

Partridge and Brittan's Spiritual Library.

---

o

SCENES IN THE SPIRIT WORLD;

OR,

LIFE IN THE SPHERES.

BY HUDSON TUTTLE.

---

THE Spirit holds the same relation to spiritual things that Man holds to physical nature. Death opens the door, and admits the freed spirit into a new and glorious realm of happiness.

---

NEW YORK:  
PARTRIDGE AND BRITTAN, PUBLISHERS,  
No. 342 BROADWAY.  
1855.

Phil 7054.116.5

1857. May. 7.

Gift of

Charles Partridge  
of New York.

---

ENTERED, according to act of Congress, in the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty-three, by HUDSON TUTTLE, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.

---

---

Turney & Brother's Storeotype, 24 Beekman St., N. Y.

# CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION, . . . . .	5
MEDIUM'S PREFACE, . . . . .	11
CHAPTER I.	
THE HARMONIOUS UNION, . . . . .	13
CHAPTER II.	
THE GROVE OF THE PHILOSOPHER, . . . . .	21
CHAPTER III.	
THE SOCIETY OF AVARICE AND DECEIT, . . . . .	27
CHAPTER IV.	
THE LOW SOCIETIES CONTINUED, . . . . .	32
CHAPTER V.	
FURTHER DESCRIPTION OF HADES, . . . . .	38
CHAPTER VI.	
DISCUSSIONS, . . . . .	47
CHAPTER VII.	
THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE, . . . . .	55

	PAGE
CHAPTER VIII.	
VISIT TO THE CIRCLES OF EARTH, . . . . .	62
CHAPTER IX.	
THE CHANGE CALLED DEATH, . . . . .	68
CHAPTER X.	
COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LIGHT, . . . . .	74
CHAPTER XI.	
THE SOCIETY AGAIN VISIT EARTH, . . . . .	80
CHAPTER XII.	
THE FORSAKEN AND DESPISED, . . . . .	92
CHAPTER XIII.	
THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE PHILOSOPHER, . . . . .	97
CHAPTER XIV.	
A VISIT TO A DISTANT GLOBE, . . . . .	104
CHAPTER XV.	
RE-UNION IN THE SPIRIT-WORLD, . . . . .	112
CHAPTER XVI.	
CONTENTELESS NOT GOODNESS, . . . . .	117
CHAPTER XVII.	
ADDRESS OF THE SAGE, . . . . .	120

## INTRODUCTION.

---

IN presenting this book to the public, it is deemed proper to give the reader some account of its author, the circumstances which caused him to write it, and the use it may be expected to subserve to the race.

A work like this, professedly coming from a higher sphere of existence, in which scenes are described that conflict with our previous educational ideas, should have such proof of its origin, if possible, as may satisfy the candid reader that it really is what it pretends to be. The subject of Spiritualism is now agitating public thought, more perhaps than any other, and many books have been printed with the professed object of enlightening the public mind on that all-important subject. I say all-important, for what other subject can equal it in importance? What other question can possibly compare with those which relate to the weal or woe that awaits us when we change this temporary abode for one that has no end? The human mind naturally looks to the future, and instinctively asks the question, What is to be my destiny in that world, or rather that sphere of existence, to which we are all so rapidly hastening? Previous to the spiritual manifestations and com-

munications of the present day, very little was pretended to be known on this important subject; and the plainest of that little was seen "through a glass darkly." To that class of the community who are convinced that a channel of communication is now open through which they can commune with their departed friends, this work is more particularly addressed. It is also commended to the attention of those who doubt or wholly disbelieve in Spiritualism. They can at least learn by its perusal what a great many people, and a rapidly-increasing number, believe in relation to their future state of being.

The medium (Hudson Tuttle) through whom the following communications were made, lives in the township of Berlin, Erie county, State of Ohio. He is about twenty years of age, and of limited education so far as the schools of the day are concerned. He has improved his time, however, in reading scientific works, much more than is usual for persons of his age. I am well acquainted with him, and also with his family connections. I can truly say that he is a person of strict veracity, and very truthful in what he says. I have never heard his character called in question by any person, and believe it wholly unimpeachable.

About the age of sixteen, HUDSON TUTTLE first became what is usually known as a rapping and tipping medium, and a great many persons frequented his abode to witness and test the truthfulness of the multitudinous and varied communications that were made through him. Within a year from his first development, he began to write. His writing was angular and unintelligible at first, as is usual in such cases, but soon became readable; and answers were very often given through his pen to the numerous questions put through him, whether orally or mentally, and the answers were generally correct. His writing at first was

Google

wholly mechanical, he not knowing the word or even the letter he was making until it was formed. By degrees the ideas were impressed on his mind ; at first a few words, then a sentence, and at this time more or less of the whole subject that is to be written upon. In this manner—that is, by impression—the present book was written. One sentence after another, *in words*, was given him, which he wrote with great rapidity, the making of the letters, spelling, and forming of the words, being his own production. The work under consideration purports to be given by spirits who lived on this earth many centuries ago, and who spoke the Greek language.

It is well known to all who have investigated the subject, that a very great difference exists in the style and composition of spirit communications. Some are very correct in their orthography and grammatical construction ; others are very incorrect. It must necessarily be so, if we bear in mind that spirits *out* of the body are the same individuals in every respect that they were when living here. There is no difference whatever in the composition of their minds, except a gradual progression. Everything they know in addition to what they knew here, they have had to learn in a similar way. There is no miracle about it. The great law of cause and effect operates as imperatively, and is as much binding on spirits above as it is on man in this lower world. This will explain the reason why spirits who were ignorant of the English language when on earth, are so often faulty in the choice of words and in the grammatical construction of sentences. The substance and matter are often of the most exalted and intelligent character ; but if given through a writing medium who is not clairvoyant, it must necessarily partake of the defects that that medium is subject to, in common with all persons who are not masters of the language they write.

A number of Mr. Tuttle's productions as a medium have been published in the spiritual papers of the day, and otherwise, and were favorably received, and especially a pamphlet, entitled "An Outline of Universal Government," which has been much read at the West. But the most important production of his is a painting on canvas, presenting a panoramic view of the earth in its progress from the time it was first enclosed by the granite rock to the present period. It is about three hundred and sixty feet long. The types of the various vegetable and animal forms are given as they appeared in the different geological periods of time, with many examples of the forms they presented in after ages. This very interesting and splendid panorama will probably be exhibited to the public the ensuing fall or winter. In painting this long canvas his hand was passive, the spirits having the entire control for the time-being.

The motive that influenced spirits to write this book, as well as many others, is the love they bear to their brethen in the rudimental sphere. They have a stronger feeling and a purer affection for us, than we of earth have for each other. The use of the book may be connected with the subject of Spiritualism generally. The question is often asked, What is the use of the various manifestations, such as rapping, table-tipping, moving of heavy substances, etc., or even spiritual communications, allowing such to be made? What good do they accomplish to the inhabitants of earth? I reply, They have convinced a vast many people, beyond a reasonable doubt, of the immortality of the soul. The present age is proverbially an age of skepticism and doubt. To the great majority of minds the future is clothed in darkness and doubt. The arguments used by the clergy, as well as others, fail to convince the inquiring mind. They want something that is evident to the senses.

— Google



There is nothing which strikes the mind with greater dread than annihilation ; and is it of no use to convince man that there is an hereafter—that his destiny is higher than the brute ?

Again, what can be a greater incentive to virtue than a belief in guardian spirits ? What can be more calculated to deter us from vice than a full belief that the dear parents and friends we so much revered and loved when on earth, still live, and are often with us, and know all our thoughts and actions ? That a belief in Spiritualism *does* produce a higher state of morality, can be abundantly proved. Many instances demonstrating the fact have come under my own observation. When I see the bloated drunkard get a communication from a loved parent, telling him to leave the fatal cup—or, if he be a dishonest person, telling him to pay his honest debts, and the advice is followed, can I doubt of its use ? It is passing strange to me that any should doubt of its use ?

With respect to the present volume, it is sufficient to say that its object is to present to man a faithful representation of spirit-life in the next sphere of existence—to embody as much information of this kind as possible in a small book, that will be within the means of every one to purchase. The inquirer will find an answer to almost any question he may ask concerning the future destiny of man. The “Scenes” give a faithful delineation of man, from his lowest and most degraded state, to the highest moral and intellectual philosopher, as they appear when they enter the next sphere ; also, various accounts of the reception they meet with, and the progression they make in their new state of existence.

It is believed that a greater amount of information, such as the mass of mankind are desirous of knowing, is contained in the following

pages, than in any similar publication. It is not the object to oppose in the least the many valuable and truthful works that have been written on this subject, but to add another light to guide the inquiring mind as it journeys on through this rudimental sphere, to that brighter land to which all are so rapidly approaching, and to enforce on us all the importance of time in preparing for the great change that awaits us, and the deplorable consequences that must necessarily follow to the person who neglects or abuses the time allotted to him on earth.

DATUS KELLEY.

KELLEY'S ISLAND, ERIE Co., O., *July*, 1855.

## MEDIUM'S PREFACE.

---

THIS work contains the impressions I have received of spiritual life, and of the occupation, ideas, sources of happiness, causes and effects of misery and degradation, etc., of disembodied spirits. Its invisible authors have rightly styled it "Scenes in the Spirit-world," as it depicts some of the most characteristic views of angelic life.

As for myself, I have but a word to say. I make my bow to the public, and introduce the real authors, whom invisibility conceals, simply saying that to them all the merit or demerit of the volume belongs; I claim neither. I well know it contains excellent truths, and equally well know that it has errors. Undoubtedly many will derive benefit from its pages, and it is with this hope it is published.

Many, perhaps, will criticise. I hope they will. I hope that the book will do good enough to stir up opposition, agitate

thought, and direct mind into new channels. The impartial reader, who has no favorite theory to support, who is free and unbiassed on every subject, is my critic, and is to decide the intrinsic worth of these pages, and to him I consign them without further comment.

HUDSON TUTTLE.

BERLIN HEIGHTS. O., *July*, 1855.

# SCENES IN THE SPIRIT WORLD.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### THE HARMONIOUS UNION.

The scene is laid on Earth—Two minds, perfectly united, represent true union of Spirit—The wife departs to the Angel-land, and her spirit hovers over the beloved one yet on earth, who soon joins her in the unseen World—The pleasures of the meeting—She speaks to him of the philosophy of their abode, exhibits the beautiful groves and flowers, and mentions the name of a Sage.

It was a quiet nook in which dwelt Leon and Hero, congenial minds, drawn together by the mutual attractions which spirit-mates feel for each other. The secluded vale was surrounded with lofty mountains, and tumbling water-falls dashing the sparkling foam into rainbow wreaths, and with gray old forests of centuries' growth; yet it was near the seat of luxurious civilization. It enjoyed all the pleasures of retired rural life, with the society and other benefits of a populous district. Wild and imposing scenes spread around to produce awe and wonder in the beholder; while the sense of retirement and secure ease, was well adapted for the elevation of such congenial minds. Drawn together by the gentle gravitation of love; united by the ties of true affinity, which can not be severed; content with the little world of happiness each found in the other, and the never-ending

delights which surrounding nature afforded—their little cottage was a paradise.

Their home was such as the ardent imagination of the children of the Orient pictures in the land of dreams—such as ethereal, happy minds would be expected to form. Surrounded by overshadowing trees, tall oaks, graceful elms, and drooping willows, entwined with tendrils of the lovely vine, decorated with a great variety of the choicest flowers, the useful was blended with the ornamental, until the embowered cottage seemed the residence of some sylvan goddess who, weary with the cares of watchful life, had employed all the means at her command to make a favorite seat.

Their minds fully enjoyed the beauties cultivated nature had bestowed, and, contented, they lived to learn and love, unmindful of the throbs of the great world around. True, perhaps there was a loss in this method of life. Leon, as a man of the world, acquired no name or credit. On the contrary, he was regarded as an enthusiast, a mystic, a sentimental theorist. He heeded not these taunts, but in the secluded grove, made liberal use of thought and pen; and if he was not exalted in the estimation of the majority, he could speak of true wisdom.

We have here a representation of true marriage, the institution of nature, producing its untold joys and pleasures, whose perversion causes the most fearful misery the mind can conceive. No sweets like those of spiritual or congenial marriage; no bitterness so bitter as false unions, such as are often recklessly formed on earth. We shall soon depict scenes in which the woes of ill-formed marriages operate to destroy *all* pure enjoyment. They are not unions, but rather animal connections. Heavenly marriage, the union of congenial spirits, results in certain and unalloyed bliss. This is the state in which the individuality of each is swallowed up in the other, and the two are made one—a unit in thought, feeling, sentiment, and aspiration. Their children

—Google

were what nature designed children to be, perfect models, and trained from infancy in morality and intellect. They were perfect types of what man *should* be, to go rapidly on to perfection.

Well developed moral minds have an intuitive belief in immortality. The pure soul feels the intuitions of the glorious future. Thus it is with all men, who fully believe in that bright inspiration which points heavenward to the after-life, as the great reality shadowed forth by their earthly existence. They cherish the truthful conception that death will not separate them, but will render their union more complete. Fully appreciating this idea, Leon and Hero looked forward with joy to the hour of dissolution between the body and the spirit. Not that they wished to die, or leave the cares of this life, but they knew the change would be for the better, and when their task was finished on earth, they were willing to depart. But perfect happiness is limited, amid the jarring scenes of earth. It rests shortly, and moves often. The hours of greatest joy have their clouds. Tranquillity will not endure forever. Age had rested lightly, it is true, on those whose destiny we write. They had trained up their children, and sent them out into the world to a good purpose. Their spirits were ripe for the change. Hero was first to depart. Her gentle spirit found its clay tenement no longer fitting receptacle for its bright form, and quietly withdrew from the external, and gathered itself into the internal.

Bright spirits welcomed her birth into another sphere, and her love found sympathy in the hosts of resplendent beings who surrounded her. Joy of joys! no barrier separated her from her beloved Leon, except that of invisibility. She could hover when she wished around him, and when dark thoughts clouded his agitated breast, soothe his mind by her gentle influence, changing his ideas and turning them toward heaven, thus restoring the harmony of his disturbed thoughts. How cheering the belief in guardian angels! It lifts up the soul to a Godlike exalta-

tion to know and feel the presence of the loved ones who have passed from earth—passed from mortal sight, but who nevertheless live in a far brighter sphere, amid the light of the source of love, and who for the love they bear their friends on earth, come down and solace them in time of trial and trouble, and often impress a bright truth, immortal from the throne of God. It is a blessed thought, and makes the man stronger, nobler, and produces a determined energy to strike out boldly into the channels its organization dictates.

Hero tarried not long as a guardian spirit. The Destroyer, whom man clothes in a skeleton form of the greatest horrors, again enters the cottage. Leon is to cross the limits of the two worlds. He reclines on the couch of death. There is nothing to draw him back from the threshold of the unseen land. Children, family, friends, and a thousand cares generally bind the striving soul to earth, but his children he had educated, and beheld them all rightly directed in life. The family tie was severed ; nothing remained.

A spirit in this condition softly sinks away to sleep, but the agonies caused by its striving to remain after death are inevitable, and terrible to behold. All his attractions are beyond the grave. His second self has passed through the "shadow and the vale" before him, and he must pass its mythic terrors before he can behold her angel purity. His being folds inward, and the deep sleep of the transmutation comes slowly on. Oblivion hovers over all things. All perception for the time is gone. Hours pass away, and he awakes from his dream-state to full consciousness, to hear his name spoken in endearing accents.

"Leon it is *I*. Do you not recognize your Hero ? I who went before you, and who now with your friends have come to welcome you to your new home ! Take this robe, finer it is than the gossamer, setting to shame the purple of eastern fable ; wear it, it is your habiliment, similar to ours."



The whole reality bursting so suddenly upon him, he stood amazed and in speechless astonishment—so new, brilliant, and unexpectedly did the new world break upon his vision. With an effort such as the stern will sometimes commands, he uttered the one word "Hero," and caught her in his embrace. His manly form quivered like the aspen in the breeze, so powerfully did the pleasures of that meeting dash over the heart-strings of his soul. Joy causes the tear to start in the strong man's eye—sooner than the severest grief. There is an anguish in our joy. His thoughts found utterance in speech.

"Realization of my former fancies, beautiful effort of productive Nature! Am I eternally to enjoy such bliss as this? Can, *can* this be reality; or is it delusive fancy which gives my *dreams form* and substance?"

"Leon, this is no hallucination. Our belief was true, as far as it professed to go. All that you now see and feel is but a drop compared with the ocean of delight in store for us. You have yet to behold the groves and bowers; murmuring streams and dashing waterfalls; the continual delight of our new home. Here, too, are the joyous and enlightened companions with whom I have passed my hours while tarrying for you."

We will not describe the greeting of friends. The imagination can fill the blank better than the pen.

"These have been my guides, instructors and friends," said Hero; "they are now yours. We have much to learn before we go onward, for my longer stay here has advanced me further than you in the ways of spiritual life."

"I can never detract from your happiness, though I wander in darkness through Eternity."

"Leon, speak not thus. It is my earnest desire to aid you. Our destinies are bound together by the indissoluble laws of the Universe; why seek you to break those ties? For the time, I am

to instruct you in our ways of life. Appreciate this, and together we will move on in progress."

"Oh, Hero! however attentive I may be, your sacrifice is too great."

"To me it is no sacrifice, for I learn to love while teaching you. And more, the philosophy of our home is all I have to teach you, and I teach you that by others, and showing you its various scenery."

"Where are we now? Ah, have I not left my own room yet! How long am I to remain here?"

"No longer than you desire. Every spirit follows its own inclinations in this respect. Some go away immediately, while others are so engrossed in the cares of life as to remain around the old homestead for years. For the present, however, you had better depart to our new home, examine its locality, and become better acquainted with your future associates."

Passing upward with the attendant spirits, Leon found himself far, *far* above the earth. Through the intricacies of the clouds he still beheld the green fields, woodland glens, blue mountains, rolling rivers, and far-reaching ocean spread beneath. With soul-thrilling pleasure he gazed on the gorgeous panorama which met his astonished gaze. All faded away in the indistinct blending of objects. His cottage, with its little garden, became a mote lost in the dim distance.

"Hero," said he, "does it not cause you to feel sad to leave that little spot, where we have passed so many happy days? I must confess it makes my heart beat quicker, and produces unpleasant feelings."

"Should the butterfly regret its caterpillar state?" responded she. "Should it lament how many sunny days it passed in the shade of the old oak, and how it crawled about among the green leaves? It has wings now, and can swiftly fly from flower to flower. Its sunniest day on the oak was passed in eating the

tough acrid leaves ; now he can sip honey from a field of flowers the day long, and the heavens are far brighter to him than before."

"Is the change I have undergone so great? Will the pleasures of this life so completely eclipse the enjoyment of my previous state, that all its joyous hours will be forgotten?"

"Not forgotten, but surpassed. If you believe not what I say, look around you : we are in the spheres."

He gazed about him and beheld the spirit-world, encompassing his firmament, in all its ethereal sublimity.

"This the spirit home? Why the floor is ground! The plants are true plants; I can grasp them; and yonder the far-expanding ocean reflecting the azure sky, while from its expanse delicious zephyrs fan my brow. Really *now* I *am* dreaming; such sublime beauty, such transparency, belong alone to the realms of the ideal!"

"My beloved, this is no fancy, but staid reality, the permanence of which is as fixed as our former abode. This is land, that is water, these are plants: you are not deceived in the least. I wonder not at your incredulity, however. I have seen individuals enter our abode who for years believed themselves dreaming, and no argument could persuade them that they were not living in fancy. One I knew who kept a memorandum of every occurrence for a long time, that when consciousness returned he might relate all he had heard and seen to his friends. Remember that our world is a daguerreotype of the lower world, like a reflection in a great mirror, and that spirits hold the same relation to spiritual matters as man holds to physical nature, and then the reality of these scenes will grow in your mind."

"I appreciate your reality. But how am I to learn the philosophy of all this—the *why* and the *wherefore* of this higher life?"

"I understand you well, and am extremely glad that so early

in your progress such desires should fill your mind. You would know from whence came this sphere, by what laws it is governed, and all the other mysteries of nature usually denominated immaterial. All this I do not feel capable of expounding. I might, through mistake or misunderstanding, lead you into errors. This is our first lesson in our renewed lives. It seems as though we were renewed or restored to each other, for although much of the time after my departure from my earthly form I was near you, yet you did not seem to me as now. True, our life as one is renewed. I am pleased with your inquiries. My first object is to lead you to the dwelling of one whose acquaintance has greatly aided me in my advancement—one who has been more than a teacher to me. He is to aid *you* likewise in ascending the embowered pathway of light.”

“And who is this benevolent spirit who so interests himself in our welfare as to neglect himself to advance us ?”

“Oh, he is an ancient sage, well known by his Portico and school. He taught erroneous doctrines then ; he is right now. His name is PYTHAGORAS.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE GROVE OF THE PHILOSOPHER.

They are welcomed by the Sage to his Portico—Description of the groves, the ether, sky, and the blue ocean—The Sage gives the origin and progressive History of the Spheres—The fruit around, of which they partake—The Sage invites them to join his Society.

THEY paused in a grove of beautiful trees and shrubbery, which gave forth the most refreshing odor. Near by stood an architectural structure, the most chaste and beautiful the mind can conceive. These were more ornamental than useful, it is true, in a clime where there are no storms or chilly winds, where only the mildest breezes fan the brow or move the graceful foliage of the trees. This was the Portico of the Sage, embowered in a profusion of foliage. Here the graceful palm, the pine and elm vied with the orange, fig, date and vine, to give the densest shade and most beautiful forms. A great garden spread far around, producing nothing but these splendid trees, with fruits hanging to the ground on the loaded branches. Beneath the umbrage of these, as he oft reclined in his ancient Portico, sat the Sage, whose name figured in earth's history centuries ago. The moment they approached he extended wide his hands, exclaiming:—

“Welcome, sister! welcome brother! welcome my children, for I regard you as such, and have long watched the expansion of your minds, and rejoiced when each found in the other the proper companion. You are *one* in my regard. Equal to me in power of mind, yet deficient in the twenty-five centuries over

which I have traveled, each year, each hour of which has taught me its lesson of wisdom. I understand your wishes ; you would know the why and the wherefore of this sphere. I am happy to instruct you in this fundamental subject. Look below. Behold earth with all her million forms. Open your spiritual vision ; see those clouds of ethereal matter continually arising from every plant and animal—every living, moving, creeping thing ; even from the mineral masses of earth itself. Such atoms ascended when earth was inhabited alone by the lower orders of life.

The spheres were not created with earth, for at that time there existed no matter sufficiently refined. Matter had first to pass through the process of world formation, and become acted on by laws then in operation, before sufficiently sublimated to become influenced by a new condition of gravitation. When the first form died, then commenced the agglomeration of exhalations into the formation of spheres. To illustrate : Your earthly body was pervaded by a spiritual element ; your death was like the death of the animal, whose external body, in the same manner as yours, contains the ethereal element. When death severed the ties which united the spiritual with the material, the component parts of *your* spirit possessed sufficient affinity to retain them together, without the intervention of the gross form. Not so the animal. The death-struggle breaks the connection between its material and spiritual ; and its ethereal atoms not retaining sufficient attraction for each other, they, as vapor, diffuse themselves into infinite space, until becoming influenced by a condition of gravitation, they ascend to their appropriate plane, high or low, according to its refinement."

"But does this account for the non-individuality of animals?"

"Yes ; for you observe that identity is like a complete arch. In man the key-stone of that arch is supplied, and the structure is eternal, while it is wanting in animals, and consequently death

demolishes the structure. The process of ascension of ultimate particles commenced while the earth was in its morning days, and has gone on increasing ever since. The soil which supports these trees, differs from earth only in the degree of its refinement, and consequently, of necessity, its productions are similar to those of earth; and as the exhalations from the earth differ as its development varies, so this soil changes continually in its character. Hence this world, in the variety of its forms, has imitated earth, copying in minutiae all its types from age to age. Thus says a spirit from a world breathed into existence long before ours, and his speech is reasonable, and proceeds from direct observation. Soon after the Sauvian Age, our sphere was inhabited by those reptile forms whose remains are buried in the permian and oolite rocks. The uncouth mammalia of the tertiary, alike, were all represented here. So has it been with all ages; their peculiar types and forms were all represented in this world until the present period dawned, when the refinement of atoms was so accelerated, that spirit with intelligence alone could occupy this abode."

Here is a shadow of that correspondence which exists, and has ever existed, between the spirit-world and earth. Matter is prone to take the form in which it has previously existed. Hence this grove, these beautiful plants, reveling in the light of their own spirituality. They have all existed on earth, and though the atoms which compose this orange tree never before united in this particular tree, yet all have existed in various orange trees before. Atoms thus modified have affinities to unite in this peculiar form of tree."

"Then there are no animals here," asked Leon.

"No; if you would view them you must retire to some other globe, or as you journey from one world to another, you will behold all the innumerable types assumed by creative life. They existed here before the human spirit took up its abode in this

sphere. They have passed away, as they ultimately will, from the globe. This will take place when they have fulfilled their destiny, and can not longer subserve a useful purpose in its economy. There are none here now, not even the highest developed, our atmosphere being too refined for the production or sustaining of such creations."

"I always rejoice at the song of the birds carolling amid the branches, and the busy activity of animal life; under this consideration, shall I not weary with the uninterrupted stillness which prevails? Will not my spirit cloy with the solitude of its home?"

"Men are fond of the notes of the bird, and become attached to animals and places, because they can find nothing better to love. Give them congenial companions, and they will not feel the absence of these. If this had been your *abiding* place, the consequences you forbode would never be realized.

"Nature continually speaks to her children, let them roam where they will. Here are the changes of vegetation, the changes of the glassy ocean into dashing wavelets, the murmur of the brook gliding to the great sea, the roar of the cascade, all to attract and divert. The sea yonder, as smooth as a polished mirror, with a slight breeze is ruffled and rendered a portrait of human life, now smooth, now rough. No storms sweep over its bosom sufficient to destroy or terrify, yet it passes through pleasant vicissitudes. You mistake your position. This is the *home* of the spirit. I stay here but a limited portion of my time, while all the remaining portion I am traveling in other parts. You will do likewise; but when weary with activity, it will be pleasant to come back to this retreat, and commune awhile with internal nature, and study and reflect."

"I am, then, to choose a locality, and call it home?" exclaimed Leon in astonishment that his future life was to become such a simile of his past life.



"That is as you please. When on earth you did so. Then you might have been a rover without a fixed habitation. The same applies here. You have a choice. This spot is *my* selection, and it is home to me. How strange you think of this! You still have a body; you have lungs, and must breathe; you have a stomach, and require nourishment. Here, above and around us, is our food. We toil and delve not to bring it forth, but these are all spontaneous productions of a fertile soil. Partake; is not the flavor unsurpassed? Who ever tasted an orange more juicy, a fig sweeter, or grapes of such choice flavor?"

"Your speech is strange, but true. My taste is quickened, and these are splendid fruits, and as I stand here partaking of them with Hero, I seem transported to my quiet garden. I once believed the spirit lost all animal propensities at death, but I see more plainly now."

"Your former belief has been a favorite dogma, without a shadow of proof," replied the Sage. The *existence* of the spirit depends upon these; without them, it could not exist. Without a due degree of selfishness, all energy would be lost. Intellect, however superior, and coupled with the morality of a god, bereft of the stamina imparted by the animalities, is like the engine without steam. Like it, too, it must have its continual sustenance to urge it and keep it in motion. But, waiving philosophy, how do you regard my Portico?—how fancy it as a home?"

"Excellent!" said both.

"Then, without any thanks on your part, my children, consider this your home, whether I am present or absent; and may you find it a fit resting-place after your journeys and surveys."

He waved them to follow, and after they had passed over a considerable space, he spoke and said:

"You have seen a green spot in a desert. Well understanding your wishes, I am now conducting you to the lower circles, to show you some of the more uncongenial phases of spirit-life.

All is not calm, still and beautiful ; but in many localities all is changed to scenes of strife. Already have we arrived at one of the societies of which I speak ; look around, and observe what you see."

## CHAPTER III.

## THE SOCIETY OF AVARICE AND DECEIT.

Portrait of a group of misers mutually harrassing each other—Their disappointments, and fearful tortures of mind.

THEY paused, and before them appeared a group of beings clothed in rags. It were better to call them beings destitute of reason, for they merely lived.

"I say, Morton," spoke one, "'twas no *small* job when I discovered that rich old mine of silver, from which the Incas derived their wealth. You had better go with me, and gather money that tells, than forever be picking grains of sand."

The person addressed, looked up; his glassy eye seemed to light with fire; his nervous hand clutched the bag which contained his untold treasures—his all.

"Ah! have you a mine of silver, and I only a bag of gold! Oh, how poor I am; I *must* labor harder—*must* be up earlier, and be more diligent. Ah, poor me!" and the wretch groaned in very agony at the thought of his poverty, while, if his sack had contained real gold, he would have possessed millions! For a moment he paused, then commenced to gather glittering grains, and, one by one, place them in his sack. The first speaker stood intently gazing at him for a long time, then burst into a loud laugh.

"Why fool," said he, "you are hallucinated; that is nothing but sand. Empty out the contents of your sack, and not keep it shut up from its true office in supporting vegetation. It is

worth nothing, and you are a poor bankrupt, worth more for the rag-mill than for any other use."

Then he laughed again, in which the other joined ; some proposing to rob him of his mighty treasures, others jeering and scorning him, which made the poor victim of inordinate love of gain creep away, cursing all creation in his bitterness.

"You, Wintle, need not put on such airs," said one, whose gray eye and iron visage proclaimed him an earthly tenant of Wall-street ; "I mistrust your intentions, and suspect that you are not the wealthiest one among us."

"Wealthy ! Wealthy did you say ? Not the wealthiest one among you, with all the untold riches of my newly-discovered mine ?"

"Yes, I said wealthy," replied the man of Wall-street, with a cold sneer. "You say you have done nothing but search for this mine for the last ten years. I fancy you would be worth little if that were gone."

"Not a farthing."

"A total bankrupt."

"Yes."

"Well, I used to search a great deal of my time for mines ; I spent the first twenty years of my life searching ; and after being deluded many times, I came to the conclusion that there were other methods of securing a fortune, sooner and easier, and with far more safety. I said, after being deluded, I *have* been many times, and almost every one I ever heard speak of thus employing their time, have been disappointed, their mines of precious metal turning out but some worthless mineral."

"Where is this mine of yours located ?"

"On the western slope of the Andes."

"Does a large tree grow close by—a pine tree, whose head is reared high above its neighbors ?"

"All true."

"What mark is there upon this tree?"

"Long since it appeared to have been hewn on the north side."

"Well, then, this is the mine I discovered long ago."

"Did you? Well, then, it is rich enough for us both, for it contains more ore than you ever dreamed of."

"Why how generous you are, and so well acquainted with the contents of this wonderful mine!"

"Truly I am acquainted with its contents. Wilder, the mineralogist, after a severe test, pronounced it silver."

"I do not blame you for being deceived. Many a poor fellow has been disappointed by that mine. Wilder, why he knows nothing of his business; he is a pretender, and cannot tell silver from lead. You should have come to me. You saw nothing but the silver-colored mica of the granite!"

"Are you *sure* of what you say?" asked he with fearful earnestness.

"I am; I once had the substance tested, and it proved valueless."

"Curses on my lot forever! Am I foiled again? my ten years lost!" Then he wrung his hands in an agony fearful to behold.

"You should not take it so hard; you have plenty of time, and you had better give up this search after mines, and take up an honest calling."

"Give up? Never! never!! I will search the world over, and will become as rich as any of your lordling crew;" and away he went, fully determined on a new search, and in a far different mode than that in which he joined the group.

"What a fool! I can play high game better than he, yet I don't have to discover mines; I gave that up because fools will do it for me. I guessed a little, and got the remaining description from him, and persuaded him I knew all about it. He fully

believes Wilder an ignoramus ! Now I'll send one of my men to him to make the purchase ; and as he thinks it worthless, if he receives anything for it he will think he is making a speculation. Yes, it is all mine, and worth more than New-York city ! I falsified a little—made him feel bad ; but what is that to such treasure ?”

An angel looked down from the upper spheres, and as its pure soul saw this moral degradation, whispered in sorrow :

“ What ! is it nothing that you have lied ?—nothing that you defrauded your fellow, and crushed your soul into a dollar ?—nothing that you play the hypocrite and deceiver ? No ; you belong to the church ; attend every Sunday, and read your long prayers under the high steeple. The blood of enslaved souls has made you rich. You are called to that church by the tones of a bell cast from the solidified tears of women and children crushed by your avarice ! Nothing that you make property of your church, and refuse the poor man whom you have made poor, a seat ! All this nothing ! But remember the great God enters not under the shadow of that steeple, and will not listen to your fine-toned bell, but shuts down your prayer within the ceiling. The righteous Judge goes into the attic where you have driven the children of the soil, and patiently hears their prayers, and gives comfort to their souls. He tells them of the bright day coming, when all their wrongs will have ended. Slowly and silently, but surely and irresistibly, it approaches. Ah foolish man ! how much better are you with a million, than with a thousand ? Every dollar you accumulate more than a sufficiency is so much lost from your soul. You enjoy accumulation. Soon that path shall be closed, and from whence, then, shall come enjoyment to such a dwarfed and contracted being ? Are you more of a *man* for riches ? Nay, less and less, dollar by dollar. Turn to the light, for angels weep for their erring brothers on earth.”

A fleecy cloud now closed down, and hid them and their errors from the angel's view, leaving the benighted group which we have described, deep in the winding path of folly. This is a true representation of earth and the lower societies of the second sphere. False to each other, they delight in the bankruptcy of their fellows, when not themselves affected thereby, forever striving, yet ever disappointed and unsatisfied.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE LOW SOCIETIES CONTINUED.

The family translated unprepared—Their quarrels and miseries, in which the effects of inharmonious unions are represented—The society of drunkards—Their conversation—Reflection.

"WE are now also in the lower societies of the second sphere," said the Philosopher; "you will now behold examples wherein you will recognize the same passions which animate many of earth's children, plunging them down into misery and woe. In the last scene, you beheld the influence of uncontrolled acquisitiveness, the desire for wealth which avails not. Here you see the action of combativeness and destructiveness, resulting in quarreling and dissension."

As the Sage ceased speaking a wretched group appeared, all unprepared to be ushered into a higher state. Bad as their condition was previously, it was a paradise to this. They were discontented on earth, and often had wished for death. How little knew they of the change! The discontented, unfledged bird would fain skim the ethereal air, like its strong parent, but not being adapted to that element until mature, it falls from its happy nest, and receives many a bruise. The caterpillar would sport in the atmosphere among the gay flowers, sipping delicate nectar from gaudy corollas, but spins its cocoon before its time, and then, when too late, finds its food shut out, its life cramped, and if it live, at most can make but an imperfect fly.

"These examples may be used to illustrate the condition of those who would depart from the present to try the unknown



future before full preparation. The law which governs the changes of the butterfly is modified in man, so that the illustration loses its force in a measure ; yet *man should mature as man* before he becomes a spirit. He should live to a ripe age, and fall away as easily as the apple from its stem."

"I fear you will find extremely few thus matured."

"Alas! all mankind have yet to learn of their being—learn how to live, to breathe, to think, and to act. Each has yet to learn the lesson, 'know thyself.' "

Ah! wretched group which now stood before them; father, mother and children; all were there—the entire family!

The Sage spoke again, but aside; his charity would not allow him to injure their feelings:—

"I know this family well. Many years since, while passing over the earth, I encountered them, the *same* as now. The parents whom you behold, worn down with care, were unhappily mated. They falsified their internal character, and each made the other believe that the two were perfectly adapted to each other. But marriage, as is too often the case, revealed each to the other in their true light. They united, as a fearful majority of earth's children unite, from selfish and passionnal motives. One passion necessarily excites the others; hence, as this burned out, the fuel becoming exhausted, combativeness and the animal organs became inflamed; their bodies, under accumulated abuses, became diseased, their minds necessarily peevish and irritable, creating an avowed disgust in each of all the other says or does. Can you ask what the offspring of such unions can be? They can inherit but few of the good qualities of their parents, but *all* the bad, and that, too, in an excited state. This is an ill-understood, but an unavoidable consequence, of embryonic growth. The Bible said truly of such:—'Conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity.' These children illustrate this. They hate their parents, and are kept together only by fear. The family

circle, instead of being a school to instruct them in practical goodness, has taught them nothing but evil. Here are ten children and a group of twelve persons (a contagion swept them all at once from earth) having as much affinity for each other as the lamb for the wolf. Ten children! No parent can rear during their short earthly life that number, and impart all the necessary vitality and instruction their natures require. And what right have parents to bring immortal beings into the world, if not prepared and qualified to sustain them?"

"Then you would have the parents instruct their own children?"

"Yes; the mother should first give them good constitutions, and then, at sufficient age, instruct them in the sciences, teach them all they require to know, and point them the direct road to preferment and honor. This is her duty, and she obeys the voice of nature in proportion as she performs this task. Who teaches the young eagle to poise its untrained pinions, or to dart with unerring precision upon its prey? Who gives it its first lessons in the art of cleaving the airy tide, and then, and not till then, throws it upon its own responsibility? Who but its mother?"

"But how is she to obtain time amid all the cares woman on earth is obliged to submit to?" asked Hero. "True, she might do it *here*, but *there* it seems impossible."

"Did you not educate *your* children? Did you not send them all directly to posts of honor? Do they not constitute the pride of your heart; for *can* a mother be indifferent to the success of her children? They are an honor to you and lights to the world; and to *you* they owe all that they are. Depend upon this, that just as a mother uses her child, so will the child use the world. How the children before us illustrate this! The words they utter are too low to be spoken or heard, constituting the language of unrestrained animalities."

"How they can do so, I can not imagine; why do they not separate?"

"It is because they have not yet discovered that it is possible, but believe that similar restrictions prevail as on earth. This they will soon find, and then they will dissolve."

"Oh, it is dreadful to see such confusion! Let us away."

"Then, fair Hero, we will pursue our way, and not halt to provoke an outburst of their passions; but perhaps the next group we meet will be no less inharmonious."

• • • • •  
 "Can you smell the odoriferous fumes of tobacco, or inhale the breath of those who drink wine that maddeneth? Nay, you can not. I almost think that I can; and we now stand near those who fully believe that they in reality do."

Reader, have you ever entered the respectable saloon? Have you ever watched the stupid stare of the inebriate when the eye grew less and less lustrous, slowly closing, the muscles relaxing, and the victim of appetite sinking over on the floor in beastly drunkenness? Oh, how dense the fumes of mingled tobacco and alcohol! Oh what misery confined in those walls! If you have witnessed such scenes, then we need describe no further. If you have not, you had not better hear the tale of woe. Imagine to yourselves a bar-room with all its sots, and their number multiplied indefinitely, while conscience-seared and bloated fiends stand behind the bar, from whence they deal out death and damnation; and the picture is complete! One has just arrived from earth. He is yet uninitiated in the mysteries and miseries of those which, like hungry lions, await him. He died while intoxicated—was frozen while lying in the gutter, and consequently is attracted toward this society. He possessed a good intellect, but it was shattered beyond repair by his debauches.

"Ye ar' a fresh one, ain't ye?" coarsely queried a sot, just then particularly communicative.

"Why, yes, I have just died, as they call it, and 'tain't so bad a change after all ; only I suppose there'll be dry times here for want of something stimulant."

"Not so dry ; lots of that all the time, and jolly times too."

"Drink ! can you drink, then ?"

"Yes, we just can, and feel as nice as we please. But all can't—not unless they find one on earth just like 'em. You go to earth and mix with your chums, and when you find one whose thoughts you can read, he's your man. Form a connection with him, and when he gets to feeling *good*, you'll feel so too. There, do you understand me ? I always tell all fresh ones the glorious news, for how they would suffer if it wasn't for this blessed thing !"

"I'll try it, no mistake."

"Here's a covey," spoke an ulcerous-looking being ; "he's of our stripe. Tim, did you hear what an infernal scrape I got into last night ? No, you didn't. Well, I went to our friend Fred's ; he didn't want to drink when I found him, his dimes looked so extremely large. Well, I destroyed that feeling, and made him think he was dry. He drank, and drank, more than I wanted him to, until I was so drunk that I could not break my connection with him, or control his mind. He undertook to go home ; fell into the snow, and came near freezing to death. I suffered awfully, ten times as much as when I died."

\* \* \* \* \*

"Can these ever progress from their fearfully depraved condition," asked Hero in sorrowful accents.

"Yes," replied the Sage ; "the lowest mind can progress, and millions of ages hence we shall find these same degraded men on *our* present plane. The years of eternity are unnumbered, and in their duration there is time for the elevation of all. The capabilities of the human mind are astonishing, and these degraded objects have the germs of all the faculties ready to

awaken into life whenever proper circumstances are furnished. In reality there is no retrogression. All is one onward march. The planets oscillate backward and forward, so may the mind ; but its retrograde movements are confined to narrow limits, and its real motion is directly toward the throne of Deity. All these will one day awake to the consciousness of their position, and the relation they hold to their fellows, and arousing from their lethargy they will renew their lives. The old doctrine of going downward to oblivion is totally false. The flame of manhood once kindled can never be extinguished, however damp and loathsome the atmosphere in which it is set to burn ; and though for a time the foul atmosphere may hide its light, and almost put out its flame, it will finally triumph over all difficulties, and blaze forth in immortal splendor. All is one progressive movement, and if these are at the very verge of the oscillatory movement, they will in time be drawn into its swift current."

Reader, we draw the curtain over scenes like these, such as are daily occurring in this society, and refresh ourselves by a change.

## CHAPTER V.

## FURTHER DESCRIPTION OF HADES.

The society stand on an extended plane, where they recognize all the phases of undeveloped mind—The lover of pleasure, the sensualist, etc., &c.—They are approached by the bigoted spirit of a miser, just departed from earth, who asks them where Heaven, Hell, God and the Devil are—His terror when his corpse is placed in the tomb, and woe when he beholds his heirs divide his property—He departs in a search for Heaven.

As they passed from the scene described in the last chapter, the Sage seemed wrapped in the deepest meditation. At length he gave utterance to his feelings :

“Here I behold minds equal in natural strength to my own, yet debased lower than the brute. This is the punishment of violated law—the many misdeeds of the body. Here you behold the reactive energy of those laws. They must work out their own redemption. Though not plunged into a fiery gulf of sulphur, smoke, and wrath, their punishment is a thousand-fold more severe. If they feel this not now, the thousand cycles of the future will reveal their trespasses in all their deformities. The knowledge of what they have lost will force itself upon their minds. We will not dwell longer on this painful subject. Objects of greater interest are around us.”

As the Sage paused, Leon raised his eyes from pondering his words, and beheld a majestic yet mournful prospect. They were standing on a lofty eminence overlooking the horizon. Far away stretched an arid plane, interspersed with hills, valleys and ravines, and oasis-like green spots would now and then break out like islands in the Sahara. The plane appeared boundless,

and on every side it lost itself in the thick clouds of vapor hanging over it. Millions of human forms were wandering over this vast space. On every side appeared the scenes beheld by ancient clairvoyants, seers and visionaries, and by their excited imagination wrought into a fiery hell of Jehovah's wrath. Oh, the loneliness of the prospect! The dim view of millions of human beings, all once of earth, wandering over the arid waste, with hearts as stunted and souls as contracted as the stunted mimosa and dwarf acacia which grow in clumps here and there over the desert."

"Here have I often contemplated the scenes of spirit misery and woe," said the Philosopher; "woe beyond all possible conception—beyond all expression; for while pursuing the ruinous course of error, they one and all think they are enjoying the fullest measure of happiness. Their minds are hermetically sealed to the light. They can never progress until their mental vision is unshrouded from the thick veil of their present ignorance."

"When I gaze off," responded Leon, "it brings realizations of earth. To all appearance this is an earthly prospect, and the spirits I behold yonder are as busily engaged as man with all his cares. Have I not viewed this prospect before?"

"True, it is an earthly scene. This is earth. The lowest circle or plane of our existence is not removed above man's plane. Thus a good opportunity is given the undeveloped to learn the laws which govern earth; and you well know that they must learn these before advancing."

"Then these shaded spirits who flit about and till the ground, and appear so busily employed, are yet in the flesh, though they scarcely differ from the others?"

"Yes, those are the inhabitants of earth toiling for food and raiment, which is right, and ten thousand useless luxuries which are hurtful. Here we find all classes and varieties of minds—

the bigot, the hypocrite, the trader, the trafficker who used fraudulent and unlawful means, deception and scant measure—the narrow-minded, the selfish, and the sensual—all are here.”

“For a long time I have watched them intently, but owing to the diversity of occupations I can not satisfy my curiosity.”

“They are variously employed. Yonder is a group who believe life created for to-day ; that to ‘drink and be merry’ is the ultimate of existence. They have in consequence permitted their minds to run to ruin, and have prostrated all their energies in the cultivation of a lisping speech, and what they style grace of manners. Now they join in the dance—well enough in itself, it is true, when performed for exercise, but when made a chief employment of life, extremely bad in its effects. Hundreds of years since I passed this way on a mission similar to my present, and then I beheld this same circle employed just as you now see them. I say the same; it appears as if some are not here *now* who were here *then*, and that the number is augmented. Perhaps some have seen their folly in a new light, employed their mentality, and arose above the pursuit of mere animal gratification. Yonder is a group of sensualists, thinking, talking and acting as on earth—sacrificing their energies on the altar of sensual desire. Think you on this spectacle ! Let me drop the veil of modesty, remembering that these have too many congeners on earth. Leon, do you recollect Marvin, the merchant prince, the speculating capitalist, the bigoted religionist ?”

“I have cause to remember him. Many a time have we argued until he became angry, and condemned me to the infernal gulf of misery as an outcast and infidel.”

“He has departed from his palace home in the distance yonder. Can you see that dark spirit yonder ? How wildly he gazes around him. He is bewildered and lost !”

“It is the one of whom you speak. There is the churchman, the creed-fettered man—a strict observer of bigotry. How



often have I heard him repeat, 'that one could tell Sunday from a week day by its appearance!' How often has he cursed me from his Bible, and said I was elected for hell, and he for heaven! Why cometh he hither?"

While he was speaking, Marvin, attracted by the superior light issuing from the eminence, hastened up, wildly gazing around at every step. The moment he came within speaking distance, he recognized Leon, and exclaimed:—

"Leon of the hamlet! and your wife!—*you* here! What keeps you in this dismal place! What are you doing here! Where am I?"

"We came here to observe the lights and shadows of nature. You are in the place where I once told you you would go, for which you scorned me."

"I remember, and believe none the more or less now. I am *not dead* yet!"

"No, but you are dead to the world."

"Say not so; I am only dreaming a fearful dream."

"If you should behold your body conveyed to the tomb, your dreams would begin to put on form and substance."

"I should believe them reality," exclaimed he, still gazing with an insane stare, and startling at every sound.

"Follow, then," said Leon, who well knew the position of the stately hall that reared itself near by his humble cottage.

The group proceeded to the former home of Marvin, and entered its marble walls, furnished with the sumptuousness of untold wealth, proclaiming Marvin a prince in dollars and pride. In a mahogany coffin, on a marble table, rested the earthly remains of the great leader in commerce and religion, bloated with the ravages of disease. His spirit drew near, folded its arms, and with a fixed gaze, stood over the corpse. Not a limb moved nor a muscle vibrated, except a slight quiver would now and then run over the face. The view of his mortal form held him

fascinated. Never will the earnest look he fixed upon his former self be forgotten. The bearers entered, and placed the coffin in the hearse. The steeds, decorated with lace, began their slow, measured pace for the family tomb. Then, with a loud scream of agony, he appeared to wake to consciousness, threw himself on the coffin, hugging the corpse with all his energy—crying with might and main he was to be buried alive—he lived—he was *not* dead—he was to be murdered! He had seen too much beyond death already. He only slept. After lamenting in this manner for a while, he became aware that the spirits with him heard his voice through the vibrations of ether. His friends, whom he wished to hear, could not hear in the least. He then strove to move the corpse—to move the arm to make them know that he yet lived. All was vain! He had lost control over his own form, and knew not how to move matter. Frantic with fear and anxiety he clung to the wreck of his mortality, and refused the request of the Philosopher to rise. When the coffin was placed away side by side with the previous generation, and with a lingering look the bearers were about to depart, he became alarmed for fear of being shut up, and followed them out into the free air, declaring all the time ‘he was in a trance! Oh, what an awful dream!’

“Nay,” said the Philosopher; “your *body* is dead; *you* live, and are a spirit in the spirit-world.”

“In heaven!” exclaimed he in extreme surprise.—“I in heaven!”

“No, not in heaven to you, but it is to us.”

“Why this is no heaven, this is earth! Where is heaven—I can’t see it!”

“What kind of place do you expect to find heaven,” asked the Sage, with something of pity mantling his lofty brow.

“What kind of a place? I believe it is as the Bible describes. It says heaven is paved with bright gold, and walled about with

precious stones, so that no sinner can get in through the narrow way which I have traveled except now and then a slight transgression, which the Lord has forgiven me. Now you are sinners, for you are waylaying me, and declaring me dead while I live. And am I in all the heaven I shall ever find? Now if I *am* in heaven, where is *God*, to whom I have prayed three times each day all my life?"

"He is here."

"Where?" he exclaimed in terror.

"Here, around and within us."

"No; I see him not: and thus you have *proved* that I am not in heaven. God is in heaven; the Bible says so. If he was here, I could see him far plainer than I now see you. He sits on an ivory throne, with scepter in his hand, dealing out laws and punishments to the nations. All around are elders and angels with golden harps, singing his praise. Where is all this? I hear nothing? Do you suppose such a concourse could escape my sight? No, I could see it across the universe."

"You hear them!—no, nor never will."

"Oh, sinners, evil angels sent to tempt me from the path of right! Oh that I could awake! Where is heaven? Don't stand pointing to your mind; I want to behold the *real* heaven, with its glittering pavement!"

"Many of earth's sons would far rather see the 'glittering pavement' than heaven itself, but none will ever be gratified," calmly replied the Sage.

"Is there not such a place?" and again the storm of passion arose within.

"No local heaven. Heaven is a condition, not a locality."

"Do you deny the Bible?"

"No."

"That says heaven is located."

"Not if rightly understood."

"Yes it does, plainly. I have crucified my flesh, suffered everything, carried my grievous cross—all for nothing! Nay, nay, I'll find the place yet."

"Not yet."

"Never?"

"Never!" replied the Sage in chilling accents.

"Are my sufferings of no avail?"

"None whatever, unless to depress you. The path of happiness passes not through suffering. Suffering is the consequence of infringed law—happiness, of obeyed law. To be happy is to enjoy all the pure pleasures of earth. You have always labored under a great mistake."

"But my prayers?"

"Prayer without action is nothing."

"Did not Christ die for me?"

"No."

"Why was he sacrificed then?"

"He died because the Jews were angry at his reformation, and treated him just as all reformers have been used since time began—burned, crucified, murdered by the mob at the instigation of the priesthood."

"Can he not forgive sins?"

"No; every man has his own accounts to answer for. If he is debtor he is necessarily punished."

"Atonement false?"

"Yes, Christ suffers not for your sins. He is not a scape-goat on whom you are to lay your burdens."

"Heretic! heretic! No wonder you have not seen heaven. I'll argue no more with you, but retire to my house, and show you I live *there* yet."

"Let us tarry, for a new scene will be soon exhibited," exclaimed the Philosopher. In a few moments Marvin rushed from his once lively halls with a frantic gesture, exclaiming:—

"Oh they have buried me, and believe me dead, and have already divided my property, which I have strove night and day to accumulate, that in my old age I might enjoy it. They are going to law about my ships; in short, are quarreling like wolves over a carcass. When they opened my safe, and I saw how determined they were to waste all my savings, I shouted right in their ears, and though they must have *heard*, they gave not the least attention. I am dead, and why does not the good angel come to conduct me away? I'll go and search for heaven myself."

"How large do you think it to be?"

"Why, it is limited somewhere. A limited spot is uncertain to find in the infinite universe. This globe is large—larger than you imagine heaven, yet one unacquainted with its orbit might search a million of ages and never find it."

"Now *truly*, did you never learn of its locality?" asked he in a supplicating tone:

"Yes, everywhere where there is a happy mind—where there is a mind capable of enjoyment, for heaven is happiness."

"Where, then, is the other place—the awful, inconceivable hell, with the old master of iniquity. If *that* is everywhere, too, I shall be haunted by evil spirits all my days."

"It is everywhere where there is an unhappy mind; and as for the devil, he can not trouble you, for he exists only in the over-heated imagination of those trained in prejudice."

"You are all fully punished for your sinful thoughts while on earth. What an awful place!"

"True," said the Sage, "this is just as bad a place as can be found. It is just as you make it—heaven or hell; and as for evil spirits, if you are *good* they can not approach you, being repelled; and if *bad*, you will seek their company. To convince yourself that heaven is not a locality, you had better search until satisfied. It will then be a greater reality to you."

"That is what I mean to do, and am in no doubt that I shall be successful."

"Go ! meanwhile we will take our departure, with the humble wish that you will return to nature, and be guided by the light within you."

## CHAPTER VI.

## DISCUSSIONS.

The society, while residing on earth, hold important discussions with each other, and listen to the arguments of an infidel and clergyman—They then endeavor to impress the infidel with the reality of spiritual existence, and partially succeed.

"BEING now in the rudimental sphere, we might profitably tarry for a time, and improve the opportunity in learning various ideas entertained by the spirit before it has left earth to try the unknown realms of eternity," said the Sage.

"Then you still hold that man knows nothing of the future state while he remains man," asked Hero.

"He can not know with certainty—all is obscure and doubtful. He may possess an interior desire for immortality, but he can not reason upon this important subject with his senses; and he has no other data from which to draw his conclusions."

"Has he not the Bible?"

"What data can that afford, when there is no external evidence of its truth? And those who profess to believe it do not live an exemplary life as a proof of its inspiration. The truth is, that man believes not fully in immortality. If he *did*, think you he would not depart the earthly life with joy, when he was *sure* of being ushered into the presence of his God? Verily, if he recognized fully in his conscience such a beautiful place as his ideal heaven, he would rejoice at grim Death's approach. Men profess to believe the Bible fully, and are terribly shocked if you question its veracity in the least. It is the *idea* they believe, not the *substance*, educational prejudice compelling them to take

for granted that which the internal light of their natures condemns."

"Reason, they say, is carnal, and not of God," said Leon, "and should not be exercised."

"Yes, and those who preach this doctrine, exercise their reason to shut the light from others' understanding."

"That is the light in which it always appeared to me. I have heard preachers declaim by the hour on the fallibility of poor human reason, and the infallibility of the Holy Scriptures, and the more they preached the more they excited their own benighted reasoning powers to prove reason false."

"But why should they declaim so much against reason?" asked Hero; "they of course admit that reason and nature, as well as the Bible, came from God; why recognize one as superior to the other?"

"To support priestly rule, the mass must not think, nor reason, but be kept in ignorance. On these grounds, reason must be debased from all access to the Bible—for you well know that, admitting the right to reason on a subject, gives also the right to pronounce true or false. Without this privilege, reason is a useless effort. When we reason on a subject, we are in doubt as to its truth. Our reason may condemn, and no one should question our right to obey its dictates, or condemn us for not accepting that which appears contrary to our understanding. If the right to reason on the Scriptures and the various church schemes of salvation be admitted, then we can, after mature investigation, condemn the whole or a part. To maintain the present system of theology, the Bible must be taken as an infallible standard. Everything must be measured by it. Reason, if allowed, would condemn a portion, and prove very hostile to the monstrous speculations drawn from mythic tradition. Hence it is hurled rudely aside, and from one end of Christendom to the other, the cry is sent up: "Trust not carnal reason and poor foolish na-



ture, they have plunged more souls into hell than the arch-fiend himself, who bids you follow their guidance." The whole fabric of the church system is founded on educational prejudice. This system, accumulated under priestly rule, has assumed the character of a dead weight on man's advancement, dragging him down to ignorance and blind subservience. Why is it indisputably the case that the lawyer, physician and clergyman are generally striving with their united energies, and have ever striven, to keep the mass in mental darkness? Simply because their whole success—their wages, depended on the ignorance of the masses concerning the organic and physical laws. Under these, and no other conditions, will they swallow their stale doctrines without murmuring. But set them to thinking, and they make sad havoc with the professions. If clergymen would preach practical lessons of morality, instead of such endless, verbose theorizings, they would become more useful members of society. If the doctor would lay aside his antiquated theories and mystical technicalities, and discourse in a language which common sense can understand, explaining the laws of health and life in a simple style, his patients would soon know enough not to be sick. If the lawyer would strive with his brother, the clergyman, to elevate the moral condition of his clients, instead of arousing all the base principles of their natures, his quibbling falsehoods and deceptions would not be needed. Mankind, properly elevated by their moral teachers, would forgive the trespasses of their brother, as they already have the *idea* of doing, and not nourish those feelings of hate and revenge, too often found among the highest order of Christians. If *all* would strive to elevate their fellows, instead of keeping them in ignorance, how soon, think you, the race would be redeemed, and all these professional men who now live, like sharks in the ocean, on the smaller fishes, be compelled to forego delicacies for which others have labored; and with the motto, "dig or die," ringing in their

ears, of necessity be forced to honest toil? The clergy have ever acted as a millstone around the neck of reformation, checking progress until it could be restrained no longer—when the mass, bursting through their efforts to hold them back, takes a mighty leap upward and onward, carrying everything with its accumulated energy. All their (the clergy's) influence has been directed backward, while humanity has moved forward, despite their efforts. Their cries of infallibility are now but little heeded. Few have patience to hear the jargon of diplomaed physicians; and none but the ignorant, wanted confidence in their remedies. A less number of persons think of consulting a priest while on the death-couch. The once prevalent idea of learned infallibility is fast decreasing. The question now asked is, "How much do you practically know?" not, "At what college did you graduate?" Oh, that the bright day, fast dawning, may shine forth, when every one will be his own master, his own sovereign, his own ruler, and govern himself with the strength of his manhood! Then shall we hail a millennium, where all will be developed up to the plane of the highest now on earth. Then we will hail an age of practical Christianity, of intellectual power and morality, shadowed forth in the vague prophecies of the past. Already have I transgressed my rules of conversation; but when I think of this glorious subject, the millennium of thought, I am excited in feeling beyond power of expression."

Near the place where they were reposing, a clergyman and an infidel were engaged in argument, and as their subject harmonizes with the previous discourse we introduce it here.

"Then you doubt all claims of the Bible to inspiration?" said the clergyman.

"Not only do I doubt, but wholly, totally disbelieve," replied the infidel; "what claim has it to my belief?"

"Why it commands all to believe, or be cast into hell, where will be wailing and gnashing of teeth forever."

"Because *it commands*, is *that* a reason why I should believe?" was the retort, with a sneer.

"In truth it is, and a strong reason, too."

"Must I believe that which contradicts my senses?"

"If God says so, you must."

"Does not God speak through nature, as well as the Bible?"

"Yes."

"Do they agree?"

"Not apparently."

"Do they in reality?"

"I must acknowledge that God has seen fit to throw great mysteries in the way of reconciliation, and to my feeble knowledge they can not be harmonized."

"Of the two, acknowledging both came from God, which *one* must be taken as a standard—which of the two? Why, the written page, *you* say, descending through centuries, unknown as to its origin except its own assertion, and even if true, but the rude chronicles of a tribe of low barbarians. Yes, the written page, mutilated, interpolated, falsely translated, must be taken as infallible; and Nature, the living mouth-piece of Deity, the instrument through which he now speaks to mankind, must be rejected! God made nature, and pronounced it all right, according to *your* Bible. We are left to judge of its laws and actions. *Our* lamp is reason, which you attempt to ridicule and despise; and we call all Christendom to witness, that *our* lives are as correct as *yours*."

"You may be moral, my friend, and do right; yet morality is not religion. You are not baptized in the blood of the Lamb, and therefore can never enter life eternal. In the last great day you will be found wanting. Christ died to save sinners; but they must take up their cross."

"If Christ died to save sinners, of course without him none

can be saved. By what miracle were those saved who died before him? They must necessarily all be lost."

"You deny the great doctrine of the atonement!" said the priest, in holy horror.

"I never could believe that my sins were to be laid on an innocent man. I expect to suffer for my *own* errors, and for no one's else. The world must be saved by its own merits—sink or rise by its own wickedness or goodness."

"Few, then, will be saved. If our own goodness is to save us, I fear few, few will ever enter heaven."

"Then few will; for to *my* understanding there can be no other scheme for their salvation—if saved."

"If *saved*!" Why an "*if*?"

"Because I feel the case doubtful."

"Why should the human mind desire immortality—why such an excessive hope in the future?"

"I answer this question by asking another: If man is not annihilated at death, why does he so sadly fear that end?"

"Ah, my dear friend, I fear the old master of evil has hardened your heart, and turned you to error!"

"Satan, do you mean? I do not fear him; in truth, sir, I never could see the use of the old rascal."

"Worse and worse! Where will you land next? Better disbelieve all else than that. The Bible teaches of a devil as much as of a God."

"And nature says that there is *not*, as plainly, and a thousand times more conclusively."

[*Clergyman musingly.*] "Disbelieves in a devil! why that saps the very foundations of our theology, and destroys all our systems of salvation, all our creeds, our churches—all—everything. [*Aloud*] Nature teaches! Ah, vain and miserable mortal! you but exercise your carnal reason."

"If there is a devil, why does God suffer him to exist?"

"It is a part of his inscrutable providence to suffer him to tempt souls to hell."

"You say God knows who are going there; if they are doomed, why does he take all this trouble to obtain an excuse for sending them there? You say God made all things good: the devil is not good, nor never can have been good. Hence God could not have made him, and he must be co-eternal and co-equal *with* God, or else so good a being as God must be would not allow such a scoundrel to forever defeat his deepest-laid plans. Hence your God is limited, and of but little use in nature's government."

"Oh, perverse sinner! Satan himself is in your heart. I can not argue with your stubbornness. Oh, when will you see the true way, and join our holy order?" He turned and walked away, leaving the infidel exulting in his supposed triumph, musing to himself:

"I hate these professors. They appear to think they have a right to abuse anybody who believes not as themselves. Our 'holy order!' Poor self-deluding fools!"

"How mistaken are both! One is as much mistaken as the other."

"It does seem," said Leon, passionately, "that there might be some means to converse with these our erring brothers, and convince one and all that they are in error."

"There has not as yet been any method discovered, by which any correct idea can be expressed. There is one quite curious, though imperfect method, that of impressing vague sentiments on the mind. Let us surround this person, one and all, concentrating our thoughts on one idea; say, 'I never argued with a foggy, however calmly, without being abused.' All think this."

They waited a moment, and then the infidel exclaimed:

"No, I never yet held an argument with a clergyman without being insulted and abused."

"Ha! ha!" exclaimed Leon. "Let us try this again. The spirit exists."

"Yes," muttered the infidel, "my logic was better than his, but something in my mind begins to say, spirits may exist."

"Can that sentence be the result of our thoughts?"

"Yes," answered the Sage; "you perceived what a train of thought was produced. You already query as to the philosophy of this effect; I shall let you reason for a while. We are in hopes that a better method will yet be discovered, for we all wish to speak with our earthly brothers."

"I have always been aware," said Leon, "that the world did not believe in a future state—at least, that men do not believe that their friends in the angelic sphere are watching over them. If they did, they most assuredly would do better. Their acts belie their words."

At the time we write, the laws by which spirits could communicate were just beginning to be exposed; and soon after the opening of these "scenes," the brilliant discovery was made that spirits could converse freely with earth.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE UNHAPPY MARRIAGE.

While the Society are engaged in conversation in the Portico, a stranger approaches, and to the questions of the Sage, gives a brief history of his life, illustrating the miseries attendant on inharmonious Unions—The Philosopher points out to him the sphere in which he must labor.

As the Society were engaged in conversation, a stranger spirit came that way, and paused near the Portico. He then drew near, and seated himself by them.

"Welcome," said the Sage; "welcome here, even if thou comest with grief and woe on thy brow. Thou art free now from earth, and its sorrows have passed away, in part; yet thou thinkest of the past and feelest sad."

"I *am* sad when I think what a paradise earth *might* have been to me, if it had not been for one false step in my youth. By *that* I am rendered forever miserable."

"Not forever miserable! If no great crime has stained your mind, it will yet be well with you."

"No crime. I am no criminal who dreads justice. That is what I want—I want justice done me. I am a victim to false marriage."

"Then you are released, and can soon be happy."

"Yes, I might be happy, for I am free now, if I could forget my thoughts respecting my earthly brothers. The misery and ignorance under which they at present suffer is beyond the power of my tongue to describe. Oh, it wrings my heart to feel and sympathize with them! I can not throw off this burden,

and when I wish to soar aloft in a heaven of aspirations, I am dragged down to earth."

"Then it is your manifest duty to go down to the rudimental sphere and instruct man in the laws of affinity and life."

"But ah, great Sage, what shall I teach? I can not approve the doctrines of free love as commonly understood, and yet I feel that there should be freedom in love. As soon as love is confined, it is love no more. But if freedom is given, I fear the consequences."

"Earth is not yet prepared for the doctrine of which you speak. It will be true for them when they become as the angels in purity. In the abstract, it is true; in the practical application of *to-day*, it is false. It is not the doctrine you should teach. Rather go to earth and teach man the laws which govern the mind, that they may know each other's character, and not be deceived by appearances. Teach them that purity is worth all else."

"Ah it is a great task—one I shrink from with fear and trembling. Something *must* be done to relieve me, for my mind is lacerated with a dreadful lash; I can not bear it long. Great God, give me strength to perform the task before me with energy and success! Give me patience and perseverance to grapple with the work successfully."

"If you act as earnestly as you pray, you will be successful. But why so troubled? Does it all result from your philanthropy and the love you bear your race? If so, that alone will place you above us all."

"I am selfish, I fear. Perhaps the idea of what I *might* have enjoyed causes my sorrow. I was a happy youth. Educated at college, and enjoying all the facilities the latter afforded, I climbed rapidly up Wisdom's mountain. As I arose higher and higher, the prospect spread further and further away, lost in the dim distance. The far off objects came forward to meet me as I ad-



vanced upward, until beneath me spread a glorious view to ennoble my life, and give me a position of honor among men. The rose-bud, half expanded, when just to bloom in fragrant beauty, may be crushed forever. A rude blast may freeze its delicate petals, or change to disgusting odor its fragrant beauty. I was, like that bud, just opening to the beauties around me. My heart yearned for congeniality—for sympathy of a kind I could not express. I could only catch a glimpse now and then, so bashfully it approached me. The cold selfishness of the world galled me. I shrank from its rude breath. I wanted a cottage in the wild woods, far, far from the haunts of man, that *there* I might employ the learning I possessed in diving into the depths of mysterious nature—exploring her laws, and journeying through her labyrinths with the torch of reason to light my path. I desired a kindred mind to journey with me—to become one with my thoughts—whom I might love with unsuppressed affections, and who would love me with a love that would never die. This was a rude effort of dawning love to picture the ideal of my dreams—an effort of mind to reach out into the undefined future, and make fancy a prophecy of my destiny.

“While in this state of mind, I saw several that seemed the personification of my dreams, and one the very ideal. In her I saw all my fancy had adored. Ah, how beautiful she appeared! Poets might strive in vain; the pencil would be a useless instrument; the pen of the novelist, in its wildest flights, is inadequate to convey the dimmest shadow of the beauty she awoke in me. So long had I dreamed over my ideal, that the object which represented it was mine. Shall I give a particular description? No, I will not—I can not, for they are only for the lover! Ah, why did not the angels who weep in heaven for the ignorance of man, come down, and by some means make me sensible of the gulf on whose fearful brink I stood? With all my learning I was ignorant. My knowledge was theoretical, and not in the least adapt-

ed to the demands of life. It was useless to me when most needed—rather worse than useless, for it gave me a confidence in myself which was not backed by the necessary knowledge. I knew nothing of the laws of life, or how I might arrive at the knowledge of another's character. *Why* I loved I knew not ; I only recognized the fact. I was led on by the blind instinct of a mis-directed love. I had heard of affinity and attraction of spirit, but it served only to involve me more inextricably, for I supposed, if attracted, I should follow that attraction, and that it was an instinct pointing out my proper companion.

"She loved me, or so pretended ; and, of course, when I was near, to all appearances was an angel in goodness and love. How philanthropic was she ! How she desired seclusion from the wide, wide world ! How she hated selfishness, and how disgusted was she with the animal passions ! She put on airs which made her the ideal I sought. I loved that ideal, for it was the offspring of my childish dreams—of my youthful heart, my dawning manhood's thoughts. I can not say I loved *her*, but I *did* love the attributes I supposed she possessed—her apparent beauty, goodness, and gentle, affectionate spirit. How fancy flew then ! What would I not have done to gain her applause ? I strove for a name for her sake !

"Shall I tell you that we united our destinies ? Nay, you know that already. Oh, how the bright vision faded away ! How feels the traveler away on the desert, when groves of palms, and lakes of clear blue water, spread out in all loveliness on the brim of the horizon, Tantalus-like, to tempt his thirst ? He urges on his camel with renewed pace, that by night-fall he may slake his feverish thirst. The sun sets in the western sky, and with its last crimson blush, the glorious palms and blue waters all vanish away, and are seen no more. So I felt when that glorious vision of happiness seemed just within my grasp ; but the moment I reached forth my hand, it vanished away.

"We put on smiles and politeness, and are ever so communicative, benevolent, and unselfish in company, just as we would a garment, to be packed in the closet when at home. It was her *exterior* garment I loved; and when the soul which inhabited it stepped out from home, joy fled forever !

"Her I had never seen. I was totally unacquainted with the being who now revealed herself to me. I loved her not, but hated her for her selfishness and affectation, and for the deception she had played me. My angel was not an angel. My ideal had faded into a low actual. How, then, our minds antagonized ! She feared the wide, wide world no more, but wished for show and popularity, and she told me plainly that she sold herself for my wealth. May the great God blot from my memory the few years—long ages they seemed—during which I suffered the penalties of my ignorance of the laws of the relations of mind. Let me pass them by ; I am there no more. I am transported from misery to regret. I would live longer on earth to plant a little monument in the minds of men, to tell them I have existed. The wide influence I have wished to build has vanished. That I must ever regret. I have lived so far to no purpose but misery in the end. Is there no balm in Gilead ? Shall the weary find no rest ?"

"This is wrong," said the Sage. "You yield entirely too much to your feelings. Be calm, and use your reason. Misfortunes are necessary to an undeveloped life. If you were ignorant *then*, you can inform yourself *now* in the truth ; and here are better opportunities for uniting congenial minds than earth affords. If a few years are lost, remedy the fault by intenser application. You are only one in millions who have suffered in a similar manner. In fact, you have given a perfect description of earthly marriage, where each deceives the other into a belief that they are what they are not ; and after union, the two unhappy beings find each other not the ones they loved,

but some stranger, who has, by some unaccountable means, slipped in and taken the place of the lover. There is too much ideality about love, which becomes so exalted that it is not realized by the actual."

"This is the great cause of my grief—because so many are going to the banquet of woe with garlands of roses on their brows, all unsuspecting of the sufferings they are to endure. And there is no remedy!"

"Yes, a remedy is near. They must be instructed. Laws are seldom violated willfully, but almost always through ignorance. They must be made to see the right, and to recognize the grand difference between animal instinct and angelic love. Where the spirit leads, go. Magnets have not surer attractions than affinities of soul."

"Go! But what shall I teach?"

"Not free love, as now understood; it is not practicable for the age, and its tendency, until mankind become more pure, would be pernicious. But teach how mutual attractions may be recognized and preserved. Free love is for man only when he becomes an angel. Teach the world that marriage is above animal instinct; an *eternal* relation of the souls of two immortals; that death changes not the relations that congenial minds hold to each other, rather strengthening the ties of affection; teach how the soul may be read beneath its exterior garment, and how all its interior promptings and desires may be determined."

"But how, O Sage, am I to teach such lofty doctrines? I shall not be believed."

"The truth is superior to all conventionalism. Go down in the sunbeams of morning's light, and write for the world. What you write will be read and criticised to-day, and the present generation will profit very little by it. But the young and expanding minds will reflect on these things, and in the ages to come they shall tell, and become a greater monument than you

could have reared had you remained on earth. Your name shall be given to the truths you teach, which, combined, will ultimate in an institution, and you will speak through the centuries."

"Oh, speak not thus; I feel like Jonah in the myth, when God told him to preach the destruction of cities; I can not go."

"Go!" repeated the Philosopher, in stern accents. "No one can address the senses of his hearers as well as you, for you have been a fellow-sufferer with them. You know how to sympathize with them and appreciate their needs. We all have appropriate spheres to fill; this is yours; and the infinite God speaks to you—go."

"I am satisfied, and will depart. The thought of doing good makes me happier. I thank you for your advice."

"No thanks are required, but your actions. When your mission has been performed, come to this Portico and inform us of your success."

How reason assumes control of the mind! Morality, affection, love, all yield to its potent strength. How a few words will raise the soul from the depths of despair, and give hope and cheerfulness!

The stranger departed, determined to do something for the advancement of man, and make that the great end of his existence. Remember him, reader, for in the changing scenes of these pages he will appear again in a different character.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE VISIT TO THE CIRCLES OF EARTH.

First stages of the Spiritual Philosophy—The Society leave their homes and visit some of the circles held on earth—The crude elements—The bigoted and prejudiced—The rightly-formed circle—How circles should be formed—Reflections.

WE wish to embody in the narrow limit of this work as much truth as possible. So numberless are the facts from which the narrative is drawn, that it requires great wisdom to select those which convey the truest impressions of our abode. Indeed, at best, but a partial idea can be given of the beauties, grandeur, and wonders of spirit-life.

A few years since the discovery of the method by which these pages are written, have elapsed. During the first years of its growth, but few demonstrations were made, and those of a disconnected character. The concentrated action at certain points had elicited public attention, and drawn out much curiosity and mirth. A more diffused action soon began to take the place of concentration. Each spirit wished to hold special communication with its friends, and hence strove to impress those friends to form circles and obey certain conditions, that they might communicate with them. The awful subject, bringing on its wings so much joy, was perverted, and, in many cases, brought to ridicule. There prevailed an almost total ignorance of spiritual laws, and a blind zeal in the belief of spiritual infallibility. A dense mass of crude spiritual elements enveloped the rudimental sphere in the darkness of night. Dreary doubt, cold skepticism, and unbounded credulity, strove

for the mastery. Perverted reason looked through imperfect mediums, and saw everything distorted, blurred and imperfect. A few active thinkers only agitated the mass, and fearlessly gave their truths to the world. Such, then, was the state of things.

"We will go to *earth*," exclaimed the Sage, "and, for a while, witness the errors and mistakes of our brothers, inform ourselves in their present ideas, and then endeavor to teach them aright." So saying, the Society departed from their bright home, down, down, to witness the crudities of earth. It was evening when they arrived, and such a beautiful evening! The silvery-orbed moon had just arose from beneath the eastern curtain of trees, and poured its flood of mellow light over the scene. The blue sky, with its lofty arch above, was redolent with gems and glittering diamonds.

"Oh, how beautiful!" exclaimed Hero; "I am on earth again, and seem an inhabitant of the lower sphere."

"Yes, nature is beautiful; but man is corrupt, because he is not true to that nature;" spoke the Philosopher in sorrowful accents.

Near by a "circle" had convened to witness the manifestations made by those who dwelled on the other side of Jordan's terrible stream. A miscellaneous crowd had collected, with curiosity on tip-toe, and all excited into a fever of expectation. Two or three "mediúms" were there, with minds as cloudy as a stormy night, uncultivated by art, and an organization not well formed by nature. Through these channels the crowd expected to receive wisdom worthy of a god.

Over these assembled a group of spirits, full of fun and mischief, though they had no bad intentions. Questions were asked, and answered by the moving of the table. Such questions! This ignorant group of spirits, it was supposed, knew all the secrets of heaven and earth, and were wiser than the Deity himself. To these the spirits answered as best they could, and

generally, after repeated blunderings, succeeded in stumbling upon the truth. In short, they were questioned like prisoners at the bar ; and oh, such questions ! An idiot might well laugh at their silliness. This very much pleased the spirits. They were having a gala time. They loved fun, and could not help giving mirth-provoking answers sometimes. One of the "circle" was determined that they should tell him where his pocket-knife was. Another how many dollars he had in his pocket. And, most wonderful of all, a decrepid old man said, "If they'll tell me how many children my great-grandfather had, I'll believe !!" This greatly astonished the Society, and its ridiculousness called out their mirth, for human nature will *out*, on earth or in heaven. A whining fellow drawled out, "If this is my father's spirit, won't you tell me who stole my oxen ?"

"Yes," was the prompt reply ; "your brother John sold them and kept the money."

"D—d lie," said John.

This was true—the spirit reading his thoughts, though his father's spirit was far from there. John was condemned unexpectedly, and the company had great merriment over his discomfiture, in which the Society from above heartily joined.

"Enough of this circle," said Leon ; "neither wishes to receive or impart much useful instruction."

"There are thousands of such circles now on earth," answered the Philosopher, "composed of excited elements, and hence gaining nothing but disgust. O earth ! is this thy boasted wisdom ?—is this the use of the intellect thou extollest so highly ? Wretched, indeed, the taste which prompts such gatherings, such questions, such curiosity ! I almost blush to think that I was once of earth."

The next circle they visited was composed of believers who were all strong in preconceived errors. They met, not to abandon, but strengthen their old position. They had attracted a spirit



who wished to instruct, but who was so passive as not to desire to infringe on their feelings. A Methodist asked questions, and from the answers drew the honest inference that Methodism was all right. A Baptist, from the answers he received, concluded that *his* creed was *the* thing the world demanded. The two conclusions disagreed, and the Methodist and Baptist revolved in their minds whether they were holding communication with Satan! This grieved the spirit very much, for he was not, like the others, given to make mirth out of the ridiculous in human nature, and he took the accusation as an affront personal, as though he were living in the body.

"Care nothing for this affront, but leave them and go with us." As he spake thus, the Sage extended his hand, and all departed. He led the way to a circle composed of ten members, all having the highest aspirations for truth and a deep understanding of spiritual laws. This had attracted a large concourse of the highest order of minds, who were disposed to reveal all they possibly could. Joy sat on every countenance, and inexpressible harmony pervaded every mind. There was not even a wish to inquire after stolen goods, or earthly affairs of any kind, for the circle were sufficiently developed to understand that man's business on earth is to look after things of the earth, and exert his own faculties; and that the business of the departed is in relation to their own sphere; and that if they undertook to reveal all crimes, and give certain premonitions of all coming danger, man would resign all his affairs into their charge, and sink into indolence and idiotism; there would be a spirit pilot to every vessel and steamer—a spirit engineer, conductor, and brakeman, to every train of cars! In short, that the spirit-world could do nothing else than look after this lower world. This circle understood that the spirit's mission was to teach great moral truths, and afterward to go to their own homes above.

"Brothers, rest now," exclaimed the Sage, "for here there

is harmony, which we all love. I would instruct this circle, that they may depart wiser than they came." He then threw back his robe, acted on the medium, and proceeded to speak at length on the spiritual age. He detailed the great era, awakening from its eighteen centuries of repose, in all its bearings, and exhorted his hearers to perseverance and truth.

The members of that circle went to their homes wiser and better than they came. Their spirit friends departed wiser, too, rejoicing that the long-sought method of communication had been discovered, and that the earth received by its means a new impetus by the influx of higher light. During the first years of Spiritualism, the stupendous subject was often brought to ridicule by the unwise course pursued by the lower grade of spirits and circles, and the foolish actions of many of its votaries. Few considered that the mind was not changed in the least by throwing off the body. The majority believed that a great change in this direction took place at death ; and hence could not realize how immortal minds could descend to the performance of such simple feats. The subject was viewed in a wrong light ; and the lowest class of the community were generally the only ones who dared to take hold of the subject at all. Much excitement also existed among them. All kinds of communication were received ; some were pure deception, others were the result of magnetism ; some came from undeveloped minds, who attempted to teach that of which they were profoundly ignorant ; and great errors were dealt out to a gaping world. But such a state of things was not of long continuance ; and as curiosity abated, the subject settled down into staid reality, where it is now seen. But its course is onward, and, like a mighty river, it goes on gradually increasing, making great havoc with creeds and sects.

From this chapter, we wish this inference adduced : If you form a circle, form it in truth. Admit no ridicule, idle mirth,

fear, timidity, or hate. Let love alone control you and yours. Be cheerful, willing to receive all that is given, to be weighed in the balance of reason, and hold free discussions on all subjects with the communicating spirits. Such circles as those first described have been a great detriment to the rapid progress of the spiritual philosophy, though in the end they have subverted a very important purpose in forcibly illustrating the character of spirits and their fallibility. Ignorance is the cause of all vice and sin ; but its influence is more decidedly felt here than anywhere else.

The whole circle of science should be brought into the investigation of this subject, and even *then* centuries alone will reveal the deep mysteries of spirit-life.

Why fear you investigation ? We throw the whole subject open to you. We give you leave to enter every department, and invite you to explore to your heart's content. We fear not investigation, discussion, or opposition, but rather court them—throwing down the glove at the feet of the *learned and scientific* world. We seek not darkness, but the light from the throne of God ; and we would light the whole earth in the beams of the rising orb of truth.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE CHANGE CALLED DEATH.

The Society, while reposing beneath the grove, receive an Ancient, who recounts his thoughts and feelings while passing through the change called Death.

THE scene is again changed to the home of the Sage. The gorgeous views and scenery spread so lavishly around, enchanted the ethereal spectators, accustomed, as they were, to its beauties. The ether tide came in rolling gusts, fanning the graceful foliage of the grove, and ruffling the still bosom of the blue ocean in tiny waves, whose sweet murmurs joined harmoniously with the zephyrs. Such coloring is unappreciable to man, who sees only by the common light. The splendid views which sometimes appear before the clairvoyant's eye, rivaling ten thousand rainbows in gorgeous splendor, convey, perhaps, the best idea of the vividness of the tints. To one acquainted only with the scenes of earth, who has not traveled on the swift wings of clairvoyance across the universe, it is useless to attempt to image by words the splendor, grace, and ethereality of nature in this higher sphere.

The four kindred spirits were reposing beneath the shade of a graceful grove, which filled the air around with the sweetest perfume. They were discoursing on the philosophy of nature and the surrounding objects. Leon had begun his rapid advancement. Already had his investigating mind sent forth its aspirations, and reached far out into the arcana of nature. His mind awoke to the full consciousness of its strength, and, as a giant, he strode through *spheres* of thought, toward the high-

est plane of progression, where the mind comprehends the whole range of the universe at a glance.

As they sat in conversation, a spirit approached with noble bearing. His countenance shone with the gleam of the morning, as seen in a cloudless sky. His thoughts were written on his high forehead and majestic mein. He moved with the dignified motion of one for whom nature has done much, and cultivation more. An artist might study that form and never tire. Such a forehead is not found on earth; but man becomes more perfect in stature and aspect as he arises in the spheres. He was greeted with a hearty welcome, and taking a seat near the Sage, he entered into conversation.

"Here is one," spoke the Sage, "who is engaged in the study of Nature; and as we are engaged on that subject, perhaps it would be well for him to give his experience, while passing over the valley and shadow of death, to that bright land of promise, or of woe and despair, that earth's sons and daughters think must be their lot. It is interesting to converse of the birth of the spirit—of its thoughts and experiences, while passing through the great change."

"In truth, this is an interesting subject—one, too, which deeply concerns our earthly brothers, and of pleasant contemplation to us," replied the spirit. "My soul wells up within me when I contemplate the scene around me. Here I could dream my life away. I never shall cease to admire the coloring of nature in this grove, so splendid and ethereal. The prospect is a glorious one—one that the gods could admire. I honor your choice in its selection. But I wander, and must recall my thoughts from externals."

"Centuries have passed, fleeting away like summer clouds, since I left the rudimental form; still I remember clearly the impressions the change awoke in me. Trained in heathen mythology, I believed in a future state, but it was a vague, undefined

belief, which never became a clear reality in my mind. How should I have obtained a correct idea of a subject of which I could receive no proof by my senses, or receive tidings of those who had gone before ? My reason said, death is annihilation. I could not throw off its grim influence. Its voice was ever ringing in my ears. But I dared not think of infidelity to the gods, and hushed my fears. The instinctive idea of a controlling power—a somewhat, a somewhere, came diffidently into my mind, and prejudice chained it there. Mythology came in and gave me its crude instructions. I tried to subdue my reason, and endeavored to believe. Ye gods, I never could *quite* crush my doubts !

\* \* \* \* \*

“It was a cold star-lit night when I passed from earth. The fields were covered with a pure mantle of virgin snow. The frost, driven by the northern blast, glistened fantastically in the star-light. There was a beauty in the scenery which, to one fain to tarry longer on earth, would have rendered it hard to close the eyes and say, ‘I have viewed these beauties for the last, last time ; I am no more of earth.’ I could not force back the clouds of mantling night as they rolled over my intellect. Slowly, gradually, I sank *down, down* into a great black gulf of oblivion. Down, down I sank, beyond all human thought or conception, seemingly millions of millions of miles, with the gloom growing thicker, denser and more stifling. It was an awful sensation to be suspended over that black abyss by a single thread, and, as life ebbed away, to feel oneself going down, down into its unfathomable depths.

“The last words I heard as I sank down, were the lamentations of my family and friends, and their sobs and cries as they said I was gone. Yes, gone ! gone from earth, its pleasures and its pains. Their sighs seemed my death-knell to oblivion. *Down, down* I sank for hours after they said ‘He is gone,’ when suddenly a flood of light burst upon my astonished vision

as a gleam of lightning, and on its wings my soul sped upward—up, up, up, in that golden light, to earth again. I was conscious, and, looking about me, saw my body on the couch. I was a short distance off, but still myself. A slight cord of ethereal matter connected me with my form. It was soon broken, and I was free. There stood my friends weeping over my inanimate body, inconsolable for my loss. I strove to convince them that I still lived, but could not; for I found that my body, though real to me, and perfectly organized, was far too ethereal to affect physical atoms. My acquaintances, while on earth, who had gone before me, now welcomed me, at the same time giving me a beautiful mantle. They then conducted me to my new home with the angels.

“Ah, how can I express the overflowing rapture which thrilled my whole being, when the sublime reality of immortal life came rushing over my soul, like a gleam of lightning! Words are but faint indicators of the emotions I experienced, or the ineffable joy which filled my being. You have passed through the change and can sympathize in my sensations, comparable only with the out-flashing of the noon-day sun from midnight gloom.

“Centuries have passed away since that time; but its scenes still cling tenaciously to memory’s abode. I have passed those centuries in traveling from world to world—in traveling the ether ocean that fills up the intricacies between the suns and planets. Let me speak without egotism. When I look back on by-gone ages, I feel as if standing on the summit of some lofty pinnacle, and looking down on my path until it seems lost in mists; and I can clearly see now from what a small beginning I had started. I am weary now, and would be a cosmopolite no more.”

“Accept this, then, as your home, for we should value the acquisition of such as you to our Society,” said the Philosopher.

“I can not express my thanks to you for your offer.”

"Platonius, do you not recognize me? Have you forgotten the Portico of Pythagoras?"

If a thunder-bolt had dropped at his feet he could not have been more surprised. He gazed steadfastly at his master for a moment, as one who would recall the past. A tear arose in his eye, and with a sudden impulse he caught the master in his arms. Twenty-five centuries had not effaced the gratitude and love from the pupil's mind. In all his wanderings, amid all the various scenes he had witnessed, the master held the supreme place. Gratitude will cause the tear to flow and the heart to palpitate sooner than the other emotions. The friendship of earth awaits its expanded bloom in the spirit-world. The gratitude we feel will be expressed in affections, and the friends of to-day will become more than friends to-morrow.

It may be thought unphilosophical that Platonius did not recognize his master at first; but though developed spirits can read each other's minds, they may be so absorbed at the time as to take no cognizance of each other's thoughts.

"Master," exclaimed Platonius, "have I found you at last? When I felt the irresistible attraction this way, I suspected some unusual cause, but I did not anticipate the joyful discovery which awaited me."

"These are the lights of our abode which we often experienced, producing the most exquisite pleasure. The affections are woefully neglected on earth; but they who *do* cultivate this noble department of mind, shall be fully rewarded for all their toil. Affections set the mind on the plane of angels, and throw a halo of radiance around the human soul. You, of course, have a companion—one on whom you have placed your deepest affections? or, have you journeyed so far solitary and alone?"

"I could not do that; she is absent now, but will join me soon."

"She, too, is one of us. The more of such, the more prosper-



ous and instructive our Society becomes. For centuries I dwelt here alone, except the company of those who came after instruction, and then departed. But now a little band is forming, from which, as a nucleus, a vast society of congenial minds shall arise, whose influence shall be widely extended, and whose wisdom shall be of universal renown."

## CHAPTER X.

## COMING TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LIGHT.

Marvin visits the Society.—His conversation, surprise, etc.

SCARCELY had the Sage completed the last sentence, when Hero exclaimed in astonishment :

"Look, hither cometh Marvin—he of whom we learned so much !"

"Yes, it was he—the self-same individual we described previously, unchanged in countenance, if we except a more haggard expression of the features, and a spark of restless insanity gathering in his eye. Such a bewildered and astonished expression as came over him as he approached is beyond the power of the pencil to express. He felt that he stood on sacred ground. With cautious step, he trod the flowery path, and with a curious gaze, scanned the Eden around. When he beheld the group of spirits engaged in deep conversation, and recognized them as the same he had so scorned at his entrance into his new life, his chagrin overpowered him. Fain would he have hurried away, had not their united magnetism retained him. He remained speechless, with eyes cast on the ground. The Philosopher, well knowing his situation, and pitying him for the errors which had placed him in such embarrassing circumstances, broke the silence :

"Friend, you are welcome here. We left you many years ago, newly born into this sphere. You were then impregnated with the erroneous ideas of a false theology, and were beyond the reach of reason. You then set out on a search for heaven. You

have been unsuccessful in your search, or you would not be here. You wronged us then, but if you are right *now*, that occurrence will be as though it had never taken place." Marvin's bigotry was much subdued by his unsuccessful search; but he would rather have appeared before the judgment-seat of his Creator than before this Society, who were acquainted with his past history, and could read all his thoughts. With these impressions, combined with the contracted ideas in which he had been educated, such generosity was as unexpected as astonishing to him. For a moment, feelings strange and sore choked his utterance. The heart of stone has its latent sympathies, and those whose hearts are steeled to all charity, may be easily affected if their character is understood. He reached forth his hand to the Sage, exclaiming: -

"Ah, reverend father, if I had listened to your warning voice when I first entered this world—if I had first sought the source of true happiness in the internal light—how superior to my present position would I now stand! I appear before you far lower than when, years ago, I entered this my immortal life. Had I harkened to your words, and not scorned your sayings, rather than have taken the words of a mythic book, as expounded by a designing priesthood, how much more advanced would I now be! Then might I have enjoyed groves like these, which remind me of the tree of life whose leaves are for the healing of the nations—have learned from the great volumes I see around me, fit emblems of the Book of Life. Curse me, but do not pity; I deserve it not; and you make me miserable by your kindness. I have brought all on my own head, and must suffer."

"Curse you! Let not such words be uttered to a society of Philosophers. Who that occupies our position will condemn an erring brother? Assuredly none. Nay, friend, we have no ill will against you. All your former harsh words are forgotten; we remember them no longer; but strive to remember the good deeds

alone. It is true, that you might have been more advanced and far superior to your present position, had you turned immediately into the path I pointed out. But as you believed firmly in a local heaven, and the tradition of past ages, it was better for you to make the search, and by *ocular demonstration* become convinced of the fallacies of your position. Blame you ! certainly not. It was not *you* who upbraided us, but the blear-eyed superstition in which you were instructed. And the scenes of this life were so new and unexpected, and you were in such an excited state, that you could not act yourself."

"I have searched long and diligently, but have found no such heaven as the Bible describes. That book has undone me—utterly, irretrievably ruined me forever. I would that I had been born in a heathen land, and had never read its soul-destroying pages ! I have inquired of every spirit I have met, if they knew the locality of heaven ; and all the answer I received would be a commiserating look, while they pointed around them, as much as to say what *you* said long ago, "Everywhere !" I have seen multitudes of spirits similarly engaged as myself ; yet none ever discovered the object of their search ; and I left them and went alone—beginning to doubt in my mind the theory I formerly believed sacrilege to dispute, and which I so fanatically supported. The few words you spoke to me came up with redoubled force, and I was ready to exclaim, "Ah that I had harkened to that venerable man whom I first saw on my entrance into this world." This day, by some unaccountable reasons, I arose to a higher plane than usual, and without a moment's warning, stood before you. Your forgiveness is worse than your combined curses. I could bear the latter, but this softens me to tears."

"Speak not so harshly of the Bible. It has served an important purpose. It has done much for the advancement of mind. It has been perverted—misunderstood, and thus made the occasion of great evils ; yet all these have resulted in ultimate good. It

was your educational prejudice and bigotry which have caused you so much suffering and misery. Because we are at one wrong extreme is no reason for our flying to the other. The mean, the center toward which all truth gathers, is the most correct path."

"You have corrected me aright; I acknowledge your superior spiritual powers of perception reverentially."

"Reverence not me. I am no more than the others. We acknowledge submission to no one. Each is his own individual sovereign, to think and act as best pleases himself, if he is regardful of the rights of others, and measured by his worth alone. If you are thankful, express it, not by words or gestures, but by actions. Reverence not me, but my truths. You are still prejudiced on this and kindred subjects, and your prejudice must be overcome."

"I *am* prejudiced. I have not striven to conquer my preconceived opinions. If I had sufficiently done so, I might now rest in this beautiful grove, instead of going down to mingle with the low demons, one of whom I am, with this difference, that I know *what* I am. Ah, must I always suffer for the wrongs of the past—the contriving of plans to cheat the poor and defraud innocence, in order to turn more gold into my coffers! The thoughts of the many wrongs I have committed on my fellow-men are like burning coals upon my heart. *Must* I go back to the society of those from whom I have this moment escaped?"

"Within you I perceive the embryo of a strong mind—one capable of wide expansion. Will you tarry with us? Here you will escape the influence of the unworthy, and dwell continually in an atmosphere which will invigorate your spiritual strength."

"Tarry with you, and enjoy all the sublime ethereality of this abode!" exclaimed he in astonishment; "you are but tantalizing me."

"In all truth not."

He flung himself down at the feet of the Sage, and a convulsive storm swept over that once iron heart. Beneath the rub-

bish and conventionalisms which conceal it, every human heart hath a diamond. Circumstances may dim, or entirely obliterate its light; yet, sooner or later, it will break through all obstacles and shine in immortal brightness. So in this man of iron, this man of the world, once so niggardly to the poor, so unmerciful to the unfortunate, who used all means to acquire riches, trampling on social law, and obliterating the moral—the gem was still there.

“Arise! reverence not me by words, I repeat, but by actions meet for repentance. You came hither alone. Where is your companion?”

“My companion? My wife, so called on earth? She died a year since. But we loved not each other, and the wider we are asunder the better both are pleased. I wished her saving, prudent and laborious, but she would be neither, and the result was one continual broil.”

“Enough; rest you here, and as one of us commence this day to advance onward and upward to perfection. The Portico is free to you.”

As Marvin entered its decorated vestibule, Leon, who had been an admiring spectator, exclaimed:

“Is it possible! Marvin—the rich, purse-proud, vain, scornful, bigoted, aristocratic Marvin here! and thus regenerated! I almost doubt my senses.”

“To one who, like mortals, has become contracted with conventionalism it appears strange,” replied Pythagoras, “but to us it is an expected occurrence. This man was once an innocent child. His natural abilities were such as would have raised him head and shoulders above all his contemporaries, exalting him as much in the moral and intellectual firmament as he became in the religious and commercial. He was trained under the iron despotism of false conditions. He was taught that to be rich was to be great, and that nothing but riches was worth striving

for. When he approached manhood, he saw those whom the world praised, flattered and adored, were those who possessed a few dollars more than their neighbors; and he was deeply impressed that, to become likewise, he must *do* likewise. For a long while he was troubled with a conscience, and his giant intellect would react against the drudgery he imposed on it in his strife to become rich. If you had been placed in his circumstances, you would have done as he has done; therefore, you should not condemn. His natural abilities are as great as ours; and his name shall *yet* resound through the spirit-home. Saw you not how readily he confessed his errors after he had fully satisfied himself of their falsehood? He is now cured of prejudice, and is like a child, which he should have been half a century ago. For this germ, divested of its educational and animal garb, have I accepted him; and soon you will be proud to call him one of us. Such a brow as his conceals the workings of a mind naturally noble and free; and with proper circumstances he will make a high mark for himself, and become a monument of philanthropy."

## CHAPTER XI.

## THE SOCIETY AGAIN VISIT EARTH.

The great city—Its description—Over this the Group rest, and view the changing scene below—They are accosted by the spirit of a fashionable lady, who wishes to know how they enjoy themselves—Replies—Her infant reflections on the transgressions of earth—Ignorance of the laws of life—How the spirit can progress.

It was such a morning as is alone beheld in the spheres, when our group of spirits again passed from their bright homes to survey the inharmonious conditions of earth. We find them resting over a large city, in which were concentrated all the abominations of the world. Fashion here held her baneful sway, and on her altars of eternally consuming fire sacrificed her untold victims. Toil, God's first command to man, was either excessive or utterly neglected. Classes, grades, and other conventional distinctions, held potent sway ; and error (sin) sat brooding over all, from the beggar in his rags to the ruler on his golden throne. Commerce sat in her deceitful form on the quays, or housed herself in high-towering walls of brick and stone. Falsehood, as a commodity, was bought and sold. Deception, fraud and hypocrisy, were everywhere prevalent. Man had contracted his God-like soul into the compass of a copper cent, and found an infinite universe in which to roam within its narrow rim. No low animal passions were suppressed ; these held supreme control—and what fearful control ! All underneath was corruption, which filled the sewers, drains, and cess-pools, sending up its poisonous exhalations to mingle with the moral effluvia generated above by corrupted man, who, with



God-like powers, walked the pavement amid the mass of corrupted elements, unconscious of their presence, pursuing his puerile ends as eagerly as a boy chases the bubble or the gaudy butterfly.

There was nothing natural—no God—none of his works—all artificial, bowing to arbitrary and conventional rules. No clear blue sky, as seen when rambling over the verdant mead; no boundless prospect, such as exalts and exhilarates the mind when on the shores of a tameless ocean; no bright sunshine awakening cheerily the activity of animal life, bidding the flowers to expand their petals and shake off the dews of heaven. No gorgeous sunset behind the western forests, commanding life to be for the time dormant. There was nothing pure, lovely and truly beautiful. Brick walls shut out the extended view; pavements concealed God's ground; night was changed to day by the glare of poisonous gas; stimulating foods and drinks were spread at every street corner, tempting the overtaken body to plunge into the gulf of infamy deeper—still deeper. The overfed gourmand jostled the beggar he had robbed of bread, from his path, with a sneer against being poor. Monopoly towered upward in six-storied structures, and crowded God's children from the soil rightly their own.

Oh, misery, crime, ignorance, and degradation, can you be surpassed in the mythic hell! Angels, weep! weep, for your brothers on earth!

Over this scene of misgovernment, error and death the group in silence rested. Within their wide-extended gaze the whole vast scene stretched out in all the rank deformities of perverted nature. Marvin, who was with them, had been a speculator—a monopolist, and had played at the high-handed game of trade in a manner superior to the shrewdest. When he saw hell-sent speculation grind down the poor and oppress the miserable; when his extended perception saw the results of the actions of

those who followed his footsteps, and *knew* that he had caused equal suffering, crime and woe, he called on the rocks and mountains to fall upon him and conceal him from the sight of those who saw him in the light in which he saw himself. He covered his face with his hands, and wept as though the bursting tempest would rend every fiber of his frame.

"Wretch ! wretch ! wretch !" he exclaimed in anguish. "Oh, that I had never been born ! I now see myself in the mirror of my own heart. Annihilation, or the torments of the fabled hell, are nothing to this. Plunge me, O God, if thou art merciful, into the bottomless pit of destruction, burning with fires unquenchable and blot from memory's tablet the knowledge of the past ! Hope, that once spread her balmy wings around my heart, thou, too, hast forsaken me, and the future is an awful scene of woe and despair !"

How long he would have soliloquized in this manner we know not ; but the Sage, taking him by the hand, raised him up, exclaiming :

"Self-accusing child, why blame yourself thus ? Blame no one for their follies, but blame the circumstances in which you were placed. They were bad ; popular opinion, before which you bent, was bad. All tended to make you what you were. You have a germ of native goodness in your being, or you would not thus accuse yourself. Arise ! weep no more ! The future is bright. You can retrieve your misdeeds, but must lose the time wasted since a child."

"Is that all ? Am I forgiven ?"

"Not forgiven ; so much is lost. Study as intensely as you will—learn until you become a god in wisdom—still, so much is lost. The scar of wrong will never hide itself in growth."

Marvin made no reply, but sat wrapped in his own melancholy reflections. The others engaged in conversation on the passing panorama. Spirit after spirit ascended as freed from earth—some

black as night, others bright as a sunbeam in a cloudless morning. Between these extremes were all degrees of brightness and purity.

A female figure arose from among the brick walls, and beholding the dazzling light of the Society, she came toward them. She was *a la mode*, with life powers cramped by a slender waist, one half the size of that which nature would have given her, and her mind diseased by stimulants and poisons. She was bewildered by the new state of things, and wished an explanation of their mysteries. She approached, and with a fashionable greeting, cold and formal as mathematical precision could make her, she inquired where she was.

"In heaven!" was the response.

"In heaven! why this does not agree with my belief!" was the surprised response.

"This is heaven, let your belief be as it may!" replied the Sage.

"Heaven is a place of enjoyment; but how do you enjoy yourselves in this airy region?"

"By traveling and working."

"By working!" said she in the utmost scorn; "working in heaven! I never *did* work, and as for traveling, it was always too much trouble."

"Traveling is very pleasant," interrupted Hero; "I take great pleasure in roaming through the groves and among the flowers."

"That may be true for *you*, but it is not for *me*. When you wish to become otherwise than as you now are, what do you do?"

"Work."

"Work! I never worked, and I never *will*. Why, vulgar people labor; the refined do not. I *won't* work—*never!*"

"It is with yourself to choose," calmly replied the Sage; "you can not be happy in indolence, while around you are those as intellectual, as good, and as refined as yourself, performing the tasks

assigned them. You can not be contented, or advance. Recall this rash sentence, and supply its place with a will."

"Never, never! I declare I won't work; indeed, it would soil my hands, brown my complexion, and injure my beauty."

"That may be true; but your hands are no better than those of the millions who labor, and if your complexion were browned, your beauty would be improved by health."

"Health!" exclaimed she; "health! indeed that is none of mine, unless it be wretched health. Such misery as I endure is almost enough to make life a burden—such terrible pains, piercing me like needles. Don't talk to me of health, diseased and dying as I am."

"You have already passed the change called death; all will become healthy in the cycles of eternity. Sick as you are, you never can be better until you labor."

"I *won't* work!"

"You will be obliged to recall that foolish declaration. Are you not ashamed to remain idle while all surrounding nature is at work? You are a consumer. You must eat, drink and wear raiment, while for the last thirty years you have produced nothing. You are to live through all future time; but according to your present determination, you never will produce anything. On earth—that great bedlam beneath—pursuant to established conventional rules, you could use the earnings of a hundred brothers and sisters, giving in return no equivalent, and causing their families to live in wretchedness and woe. There the poor can be made slaves, toiling night and day for the support of idle masters and mistresses. There, those who toil most receive least, eking out a life of want; while those who toil least receive most, sleep on down, sup from silver dishes, consuming an endless number of useless luxuries, while thousands are living in destitution, and are obliged to expose themselves to the winter's blast. You have entered a new sphere of existence. Here the laws of right

are observed. No one here can live on the sustenance of another. Every one must be a producer. 'Dig or die,' is our motto, rigidly observed. When we find a person refusing his share of honest toil, we let him suffer the consequences of violated law, which soon makes him tractable, and ready to listen to the words of nature."

"But I *can't* work; I never learned to do anything."

"Have you not learned something useful?"

"Oh yes; I can embroider, can play on the piano, can sing, paint and draw."

"Nothing more?" asked the Sage in a tone of pity.

"I know a little of French and Italian, and can dance."

"Know you nothing of the laws of life, and of your being?"

"Laws of my being! Why God takes care of that. He giveth and taketh away. Can I know his reasons?"

"Verily, it rests in your hands, and you should understand those reasons. Can you expect health without knowing how it may be preserved? Sickness is the result of ignorance and consequent physical violation. If you understand not this subject, you are like one walking in darkness over yawning precipices, every moment liable to slip and precipitate himself on the rocks below."

"To understand this subject, and avail oneself of its advantages, would it not set at naught the mysterious ways of Providence, and be a sacrilege in the sight of God, by changing what he has decreed?"

"As for the providence of which you speak, it exists only in the diseased fancies of the abnormal brain; and as for sacrilege, what we can discover of nature and render available, is our privilege to investigate—not trembling at every step for fear of God's wrath, but boldly and manfully, doing all that we can to discover truth. This is our privilege. You understand not the science of life!"

"No; all I know is to live, asking no questions."

"That is as much as the blind devotees of the world know. They understand nothing of *manhood*; they are in their infancy. Thus you have wasted years in the accumulation of useless—worse than useless—knowledge. Man studies to elevate himself for a few days on earth. He acquires knowledge to that effect, and not for eternal life. The *spirit* is neglected and crushed to earth. They send their children to the primary school to prepare for the college! Strange that the future is not provided for! You are totally, totally unprepared for the unseen realities before you."

"I know I am. Let me go back! Ah, I *must* go back to earth. I can't stay here. What shall I do! Ah, how I wish I could go back!"

"You are wishing for an impossibility; you have entered a new life, and *must* submit to its conditions."

"If I stay here I will be obliged to labor, and you know that I do not know how."

"There is an eternity before you in which to learn."

"But there is no one to teach me."

"There is a circle of those like yourself, striving for elevation, and to them I direct you."

"A circle!—all strangers! and I becoming a pupil in a workshop! I won't *do* it! I'll go back! I *won't* work!"

At this moment, an infant spirit, conducted by one long in the spheres, arose above the smoke and dust of the city. With almost a scream of delight, the *lady* spirit flew toward them and clasped the infant in her arms. She then came back to her former position in a transport of joy, exclaiming:

"I don't want to go back now. My child is with me. Poor thing! so delicate, pale and unwell! She has troubled me ever since she was born. I expected her to die, but while on earth I dreaded the event which now gives me so much joy."

"Yes, she is a delicate thing—an offspring of your infringement of organic laws and the sacred principles of life. She is a fitting emblem of the violations of earth. Delicate and unwell, indeed! How could it be otherwise where the laws of hereditary descent prevail and mould the child after the thoughts of the mother? Whatever thoughts are excited or depressed in the mother, will appear in the same state in the child. When will mankind learn that the development of their offspring depends upon themselves, and that it is as possible to rear philosophers, statesmen, and poets—minds having the capabilities to arouse a world—as such mental dwarfs—such poor, imperfectly-formed beings!

"You are another fitting emblem of earth's errors. Fashion has distorted your form, changed your manners and your whole being. God made you for health; you have striven to disobey his laws, and have bent before the silly force of prejudice and conservatism. Look at yourself, and compare yourself with Hero, whom Nature made. Beautiful as your form was thought to be, how ugly and homely when compared with one who has obeyed Nature's laws!"

"Don't laugh at me," said she, piteously.

"Laugh at you!—never! I pity you, and your child I pity still more. She is a copy of all of your defects and of none of your virtues. This is the result of your violation of marriage laws: the offspring of those who are uncongenially joined take the bad qualities of both parents in their aggravated state. In *true* marriage it is the reverse. Ah, men and women of earth! a tremendous responsibility rests on you, from which you can not escape. The destinies of the future generation are in your hands. Send not into the world such miserable organizations, with but half the life they should possess, diseased and suffering from the effects of your continual violations. Think of these things *well* before you take the responsibility of developing an

immortal being into the world! Look at your child there! its death written in vivid hues on its countenance, imbecility of intellect in its vacant eye, an instability of purpose and a deficient morality in the contour of its head! Strange you should become so nervous on account of her illness, when you took so little care in her embryonic development! Strange!"

"Not strange." (The mother speaks now, she spoke not then). "How could I do better, considering my ignorance and the evils with which I was surrounded?" asked she, in a palliating tone.

"Because man is surrounded by evil circumstances, he should not cease to strive to overcome those circumstances. He himself is the greatest circumstance. Let him strive to change himself; then will all conditions put on a new aspect, as clouds change their color in the setting sun. He should not sit down complaining of bad circumstances, but take hold manfully, and work his way upward out of them into the light. Does the mariner, out on the wide ocean, complainingly sit down in imbecility when the storm breaks over him and the billows dash at his feet? Assuredly not; but he strives to overcome the external conditions by the preponderance of mental vigor. Thus should man strive on the sea of human life—strive ever to overcome and conquer. Well do I know your condition was anything else than enviable, for the best situated are bad enough. Here, in this little being, behold the result."

"Is she to bear *my* sins?" asked the mother, in agitation.

"Not your *sins*, but the *results* of those sins; and the punishment recoils back upon yourself."

"This is injustice," said the agitated lady. "My poor Isabel to suffer for my crimes! I can not bear the thought of it. I had rather suffer a thousand-fold than have her suffer for a single hour. It is unjust!"

"Not so; it is but the extension of the great principles of equity which lie concealed in the depths of nature. It is neces-



sarily the result of infringed law. Without this punishment the laws would be useless. Pain is the police and safety-guards set along the way to drive us back to the right path. If not for its influence we might go off on some tangent and never return. So we are compelled to do partly right. We oscillate within given limits. Thus you perceive infinite justice in the punishments His laws inflict."

"Talk of justice to me when I see my child crushed as an opening flower by its iron sway!"

"Yes, I would talk of justice to you, that you need not sink yourself under new violations. Your feelings are overwrought, and distort your reason. Rememberest thou the noble ancient who gave his eye to save his sons?" (Then the parent spoke.) "Seek not to take this punishment upon yourself, for you will have all you can bear without more."

"Can I not retrieve the errors by which I have brought this misery on her?"

"You know there is a law of progress that will relieve you."

"And is it possible for little Bell to become healthy as other children?"

"Possible—but a long time must elapse before this can be fully accomplished. Nature once crushed recovers slowly and with great effort."

"If it is possible, I am happy;" and a joyful radiance overspread her countenance. "Can not I do something to aid her recovery?"

"You can work. This, for the time, will be your field of labor. You said you would not labor. You must toil here, or your child will pass ages in the sphere where you now behold it."

"If I can do anything to elevate my child, I will work night and day continually."

"I said you must work. You are now willing to do so. If you had expended one-half the labor on earth that you will

be *obliged* to exert here, your child would be very much superior to its present state. You thus perceive Nature is a grand scheme of compensations, and all, sooner or later, must perform the tasks assigned them."

"I am willing—willing to labor to eradicate the evils I have entailed upon my dear, dear Bell."

"Speak not rashly, for centuries must intervene before you have accomplished what you *might* have done in a few years on earth."

This announcement chilled her courage, and she was very much pained, but it was for a moment only. Her woman's nature, crushed as it was, arose above selfishness, and she exclaimed :

"No sacrifice is too great for my child. I have caused her to enter existence as she is ; I feel that it is my duty now to make atonement by instructing her."

"Can you instruct her when ignorant yourself?"

"No, I had not thought of that. My God, have mercy ! I had a bright vision of happiness, but it has faded away—gone forever !"

Mother, with thy loved babe, how feeblest thou when it is snatched from thy embrace ! Canst thou feel her heart's pangs ? Then thou knowest how agonized was the mother in the spheres, regretting that she had not learned something useful while a mortal.

"Sister," said Hero, soothingly—"sister, it is not as dark as it seemeth. There is hope. If you can not instruct your child, the circle to which I will conduct you will rejoice to assist you."

"Can I be with my child ?"

"Yes, sister, you will do all you can to instruct it while learning yourself. You will be her guide, and procure such assistance as you desire. I will conduct you to that circle, and then leave you."

"But shall I find friends there?" asked she, in great anxiety.

"The spirits of this plane are all friends to each other. We know no hatred or revenge. The animalities are for the lower grades."

They passed away, and arrived at the mentioned circle. Hero introduced her to them, and the affectionate band pressed around her, each striving to manifest the warmest friendship. The worldly lady was a worldly lady no more. She ascended from a worldling to a superior grade of society.

Reader, we will leave her here, toiling in the path of ascension, laboring to eradicate her own errors and their fruits in her child. The spirit advances comparatively fast under such influences. If once thoroughly convinced of its errors, it can arise with lightning speed. The atmosphere of love in which the higher minds dwell is favorable for progression, and mind is developed with a rapidity man can not conceive.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE FORSAKEN AND DESPISED.

Mary—She loves and dies, while the world jostles on, unheeding her sorrows—They bury her form beneath the old church-yard willow—Her sighs mingle with the wall of its awaying branches—As she sits down on her own grave, an angel appears—The words of the Sage—The world wants charity.

BEFORE the band had finished discussing the ideas of the last chapter, a bright spirit came near them—a female, whose garments were of great purity, but over whose countenance rested the shades of grief and regret. She saluted the group with a low bow, for their dazzling brightness showed that they were of great wisdom and purity. They returned the salute, evidently to her great surprise.

“Why so astonished?” asked the Sage. “We would not merit our present position if we gave not to the *lowest* due respect. Why so sad? So good a mind as yours should never be shaded.”

“Ah, noble sir, I am sad, and *more* than sad; I am in woe and misery. My heart is bursting with its secret grief.”

“Why is it that one so fair and pure should be thus troubled?”

“Call me not pure; the words burn my brain. I am miserable because I am *not* pure.”

“What have you done to stain your purity or make you sad?”

“Ah, it is a sad tale—one which should remain a secret from any but those as bright and pure as you. I was a happy girl. The day was but a round of happiness. I sang in the old forest

to the evening breeze, culled flowers from the murmuring brook side, gathered moss from the gray old rocks, and listened breathless to the songsters of the grove, for hours. Ah, I was happy then ! I had no cares of the morrow, and the world went cheerfully on without infringing on me or mine. I lived to love. How I loved I can not express. If you have loved, I need not tell you. I was loved in return. What a noble one for my lover ! Such towering aspirations as he possessed, united with such gentleness and affection, I never found in another. We were youths then, but had loved for years ; and I began to look upon him as mine forever. Then fancy built airy castles, in which *we* always dwelt ; and hours and hours I passed in those delicious day dreams. Nothing so bright, so joyous, so beauteous, as " Love's young dream." How I have experienced that ! how felt its influence ! The heart-pangs those dreams have caused me have more than compensated for the short hours of bliss they afforded.

" After years of love, my lover left me—why, I never knew—and married a friend much my inferior in every point of view. Oh, that was a dark day—the darkest in my life ! I sunk under its miseries. My brain seemed on fire, and long I lay in delirium ; but my physical strength grappled with the disease of my mind, and overpowered it. I was again free, but no more the joyous girl I had been. I brooded over my crushed hopes in secret ; stifled my aspirations as much as was in my power ; and blame me not, great sire, if I called pride to my aid. Yes, pride was the greatest strength I possessed. It did all in sustaining me. A *friend* would have said from my demeanor that I cared nothing for him by whom my being was enthralled. And still more ; to show my indifference for him, I married a man, my equal in talents it is true, yet as black-hearted as night. It was a childish revenge—one which came bounding back, and struck its keen edge in my own bosom. It was too late for repentance then—too late for hope ! I soon found a misery greater than all. The

man I thought I married, I married not. It was a sham, and the priest was a priest for the occasion. I was deserted, left in the heartless world, despised and scorned. Of the many friends I had previously, not one remained in the hour of my adversity. They passed me without recognition, while scorn mantled their lips. I had *no* friends, *no* society—nothing but enemies who hated and despised me!

“ Oh, it is fearful to live in the world thus—to feel continually the jeering taunts of those once pretending to be friends! A fearful thing—one which my frame could not bear, and I sank to rest. A kind mother who had been my support while I lived, had me buried beneath the family willow in the church-yard, and planted flowers over my grave. I was there when she moistened them with her tears, and I whispered to her, “ Mary lives with the angels.” The delicate breeze wooed the drooping willow, rustling to my thoughts, and blowing back the tresses from my mother’s brow, revealed the care-worn features and the tearful eye. Oh, I was sad, sad! I was translated into a new world, of which I knew nothing. I sat down on my own grave, beneath the willow, and O what sorrow I endured! I sat for a long time wrapped in my grief, not daring to stir for fear of encountering some one who would laugh at or scorn me, when a female came near me, with the most beautiful expression of countenance I ever beheld. Perhaps I thought so because it was the first spirit I ever beheld. She took me by the hand, raised me up, saying in the sweetest voice, whose melody I yet hear :

“ Be cheerful. Let not such saddening thoughts influence you. You are no more of earth. Heaven is here with its joys.”

“ Oh, say not so !” I cried. “ I am a poor, despised thing, with no one but my mother to think or care for me.”

“ The inhabitants of this world,” replied she, “ despise not the unfortunate, but pity those who grieve under any circumstances, especially such as yours. The people of the world crush and

then despise the blighted flower. There, prejudice may exist, but it has no place with angels. We love the unfortunate for their misfortunes. Cheerfully, then, sister, go with me."

"I can not," I replied. "It will cause every one to look with compassion on me. I can't bear pity. I want to be regarded as when a girl I played in the old forest, or sang to the babbling brook."

"And that is the light in which we regard you, not as those who commiserate."

"Ah, then I *am* happy!" I exclaimed in a flood of tears, and flung my arms around my angel's neck, and she returned the embrace with the same warmth.

"Then accompany me," she said, "to those who will by their love strive to remove every trace of grief from your mind." I grasped her extended hand, and soon found myself in the midst of a band of bright beings, who came forward with joy on their radiant countenances, and with embraces manifested their friendship and love. I could not repress my tears; they came gushing up from an overflowing heart. The change was too great. The scorns of earth were still fresh in my memory. "Even now, great sire, a shadowy recollection crosses my mind when I meet with these bright beings in my own inferiority, and I fear their scorn, yet I never receive it."

"Nor ever will. If any scorn you, they are not worthy of your contempt, much less your regard. Earth's children have a great lesson to learn, and that is charity for their fellows and regard for their feelings."

"If one so elevated as you despises me not, I will not care for others."

"Never let the thought of how *men* regard you enter your mind again. Blot it out by thinking how angels regard you. You took a false step; and who has not taken *one* false step!

And is a false step in *one* direction so much worse than one in another ?”

“The world regards it so.”

“Rudimental man is governed by his lowest faculties. He sees mistily the principles of right. To show you my appreciation of you, and to dispel every doubt from your mind, I request you to join our circle and become one of us.”

“I feel so beneath you, I can not. It is too great a privilege to ask.”

“You will confer a favor on us all by doing so, and place yourself in a position for rapid advancement.”

“I can not express my thanks to you by words.”

This is the reception the broken heart receives from the angels. Their discriminative powers are used, and the thoughts weighed in an equitable balance. Be careful then, O man, how you condemn and despise the lowly.



## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE INSTRUCTIONS OF THE PHILOSOPHER.

The band visit a circle on earth to give instructions—The vision—The essay—The philosophy of spirit flight through space—The good and the bad angels—Necessity of perfect harmony in the circle.

It was evening, when the band, attracted by a harmonious circle, descended from their bright home. The circle had convened for the reception of superior wisdom. It was rightly formed, and the most developed mind could communicate on any subject it wished. The Sage controlled the medium's mind in such a manner as to convey some idea of the spirit-world, in the following

## VISION.

"Glorious and grand the prospect breaks around me as though a magician's wand had dispelled the deep darkness which before encompassed my senses. My spirit revels with the infinite hosts of heaven. My sympathies now depress me, and after a long journey, I rest in a far different clime. This is the first circle of the second sphere. Here I behold man's degraded state. Here is the home of all filth and corruption. I can not picture its miseries, for I never had an idea of such wretchedness and ignorance. I stand on an elevation in the center of an extensive and seemingly boundless plain. All this extended landscape is covered with human beings freed from earth, but not from its cares, its strifes, its miseries and its woes. They are all divided into groups. *There* is a band of robbers; *here* of murderers or sensualists; and in short, all the animalities are represented here in

their various colors and disgusting forms. Avaunt, bloated sensualist and gourmand ! Stand not so near, you suffocate me with your loathsome breath. Your presence fills me with disgust. I can not gaze on the bloodshot eyes and ulcerously-inflamed face without a shudder.

“ Here are beings clothed in rags, hanging in tattered shreds around their forms. All, all as black as night ! My pity is moved at the spectacle, and keeps me gazing at the scene, fascinated with its changing hues. There is no rest, no quiet, no tranquillity of thought or peace of mind here. All is animal excitement and its attendant suffering. They wander about without purpose or design. Their errors keep them from the light ; so they can not progress, nor raise themselves above the level of the surface of the earth. They grope about in a loathsome atmosphere, from which it is almost impossible to rise. No, not impossible, for those superior to themselves descend into this lower abode as missionaries, to teach them the ways of goodness and truth. These messengers, endowed with exalted philanthropy, make the great self-sacrifice with hearts overflowing for their erring brothers. They teach them the path of righteousness. I can behold many descend, and their shining robes become more brilliant by the contrast with those benighted minds. They are speaking on reform. The haggard features around them become more ghastly in expression, and some approach them, scorning and cursing them in rage, as the Jews of old did Jesus the Nazarene. But they can approach only so near, a magnetism warding them off. They are chained, and stand listening to the words of the angels, who paint the errors of each in turn, holding the mirror to each one's heart. By turns they are enraged and chagrined. Now the angel finishes, and, unloosed by the last sentence, that dark audience move away, shouting and cursing in their bitterness. Ah ! a *few* have stayed. There they stand, weeping in agony ; their hearts have been touched ; they see their errors, and wish

for the truth. They have resolved to reform, and do not wish to remain with this dark group. They now are going away with the messengers. How bright they appear! To gaze on them fills me with pleasure.

"I have arisen to a higher plane—the sphere of the good and just. Such an exaltation fills me now that I find words inadequate to express it. Here is an Eden of delight, with gorgeous groves and fragrant flowers, beautiful trees and crystal streams. The colors are resplendently clear and vivid, the light is soft and brilliant, partaking of the ethereality I everywhere observe. Throughout the groves bright beings appear, engaged in their various pursuits, meditating or conversing, all joyous and happy. I wish to remain here forever, and mingle with these intelligences; the atmosphere exalts my soul. \* \* \* \* But I must come back to earth; how I dislike those words! Earth looks dark, dreary and desolate."

The Sage then controlled the pen and wrote:

"I came here this evening to instruct you. I have given you this vision that you might become impressed with the *opposite* conditions of spirit life. In the first part you recognize what will be your position if you indulge the baser faculties at the expense of the moral. If you are miserly—grind down the poor—speculate in blood and tears—are revengeful and cruel; if you make gourmands and drunkards of yourselves, you must expect to find a home in this dark sphere until your grossness and crudities have passed away. If you would become angels of light, and dwell in the bright abode last described, you must be good, truthful, philanthropic—not from a regard to your own happiness merely, but because it is right so to be.

"Turn not a beggar from your door, though perhaps he may not be needy. Better give to a hundred *not* needy than turn one needy one away.

"This is the *hell* so vividly impressed on the minds of the ancient seers and clairvoyants, which they supposed to be a lake of fire. You also here find heaven—happiness of spirit. Where mind exists, it carries the capabilities of either state in its organization. You need not look beyond the grave for hell or heaven ; they are with you all the time. Nor should you desire to leave earth ; you will be none too well prepared when the day of change overtakes you, if you live an age. You can render your sphere as beautiful and happy as ours. You can enjoy society as well on earth as in the spirit-world. If you enter this life thinking to *better* your condition, disappointment awaits you, and you exclaim 'Take me back !—oh, take me back to earth again !' The desire is suicidal, and should not be indulged for a moment.

"This is a beautiful state ; so is earth. Man is created to enjoy its pleasures, and while he is *man* he should not wish for a better abode. It is the infant school to prepare the mind for the college of eternity. Be pure and unselfish in all things, that you may enter this life prepared to participate in its joys. You will find it the greatest of objects to be prepared at death—one which few consider."

QUESTION BY THE CIRCLE.—"Will you give us the philosophy of your flight through space, and tell us how you move from world to world ?"

SAGE.—"If it were not for the refined ether of space, or, in other words, if the distances between the planets were voids, it would be as impossible for us to leave the earth as for you.\* Refined as is this ether, so much so that you would call it immaterial, it is slightly denser than the matter which composes our forms. Thus being relatively lighter, the action of gravitation is *nearly* suspended, and the remainder is overcome by our wills assuming a positive action. Then we move wherever we

\* The existence of this ether is proved by the retarded motion of comets and of light.

will, with a rapidity exceeding light. Almost as instantaneous as the thought is our flight to a distant star. The more elevated the spirit, the easier this is performed. The lowest minds can not rise into space at all. This is the reason of the lower societies residing on the earth in your midst. They can not rise, and therefore do not believe they have latent powers of moving by the WILL. These are around you all the time, their homes being with you, and are ever ready to converse with you, if all conditions are not harmonious, and hence, to them, repellant. These can control physical matters more easily than the higher classes. The more exalted the spirit becomes, the less can it control physical things of earth, and it ultimately becomes impossible to do so directly. But to pass thus from earthly influence, it must become so exalted that the truths it would communicate would so far transcend man's conception that they would be useless. Hence you are greatly exposed to the crude answers arising from the ignorance and deceptiveness of the low societies, and the only means to prevent such answers is to preserve a harmonious mind. In CIRCLES, the utmost harmony should prevail, or the confusion will attract confused minds. These, having but little to occupy their thoughts, are ever ready to communicate, while the elevated have duties to perform, and can not, or will not, come at any hour they may be called on. They are all striving to advance themselves."

CIRCLE.—"If they have such a boundless love and philanthropy for us, they would delight in spending their time in instructing us."

SAGE.—"Suppose the angels you called on should spend their whole time for your benefit, how much time would you surrender to them? What farmer would leave his plow? What mechanic his bench? 'Ah!' you answer, 'these are our employments, and we can not well leave them.' We have *our* employments, more essential than yours. We save a minute while you spend an

hour. Every moment of time is precious to us, and, if our philanthropy send us to earth, it is at a great sacrifice. The spirit advances by study. The more we learn the more expansive our minds become; we have our aspirations, our hopes and expectations. We ardently desire to become elevated into the brilliant circles above us. How we desire to sit down in the groves of the sphere above us—one day's journey nearer the omnipotent God! The visions from above arise in our expanding souls—beautiful surpassing expression.

“I would that I could impress you fully with the value of a *single hour* of time. What can be done in the hours? There is nothing so ruinous as the waste of time. Though life is an eternity, the moments count, and wield a potent influence on the character who wastes or preserves them.”

CIRCLE.—“Would you have us gratify all our faculties?”

SAGE.—“Yes; every faculty has its appropriate function, which it should be allowed to fill but not exceed. The moral faculties are monitors over the lower, while the latter give strength to the former. The mind is composed of antagonisms, which mutually compensate each other and prevent excessive action. It is wrong for any faculty to absorb the whole energies of its nature from the others. The social faculties and affections should be drawn out by the intercourse with friends, but their cultivation should not become the end of life. The intellect should be cultivated, but not at the expense of the physical. The animal organs should be kept active, but should not infringe upon the higher functions. The result of pure affections is to lead man into societies; their ultimate effects will be to form associations, communities, etc. It is as wrong to destroy or neglect as it is to improperly excite the basal organs. Their gratification within their prescribed limits is as right as the gratification of benevolence or friendship. The doctrine which teaches the contrary

nas descended from traditionary vagaries, and has 'ignorance' stamped upon it. You should strive to harmonize all the faculties, functions and powers of your entire being, and, though you may not wholly succeed, you can approximate the perfection of a HARMONIAL MAN. Adieu !"

## CHAPTER XIV.

## A VISIT TO A DISTANT GLOBE.

The band visit a distant sun—Their flight through space—The meeting—Discourse of Christ—Its beauty and grandeur—Description of Christ—Conversation—Song.

MARVIN, recovering from his melancholy, proposed a visit to a distant sun they saw twinkling as a point of light far away in the dim blue. The proposition was readily accepted, for all wished to give him an opportunity to make himself useful, that he might feel more at home in their company, and they themselves learn from his experience. Upward they arose, the earth appearing to sink from beneath them, while they appeared to remain stationary. Then, instead of a great plain bounded by the horizon, it contracted into a sphere, and when they ascended still higher, it appeared a ball suspended in space. The sun and planets underwent rapid changes. When they reached the confines of a planet's atmosphere, all the other orbs lost their rays or scintillations, becoming, to their vision, as balls or points of light. The sun appeared of brilliant whiteness and purity, while the stars assumed various hues, owing to the decomposition of light in their own atmosphere. The sun, in their rapid flight, became a mere point of light, and then expired behind them in the incomprehensible space over which they had traveled. They passed away through an opening among the worlds, and saw a brightening orb of mellow radiance. To this they directed their course. Every moment, a new universe spread above, beneath and around them, redolent with Nature's gems. Worlds, suns



and planets whirled past them in their rapid career. The distant star they sought became a world, expanding until it spread out beneath them, bounded with a horizon. \* \* \* \* At length they pierced its thin atmosphere and alighted on its beautiful surface.

"I once came here in search of heaven," said Marvin, "bringing a hell and the *capabilities* of a heaven with me. I was attracted by the superior beauties of the place, and searched this whole world over. I was unsuccessful, it is true, but I learned many a lesson of wisdom which I otherwise should have never known."

"Your experience," replied Leon, "has taught you many things we have never learned. Your knowledge of localities, and the aspects assumed by Nature in the various worlds, is far greater than ours, for we have passed our time in searching the deeper arcana of Nature.

"All have their spheres of action," spoke the Sage. "Each individual has his proper place for the time-being. Every one adapts himself to surrounding circumstances. Change these, and you change their character. All things are governed by the absolute and impartial law of NECESSITY. This none can refute. We enter the rudimental sphere by laws over which we have no control, and we leave that state for this by self-acting laws of a similar nature. We possess control over nothing; but everything moves by necessity. The stone falls to the ground, world revolves around world, sun around sun, by the action of similar causes. The laws of the universe are like the different parts of a beautiful and nicely-adjusted machine, every part of which is perfectly adapted to the demands of every other part, and all animated by one interior propelling force, which necessitates every other part to move with the utmost precision."

"But who established such omnipotent laws, which so wisely govern matter?"

"They are co-eternal and co-existent *with* matter. Upon

them matter depends for its existence, and, by them, it derives all its properties of form, extension, indestructibility, etc.\* Ask who made matter. I can not answer otherwise than by my reason and the reason of those above me, which informs me that in some of its numerous forms it has always existed."

"If this be true, as it was governed by the same laws, why did not Nature assume her present form at first?"

"Saying the laws of the universe were co-eternal with matter, is not affirming that they all began their action at once. Matter was subject to development, and when the conditions were not favorable to the action of superior influences, it remained in a low and negative state. But, however low it may be, it will in time be prepared for the action of the higher. Thus we may regard the universe as a machine governed by higher and higher principles, as it is polished and perfected. In every new plane matter reaches, it *modifies* the previous code of laws, but does not set them aside. When the necessary condition of life from motion is fulfilled, life is generated. Each era, each age that worlds pass through, modifies the action of previous laws, and new forms of life, peculiar to those eras, are produced. To demonstrate what were those conditions, look at our world. Each age has its types, found in no other; and its present forms are living witnesses of this beautiful adjustment."

"You speak as though 'law' were the prime mover of Nature,

\* The term "*law*" is borrowed from the civil code, and used in this sense because the action it represents appears superficially to be similar; yet there is a vast difference. As used in this work it means a *principle of nature*, blended in and confounded with the existence of matter. It is not used in the civil sense in the least, and, if it were possible to use correct terms, it would be best to throw the word "*law*" entirely aside. By "*law*" we mean an attribute of matter which compels it to pursue a certain course, conditions being similar, to effect a given result. Thus a stone falls to the ground if nothing prevents it; if sustained or held up by superior force, it does not fall. Circumstances modify everything.

while I always regarded it as a 'code of action' by which an intelligent agent acted, and not in the sense in which you appear to use it."

"You speak the ideas of the world. You well know that all our ideas are comparative. We can reason only by comparison of causes and effects. The action of what is called 'a natural law' is *similar* to what is called a 'code of action,' and, hence, to explain the subject to rudimental comprehension, the term 'law' has been employed, but not in the sense in which you take it. As I before stated, the *existence* of matter depends upon certain principles, and thus it must have ever been, for, if it lost a single one of these, it could not have existed. Under the various combinations and conditions of these, originate its properties and affinities, which make it just as easy for it to become a living form as to aggregate in the crystal. Thus you perceive that I make no overruling 'code of action,' but when I say matter existed from eternity, I comprehend all its properties, conditions," etc.

"The subject appears plain in the new light in which you present it. I was obliged to reject the doctrine of necessity on the ground urged against it by the clergy."

I comprehend you—like the majority of mankind, you were willing to pay the clergy to do your thinking, while you employed your talents in amassing wealth. I can not sufficiently impress the folly of such a course."

"It is true, *too true*, I gave way to the belief of others, and thought I could recognize the existence of an overruling power, separate and *detached* from Nature."

"The impossibility of this dogma I hope you will see. It is supported only by the flimsiest fallacies. For instance, they ask, 'Is it not impossible for this beautiful creation which spreads around us, to have come by chance?' No one believes it came by chance; but I would ask which is most reasonable, the idea of the universe being born from chance—pure, ungoverned

chance—or of a Being so infinitely superior to it, to creating it from nothing ; or, lastly, of its existing without creation ? But I have not said Nature came by chance, but from its own inherent principles. I can not speak of the beginning, I know nothing of that ; but of the course of matter since the beginning, I speak understandingly.”

“That appears reasonable to me, and has the force of truth.”

“Do you not,” interrupted Hero, “feel a peculiar attraction from hitherward.”

“I do,” replied the Sage, “and have for some time. It can proceed only from an assembly of highly-developed minds. Let us proceed thither.”

In a few moments they were in the presence of exalted minds. They were listening to the address of one of their number, who was recognized by the Sage as Christ. While on earth, he was a perfect man—his body a model of symmetry, his mind harmonious and pure, his thoughts beautiful, his speech eloquent, simple and grand. Christ in the spheres is a model of angelic perfection. If his form on earth was that of a perfect man, it was now that of a perfect angel. If his mind was for man a model, it was now a model for spirits. If his speech to man was eloquent and truthful, it was now grand and sublime. As the assembly were arranged, he occupied a slightly elevated position, like as he did in his ancient temple—a temple whose lofty canopy was the blue arch of heaven. He discoursed to many eager listeners. Some of them were still imbued with the false ideas they had formed of him and his doctrines while on earth, and efforts were used to eradicate them. He first spoke of the idol worship of earth’s children, and compared them to heathen islanders, with whom a sculptor left a beautiful marble statue. When he was gone they hung beads and tinsel, shells and decorations over it, until when, years after, the sculptor returned,

he found his master-piece entirely concealed beneath the towering pile of rubbish. So had it been with his teachings there. They had lost all their pristine vigor and beauty by being clouded with bigotry, fanaticism and superstition, and needed the rubbish and tinsel cleared away, and their entire spirit renovated. Then he contrasted the highest stations of earth with those they now occupied.

Such burning eloquence, such grand comparisons, such figures of speech, would strike the mortal poet dumb, when comparing his best efforts to those now delivered. Man forms a very incorrect idea of Christ from the evangelists. When he spoke of the ineffable beauties of spirit-life, so harmonious were his numbers, that all the listeners in the vast assembly tuned their voices to the measure of his words. When he towered above, and dwelt upon the grand principles of man's moral nature, it seemed that God had descended from his throne of light. His voice thrilled through the hearts of his listeners as he told them of the laws they should obey. When he spoke of the majestic and sublime, he made his hearers behold what he described. When he touched on the crime, vice, misery and woes of the lower societies, his sorrowful accents would melt the heart, steeled though it might be by the transgressions of man. Such wonderful powers of conception, such beautiful diction, such stern simplicity, are beyond the power of words to express. Should we strive to copy a sentence from the wonderful speech, the barrenness of language would become painfully conspicuous. When we speak of things within the conception of the human mind, we do not perceive the want of terms in language; but when we would speak of the beauties of our spirit-home, we find language (all languages) deficient in the requisite terms; for the *idea* of such sublimity and splendor never entered the heart of man, and hence he has no terms to represent them.

The charmed audience were excited with the deepest emotion

as his thrilling words swept over their heart-strings. He closed by exhorting them whenever they had the opportunity, to descend to the lower societies and to earth, and teach the doctrines of Nature. They assented to the truth of this, convinced that they owed this duty to themselves and their fellows.

"Now have I seen Christ whom I worshiped as God," said Marvin, in bewilderment, "and if ever a messenger came from the throne of the Great Intelligence he is one."

"I presume he has dispelled all your ideas of his divinity."

"Truly he has, and I can not imagine how I could have ever believed so absurd a doctrine. I think I never did harmonize the *three-oneness* of the Godhead, but threw a mystery over it, which I thought sacrilege to touch."

"Mankind clothe their ignorance by the all-comprehending term 'mystery,' which is but another name for ignorance."

"When they find a subject baffling their powers of comprehension they are ever ready to exclaim : It is a great mystery, beyond the ken of reason, and it is sacrilege to attempt to reveal it, for God has concealed it from human effort. Alas ! for human ignorance, crushing the millions down, down the dark and loathsome ways of death ! Alas ! for human weakness, grasping the shadow, while the substance passes by them unobserved."

"Well may you exclaim thus, brother," said Hero. "Alas ! for human ignorance and selfishness ; every one believes themselves superior to their neighbors ; all are willing to teach, and none to be taught. I have wept over the Sodom on earth. I still weep, praying ever that the march of ages will relieve the down-trodden, and elevate all far, far above the level of the most advanced minds now on earth."

"The day of which thou speakest," said the Sage, "is close at hand. Its messengers are already rapping at the portals of earth. The prophets saw its gray morning's blush on the horizon of mind, with its resplendent coming. The grand illumina-

tion—the millennium of mind—is approaching on the wings of thought. Tyranny, anarchy, misrule, slavery and false government will be swept away before its irresistible tide! The sovereignty of the individual will take the place of these; *then* shall the love of wisdom walk forth in the splendor of its morning beams.” \* \* \* \*

“Hero, sing a song to close our sojourn here, and then we will take our swift course to our distant home!” said Leon.

With a pathos beyond the conception of those who have not heard a spirit song in the spheres, she sang the following, as nearly as the language can be rendered in the speech of mortals:

“Let us tarry no longer on this far distant sun;  
Our journey here ends, or mission is done;  
No longer through high airy regions to roam,  
We will seek the lov’d bowers of our far-distant home.

“We have heard the sweet lessons of wisdom and grace;  
We have rapturously gazed on suns whirling through space;  
We have seen the bright groves of the spirits above,  
Whose minds are perfected in wisdom and love.

“No longer to wander through heaven’s airy tide;  
No longer to gaze on these scenes as we glide;  
Let us home to our bowers, where genial showers  
Awaken new life in the plants and the flowers.”

## CHAPTER XV.

## RE-UNION IN THE SPIRIT-WORLD.

Lucian the stranger comes back to the Portico dejected, and to the questions of the Sage relates another episode of his life—Mary—The union of spirits.

READER, do you remember the stranger who recounted his conventional marriage to the Society ? We designate him by the name of Lucian. As the Society sat beneath the Grove he approached them. The same care-worn expression marked his brow with painful outlines, and there appeared in his manner a degree of nervousness, though he strove hard to conceal it.

"Thou hast returned, brother, from thy earthly mission ?"

"I have," answered Lucian, in mingled accents of shame and sorrow.

"Have you fulfilled that mission ?"

"Speak not of it to me," said he—"speak not of it to me ! How *can* I teach when I have such sins resting on my shoulders ? I can not say to others, Do this, when I have done the contrary myself."

"You spoke not of such disobedience when I saw you."

"No, for I did not then regard it as such ; but when conversing with a circle, I saw my own case in one of its members. The conviction burst upon my mind ; I then saw for what I had suffered so much, and recognized that punishment as just. I could say no more of love, when I had disregarded its just laws, and I fled away confounded. O mighty Sage, a burning hell has encompassed me ever since, from which I can not escape !"

"You are guilty."



"Guilty! yes, a vile, guilty wretch! It is a long tale, soon told. I loved a modest maiden, and she loved me. We played and sang together in our childhood, and in our youth our lot was always cast together. She was plain, confiding, unaffected, and retiring in her manners. She was always what she appeared. But she did not equal my ideal. I saw a girl who, understanding my peculiarities, used art, and was the ideal of my dreams. She made me forget my first love, and for a time love her. How that affection vanished—how I passed a few years—long ages it seemed—you already know. The art appeared, love vanished, and I was miserable. The maiden of my boyhood died of a broken heart, I then thought, for another; but I understand better now; I did it myself. Oh, to think of this—to remember the days of love we passed together—that I, in whom she had placed her confidence, should cause her death, adds torment to my aching brain!"

"I know not how to soothe your mind," replied the Sage; "your violation is great, trampling as you did on the highest law of mind. Human affections should not be thus trifled with. They are more precious than diamonds; and he who crushes them, must be severely dealt with. I understood your situation when I first saw you, but considered it best to let you find it out for yourself, as it would produce a more vivid impression, and do you a more lasting good."

"But I was ignorant of the mental injury I was inflicting; I knew not that unrequited love recoils back with such overwhelming power. I supposed love but a transient *passion*, soon and easily subdued."

"Ignorance is no defense to set up to escape punishment. Cause and effect will eternally operate; and punishment must necessarily follow crime. The prejudices of earth are such that there is no mean between friendship and love. The opposite sexes are forbidden to be friends of a higher order. The

suspicion of parents or neighbors is immediately aroused. Marry, or stand clear, is the motto. The individual thus deprived of society, as necessary as breath, rushes hastily into marriage without due consideration. Courtship should last for several years, instead of as many weeks, that each may become thoroughly acquainted with the other. Then it is well to make the ties of the two souls still stronger. Love is not a *passion*, neither is it transitory, but it is the uniting of two souls into one ; and verily such unions *will* exist, growing stronger and more intimate, when yonder mountain shall be changed to vapor, and shall have passed away. This is true marriage—an eternal union of soul, thought, and being. There is no passion in it, that being of an entirely secondary nature. Animal love may be subdued ; but spiritual love, when once drawn out, is as lasting as time, and develops more and more in the spirit-world. It seeks one object, and clings to it with the greatest tenacity through life and death ; and puts forth its bloom after thousands of ages hence, near the throne of the omnipotent Mind. Love is a delicious dream of the soul, which if rightly directed becomes a glorious reality in the future. It adds power to genius, and expands the wings of thought to their utmost extent. No one is what he should be if he has not loved and been loved in return. But unreturned love, crushed back to its secret fountain, stifled down by the proud soul, is blighting, withering and destructive in its effects."

"Oh that I knew MARY loved me still—that she did not hate and despise me !"

"You disowned your *Mary* in the world, and through long years scorned and despised her."

"I never despised her ; I loved her ; I thought it *friendship*, but you well know I could not manifest *that* in the jealous world without scandal, and was compelled to avoid any intercourse with her."

"You threw away her love."

"But I was led astray, and afterward compelled to do so. I blamed her not for the course she took, nor despised her for the result."

"Did you sympathize with and pity her?"

"May God bear record that I did; and how often I have prayed, that I might find her and tell her of my sorrow and repentance for the wrong I did her?"

"Why have you *not* found her before this?"

"I know she is in heaven, but I can not find any trace of her abode."

During this conversation his eyes were cast on the ground, and he appeared as though guilty of a heinous crime, daring not to look up and meet the searching gaze of the Philosopher. The latter now took Mary by the hand, saying,

"Lucian, here is the Mary you disowned, and crushed by refusing her love. She forgives you all."

Mary, who had eagerly listened to the conversation, was now so completely overcome, that she could scarcely stand. Lucian gazed at her a moment, and then caught her in his arms. Both were unable to speak from the violence of their emotions. Lucian recovered the use of speech first, and with great effort exclaimed,

"It is not for me to be thus happy! I can not—can not ask Mary to accept my love. I am unworthy, and have thrown it away once; she must despise me now!"

"Not thus," said the Sage; "she will forgive you and forget the past."

"Speak, Mary, speak—am I forgiven?"

"Yes, Lucian, a thousand times," said she, in a sweet voice, smiling through her tears.

We dislike scenes where such nervous suffering is disclosed, and will therefore draw the curtain, leaving the remainder to the reader's imagination.

There is no violation of spiritual law which meets so severe a punishment as that of drawing out the confiding love of the soul, and crushing its expanding bloom. We can not paint the misery and woe which result from such conduct, in sufficiently vivid colors. The affections expect a return; they send out their tendrils to twine around some human heart, and if they find no support, they are bent back upon themselves, and are left desolate and alone. It may appear strange to you that love has a similar action in heaven; but you must remember that heaven is a place of love—that one of the supreme attributes of God is unbounded love, and that angels feel the influence of this faculty a thousand-fold more than man. If so, it must have an object; and hence we find those who are congenially united together, are unities, and enjoy the most perfect bliss.

"Can you now teach mankind?" asked the Philosopher.

"I feel free to go now. No crime is on my brow. I have just found heaven; its peace and joy encompass my heart; I have been in the opposite condition ever since I left earth. The vacancy I felt in my mind is filled. I feel seconded by a noble being, who, in time of need, will give me aid. Conscience will not accuse me now."

"You can *now* add this precept to your teachings: 'Teachers should follow their own instructions, and not attempt to teach until they are themselves comparatively pure.'"

"I shall tarry no longer with you, but take my mission on earth."

"Go; our prayers are with you for your success."

## CHAPTER XVI.

## CONTENTEDNESS NOT GOODNESS.

Leon's experiment.—He takes a common mind up to the highest society of Philosophers, to show them that mere negative goodness is not all that is required of man.

WISHING to ascertain the feelings of a negatively good spirit when suddenly led into the highest circles, Leon went to earth and soon found such a one as he desired. This was an aged man, with but common talents, giving ready credence to the doctrines of the Church. He was satisfied with everything as it was. He revered the doctrines of the Church, because time-honored. He believed because he did not think. He loved his fellow-men, because he had no hatred for them. It was indeed a problem, where such a passive organization would gravitate.

He was standing by the side of his body, looking around in bewilderment. Leon took him by the hand, asking him where he was.

"I am dead," he replied; "but I can not tell where I am."

"You are in heaven, or rather in the world of spirits. Look yonder away, through the blue expanse; that is the spirit-home. You appear in the right state to enjoy its advantages, as your mind is peaceful and composed."

"I trust I am, for I have lived fourscore years on earth, and have never had any difficulty with my neighbors, or a dispute of any kind. My relations are harmonious with all men. I can safely say no one can bring a charge against me before the

throne of God. I have done right, as far as possible, and have gone truthfully, to the best of my knowledge."

"Well, then, you should be rewarded for your good deeds."

"Come with me and enjoy the *fruits* of your good deeds."

He conducted him suddenly into the midst of the highest society it was possible for them to gravitate to. Have you ever seen a rude boor conducted into the presence of kings, where all the flashing trophies of a court met his astonished gaze? Then you can imagine how this spirit stood in the presence of this society. It was composed of philosophers and naturalists, with lofty brows towering upward in their efforts to understand the mysteries of the works of God, sitting in conversation on abstruse subjects. The light overpowered his senses. There was nothing in common with him and them. He could not comprehend their actions; but in the brilliancy of colors which flashed around him, the forms he saw seemed a council of the gods met in consultation over the destiny of worlds, and he was completely bewildered and confounded. He intuitively understood that there was no enjoyment for him there, and happening to cast his eye upon his garments, in the brilliancy around they were as black as night. This overpowered him, and his usually passive soul was excited to action, and in agony he exclaimed:

"Oh take me away! take me away! I shall perish in the intensity of this light. Take me where I am equal, at least, to those who surround me!"

"Come with me, then," said Leon, taking the hand of his companion; "you here behold what *you* and every other spirit are capable of becoming."

They approached a society of the same grade of the aged man. They were not of that shining purity of Leon, nor as dark as those described in previous chapters. Here was a mean where *passive* goodness resided. They possessed not the energetic qualities which cause crime, and were consequently good—

not because of noble virtue, but because they had no inclination to evil. They crowded around them, knowing that a new member was to be added to their number, and thankful that so developed a mind as Leon's should visit them. Leon, when about to depart, spoke as follows :

"Your goodness has been of a passive character. So far you never have had any difficulty with any one. You have always agreed with the world. So the Quakers strove to live. But I tell you now, that this is not the goodness that elevates man in the spheres. It is no virtue for a person devoid of passions to be virtuous, nor for a person devoid of animalities to be good, for we can not measure the goodness of the man until we know how well he governs his baser faculties, if he possessed them. The morality having nothing to combat, becomes dormant. Contentment, or rather lethargy, is not the law of nature. Everything is striving and aspiring to attain a higher state. The infant looks forward to youth ; youth to manhood ; old age to the spirit-world. He who sits down content amid the scene of upward strife will speedily find himself on the retrograde. You *should not* be satisfied with your present lot, but strive to elevate your minds, that some time in the ages of the future you can comprehend the condition of those whose presence has now so blinded and confused you. Strive with holy aspirations to ascend upward forever, to the comprehension of final causes. The shaded garments you wear to-day will grow brighter to-morrow, as you become more and more elevated in thought, and ascend higher and higher in purity."

## CHAPTER XVII.

## ADDRESS OF THE SAGE.

The Philosopher finds a circle to whom he can fully convey his thoughts—He then addresses them on the attributes of Man and Spirit—What will elevate or depress in the spheres, Deity, crime, wretchedness, slavery of mind and body, the true man, etc., etc., going rapidly over the whole ground of reform, and pointing out the duty of man.

It was a splendid evening when the spirit band came down from their ethereal homes to re-visit the scenes of their earthly life. The spirit, when it visits earth, feels like the traveler who, after long journeyings, reaches the place of his nativity ; new pleasures are awakened, and the association recalls the incidents of rudimental life. The Society paused for a long while, surveying the familiar scenes around them in silence. Leon interrupted the stillness.

"This scene causes a melancholy sensation to steal over me, which I would gladly throw off, and yet it thrills my being with indescribable emotions."

"Melancholy is often a mournful pleasure of a holy character."

"I wish I could experience its influence," said Hero, with a smile.

"Your light heart would be crushed. But our mission is not here ; let us fulfill the object for which we came."

They moved on to a mansion, in which a large circle had convened. When they entered the atmosphere the Sage smiled with satisfaction, exclaiming,

"I have long desired to meet with such a circle, and for some



time past I have watched for such an opportunity. I have pondered in my mind how, and on what subject, I would speak to the rudimental sphere. I will now speak in a miscellaneous manner of the many things I would relate.

"If you speak miscellaneously you will tell each what he wishes to know," replied Platonius.

#### ADDRESS TO THE CIRCLE.

Twenty-five centuries have rolled away since I passed from the rudimental sphere. Each year of those centuries has been a volume to me. My wisdom has expanded in the light of those ages, and I now feel more youthful than when, in my Portico in Greece, I taught a sublime, yet crude, philosophy to those who thirsted for truths beyond those found in the ceremonies and mysterious rites of mythology. I am younger now than then, for a vast circle spreads far above me. I can perceive there is more to learn now than I then thought possible to exist. The philosopher in his early career exclaims: "I am almost at the end of the race for wisdom." Foolish thought, when the wisdom of the Infinite God is all beyond.

You look upon the earth as a huge ball; but when standing far away on the fixed stars, the whole solar system, the sun, planets, satellites and comets, appear not as large as the mite in the sunbeams! You look upon *man* as the ultimate of creation; yet there are angels beside whom he would appear far more insignificant than the Patagonian savage beside the intelligent European philosopher. Man is an animalcule on the earth, which is itself but an atom of the universe. There is a vast void between the animalcule in the drop of water and a solar system; yet a greater difference exists between the wisdom of man and the Infinite Wisdom beyond.

In the beginning, remember that your life-journey is not for to-day, but for eternity. Your journey after wisdom is like *our*

journey through space. We direct our course to a distant star, behind which no others appear. As we move onward, points of light start out from the dark background, and when we rest on the distant orb, the diamonds of the blue expanse flash out to welcome us there. Again we take our flight to a pale, glimmering point of flame ; again the blue arch is redolent with constellations. When we reach the confines of one system, another is ready to flash out and welcome us. There is no beginning, no end—all is one mighty eternity of systems and forces.

So with wisdom. March onward in its path forever, and forever more is written before you. Your past toil but illumines the endless way, exhibiting more clearly its unimaginable length. Thus was the universe formed. No finite being can comprehend its vast proportions, or arrive at the grand attributes, the FINAL CAUSES, which lie away far down in the depths of Nature, and underlie and ramify throughout creation.

The matter composing our earth was very low at first, and was developed by degrees. The gaseous ocean of the beginning was the necessary germ, combining all the elements in its vapory mass. The igneous nucleus, or center, was necessary to give the earth its globular form, its diurnal and yearly revolutions, and prepare it for the next stage, when the water condensed and formed the thermal oceans, which boiled as cauldrons on a heated furnace. The coal era cleared the atmosphere from the superabundant carbon, and fitted it for the support of life. The saurian types of animals were the representation of the peculiar combinations and conditions existing when they flourished. The chalk formation freed the ocean from surplus lime—so of all ages. Man came last, because in him are combined the essences of the material world—of zoophyte, fish, lizard, reptile, bird and beast. Man's brain contains finer and higher material than the brute's, which raises him above the instinct of animals. In him Nature has added one more link to the endless chain—has

formed the key-stone of the arch of mind, which prevents the whole from falling, and she has thus given him an eternity beyond the grave, that his mind, having a thirst for unbounded wisdom, may have an eternity of time to seek it in. The *perfected spirit* is the end of creative Nature. For it, the gaseous ocean of the beginning existed ; for it, the igneous ball rolled through the vast space for ages ; for it, one form of life after another came, type following type, and degree succeeding degree in endless mutations. Man is the bud, the spirit, the unfolding flower of Nature, which will go on unfolding its powers until it reaches the throne of the Omnipotent Mind.

Thus, you perceive, there is no end to the acquisition of wisdom, and though the weary soul pitches its camp each day a day's journey nearer God, the number of those days' journeys are as countless as the leaves of the forest, or the sands of the seashore. March forward as far and as fast as you will, and you need never speculate on the consequences of arriving at a point where progression ends.

Draw a circle about you to-day, and to-morrow's circle will encompass it. The growth of the soul is like the growth of the tree, by consecutive circles, each new growth encompassing all the rest. The soul is exogenous and endogenous in its growth ; it grows not only from within, but also from without. Each age draws its circle around all those which are past. You may think cohesive attraction a great force—its sphere comprehensive—yet gravitation draws its circle around attraction, and a thousand forces beside ; and gravitation itself is far from a *final* cause. Some giant mind will, in the distant future, stretch forth his hand and describe a circle which will include gravitation and all its antagonistic forces. You must learn to comprehend great principles, and classify facts. By observing isolated instances, you loose the connection and become confused. Nature is a whole, and should be studied as such.

Men are striving to describe circles around their predecessors. The circle which bounded the mental horizon of the ancients has become, as it were, the center, a point in the circle of to-day, while to-day's circle will be lost in the efforts of the future. A circle which can not be outgrown in ages, exists only in the imagination of unprogressed minds. Whitherward tend all these efforts? They tend to mingle in the grand circle of OMNIPOTENT MIND. The men who draw circles around their farms and cottages, around their stores, their warehouses, or the countries to which their ships go out; those who circumscribe the range of thought to the earth, or in their efforts after wisdom include the starry host in their mightily-expanded sphere—all, all are for the same object—the advance of mind in its efforts after the unattainable.

The savage reaches out into the future state, and feels the presence of a supreme intelligence operating on his undeveloped faculties. Thus has man progressed, by the efforts of his intuition, in receiving impressions from the Omnipotent Mind. Thus all races, in whatever clime or country, however disadvantageously situated, in every age, have acknowledged an incomprehensible wisdom. From this, too, each nation has its own peculiar mythology. Even the half animal, naked savage, on the bleak rocks of Patagonia, has a glimpse of that Infinite Spirit whom he imagines sighs in the evening breeze, and echoes his thundering voice in the hoarseness of the mad waves which forever lash the rock-bound shore of his inhospitable clime.

The human intellect has the most astonishing powers. It grasps a solar system at a thought. It would exert its powers and solve the mysteries of the Divine character. The undeveloped mind feels that the external world is controlled by an invisible force which it can not comprehend. And from this arises the idea of the *cosmos*, or universe, being a machine, with a superior intelligence to direct its motions. Of the character of

that force the savage knows nothing, and the civilized man, the theologian, after the innumerable works they have written about it, know no more—the savage regards God as a separate and detached being. The civilized man, as the author of creation, penetrating through every atom of matter.

This is well expressed in the ALLAH of the Mohammedan, "the Only." How beautiful is the idea contained in this: "God is the only!" When we speak of him there is no Nature, for we mean everything. All is a part of the Omnipotent. God is the "Only," the "All," the "I am." He speaks to you through every sense, and impresses himself on your minds.

Here, I perceive, the question arises in your minds, "What, and where is God?" This vast subject has engaged the attention of theologians and philosophers through all recorded time, and yet nothing but a vague, unsatisfactory conception has been gained. Still the question arises, "What, and where is God?" Still the human mind manifests its inward dissatisfaction in striving for something more—something beyond. In early ages, the chiefs and rulers could give their ideas, and their blind followers were satisfied. They recognized God as a personal being, and their followers worshiped him as such. This idea of God's personality has descended to the present time, and the mass still worship a monstrous human potentate, instead of the controlling principle of universal nature.

Say to the churchman that you believe the Deity to be the mind of Nature, and he will exclaim in sacred horror, "You are a disbeliever in a God; you can not worship Him unless he is personified." The Chinese bowing before their idols, the Hindoo prostrating himself before the crushing wheels of the Jugernaut, the fire-worshippers venerating the rising king of day, are no more idolatrous than those who worship a personified Deity. Nature will out. The germ of true veneration is deeply planted in man's nature, and can not be suppressed. From be-

neath the weight of ages of superstition, the high thoughts and holy aspirations of our nature will flash out like beautiful stars from behind the rolling clouds of the angry storm. In olden time I lived in a civilized land, and often to myself uttered the sentence, "What, and where is God?" Civilization sent back its sullen echoes in a host of answers; individuals and classes assailed me for a separate hearing; all was uproar and confusion; but above the universal din arose the voice of the priests, that God was a potentate in the human form, dwelling in a far-off star, seated on an ivory throne, with priests and angels standing in vast numbers around, forever singing his praise. They described him to my mind as a compound of good and evil, hate, revenge, pride and ambition. One thing appeared self-evident—that none were satisfied, even with their own answers.

I wandered over the sands of the desert, revolving the great inquiry in my mind. A son of the wild waste stood before me. Here is a child of Nature, thought I; he can not be prejudiced to so great an extent as the previous named persons, by the myths of their fathers. In this, however, I was mistaken; for none are above the prejudice instilled into their infantile minds by the instructions of their parents. For a moment, free thought broke through the clouds which hung over his mind, and Nature spoke through him:

"Behold," said he, "these sands are bordered with plants. They grow and give me sustenance. In their growth I behold life and wisdom, and, in proportion as my mind expands, I behold intelligence. Look abroad over this waste. See yonder moving pillar of sand. God has moved his breath to do his bidding. I feel his presence in the broad sunshine and in the serene night. The stars reflecting the dim shadows of the waste remind me that he is far off, yet near."

Turning to the Indian, who passes his life away chasing the deer through the forest, or pursuing the bear to his den—who

dwells most with Nature, and has never been led astray from her truthfulness—we present our bold inquiry. For a moment he is amazed and confounded, when he exclaims :

“View the mighty forest, the birds caroling in the branches. I hear his voice mingling with the wail of the spirits of my fathers in the breeze. In the echo of the thunder he speaks to me. Where is he? You are now in his presence. He is ever speaking to you, for he dwells in everything, and is everywhere.”

Untutored child of Nature, from whence hast thou derived so much truth? Theologians have long striven to grasp thy simple explanation, and failed. Preconceived opinions and tradition exercise great influence over the mind, and, although fully convinced that the Deity is an intelligent principle,\* our thoughts *will* personify Him in the imagination. Reason alone can set the matter right. So soon as you personify and give God a shape, you circumscribe his limits and power. So soon as you measure him by man, in power or shape, and thus bring him down to finite comprehension, you make him a finite personage. In the latter field much labor has been performed in vain. You must not compare him with man in this way. The fact that man stands apparently at the head of creation, is no evidence that there may not be inhabitants on other planets differing entirely from him in form, yet as far exceeding him in comprehension and power of thought as the most acute philosopher on this globe exceeds the Hottentot who imagines the horizon to be the boundary of the universe. The *finite* can not comprehend the Infinite. The idea of God's personality leads us immediately into the idea that he is of the human form. The Caucasian thinks he is a Caucasian; the Indian, a red man; the African, a black chieftain; and so to the limits of intelligence, where God's existence ceases to be recognized. It also compels

\* We would refer to the explanation of “law” in a previous chapter.

the assigning of a locality. If God is local, he can not be universal; he must be finite, and not infinite. A finite being can not control an infinite empire—thence there would be systems of worlds, with all their intelligences and forms, situated far, far beyond the control of such a God. The great code of principles created the earth in its present form, and so far as they acted in creating, they now act in controlling. God is eternal; so are these attributes. They are co-eternal, co-existent with matter, and can never be annulled or altered. As man's soul and body are one, so is the Infinite mind and the whole universe.

But you say this idea of Deity will lead to Pantheism. What if it does? Can there be no truth in Pantheism? I care not from whence truth is derived. I never trouble myself as to the *origin* of an idea. If reason approve it, I am satisfied. Pantheism may contain some correct views. Even the lowest depths of Atheism rest upon some truths. All error begins in *myth*, and would be immediately condemned if not for the few truths upon which it rests. Men who dare not use a new truth, for fear of being styled infidel, are in want of moral courage. Such are willing to skim the surface, never daring to go deeper than their predecessors and cotemporaries.

“But how can you worship a principle, or a code of laws?”

If the ancients called those attributes manifested in Nature by the term God, and we now recognize in what this Deity consists, and if our devotion thus ceases, it is no argument against our conception. This objection is similar to the plea for ignorance, because the learned do not feel the same degree of awe and wonder as the savage when gazing on the fearful tempest, or the roaring cataract. If increase of knowledge destroys devotion, then it should be destroyed. But does it do this? The man who regards Deity as the Omnipotent Intelligence, will not fall down with blind zeal or bigoted devotion—with fear and trembling—as in the presence of an angry tyrant. Perhaps he will have no



stated time to go through the mummery of a formal prayer, only lip deep; but his veneration will speak in the still, small voice, and he will adore the great cause of universal harmony which spreads around him, in which he recognizes the action of those great and comprehensive principles to which his fathers gave the name "Jehovah." The ignorant devotion paid him is the result of superstitious fear, and has not the semblance of true devotion.

Devotion springs from the most exalted faculties of the mind. If man strives to be devout, he immediately loses his object; when he strives not at all, he is most devotional in his feelings. When the man who has violated law prays, whence cometh his prayer? Not from the moral organs, but from the selfish and the animal. After men have become miserable by violating law, they pray God to forgive them. After doing wrong through the day, they pray for forgiveness at night. Hence God receives the homage of the animal propensities. True devotion to Deity, of the developed mind, is the obedience of all the laws of his nature. There is no distinction between Nature and God. That mass of matter and mind which has ever been separated, is an indivisible unity. Let this lead to Naturalism or Pantheism; these impressions are clear and strong, and rest on the immutable basis of creation. I consider the laws of Nature as the will of Deity; the wisdom and intelligence displayed around me, as his mind; and though in speaking of these it is well to preserve a partial distinction, yet, in reality, all is one inseparable unity. I recognize nothing superior or *external* to Nature; nothing above, or controlling, this unity; but within dwells perfection of principle, working forever with indefatigable energy.

We have but one guide in the study of Nature, and that is reason. Revelation is scientifically shallow and superficial, being but a daguerreotype of the rude Hebrew mind. Respect it for the truths it contains, but not otherwise. Nature, then, is all that remains for our study to bring to light those laws which reveal

the hidden ways of the Omnipotent mind. The field is open, and though "Infidel" will be branded on all who pass through its portals, followers are not wanting. Why has the pursuit of the natural sciences always been thought dangerous to the mind? Why has materialism been said to be the result? Simply because such investigation opens the path to free thought—free communication with Deity.

God's attributes are revealed in Nature, and constitute the justice, benevolence, wisdom and love of the external world, from which spring harmony and progression. From these man *absorbs* the attributes he possesses. If they had not existed in Nature, they could not exist in him. His ideas are all absorbed in this manner. His conception of mathematics is derived from the precision he recognizes in all things. He observes that matter pursues certain fixed courses to accomplish given results, and he calls these laws.\* So of astronomy and philosophy—all ideas of which are derived from observation of celestial and terrestrial motions. So, too, of all science. Nature is the "All," and from her crystal fount, mind absorbs as much as it wills, and still the clear stream flows as bountifully as before, in never-ending currents of truth, love and intelligence.

Hence, in all your pursuits after knowledge, you will make Nature your text-book, and Reason your guide; and learn from every babbling brook, from the majestic river, rolling its tranquil waters to the ocean in its sublimity; learn from every mound, towering mountain, tumbling water-fall, and fruitful plain. The name of a wonderful intelligence is marked on every flower. Its signet-ring is impressed on every shell of the sea, and on every leaf of the forest. Even every dew-drop contains a lesson of creation. He who sees not this intelligence in shell and leaf, is blind. He who hears it not in storms, and in thunder, is deaf.

\* Law lies beyond this, however.

He who *feels* it not around and within him, speaking all the time, has not clear intelligence to feel. Thus is Deity ever present, addressing man and spirit from age to age. You stand forever in the presence of Jehovah. He is your teacher; all your mentality and morality are absorbed from him. How, then, should you act? Act true to those attributes. How you can do so, I will now inform you: Charity is the basis of greatness. *Pure* Christianity clearly teaches this—yet few Christians have sufficient charity to cover a multitude of sins.

You preach Temperance and Abolition, yet you shun the drunkard as you would contagion, and the negro, whom you have so shamefully wronged, with disgust. You are against capital punishment and the barbarous abuses of the criminal. Why do you not use all your influence to abolish these abuses? Let your words and deeds be consistent.

If you were in the circumstances of the drunkard, slaveholder, or criminal, you would act as they do. Considering this, you should have charity for crime in all its forms.

There are thousands of poor in your cities—in every town a few. How came they poor? Let the capitalist and monopolist, the savages of society, answer.

The infant must travel the same road—must go over the same ground his parents have traveled for these thousands of years. The road is a beaten track, and easily followed; hence, under favorable circumstances, at thirty they have traveled over the whole vast space. But one may be hindered, or entirely stopped on the way, and then he becomes a savage, a barbarian, or half civilized, according to the point he reaches before encountering the obstruction. Who arrests the upward journey of the child? Society; and society must bear the recoil of its arbitrary power.

How have the past ages treated the criminal? Humanity, shudder and hide thy blushing face! Look down to the loath-

some dungeon, where a bundle of straw on the dirty floor is the resting-place of what might have been a man—a mouldy piece of bread and a bottle of water his only sustenance for days together. Look yonder at those state engines, the gallows, the gibbet, the guillotine, the inquisitorial prison, whose secret chambers are the portals of hell ; whose officers are incarnate demons !

You turn from these in disgust, and blush,—blush to own your race ! But enormities as great stare you to-day in the face, from which you withdraw your charity. An age of iron called for blood. These things were necessary concomitants of the struggle for civil freedom. *Your* jails and prisons, and the manner in which you treat your prisoners, though mild, compared with the past, are harsh, when compared with the standard of humanity at the present day.

Society has a right to protect itself ; but it has no right to infringe on the just rights of the individual. If a man threatens you with injury, you are justified in restraining him, and if gentle means will not do it, in using strong measures ; but never are you justified in taking his life, or maiming him intentionally. The fact that he injured you yesterday does not justify you in retaliating to-day. Revenge is the basest of the animalities. Charity has a lesson here to learn. In the undeveloped state of things now existing, the majority are born with bad organizations. They are found in all classes of society. Reared from the *embryo* in the worst conditions, surrounded by circumstances calculated to excite alone the animalities, can you be astonished that men are as they are ? They are surrounded by objects which excite their acquisitiveness ; by companions who allure them on to crime. They are bred amid filth, vice and corruption, with scarce food enough to sustain the life within them, or fuel to keep them from freezing ; while all around is wealth, luxury and comfort. Blame them not, brother ; *you* would

soon learn to lie, and steal, and cheat, if you were similarly situated.

The disposition to crime is a disease, like lunacy and other cerebral disorganizations; and charity should teach pity, and not revenge.

How did you treat your lunatics a few years ago? You shut them up in dungeons, gave them straw for a couch, and only a little grated window through which to look out on God's beautiful world! Then you appointed iron-hearted men, almost devoid of a shadow of humanity, to oversee them. When they screamed and tore their clothes, and gnashed their teeth, and twined their fingers through their hair in their agony, they were scourged, lashed, bruised and beaten. Did you cure lunacy by these means? "Never, never!" echoes the cold, damp walls. Enlightened humanity stepped in and said: "Lunacy is a disease:" then insane asylums arose amid beautiful parks; comfort, convenience and health were consulted; the insane were taught that they were not hated but loved; and now the consequences are apparent. The lunatic is sent back to society a strong-minded, useful man.

Take the criminal as you did years past; shut him up in a cage as you would a wild beast; give him no labor nor books—nothing to divert his mind from his gloomy situation. He feels crushed and insulted; he feels that in him humanity is outraged. What do you shut him up in that dismal place for? To protect society! No, but for revenge, cold-blooded, premeditated revenge! *He* knows this, and resolves, when he regains his freedom, to profit by the example. He passes his gloomy years in concocting desperate plans of revenge, and then is turned loose upon society like a fierce tiger from the jungle. Your roofs shall blaze now. Your property and life are in danger. You have made him worse by such training.

So of the drunkard. You despise him as you do the criminal

fresh from prison. Both feel that their manhood is forever lost; and, do they never so well, they feel that it is almost impossible for them to retrieve their former position. You say the murderer is past all hope, and you hang him for an example. Once, and that but a short time since, he was seated on his coffin, and paraded through the streets, and the gallows occupied the most conspicuous position in every town. Crime was then more prevalent than now. Such scenes do not intimidate and frighten the lower faculties, but rather excite and feed them. You now acknowledge this, and hang the poor culprit in one corner of the prison yard, out of sight of everybody. In none of these proceedings is charity exhibited. Take the drunkard away from the influence of his associates; take the poisoned cup from his burning lips, and apply healing balms to his wounds. Bring the subject home to your own hearts. Study cause and effect attentively, and then act true to your convictions. If you restrain men from revenge and retaliation, and if your object is to intimidate others, then apply the lash and invent tortures at which a demon would shudder. But if your object is to reform the unbalanced, and send them home to their friends and to society regenerated men, capable of struggling honestly with the adversities of life, then a great change must be made in your prison system. The offender's morality and intellect should be aroused, and everything which excites the basal or animal propensities avoided.

Have charity for the poor and distressed. Do not say that in their present circumstances they can do better, but place yourselves in their path, and become a new circumstance in their lives, to change their poverty to affluence, their distress to pleasure. This will call out and exercise your benevolence. It will be a source of pleasure to give to the needy and suffering. Copy benevolence from the external world. The rain falls equally on the just and the unjust. Gifts are bestowed alike on the savage

in his wild forest home, and the most refined Caucasian in his beautiful mansion.

I will not speak of love or justice. If I should, I could but repeat truisms; for you all know how to be just, and how to love.

Again, you ask: "How can we become exalted in the spheres?"

He who seeks exaltation for its own sake will be debased. Genius may soar on eagle's wings, tireless and strong, but the same wings which carry it to heaven will, when used by a perverted mind, depress it downward to perdition. Great men are necessary, and to them the race are loyal at heart. Genius may tread secure in its upward march among the precipices of fame, and so long as it keeps its eye steadfastly fixed on the radiant orb of truth and love, it may go on until it rests its weary form upon the summit; but so sure as it looks *down* with contempt on the masses toiling below, whom it has outstripped in the race of life, with scorn or egotism, so surely will it grow dizzy and fall, mangled and crushed, on the rocks below—its light put out when in its noon-tide glory, leaving only a blank to speak of its existence.

Men of genius! a tremendous responsibility rests on you. Strive never so hard, and you can not more than accomplish the work marked out for you. The towering mountain which overlooks all its neighbors is a sublime spectacle to behold. From its craggy sides flow many crystal streams, to water and fertilize the warm valley below; where the flower blooms in fragrance, and the grass spreads its downy carpet over the hills; where the cool breeze waves the sighing forest, and ruffles the beautiful lake. Away up on its granite brow the storm and the sleet beat in wild fury, and the avalanche plows great furrows in its jagged sides. Thus genius, which towers above common men, must

expect to live in a different clime, and encounter storm, tempest, hail, snow and driving sleet, while those on a lower plane enjoy the warm sunshine. The responsibility is, to manfully combat all opposing forces, and, like the mountain, resting on its strong basis, present a granite front to the battle.

Common men, too, have their responsibilities. They all have duties to perform to their fellow men. It is in vain for them to cry, "I am not my brother's keeper;" they are recognized as such by the Lord. Present the subject in all lights, and still it is the same. Mankind are a great brotherhood. The depression of *one* individual depresses all, as a blow of the hammer moves the earth. So the elevation of a single mind is felt by all. You cannot progress without dragging the whole world after you. Are you envious of the fame of the great discoverer or inventor? Be not so; the light is not shut from you, for by their efforts has been opened a larger field for your research. Most men make themselves prominent by putting out other's lights. These do not appreciate the truth, that by bringing the world *with* them, they can accomplish an infinitely greater good. The *Nazarene* understood this. His precepts, his philanthropy, his pure life, embraced the race, and he lives forever. If any one would speak through the coming ages, he must do likewise.

Thus you perceive what exalts the man. Need I tell you what depresses him? The pursuit of wealth has no correspondence in the Spirit-world. The miser and speculator are men of this world. They are respected, and called great. All their powers of mind are directed in one channel, and that the accumulation of wealth. In their haste for riches their intellect is perverted, and the rank weeds of error luxuriate in the neglected mind. After death they awake the same in every minutia of thought; but having no real objects upon which to exert their selfish desires, the only channel through which they can receive enjoyment, is closed, and they are miserable. On earth naturo



always presented to them the sunny side ; now her light flashes up but to reveal their hideous development. You know that these can not be happy but miserable, under this recoil of the moral law.

Death is a great leveler. When Charon wafts the weary soul over the Styx, he strips it of all its wealth, titles, honors and ornaments. The mind remains in its unconcealed magnanimity or meanness, and gravitates to its proper sphere. Kings and nobles awake and find themselves kings and nobles no longer, and hence are greatly dissatisfied with heaven's grand republic. They are too egotistical to be taught, and centuries roll away before they recognize the truth, that all men are equal in their rights.

The *condition* in which men are born has great effect on their condition here. You do not expect the ignorant boor, the vagabond who roams your streets, to be as elevated as yourselves. Why ? Because the circumstances in which he was reared, and over which he had no control, made him ignorant, vicious, and criminal. But perhaps in the infinity of future ages, you will behold the power of that vagabond's mind transcend the united strength of Newton and Humboldt.

Another great cause of misdevelopment is inharmonious marriage. The virtuous man and woman have peculiar sympathies which they can not express. They have strong desires for congenial companionship. The mind images to itself the felicity of a union with another appreciating mind. It meets its object, and then knows that no mind is perfect without its mate. As the brain is constituted of two hemispheres, so it takes two minds to perfect one. God has planted these desires in the human soul, and under proper regulations the soul must act true to its promptings. Thus it recognizes its mate, and has a foretaste of the joys a union will produce. Now let it be turned off with a cold antagonistical companion, and it is crushed. The peace

of the family circle is broken by discord ; the lower passions of the offspring are continually influenced by their sympathy with the parents. The more spiritual the mind, the more discrimination it possesses in the recognition of its true mate, and the more debased, the less discernment it possesses.

If you would exalt your children through life and through eternity, make the family circle harmonious and pure—make it a primary school and college in which may be learned lessons of wisdom and virtue.

No parent should be instrumental in bringing into existence an immortal being, if they are not fully able to give it a good constitution and an adequate education, so that it may be able to grapple with the difficulties of life. They commit an outrage on humanity who heedlessly throw their offspring upon society with diseased constitutions, and with what little life they possess, wholly unprepared for the trials of the world. What can you expect from antagonistic unions, where the children are bred from the beginning in an atmosphere of animal passions ? Can any other than coarse, low-minded men and women proceed from such a source ? True, there are those now and then whom nothing can corrupt—so elevated in their sublime spirituality that they can walk through the depth of depravity unscathed ; but such are exceptions. The great multitude are all subject to surrounding circumstances. Exercise your charity then, brothers, in changing the condition of the miserable, and elevating the wretched.

To this end, unite with a congenial mind. You say all *strive* to do so. Yes, but they only strive with their animal instincts, not with the attractions of the Spirit. There are numerous positive attractions in the essence of the soul, which, if followed, will find their proper negatives. You should rise above all conventional regulations, and follow the dictates of reason and wisdom, and become passive to their impressions. The Spirit desires to

find its mate. If it fails it is like the turtle-dove; it mourns night and day, over hill and dale, to find the counterpart of its being. The ceremony is nothing; the heart is all.

“ You ask, what is the condition of Spirits ?

He who doeth well enjoys the satisfaction of that well-doing.

The spiritual body pervades the external form. Bone pervades bone; muscle, muscle; nerve, nerve. The spiritual is a simile of the earthly body. When the earthly dust is brushed off—when it rises into the bright day of immortality—it finds itself the same entity with similar thoughts, desires, passions, affections and emotions. This being true, rest is required. The mind tires, and the spirit must rest. Thus are the earth and Spirit-world related, being intimately blended, without any chasm between them; so that the individual who has obeyed the laws of his nature, quietly passes, as it were, from one room into another, calmly and easily, as the ripened apple falls from its parent stem.

All must pass through this change. Everything matures and dies, or rather changes. You may regret this. Others have considered the earth a tarrying place, where they are compelled to abide a long while without profit. In this they are wrong. The apple should not be plucked while green, from its parent stem, nor man immaturesly depart from earth. Often have I paused over the battle-field when thousands were engaged in the strife of murder, when the cannon thundered loudest, and the cavalry charged fearless of death. Then have I seen the dark spirits of the slain warriors ascend thickly as forest-leaves blown by autumn winds. If I could then have sat down and wept for man's folly and ignorance, gladly would I have done so. But such a crushing weight of human error came upon my mind that I could not weep. Man should not die until ripe age breaks the cord which connects his spirit to its form or body, and he is fully prepared to enter his new abode.

A state of immortality is rendered necessary and certain by

the principles of mind. Every individual has the germ of an intellect which, if properly developed, would transcend your idea of the knowledge of angels. Shall that germ be crushed, and never be allowed to develop? Nay, there is no soul made in vain in creation, and if man can not become developed on earth, he will have an eternity in which to expand hereafter. Men look on the surface when they speak of greatness. Very few kings, lordlings, or autocrats, are really great; but he alone is truly great who not only has love, not only philanthropy, not only wisdom, but all of these combined into one harmonious whole. Then harmonize your being; make this the object of your lives. Eradicate your peculiar evils one by one, with a firm faith in success. Your position, estimated by the world's standard, is nothing. The poor beggar shall stand on a higher plane than the proud king, and many a poor African will be more elevated than his master.

You can not be too fearful of slavery of body, but oppose to the utmost slavery of the mind, as you would the way of death. Little charity as is exhibited in the slave-system by a nation of pretended freemen, yet the system which fetters the mind is incomparably more ruinous.

A great incubus hangs over the American nation; stand from under when the weight falls, for fearful will be the crash. That incubus is a small cloud compared to that which rests on the mental firmament. Mankind are ever ready to drag the corpses of their dead ideas after them, traveling slowly onward, but looking wistfully over their shoulders at their old superstitions, and hence are very liable to stumble in their course. How loudly you praise your free-thinkers! But how free *are* they? How you clamor about your reformers! Your free-thinkers are bound by superstition, and your reformers have their strong prejudices. Here is one who attenuates his ideas until he runs them into the ground—becoming as befogged as the fogies he has deserted, and

riding his hobby until he is as bigoted as the bluest bigot he has left. *There* is one who goes out into the future a little way and stops, frames his ideas into a creed, and awaits the coming up of the advance guard of the world. His creed stops there. He forms them into an army, looking around to prevent any from passing or leaving him. The stream of life is choked, and must stop until it has accumulated sufficient force to sweep creed, reformer and all away on its impetuous current. Luther built a strong craft, but must use some parts of expiring Catholicism in its construction, and it was no sooner finished than stereotyped, and all progress stopped. He must necessarily sail out into the ocean, that perchance some venturesome reformer should build a craft to his own liking, and when such sails come out from the shore he can give battle.

Men are not free. Some are slaves to their passions, some to their creeds, some to their superstitions and prejudices. He who dares to stand up nobly defending his manhood and acting true to his convictions, is but one in millions. You laugh at the Chinese compressing their feet until they can scarcely walk, while you yourselves are greater slaves to fashion. The feet are unimportant organs when compared to the waist, but you compress the latter until the life organs occupy not half the space Nature intended for them.

Where is the natural man or woman? All have some distortion. Well might the rude mind refer the deformities he saw in his companions to judgments of the gods, and look back to a period of perfection from which he had fallen, instead of forward to future perfection.

Every man and woman should consider themselves individual sovereigns, to think and to act as best pleases themselves, if they do not infringe on the rights of others. There should be no conformity except to Nature. The thoughts of yesterday, if they can not bear the light of to-day, should be cast aside. If you take any part of the old craft to build your new one, it will be

bungling, and incapable of withstanding the rough waves of the troubled ocean of reform. The reformer should cease lopping off the branches, and strike at the roots of the monstrous tree of error which shadows the world. By so doing you leave humanity free to commune with the infinite God. This is all that is required of you. To be great should be the aim of every individual. Not great in crime, like Cæsar, Alexander, or Napoleon, who merit the scorn of the world ; not great in intellect alone as Laplace and Cuvier, or in morality as Confucius, Menu and Howard—though the latter species of greatness is superior to the others. But be great in all of these, with a giant intellect supported by a pure morality, and put into action by well-controlled basal organs. Thus organized, the great mind will not look down with contempt on those beneath, nor with envy on those above. There will be nothing arbitrary or conventional in such a mind, but serene and pleasurable emotions, and the highest enjoyment of life. In this way Jesus Christ was the greatest of men. He was an exalted moralist, a profound philosopher, and possessed the energy to put all in action. So superior was he to common men, that in those superstitious times it was natural for men to believe that the Deity had descended into him, and that something marvelous had taken place at his birth.

In the development of the race it may be well for the minds which constitute the advanced guards to be drawn out in a tangent in some particular direction from the circular. But to the individual himself it is injurious. The perfect mind is represented by the perfect circle. Chemists, naturalists and philosophers draw out their minds into particular directions until the circle is nearly obliterated, and though the development of the department of science has in that way been accelerated, the individual has suffered by his zeal. The nearer the harmonial circle you approach, the greater will be your powers of analysis and capacity for the reception of truth.

There must be *positiveness* in goodness, not *negativeness*. Then we have the truly great man who, with the truth before him, scorns all peril, and with venturous energy climbs to the summit, and stands up like a tall mountain from its granite base, sending its impregnable spires into the region of storm, hurling back the thunder-bolt with defiant echoes, grasping the storm-cloud with his science, saying, "go no farther"—withstanding the shock of the elements, and continuing his onward course to Eternity !

Thus have I gone rapidly over the important subjects that you and all men should understand, so that you may act in accordance with Nature. Perform the task assigned you on earth that it may not check your progress here. Do right, act justly, love your race. Then will you softly close your eyes in sleep when age has settled on your earthly form. No shadow will darken your soul, but peacefully will the internal unfold itself, and you will awake in heaven an angel of light.

THE END.