make a moaning noise, which is loud at a distance and dies away to a feeble moan as they approach. When they are near you the sounds of their wings may be heard and the flashing lights of their eyes can be seen like dancing fireflies in the dark.

"Should you be the happy possessor of a cocoa-nut pearl you are safe, but otherwise the only way to beat them off is to cut at them with a kris, the blade of which has been rubbed with the juice of a lime. If you see the lights and hear the moaning in front of you, wheel suddenly around and make a cut in the opposite direction. Berbalangs always go by contraries and are never where they appear to be." [Hervey places this last sentence in italics; it is not so in Skertchly's account.]

The report appeared in the Society's journal of that same year. Mr. Skertchley further electrified the world by issuing a statement to the press stating that owing to the shortage of corpses on the island the Berbalangs were about to invade Asia, America, Africa and Europe. The danger was so great that he intended undertaking a world lecture tour so that he could spread the alarm.

While being interviewed he suddenly held up his hand.

"Be still everybody!" he called. "I think I can hear them coming! There! Do you hear them?" He did not wait for a reply but immediately commenced to hand out some dirty gray-looking marbles, which he claimed were cocoa-nut pearls.

"They've gone!" he exclaimed after a few minutes had passed. "You had better keep the cocoa-nut pearls. There's no telling when they'll be back," he added, peering anxiously over his shoulder.

Mr. Skertchley's first lecture took place in Hong Kong. He warned his audience that they were doomed unless they made an all out attempt to cultivate cocoa-nut pearls. Failing that they must arm themselves with a kris, the blade of which had been rubbed with the juice of lime.

"If you will all hold your breath and listen carefully," he concluded, "you will hear them hovering overhead. They are waiting to invade your bodies. You must safe-guard against this by sprinkling lime juice over everything you eat in strang places. The Berbalangs have the habit of serving their guests with a dish that resembles curried fish,

but which is reality human flesh. Once you eat it your soul is destroyed and you become a Berbalang yourself! If, however, before eating you sprinkle the food with lime juice it will again resume its natural shape."

There were many in the audience, of course, who treated the whole thing as a huge joke. To them Skertchley said: "There is no point in giving you one of my cocoa-nut pearls, because unless you believe they cannot help you. Laugh all you wish, but there will come a day when your mind will reel with horror and fright. I have seen the Berbalangs at work. They are ghouls and fiends and will surely get you if you don't watch out! Those of you who possess cocoa-nut pearls must not give them away. They lose their efficiency one they change hands --"

"What about the ones you've just distributed?" a skeptic in the audience called out. "They've changed hands, haven't they?"

"Yes, that's true." conceded Skertchley, "but these are special cocoa-nut pearls. They were picked by left-handed native virgins, and retain their full magic powers no matter how many times they change hands. One thing more. You must make haste to sprinkle the juice of a lime over the graves of your loved ones to prevent them from being horribly despoiled by the Berbalangs."

"How do we cultivate these so-called cocoa-nut pearls?" inquired someone else.

"You must plant the cocoa-nut pearl I have just given you inside a yellow teapot filled with sawdust. You must moisten the sawdust regularly with lime juice and cabbage water. In due course the seed will grow into a magnificent tree. When it has borne fruit you must place the nuts in a sack and swing it three times around your head, saying, 'The Berbalangs are doomed!' backwards. The nuts can then be opened and the pearls extracted."

Mr. Skertchley journeyed [sic] to India. His lectures were well attended, and he continued to distribute cocoa-nut pearls by the sackful. He had taken to wearing a kris, and on more than one occasion he almost decapitated people in the street when the Berbalangs swooped down upon him.

He disappeared in February, 1899, while on his way to confer with the [Dalai?] Lama of Tibet, and to this day there are many people who claim that he was spirited away by the dread Berbalangs.



CORRECTIONS

1. Page 3, line 52, "maybe" for "may."
2. Page 11, line 50, "whose" for "who."
3. Page 12, line 3, "affliction" for "afflicion."
4. Page 16, line 44, "strange" for "strang."
5. Page 17, line 7, "horror" for "hoor."

