

DR. ZELL
AND THE
PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

An Autobiographical Relation of Adventures in the Life of a Distinguished Modern Necromancer, Seer and Theosophist.

BY
WARREN RICHARDSON.

“Through the sympathy of similar, and the antipathy of dissimilar things, all creation hangs together; the things of a particular world within itself, as well as with the congenial things of another world.”—*Henry Cornelius Agrippa.*

“But I will not allure to forbidden things; if thou should'st find anything in my writings which is dangerous, do not make it known.”—*Maxwell Medicines-Magnetica.*

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Dedication.

TO THE GREAT GERMAN NATION:
GLORIOUS ALIKE IN WAR AND IN PEACE;
PROGRESSIVE IN ITS CONSERVATISM—CONSERVATIVE IN ITS
PROGRESS;
SOLICITOUS TO INSURE TO HER PEOPLE INDIVIDUAL LIBERTY,
WITHOUT SACRIFICING ORDER AND SECURITY;
THE HOME OF SCIENCE AND METAPHYSICS;
WHERE LITERATURE FLOURISHES AND EDUCATION IS UNIVERSAL;
WHERE LABOR IS RESPECTED AND THE DOMESTIC
VIRTUES REVERED;
A LAND IN WHICH PUBLIC SPIRIT, RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY,
LOVE OF TRUTH AND UNDYING PATRIOTISM ARE THE
CONSPICUOUS TRAITS OF THE PEOPLE;
TO HER AND TO HER BRAVE SONS AND CHARMING DAUGHTERS,
THIS BOOK IS REVERENTLY INSCRIBED BY ONE WHO
HAS ABUNDANT FAITH IN HER GRAND DESTINY.

THE AUTHOR.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

SCENE. } PART I—NEW ENGLAND AND NEW YORK.
 } PART II—A PRINCIPALITY OF GERMANY.

CHARACTERS IN PART I.

DR. ZELL—*A Mystic and adventurer, afterwards Prince of Graffenburg.*

GERTRUDE—*Same—in the disguise of a young girl.*

DR. PIERREPONT—*Kinsman and guardian of Dr. Zell.*

MR. THORNHILL—*A religious zealot to whom young Zell was apprenticed.*

TOM SLING—*A Yankee cottager of liberal ideas.*

MRS. CLARK—*Keeper of a cheap boarding-house, N. Y.*

MADAM AURELIAN—*A Clairvoyant and Hypnotist, N. Y.*

ELOISE—*A young girl employed by Madam Aurelian.*

ESTELLE—*A New Hampshire Beauty.*

Minor characters.

CHARACTERS IN PART II.

DR. ZELL—*“The American.”*

PRINCE KARL AUGUSTUS—*Sovereign of one of the minor German States.*

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE—*Wife of Prince Karl.*

BARON VON EICHMAN—*A German nobleman—a jealous husband.*

BARONESS VON EICHMAN—*His wife.*

COUNT VON ELDEN—*A young officer in the service of Prince Karl.*

NANETTE—*French ladies' maid (to Princess Charlotte.)*

COUNT VON EBLEMAN—*Prime Minister to Prince Karl.*

GENL. VON WIMPLE-STEIFAN—*Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Graffenburg.*

COUNT ERNESTINE—*Grand Chamberlain.*

DR. VON BLEISENBACH—*Court Physician.*

HERR LICHTENFELTER—*A Jewish merchant, president of a chess club.*

Court dignitaries, etc.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS book will inevitably find its way to those persons who need it for their instruction in occult science.

Those who, reading it for amusement only, shall conclude it to be merely a work of imagination, will deceive themselves. Its deductions are based upon science, and its general incidents are grounded upon actual experience.

The light thrown upon such topics as Ceremonial Magic, Mind Reading, Astrology, Divination, and, above all, Hypnotism, is in harmony with the best authorities on these several specialties.

The latest known discoveries in all branches of occultism will be found interwoven with the incidents of the story, and are set forth stripped of all unnecessary verbiage.

The practical ceremonial and operative features for the evocation of the dead and for fascination are correct in detail and sanctioned both by authority and practice. The secrets of hypnotism, as elucidated in the crypt scene (Chapter 22), are not generally known, and have been hitherto concealed from the public and sold to students for a high price under injunctions of secrecy.

The Bibliography of Occultism found throughout the work, though not by any means exhaustive, will nevertheless be found useful to such young students (and others unfamiliar with the subject), as desire to explore these mysteries of Nature to their profounder depths.

To the general reader it is hoped that the curious pictures of life under strange phases, and especially the details of life in the palace of a sovereign prince of Germany, will be found sufficiently interesting to repay an attentive perusal.

THE PUBLISHERS.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
Introduction, by the Editor.....	9
Author's Preface.....	19

PART I.

CHAPTER I.

First Experiences—Childhood Among the Puritans.....	21
---	----

CHAPTER II.

How Very Slight Incidents Lead to Important Results.....	36
--	----

CHAPTER III.

Tower Hill—Dr. Pierrepont and the Ladies Who Were Once Young.....	48
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

What the Books Claim an Adept May Accomplish.....	55
---	----

CHAPTER V.

A Scornful Beauty—The Astrologer's Letter—Change.....	61
---	----

CHAPTER VI.

In New York—Singular Proposition from One Business Woman, and a Stormy Interview with Another.....	70
--	----

CHAPTER VII.

Disguised as a Woman.....	81
---------------------------	----

CHAPTER VIII.

Madam Aurelian.....	92
---------------------	----

CHAPTER IX.

Curious Experiments—Awful Mysteries—A Surprise.....	100
---	-----

(6)

CONTENTS.

vii

CHAPTER X.

PAGE.

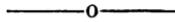
A Journey with an Object, and a Second Surprise... 116

CHAPTER XI.

Out of a Dilemma—An Old Letter with News—Prompt Action,
Rapid Changes—Estelle, the Mountain Belle..... 132

CHAPTER XII.

The Danger of Hypnotism—He to Whom Love Was Once a
Passion, Now Makes it a Diversion—Beauty Indignant 155



PART II.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Author Gives Glimpses of Theosophy—The Secret Brother-
hood Graduate Him with a Secret Mission—An Acci-
dent Makes Him the Guest of a German Nobleman—A
Rash Promise and its Consequences..... 166

CHAPTER XIV.

Explains Astrology—Elucidates the True System of Mind Read-
ing—How the Adept Reads "the Depths of Men's
Minds and the Secrets of Women's Hearts"—Happy
Ending of a Serious Domestic Complication..... 188

CHAPTER XV.

Grafenburg and its Ruling Family..... 209

CHAPTER XVI.

Dr. Zell is Introduced to the Royal Family—His First Meeting
with the Princess Charlotte..... 216

CHAPTER XVII.

How the Money Difficulty was Tided Over—Chess in Graffen-
burg—Some New Acquaintances..... 224

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Reception at the Palace..... 233

	PAGE.
CHAPTER XIX.	
Further Acquaintance with the Eccentric Princess—A Sudden Engagement.....	241
CHAPTER XX.	
In the Shadows of Royalty—Rules of the Royal Household....	247
CHAPTER XXI.	
A Military Review—The Princess Charlotte Becomes Confidential.....	253
CHAPTER XXII.	
Thrilling Midnight Adventure with a Daughter of the Cæsars—New Things in Hypnotism.....	262
CHAPTER XXIII.	
At Death's Door—Was it a Dream-like Reality, or a Reality Like a Dream?.....	272
CHAPTER XXIV.	
At the Crisis of Fate.....	279
CHAPTER XXV.	
In Deadly Peril—The Unprecedented Suggestion.....	284
CHAPTER XXVI.	
The Unprecedented Realized—Leaves from the Diary of the Princess Charlotte.....	293
CHAPTER XXVII.	
Nanette—"You Promised to Make me a Countess!".....	309
CHAPTER XXVIII.	
Curious Traditions of the Palace—A Train of Evil Directions—Dr. Zell at Home—Finale.....	318
APPENDIX.	
Three Notable Conversations:	
On Woman's Suffrage	331
The Labor Question.....	333
Government.....	335
Index to Subjects and Authors.....	336

DR. ZELL AND THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR.

I AM one of that small class of people who seem destined to wander in unfrequented paths. My occupations, studies and researches have been mostly out of the common way. My reading has been chiefly in the psychological line, with latterly a strong and rather unaccountable leaning toward occultism. I was already married, and the father of a family, before my researches took this singular direction. I was too poor to have much leisure, and pressed for the means of subsistence, began to despair of ever making much progress in my favorite study, when in a fortunate hour, and by a train of circumstances that seemed to hinge upon a single lucky chance, I was thrown into intimate personal relations with one of the greatest occultists of this age—perhaps of any age. I refer to Dr. Theophilus Cardan Zell, the author of the following autobiography. I might, if I chose, make much of the little series of fortuitous circumstances (some of them not wanting in mystery or in strange coincidence) which brought us together. But it is not in myself that I expect to interest the reader. It is in the strange, the erratic, the mysterious personality, whose literary remains I have the honor to present, that all the interest of this work must center. For a period of about two years, I was the daily companion

and literary assistant of this remarkable man. I have, after the manner of Boswell, preserved conversations embodying his opinions upon some of the leading topics of the day and a few of the great questions which in all ages have engaged human thought. These may at some future time be given to the world. They are worthy of careful study—not only for their intrinsic interest, but also for the force, vigor and originality of the thought and expression, the novelty of the treatment and the bold and manly attitude of the sage in combating popular prejudice in the cause of what he believed to be right.

I found him living in a venerable mansion among New Hampshire hills, amid a savagery of woods, pastures and tangled forest, diversified by meadow, heath and swamp, near the shores of one of those picturesque lakelets which abound in that region.

The place was lonely, wild and almost gruesome in its solitude. It had once belonged to a local magnate of means and prestige, as a descendant in direct line of one of the early settlers of the country. But the fortunes of this once rich family had become gradually reduced, and in recent years the last representative of the line had expired, leaving the ancient house and neglected grounds—the tumble-down sheds and rambling barns and out-houses—the mossy orchards and worn-out fields, to his remote heir, in the person of the author of these memoirs, who soon after appeared to take possession of the property.

The house was large, massive and roomy, with many quaint passages and irregular features oddly intermingled with its great halls and corridors. One picturesque feature of the old homestead was a tower, some sixteen feet square, with snug rooms on each story communicating with apartments in the main building. This tower arose to a rather disproportionate height above the main edifice. The latter was of three stories, if we count in the attic story, which seemed thrust in between the massive clusters of chimneys,

and modestly rounded itself into as small compass as possible, circling with many joints and heavy projecting gables, and here and there a dormer, or oriel window. At the summit of the tower was quite a good-sized room, with lofty ceiling, and lighted on every side high above the tops of the gable peaks and the chimneys. I speak particularly of this room because it was the favorite apartment of the sage and constituted his magical cabinet. It seemed made for him, so excellently was it calculated for his purposes. Indeed, the entire place seemed in keeping with the man, and the man in perfect sympathy with the place and all its conditions. It is perhaps time to approach the owner of this singular domain.

He was a man who would be taken by the casual observer to be somewhere between forty and fifty years of age, yet to a closer scrutiny he presented some (rather undefinable) signs of a more advanced age. When I became more intimate with him, I gave up all effort to estimate his age, and I may as well say here that to interrogate him concerning that or any other personal matter would have been a thing out of the question, even for his intimate associate. There was that in his appearance and bearing which forbade all familiarity. His was one of those commanding personalities that no man of any sense or discernment would think of taking liberties with. Of medium height and well proportioned, he impressed one as being taller than he really was. He carried his head with the air of a man who knew and appreciated his own importance, yet there was kindness and even gentleness in his manner. His face expressed intellectuality, benevolence and dignity.

The eyes, of a rare steel blue, had a very peculiar fixity of gaze at times, and under excitement, or, rather, when animated (for the doctor could not be said ever to have been excited during the period of my acquaintance), his eyes would assume a bright violet tint, a peculiarity I have seen in but one other person. His voice was soft, musical

and susceptible of fine modulation; his movements easy, supple, graceful and, if he chose, magnetic. To say that he could invest with a peculiar and indescribable charm every movement, tone and gesture, would indeed be true—though falling short of the whole truth, and that I despair of conveying to the reader; but it may be gathered indirectly from his own narrative. He must have been almost irresistible with women, and it was well that his principles forbade the unscrupulous use of a power which was capable of harm. His temper was calm and equable, so perfect was his self-control and so serene and unruffled the smooth tenor of his life. For all vexations he possessed a ready antidote, and for most mishaps or difficulties a present remedy. He had a singular power over animals, easily winning their confidence and affection. He was remarkable for his sympathy for all living things—for vegetable as well as for animal life. He seemed to treat plants as though they possessed consciousness, and ascribed special powers and affinities to the different species. In fact he had positive opinions of their virtues for different purposes according to their kind and nature—spent much of his time in their cultivation and gathering at special times, according to planetary influence. He was singularly successful in curing diseases and ailments in man or beast.

He spent much of his time alone and in his cabinet at the top of the tower. To that room I was never admitted, and the servants could not even approach it.

He believed himself surrounded by intelligences invisible to others, but producible in form, almost at will, by himself under proper conditions. That this notion was not altogether an hallucination, I have only too much reason to believe.

He was reticent on the subject of "Phenomena," which was his term for anything remarkable in the way of actual magical performance, and very averse to works calculated to satisfy mere curiosity. Yet upon rare occasions, when

strongly solicited, he would yield. Upon these occasions, however, he would always leave one with the impression that he had shown but a small part of his skill, and was capable of much greater things; and since reading his memoirs I am convinced that such was the fact. It was common for him to say to the visitors present, after some phenomena had been produced before them: "It will be as well not to speak of this outside; people around here are not prepared for these things, and will not understand them right." Quite often he would enjoin positive secrecy.

This singular personage, whom I will soon introduce to the reader to tell his own story, had been an occupant of the old manor known to all the country around as "Tower Hill Farm" for about five years at the time I was employed by him as a sort of amanuensis, secretary and business agent. At the same time my wife was installed as housekeeper. Dr. Zell had, or seemed to have, a distaste for all business details and money affairs. He could not bare to haggle over a bargain with his neighbors, and seemed greatly relieved when I undertook the office of business manager. Our compensation was fixed by myself and promptly assented to by the doctor, who never seemed to give a thought to expenses, and did not wish to be annoyed by hearing about them.

He never cared to examine accounts or statements of sums disbursed. When required, money to satisfy all claims was always forthcoming without a word of complaint, yet where it came from was ever an enigma to me, and is to this day, for my employer had no source of income that I was aware of. The old worn-out farm, with its garden and orchard, yielded no money return, and was a continual source of expense. He had no stocks, bonds or securities that I knew of to bring in interest. Once only during my stay with him I knew of his receiving a considerable remittance by draft from New York. Nevertheless, he may have had any amount of money at command. 1

should never have known it. It was a habit of his to conceal everything, and I sometimes thought he took a strange pleasure in baffling impertinent curiosity concerning his private affairs.

The neighbors, with whom we had but little intercourse, used to wonder how the "strange doctor" lived and kept up his establishment. Yankee curiosity is always active in this direction. Most people probably thought him poor—an inference natural enough, considering his frugal personal habits and plain dress. Besides, but few of the country people had the *entrée* of the house, and these few saw but a small part of it, and knew but little of our way of life. The fact was that we had an abundance of everything for our comfort, with many luxuries; and I smile to think how astonished some of these simple country folk would have been—who supposed us living almost in distress—if they could once have taken a peep into the doctor's private apartments, and especially the cabinet, where they might have seen apparatus and paraphernalia that must have cost many thousands of dollars: robes, jewels, and costly regalia trimmed with precious stones; rare books, to say nothing of some things that money itself could not buy or restore. But no one ever suspected anything of the kind. No visitor ever penetrated to these apartments. Neither I nor my wife had ever seen more than a few of the plainest of these costly properties up to the time our employer left. Our two serving-women were instructed never to enter any of the rooms especially designated as "the doctor's," except to make the bed and dust the furniture of his plain sleeping apartment. Besides, everything was under strict lock and key.

The house itself, under his direction, had become almost a fortress. Yet, strange to say, no one would have suspected it, passing along the road. It must have been a keen-eyed observer to have detected without minute examination the precautions employed against possible intrusion.

With an outward appearance of carelessness usually found in an ordinary country house of its class, was united in our case a degree of strength and security little suspected even by ourselves. Electric alarm signals communicated from every door and window with the central apartments of the owner. Our inner grounds around the mansion, that seemed so innocent of all protection, so hospitably open and free, were yet rendered almost inaccessible at night by the closing of the light double iron gates—really the only opening in an almost invisible iron fence—light and almost hidden by overhanging vines, climbing plants and the ancient hedge, which effectually screened it from observation. The locks to some of the heavy oaken doors were unlike those in ordinary use in this country. I am not quite sure, in my own mind, whether all these precautions were the work and design of Dr. Zell or of some of his predecessors in the house. It was said in the neighborhood that one of the former occupants of the old mansion, an ancestor of the doctor's a couple of generations or so back, had been a notorious miser, though living in apparent poverty, and that search was made after his death for treasure suppose to have been buried or otherwise concealed about the premises; but it was not known that anything was ever found by those who followed him. My opinion is that a part at least of these precautionary measures were of the doctor's contrivance, because it accords so well with his general character. He had a strong predilection for secrecy. Silence was with him an axiom—almost a cardinal virtue.

I believe I could write a book—not devoid of interest—wholly made up of the little incidents of our family life at Tower Hill, but such is no part of my present intention. I must hasten to the conclusion of this introductory chapter, which is my only contribution to this volume, save an occasional marginal note, and the appendix.

The time came when Dr. Zell became unusually reserved

and grave in his demeanor. He was now seldom seen outside of his private apartments. In a notable conversation which I had with him toward the time of his departure, he told me of the premonition he had of his own approaching death. I had long suspected that he was the victim of some hidden grief or anxiety which, in spite of all his efforts to conceal and overcome, was gradually preying upon his mind and spirits. He said he was about to depart, perhaps never to return. He desired me to take charge of all his property, and keep everything about the house as it then was for the period of seven months. If he did not return or announce his intention to do so inside of that time, I was to take possession of the cabinet and contents, and of his private papers in the iron safe, which he said would contain further instructions concerning the disposal of the property.

It was now late in the fall, and he left us, intending, as he said, to spend the winter in Florida.

I shall never forget the grave tenderness of his leave-taking. I felt that it was final. The time set for his return expired without any word from him. The time designated for me to take possession of the effects and seek his further orders arrived. I obeyed his last directions to the very letter. I found a complete magical cabinet with all the expensive robes, jewels, apparatus, etc., which will be found described in various places in his narrative. All this was a surprise; but what was my amazement and gratitude to find among his papers, a will, bequeathing to me, at his death, all these curious and valuable things, with Tower Hill Farm itself, on condition of my publishing the "life" (which he desired should be done two years from that time, in case of his non-return), and in default of proofs of his death within three years, I was made owner of the property by deed of gift. I was enjoined, however, never to part with the regalia and furnishings of the cabinet, nor to permit them to be removed from the house. I am not to ex-

hibit them, unless it be to an initiate bringing suitable credentials. or otherwise able to prove himself by giving the secret signs of a certain degree in which he had instructed me soon after I first entered his employment. But I have free permission to use these things according to ritual, though strictly cautioned not to exceed certain bounds, nor prostitute the noble science of magic to base and unworthy purposes, "under penalty of that sure retribution bound to follow in some form." "Take warning from my own case," he continues, "*and above all things keep yourself innocent, lest, like me, the flower of your life be blighted by remorse for wrong-doing, and life itself rendered a burden by some great and overpowering temptation, likely at any moment to plunge you into crime.*"

I was thunder-struck at the words. "What! that gentle nature 'blighted by remorse!'" thought I, and life a burden on account of "an overpowering temptation?" I could not believe it. I flew to the "life" for an explanation, and if it interests you, dear reader, as it did myself and the good wife at my side, you have a treat in store for which you will have reason to be grateful.

Motives of delicacy have constrained me to limit this introductory chapter to the statement of what is barely essential to show my personal relations to the author, and to introduce him to the reader.

It may be proper to add that his mysterious disappearance was of a part with his singular career as depicted in the "life." I have made diligent inquiry in Florida, but can not find any trace of his ever having been there. The body of an unknown man, impossible to identify, was found the following summer in one of the vast swamps of the Everglades. It might have been our friend. Did he die by violence, by his own hand, by accident? Did he perish in the impenetrable jungle, a lost wanderer in that inhospitable wilderness? I can not think so. He possessed resources equal to such an emergency. Or is he still alive

and undergoing in some new metamorphosis adventures stranger than any related in his memoirs? All is conjecture as to his fate; but here is his record—a record of a veritable meteoric human destiny, bright, swift, erratic, almost frightful—in an orbit far outside of ordinary paths and leading—where? To the sun of our system, to the central sun of all systems, or destined to circle in an orbit of infinity? Vain speculation. We have seen this phenomenon from our abode in practical life, and have traced it for a time—it has passed from our view, perhaps never to return again to the regions of human observation. But of this and like portents it behoves us to take note.



DR. ZELL'S LIFE STORY.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

FINDING myself nearing the end of a career eventful and singular beyond any modern precedent, abounding in experiences outside of the ordinary routine of human existence, I am unwilling to depart from the world without leaving it an opportunity to derive some benefit from the studies, achievements and trials of my life.

I have traveled in a path almost neglected by my contemporaries, and experimented in a line of investigation but little known by the generations now on earth, though regarded with curious and longing eyes by many.

The circumstances under which this work will be presented to the public will be in themselves a sufficient guarantee of the purity and disinterestedness of my motives. No thought of fame or gain would have induced me to make these confessions during my life-time. Besides, I could not, for certain reasons that will be obvious later on, undertake this publication during my own life-time. It would lead to investigations which might result in very unpleasant consequences to innocent parties in high circles in Europe, and would be likely to attract a degree of publicity to myself which would be repugnant to my feelings. I should be confronted by a public eager for phenomena, yet not sufficiently prepared for it. I do not care to set myself up as a target for the morbid curiosity of an unsympathetic age. My life belongs to the past and the future. The people of this age and country are, as a whole, but little con-

versant with the magic wonders of the past, and therefore unprepared for the still greater wonders of the future. Yet a germ is already awakening in the minds of a few pioneers in psychological research, destined to develop truths which will eventually lead humanity to greater triumphs than the most sanguine now dare to hope for. To such pioneers my work will come at a time when it is necessary for their encouragement. While it will not make adepts, it will show how adepts are made, and there are those now living who will be able to profit by it. Besides, my work will serve to amuse and divert many minds now wholly bent upon things unworthy of them; and in reaching this and other classes of readers, through their curiosity, I hope to instruct them in some of the mysteries of heaven and earth, from which the mercenary spirit and incredulity of the age debar all save the most candid and peculiarly gifted people.

As long as men continue to search for the secrets of nature, whether in material things, in the soul, or in the soul's environment, books like this will be helpful.

THEO. CARDAN ZELL.



DR. ZELL AND THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

CHAPTER I.

FIRST EXPERIENCES—CHILDHOOD AMONG THE PURITANS.

“Biography is, of the various kinds of narrative writing, that which is most eagerly read and most easily applied to the purposes of life. . . . I have often thought that there has rarely passed a life of which a judicious and faithful narrative would not be useful.”—*Dr. Johnson.*

“The lessons of life make deeper impressions than the lessons of books, because they touch the heart before they reach the head.”—*Anon.*

I WAS born in a seaport town of New England, in the first quarter of the present century. If my life has been in any sense extraordinary, the same can not be said of my origin and parentage, for it was as commonplace and humble as that of any poor man's son in my time. My mother's family, it is true, was comparatively rich; but she had married my father against the will of her parents, and immediately removed with her husband to a considerable distance from the home of her birth. An estrangement of the most positive and irreconcilable character existed between my father and his wife's family, which was due probably to their opposition to his marriage with the brightest daughter of the house. Nevertheless, marry they would and did, and my father, who was a sailor by occupation, bore away his beautiful prize in spite of all opposition. The new pair settled down to housekeeping in

an humble way in the port from which my father sailed. At the time of my birth he was away on one of his voyages, serving in the capacity of a second mate, I believe, to a vessel in the South American trade. About three years later my mother died suddenly in his absence. She was almost alone in her illness, save for the presence of a sister of my father's who happened to be visiting her at the time.

I retain no distinct recollection of my mother, except as I saw her on the funeral day, lying in her coffin; but I do remember being lifted in the arms of some sympathetic woman to take a last look at that dead face. It is the earliest memory of any kind which I can recall. Thus my first conscious life opens with a scene of death. Probably few children of three years are brought to the realization of death as I was, for I remember that I apprehended they were about to take her away forever. I did not at the time, however, know anything of death, and I remember that I begged them to release and awaken her. Finding this impossible, I became frantic with grief not unmixed with indignation; for I felt that I was powerless among so many grave, stern people who seemed determined to take her away in spite of my violent protestations. Ah, me! what a loss was that. Had I known its awful magnitude, I must have died on the spot and been buried with her.

Several of my mother's family were in attendance at the funeral, and I am informed that offers were made by my grandfather to adopt and provide for me; but my aunt, a strong-willed woman, who was now in charge of the house, would listen to nothing of the kind. No disposition should be made of the child, she persisted, until the return of the father, and she would charge herself with my care in the interim. I have some faint recollection of this woman, and, justly or not, it is a recollection of dread, for she had little love for children and was a stern disciplinarian, though not designedly unkind. She certainly deserves

credit for preserving me alive and caring for my material needs up to the time of my father's return, which occurred a few months later.

My father was poor and in debt, as he had been living fully up to his wages, in his anxiety that my mother should be as comfortable as possible during his long absences. Nevertheless, he would not entertain the proposition that I should be consigned to my grandfather. The old animosity was too strong and his pride too much involved to admit of this easy and natural solution of the difficulty. So I was packed about among his relatives for three or four years, he away on his voyages all this time, and visiting me on an average, probably, about once a year.

I will pass over this infantile period, stopping only to relate one little incident.

One summer, when I was in my fourth year, I was observed by the good dame who had me in charge to invariably retire to eat my porridge and milk to a certain obscure corner of the garden, a few rods distant from the house, where, in the shade of a large oak-tree, and hidden by a hedge of currant and gooseberry-bushes, I spent many hours alone during the sultry afternoons, and not unfrequently would fall asleep there on the grass. My persistence in strolling to this spot finally attracted the attention of the curious housewife, who quietly followed and watched me. What was her horror to find me sharing my repast with a large black snake, who was contentedly lying by my side and quietly helping himself. Surprised in this singular *tête-à-tête*, I explained:

"He always waits for me here; he likes me to feed him. Don't scare him away, aunty," I cried (as my glossy companion glided quietly into the ambush of the surrounding vegetation), while the old lady shrieked and wrung her hands. Questioned closely on the subject, I confessed that this strange intimacy had been going on all that season. I could not be made to realize that the creature was

liable to hurt me, and wept long and bitterly when forbidden to go to the trysting-place again.

Some time in my seventh year news came that my father was lost at sea, and the question of my future provision became a serious and immediate one for those who had charge of me, assisted by the local authorities. At this juncture, my maternal grandfather's former offer to take me seems to have been strangely overlooked; but he was a hundred and fifty miles off, a great distance in that day, before railroads were thought of; and, moreover, my grandfather was a hated Universalist, and the people where I was were all Scotch Presbyterians of an uncompromising type.

My father's aversion to allowing me to be given up to the Pierreponts, my mother's family, was known and perhaps shared in by his relatives who had me in charge. Besides, it was a pity, they said, "that the poor child should be given over to almost certain damnation by placing him under such dangerous influence." What if Dr. Pierrepont *was* well off, was he not known as a wicked Universalist, who denied that there was any hell? A man of Mammon, who frequented the society of play-actors and horse-racers—nay, who ran horses himself. An enemy of the truth and of the church of God, (namely, the Presbyterian Church (?), of course). Yea, a man who "wrested the Scriptures to his own destruction." So said the minister of our parish in a discussion of the matter, which took place in the trim parlor of the farm-house where I was then placed, the three "selectmen" of the town being there in consultation.

It must be remembered that in those days a Universalist was regarded by his orthodox neighbors as but little better than a downright atheist, and more dangerous. So it was decided that I should be given into the care of a certain "godly man," a saddler of the village, who had expressed a willingness to have me bound out to him until I should

reach my legal majority. I took a dislike to this "godly man" on first sight, and trembled with terror at the threatening look he shot out at me from his cavernous eyes when told by the woman of the house that I was strange and shy. It was a look that seemed to say: "Ah! we will soon take the strangeness and shyness out of him." Even then I had a way of reading people's thoughts; but in this I was not different from other children. They are all diviners of the thought and feeling of those about them to an extent much greater than is generally supposed. I felt at sight that this man, who was to be my future master, was overbearing, unmerciful, and even cruel. In terror and despair I shrank, trembling, to the rather cold protection of the only woman present—she who had lately stood in place of a mother to me. I clung to her skirts with sobs, and begged her piteously to let me stay. But, no; she was a cold-hearted, business woman, and had no great affection for me, or for anything, save money. She was not entirely unfeeling, and perhaps for one brief moment something like a spark of womanly tenderness shone in her face at the sight of the pitiful waif at her feet. But no one interfered for me; the formalities went on, and the papers were duly signed that bound me to this horror of a man. I already felt myself a burden and an incumbrance to the world. I began to realize that for me there was no recognized place in it. I dimly saw myself as an interloper, an unwelcome stranger, whom nevertheless those in authority somehow did not feel quite justified in killing. Perhaps no poor youngster ever felt more entirely alone.

Please remember I had never known the common endearments of childhood, had never been petted and caressed like other children. With the exception of a few kind words, of an odd sort of greeting, from my sailor father, during his two or three visits, I had scarcely known what it was to be loved. Everywhere, it seemed to me, I was regarded with dislike and suspicion—simply tolerated—

while all around me were children whom people loved, and who were not regarded simply as an annoyance. I was cuffed and pulled about by the *paid* women who had the trouble of taking care of me, scolded for tearing and soiling my scanty clothing, and despised for my awkwardness at table.

No wonder that I was shy, and preferred to enjoy my bread and milk in the garden and in the companionship of the serpent, like Mother Eve. I warn the reader that I have dwelt upon these small things simply because they possess a certain significance from a psychological point of view, though trivial otherwise. I was now seven years old. I had already learned to dislike women, to suspect men, and to regard myself as an unwelcome stranger in the world.

The papers signed, I was duly taken possession of by my new master, a Mr. Thornhill—care being taken by those in authority to dispatch a letter, as I afterward found out, to my grandfather Pierrepont, informing him that I had been comfortably placed with an estimable man who had shown an interest in my welfare, and who had kindly adopted me into his own family, undertaking to provide everything necessary for me—to see to my education and instruct me in a good trade, etc. This letter was well calculated to lull all suspicion in that quarter, and although my grandfather would have preferred taking me himself, yet he did not probably feel justified in interfering with existing arrangements; and, in fact, at this stage, could not have done so effectively without involving himself in legal complications. Besides, he had many present cares: a large family of girls to provide for, an involved estate; and so was perhaps not unwilling to dismiss the matter from his mind with the reflection “that, after all, the child was well provided for, would have a good home, acquire a good trade; and what more could reasonably be expected?” Then again, I was a considerable distance

away, and, in a sense, out of mind; and so the well-meaning old gentleman allowed himself to lose sight of me altogether, for the time. I had learned to read and spell a little up to this time, and, for the rest, my education was derived wholly from what I had been able to learn by my almost unaided observation. The birds, the flowers, the bees, had been my companions and educators. Mr. Thornhill was a small farmer and saddler. The latter avocation he carried on mostly in the winter months, though he mended harness all through the year, and especially on rainy days, etc. There was no let-up to hard, grinding labor the year round, except on Sundays, and these, of all days, proved the most gloomy and tedious; for though labor was strictly suspended on the Sabbath day in this household, so also was everything else that could make life endurable. On this day no noise could be tolerated—no thoughtless remarks made—no possible thing from which any enjoyment could be extracted (at any rate, for me), was permitted. On Sundays we were not allowed to laugh, or even smile. Heaven knows I had little occasion to do either, on Sundays or any other day. The rule was that we should go to church (which was several miles distant) for forenoon and afternoon service, and must attend Sunday-school at noon, with nothing to eat until evening.

One of my earliest lessons in the Sunday-school was the story of the two bears eating the children who mocked the bald heads. I was given to understand that bears (of which there were still occasional specimens seen in the backwoods of New England at that time) were always on the lookout for bad children.

After returning from church, at the close of the wearisome day, we were given a slim repast and again posted off to the evening lecture or prayer-meeting at the district school-house. These latter were doleful affairs in the extreme. They consisted of monotonous tales of "experience" from the old people, told over and over again with

groanings, sighs and tears. Long prayers were said which I often thought might tire the ears of heaven itself. Such were the scenes to which I now became accustomed.

Mr. Thornhill's house was a stark, white structure of two stories, rather narrow and high, which gave it a pinched and gaunt look. There was no flower-garden, and scarcely any trees about, to relieve the nakedness of the scene. There was no time for flower culture in this thrifty household; and, besides, flowers were "a vanity." A few scrawny, neglected peach-trees added to the desolation of the scene. Everything about the place looked hungry. The cattle were always thin, the horses poor, the very children half starved. The flesh was to be "mortified," and all enjoyment was denounced as sin, for which strict account must be rendered. On the day I was taken home (?) by this pious man I was given my first lecture, which was all on obedience. I was sternly told that I must do as I was bidden in all things, little and great, and "just so sure," he would say, with cruel emphasis—"just so sure" as I failed or disobeyed in the smallest thing, "just so sure" should I be punished. "Remember," said he, "I will make the blood run if you do not mind me in all things." This was a favorite expression of his, I soon found—this mention of blood. Another favorite threat was to "break every bone in my body." As a matter of fact, my master was not quite so cruel in his actual practice as his words would indicate; but I soon found that he was as cruel as he dare be, without making himself liable to the laws. His whippings and castigations were of daily occurrence, and often, it seemed to me, "within an inch of my life," which was another favorite expression of this good man. All this time I lived in constant terror and dismay, and generally striving the best I knew how to comply with what was required of me. But I was whipped for lying, for carelessness, for contumacy, for everything that I did, for everything that I did not;

but above all things for "sullenness" and what the old man fancied to be "contrariness," as he expressed it. I had soon learned that anything like denial or explanation of any fault that I might be accused of was not only of no avail, but likely to exaggerate the punishment. If I endeavored in never so humble a way to expostulate, while the cruel whip was extended at a threatening angle over my head, he would savagely interrupt me with: "Shut up, you rascal! How *dare* you talk back to me?" or, "You will *lie* to me, will you, you base, ungrateful, wicked, depraved, worthless *brat*?" With the utterance of each of these expletives his rage would seem to grow, and soon the whip would descend upon me, and on more than one occasion he literally fulfilled his threat of drawing blood. So I gradually learned to take these daily scourgings as a matter of course, and, as a choice of evils, would take them in silence rather than run the risk of making it worse by trying to say anything in my own defense. Hence the standing offense of "sullenness and contrariness," which was readily at hand when no other cause for correction suggested itself. His wife was a submissive slave, who never interfered to save me, but, on the contrary, was always talking of the wholesome "rod of correction." To be candid, I must say that they were almost as hard upon their own offspring as upon me. Still there was a distinction. The woman always spoke of me to visitors as "that child," implying that I was different from all other children, in depravity, stupidity, ingratitude, etc. I have heard her say to the old minister on his visits, with a hypocritical air of resignation:

"I really don't know what to do with *that child*," meaning me.

"Why, Sister Thornhill, you must use the rod more," replies the man of God. "You are too easy with him. 'Spare the rod and spoil the child,' saith the wise Solomon."

"True, your reverence," she replied, on one memorable occasion; "but this one" (mysteriously, and in a low tone of confidence), "this one is so deep, so *utterly* depraved. What can you expect? Why, they say his mother before him was a daughter of the world, a misguided woman who gave herself up wholly to vanities. Why, she used to attend balls and theaters; and his father was no better—a wicked sailor."

To which the minister unctuously replies:

"No wonder they were both cut off in their sins. How often do we see the words of Scripture prove true, that the wicked do not live out half their days—"

"By cleaving unto evil ways," chimes in the woman, to which the good man assents by something between a grunt and a groan, and a look of pious complacency to the sister, who in turn assumes a saintly air of resignation and demurely drops her eyes to the floor.

"By the way, sister, how does this youngster get on with his catechism?"

Here my master rather unexpectedly enters.

"Oh, sir!" he cries, with uplifted hands, as if in pious horror, "we can teach him nothing. The devil, sir, has a sure hold upon him, if he ever had upon any boy on earth. Why, you can not *hammer* anything into his stupid head. Just examine the dumb creature and see for yourself, doctor. But wait; nothing less than the rod will make *him* speak."

My master reappears with the rod of correction, in the shape of a whip with a long lash and snapper of his own make, which he flourishes with a frightful crack over my little ragged form, which was crouched behind a chair in the most abject terror.

"Now, my lad," proceeded the minister, gravely, "tell us, 'What is the chief end of man?'"

I made no reply, for I did not understand the learned words of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism, and had the

questions and answers all mixed up in my little stupid brain, to say nothing of being confused by mortal fear.

“ Now, behold his *contraryness*,” proceeded my master and tormentor.

“ ‘ *What is the chief end of man?* ’ you rascal!” he repeats, in a voice of thunder.

“ ‘ Sanctification,’—no, ‘ jollification,’ ” said I, doubtfully, looking tremblingly from one to the other.

[I will here explain that the word “ jollification ” I had from a tramp saddler who had been temporarily employed by my master a few weeks before, and who, being waggishly inclined, had taught me to include this along with the other “ fications ” of the little catechism.]

“ Oh, Theophilus! how *many* times I have taught you that,” interposes the lady, doubtless apprehensive that my dullness might reflect somewhat upon her fidelity as a teacher in the eyes of the stern, indignant elder, who now looked savage enough to devour me. So she prompts me:

“ ‘ Man’s chief end is to glorify—’ ”

“ Ah! now I have it,” thought I: “ ‘ To glorify God, and enjoy himself forever.’ ”

“ ‘ Enjoy *himself forever!* ’ ” repeats the old man, in a tone of intense sarcasm, and then to the preacher: “ That brat thinks of nothing but enjoying himself—eating, idling his time. Why, I can hardly get him out of bed in the morning.”

[I was then getting up at four o’clock A. M., and was kept working steadily as long as I could see at night, and then tumbled off to bed after a repast of brown bread and skim milk, and not half enough of that.]

“ Well, well, well,” says the horrified pastor, “ all I have to say is this: Use the rod, use it often and hard; and then, if this wicked child can not be *saved*, it will not be your fault nor mine if he goes to *hell*, where he is doubtless destined to go; ‘ for broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go therein.’ Let us pray.”

Then followed a prayer in which I was described as a "lost soul," "a worm of the dust," "child of sin," "prone to evil as the sparks fly upward."

I did not comprehend much of it; but the sparks, I supposed, in some way related to the burning lake of fire and brimstone that I had heard a great deal about of late.

After the minister left, I was soundly thrashed and sent supperless to bed, where, in pain and almost famished, in the bitterness of my heart, I invoked God and the spirit of my mother to grant me death as a relief.

My prayer was not answered, at least, not in that way; but from about that time hope began to dawn upon my mind. The idea of escape was slowly taking form in my poor brain; but such were the circumstances of my situation that I was long held back as by a chain of iron. I was now twelve years old. I knew nothing of the country, being deplorably ignorant of everything. I had not been out of the parish since I had been apprenticed. I had no decent clothes, no money, and knew of no way of getting any. I had no friends to go to for help or advice. I had been told that the papers that bound me to my master were of such a nature that should I ever run away, or even leave the farm to go to a neighbor without leave, I should immediately be sent to prison, where I should be kept in a dark dungeon and fed on bread and water during my natural life, unless taken out by my rightful master.

I remembered of hearing, in my early days, some mention of my grandfather; but I had no recollection of ever having seen him. I did not know where he lived, even, or indeed if he lived at all, until a fortunate train of circumstances occurred which gave a new direction to my thoughts, and finally led to my release.

Duplicity is ever the ready ally of Fear and Weakness, and it now came to my relief. I pretended to take a great interest in the catechism, and devoted all my spare mo-

ments to attain by rote its high-sounding phrases and the bewildering array of long words with which it abounds; but the meaning of all this sound doctrine was as unknown to me, nearly, as the Greek of Sophocles. I also affected a great fondness for the Bible, and an ambition to read it through. I soon learned to enjoy many parts of it as highly interesting reading, and not unfrequently I came across passages which gave me comfort and brought tears to my eyes.

I began to regard myself as a sort of martyr to circumstances, and placed there for some purpose: as to try my patience and fit me for something better, either in this world or the next. I had now learned to read pretty well; but the old family Bible and a much-worn copy of the "Pilgrim's Progress" were nearly all the books accessible to me. I was entitled under my indentures to three months' schooling in the winter, and this had been rather grudgingly complied with by my master, who knew that the eyes of the guardians of the poor were upon him, to see that he, in all outward things, at least, kept his contract. So to school I went in my thin, patched and ragged clothes, and from the very first day had been apparently doomed to become the scapegoat of the flock.

Three different teachers had succeeded each other in as many winters, and, however they may have differed in other respects, they were alike in their tendency to single me out as a special victim of their wrath. These were days of stalwart school-teaching and heroic treatment generally, and that school-master was regarded as most faithful to his duties who punished the most severely. I was poor, friendless, ragged and uncouth in appearance, and therefore a fit subject to serve as an example to the rest. I tried to observe "the rules," but it appeared that I was guilty of some offense almost every day. The other boys saw fit to despise me, and were all in league to get me into trouble. If one whispered to me in school-hours, I must

answer him or be "beaten" in the play-ground at the next intermission; if I did answer him, I was flogged on the spot by the school master. I was somehow a little slow to learn in those days, and was daily denounced by the master as an idle, half-witted dunce, etc., and flogged for being behind the class in my lessons. In the course of one winter I had one of my ears twisted and pulled so severely that a portion of the structure was actually affected organically, and afterward lost all flexibility, undergoing a sort of hardening, like ossification. Again, I was compelled, on some trifling charge, to stoop over for a painfully long time in the presence of the whole school, to "hold down" a nail in the floor, while the school-master came up at intervals from behind and struck me on the fleshy parts with a round ferrule of some hard wood. I felt the effects of this punishment in a weakness of the spine for years afterwards.

The invariable rule of our house was, that if a child had been whipped at school, he should also be whipped on his return home, and as the other children would always tell on me with great promptness, I scarcely ever missed the double punishment.

I stumbled on through the maze of hard names in the Bible, reading all in its course, now and then striking something I could understand. I even learned to commit considerable portions to memory. These things did not fail to attract attention from the minister and church people; but this "work of grace" was, I soon found, credited mostly to the diligence of my pious mistress, and above all to the efficacy of the rod. So my regular punishments were but little mitigated, either in frequency or severity, being regarded as a "means of grace." I was always told that chastisement was for my good, and if it had been really so, I ought to have been a saint; but somehow it operated the contrary way, and instead of getting better, I was rapidly getting worse, and bid fair to become a

sneak, a liar, and I know not what more, had the treatment been continued up to manhood. As it was, I was irreparably injured, having lost all hope and all self-reliance. I believed that God was angry with me, that the devil pursued me, and that hell yawned for me. I was often told that the State Prison was to be my future home, and that I was a candidate for the gallows. My spirit was utterly subdued—my heart was broken. I think I should have died of despair at this time had not Providence thrown in my way a new source of hope and consolation.



CHAPTER II.

HOW VERY SLIGHT INCIDENTS LEAD TO IMPORTANT RESULTS.

“The strawberry grows underneath the nettle,
And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best
Neighbored by fruit of baser quality.”

—*Shakespeare.*

I WAS now in my thirteenth year, and had not hitherto been allowed to go off of our little farm, except to church, school, or prayer-meeting, or for an occasional errand to the neighbors; but now a custom grew up of sending me with the horse and wagon on Saturday nights to the post-office, six miles distant, for the weekly mail, and sometimes to obtain small supplies from the village store. On these occasions my orders were most strict: not to stop anywhere on the way going or returning, and to make no delay in town, on pain of the usual “just so sure” retribution; and for some time I was careful to obey. But one night I was compelled to halt at a house for assistance, on account of a slight accident to my rickety wagon. It was an humble cabin, near a stream and surrounded by dense woods—the home of Tom Sling, a notorious character in that region, where he enjoyed an unsavory reputation. It was said by the pious neighbors that Tom was an infidel, and actually had the works of Tom Paine in the house. Besides that, he was a shiftless, idle person who wandered about the country, hunting and fishing; that he was a breaker of the Sabbath, and had even been heard

whistling a dancing tune on that holy day. I had never seen Tom, but had heard the church people speak of him as a "vessel of wrath unto wrath."

Tom came out and assisted me, and then, to my astonishment and alarm, urged me to come in awhile. It was in the fall, and the long evenings were commencing. He threw a buffalo robe over my horse, and before I had time to excuse myself, I was fairly inside before the cheerful wood-fire, surrounded by a scene of mirth and enjoyment. There were several young people present, for Tom had a large family. There was a game of cards going on in one group, and checkers in another corner.

A kindly old woman—Tom's mother—was darning in a snug corner, at one side of the huge fire-place, while a comely middle-aged woman—the mother of Tom's children—came forward with smiling face and insisted on my taking her own chair, while she bustled around, setting things to rights a little, and finally sat down on a trunk, there being no other seat.

The room was scant of furniture, yet singularly comfortable in my eyes, and jokes and laughter were heard on every side. They all seemed to try to make me feel at home; but it was difficult, owing to my shyness. No great progress was made towards getting acquainted that evening; but when, after a short stay, I arose to go, Tom and his wife and the children all urged me to call the next Saturday night, on my return from town, as they expected a cousin from an adjoining township on a visit, and we could have such a grand time "playing blind-man's-buff," one of the boys said.

"Did I play blind-man's-buff? No? What games did I like best?"

I said I had "never played *any* games."

"What, never played any games at all? Goodness! No cards? No checkers? No fox and geese? No blind-man's-buff? No riddles? Well, do come and see us

often," they all chimed in. I could see that they realized my wretchedness and sympathized with me, from the old grandmother in the corner to the youngest child. The older people pitied me from one point of view, and the merry children from quite another. The young ones could scarcely believe that a boy of my age knew nothing of amusement, or "fun," as they called it. And I must be sure and call every time I came that way and join their sports.

I resumed my way home with a guilty heart, for I knew I had committed a grave fault, which, if found out, would bring on me a fearful punishment. Besides, I had a vague idea that I had committed a great sin. I had never seen cards before, save once, in the possession of the aforesaid tramp saddler, and our master had turned him out of the house the next day after the cards were seen in his possession. I heard him say they were "of the devil," and must be burned on the spot, as he would not suffer them in the house overnight.

And now I had been where cards were played with. I was fascinated with this new mystery. What were those curious bits of colored pasteboard, with gaudy pictures of kings and queens and knaves upon them, that I had heard them talk of, and in what did their charm consist? Was it indeed a device of the Evil One? I could not help thinking that the devil's people seemed much happier, and ever so much kinder, than the people who called themselves God's people.

The next Saturday night I stopped again within the charmed circle of the wicked Tom. This time, being strongly urged, I joined in the play, and the new delight of mirth and companionship fairly intoxicated me.

Henceforth I was a weekly visitor in this merry family. It turned out that Tom had known my grandfather, had worked for him at one time. He said I looked like Dr. Pierrepont "for all the world." He described the doc-

tor as "a rich man who lived in a big house with a tower." "A regular aristocrat." Mrs. Sling said that no doubt the old gentleman would be glad to see me, and would do well by me if he had a chance.

"Yes, indeed," chimed in the grandma; "especially if he knew how badly the poor orphan is abused, to be sure."

"Well, he is able to, at any rate," says Tom. "He is a proud old cove, and if he knew that one of his kith and kin was being starved and beaten by an infernal old hypocrite like Thornhill, I rather think he would take the law on him."

"Hush, Tom!" said the prudent wife. "You ought not to talk so of our neighbors, leastwise before the children. 'Little pitchers have great ears.' But come, we are to have a nice lunch, and Theo will join us. So, Tom, you mix the punch."

Tom brewed the rum punch as though his very heart was in the work, and soon a delicious odor of the beverage, the lemons, spices, etc. mingled with the flavors of the savory hot pigeon stew, which was steaming on the table, ready to be served in abundance to all.

Tom had netted the pigeons that afternoon, and amused us by his comical talk all through the meal of how he had gotten the best of the birds from his ambush, and dexterously thrown the net over them just as the "whole congregation" had nicely settled down to partake of the bait. Thus the time flew by, and all too soon I found myself compelled to go, being already two hours behind time.

Gradually I ventured to stay later in this genial company. Thus far I had not been detected; but it was noticed that my trips to town took up much more time than formerly, and I was taken to task about it. I invented a ready lie, of course: I had lost a package out of the wagon, and had to go back almost three miles to hunt for it in the dark. Another time I said I had to wait to

be served at the store, and could not get the horse out of a walk, he was so worn out after the week's work. These excuses served for a time, but in an evil hour for me some one reported to Thornhill that I was frequenting Tom Sling's. Our old white horse had been seen tied up there.

Horror of horrors! I was discovered. "My sin had found me out," they said. My master's rage knew no bounds. All my former offenses were as innocence itself compared with this. It was correctly inferred that my offense was of long standing. I was caught in all my lies.

Mr. Thornhill seized me in his powerful arms and actually threw me across the shop. I landed in a pile of harness leather, not much hurt; but now he came at me like a raging lion, and for the first time in my experience, struck me with his fists, not taking time to get a whip.

I was now in my fourteenth year, and just a little stronger than of yore. I thought the man intended to kill me on the spot—I was desperate with terror. I did not strike back, but after receiving several blows, and with the blood streaming from my face, I grasped the man's arms with a grip of desperation, and looked straight into his eyes with what must have been like the wild gleam of a maniac. He recoiled for a moment, and panting, ordered me to bed, saying he would "settle with me for all this to-morrow."

I retired to my garret, and instantly resolved that, come what might, that should be my last night in that house. I would make a break for liberty. I hastily gathered the few articles of clothing which were called mine, and from these poor rags I selected the best. I lay down quietly till within about two hours of daybreak, when I stealthily arose and softly descended to the ground. All was still. The old house-dog was evidently the only creature awake about the premises, and also the only one there of whom I could wish to take leave. I had often shared my scanty

meals with him by the kitchen fire. He came up wagging his tail, looked up knowingly in my face with his large, intelligent eyes, as though divining my purpose. He made no noise, and for this and the affection I bore him as my only friend about the place, I hugged his shaggy neck.

I could not keep back the tears as I uttered, "Good-bye, Rover. You will never see me again."

Another moment I was off across the fields, and by short cuts and by-roads making the best of my way to the cabin of my friend Tom. It was now June. I was wet and bedraggled with the heavy dews from the grass and underbrush when I reached Tom's house. He was already stirring, for Tom was an early riser. A few hurried words sufficed to explain my situation and purpose. The big heart of my friend was full of sympathy for me and indignation for my oppressor. He knew the country well, and hurriedly gave me directions for the first day. He even marked out with a pencil a rude drawing, showing the principal land-marks of a route he thought the best for me. Most important of all, he gave me the address of my grandfather.

After swallowing a little breakfast, a substantial lunch was hurriedly packed for me by the kind-hearted mistress. I saw Tom whispering anxiously to his wife and rummaging about the old case of drawers. Presently he brought me a few silver coins.

"Theo," he said, "you will need money, and I know you have none. Take this; it is all I have in the house to-day, and very little, but it will help." I tried to refuse, for I knew they were very poor; but he thrust the coins in my pocket. "And now," said he, "we must be off, for the sun is getting up, and old Thornhill will soon know you are gone, and will naturally suspect you have come here for a start. There is never no mischief takes place around here that is not laid to Tom Sling on general prin-

ciples, and in this case they have too much reason; but I'll take care of that."

He went with me for some miles, talking rapidly all the way. I was to make my way for ten miles to a heavily wooded district, but little frequented, which he directed me to, and there secrete myself in the forest till night. I was then to resume my way and travel till sun-up the next day, when he advised me to rest in some secluded place till the next night. I was to watch closely and keep out of the way of all people on the road by day or night, to avoid the villages, watch the guide-boards at cross-roads, and for some days, at least, to keep away from the larger houses on the road.

"Ask information and 'vittels' from the poor; the rich people ain't to be depended on in your case," he said. "They are liable to detain you as a runaway and turn you over to the s'le'kmen, and then back you go in a hurry to your own township and old Thornhill. Blast him! I would rather go with you all the way than that he should ever have the satisfaction of getting you back. But no, that would not do, either. It would only be liable to get us both into trouble; and, besides, I can't leave the folks just now. Haying is coming on, and I must earn a little something to keep the pot a-biling. So, good-bye, boy, and when you get into a snug harbor you won't forget old Tom Sling—the 'gypsy vag,' as they call me. If you ever hear 'em say that I've no principle, you just say: 'P'r'aps not, but he has a heart.'"

And now, with tearful thanks to my benefactor, I am off, looking back often as my friend gradually disappears in the opposite direction. Pretty soon he is out of sight in the distance. From a little hill I see him again, afar off, just going out of sight. He sees me and waves his hat, and I am inwardly aware that if ever Tom breathed a prayer, it is going up to Heaven now for my deliverance.

Now I am alone—alone with a dreary past behind me,

and an unknown future before. A great hope and courage comes to my relief. I am taking the first voluntary, decided step of my life. The will has become action. I feel that success will follow—nay, has already commenced for me. All nature is bright and glorious around me; the birds are caroling from the trees, the air is fragrant with the perfume of Nature's sweet exhalations from field and flower. No other summer morning has ever seemed so glorious as this one, which was to me the dawn of liberty and of hope—the commencement of a new era in my life. As scene after scene opened to my view I was fascinated by the novelty of the situation. For the first time I seemed to possess an individuality. I belonged to myself and had a destiny before me; and the God of all destinies, who takes notice of the fall of a sparrow, would He not take care of me on the road? The assurance came to me that He would; and I never felt safer in my life, in spite of the misgivings I had always had on the subject of bears and panthers, that I supposed frequented the dense forest around me.

From the summit of the hills the surrounding country seemed *all* woods—though it really abounded with clearings and cultivated farms; but this is a common effect of the New England landscape. Anyway, better be eaten by bears, thought I, than to go back to that wild beast of a master, the very thought of whom was more terrible than that of death. But my grandfather—what would he think of me in my ragged, forlorn wretchedness? Perhaps he would disown me, after all. Well, what of it if he did? I would find some place to work, and I guessed my lot could be no worse than it had been.

With these and similar reflections I reached without interruption the place Tom had pointed out for me to hide in till evening. Here, leaving the road for a short distance, I crept into the depths of the wood, and throwing myself on the mossy turf at the foot of a huge pine-tree,

with the numberless creeping vines and tangled forest undergrowth effectually concealing me from view, lulled by the sighing of the trees, the sylvan shade, the hum of insects, and the forest odors, I fell into a delightful reverie, and from that to a sound, sweet sleep. It was dark when I awoke, bathed in dew. I had to gather my thoughts a little before I could realize where I was. By the faint light of a few struggling moonbeams I opened my little hamper of food that the good woman had given me, and ate with a boy's appetite of the cold meats and bread, which seemed to relish beyond any meal I had ever taken before.

Now for the road, and welcome to the first running water. I trudged along with a light, swift pace, and before midnight reached a sparkling stream which crossed the road, dashing with a wild murmur over a pebbly bed. I drank eagerly, and never water tasted so sweet. Greatly refreshed, I hurried on, and the thought of pursuit quickened my pace almost into a run at times. I must have placed many miles between me and my tyrant before the morning sun found me tired enough—this time in a woods of low pines, with wide-spreading branches extending almost to the ground, and no undergrowth, only the green pine needles, old and new, and the fallen cones. The air was redolent with the smell of pine—a dry, aromatic, resinous, bracing odor that I have always loved. Here was safe shelter, and again I rested through the heat of the day, and resumed my journey towards nightfall. Thus far, by good luck and a sharp lookout, aided by darkness, I had escaped all human observation; but starting early on this second evening, I was overtaken by a farmer in a wagon. The man looked at me, I fancied, very sharply. I bowed low, taking off my hat, and met his gaze unflinchingly. It suddenly occurred to my mind that I could do best by appearing entirely unconcerned. I even asked him the favor of letting me ride a piece with

him. "Certainly, my lad; jump in." So I scrambled in and took a seat by his side. But I had not foreseen the long string of questions that was to follow. All my powers were strained to the uttermost to manufacture lies for the occasion and avoid the pitfalls of inconsistency, for the cross-examination proceeded thick and fast. I managed to go through it all with only one or two trifling hitches that I afterwards patched up in time.

I was from Providence, R. I., and going to friends way up in New Hampshire. [Providence was the first name that came into my head, and sufficiently distant, I thought, to be out of the farmer's knowledge, and so it proved.] I had to make instant replies to all his questions, which I did so innocently and adroitly that I am convinced he believed every word I said. He was going to the next village, a few miles ahead on my road. I managed to get him to talking about himself, his cattle, crops, children, etc., to divert his mind from me. In a couple of hours he dropped me at the village, better off for the ride and a bit of useful experience. I resolved to avoid seeking rides in future; but if unexpectedly compelled to talk to people on the road, I would adopt the very story that I had made up in so impromptu a manner for the occasion just past. I modified it a little, prepared myself for every kind of question that would be likely to grow out of it, and felt that I now had a theory that would bear any ordinary test; and at any rate, it was as good as any other, since the truth would not do.

Yankee curiosity must be satisfied in some way, and a fugitive boy must look very honest and be able to give a reasonable account of himself. I hastily made my way through the long, straggling village, and as I passed the door of an inn I was almost paralyzed to see a printed poster staring me in the face, headed with the dreadful words: "Run Away," "An indentured apprentice," etc.; about so tall; dressed so and so; liberal reward for his

arrest and return. But it was not me, and did not answer my description, for which my heart beat fast with joy, mingled with fear that I might nevertheless be apprehended on suspicion and detained; but no one seemed to notice me, and I lost no time in getting out of the town. I made great speed all that night, and continued with all my might till noon the next day, when I halted at a little cabin, where I saw a lot of clean milk-pans out drying on a bench, after the manner of the country. I was yearning for a glass of milk, but I timidly asked the old lady who was spinning inside the open door for a drink of water.

She was about handing me a dipper of water, when she, happily for me, asked if I would not have a bowl of milk instead. "Yes, I would, if she pleased, and be very thankful for it." She gave me the milk, and added to it a plentiful portion of cold hasty-pudding—a most delicious repast for a hungry boy.

A very small installment of the Providence story sufficed for the good old woman. It was enough for her to have learned from my lips that I was an orphan and traveling a long journey on foot and alone. She confined most of her questions to how I fared on the road, where I slept of nights, etc. She insisted on adding to my now almost exhausted store of cold meats, etc., and tucked in some nice nut cakes and a few early apples, just ripe. Blessings on her head! I trudged on more slowly now, for I was tired and foot-sore. I spent that night in a barn some rods from its accompanying farm-house, for I was now in the open country and could go no further without rest. I had a good sleep on the newly made hay, and was up and off before daybreak.

From the best data I had, aided by the country guide-boards, I figured that I had now gained seventy-five or eighty miles of the required distance, and felt myself almost out of danger from pursuit.

I learned that I was now in New Hampshire, and on the

direct road to A——, the nearest post town to my grandfather's residence. I now ventured to travel in the day time, and this day passed without adventure, but brought me thirty miles nearer my destination. On the succeeding day I gained a ride of twenty miles with a good-natured stage-driver, who took me up on the box with him and plied me with questions about the lower country, which he had some notion of going to with a view to improve his fortunes.

That night I boldly took lodgings in a country inn and paid my score from the coins Tom had given me. I was nearing friends, and already met with people who knew Dr. Pierrepont. His fame as a successful physician extended far and wide. The stage-driver had heard of him. "Why, he would saw off a leg," he said, "as coolly as another man would a post." And now here I was within fifteen miles of Tower Hill Farm, which everybody knew as the home of old Dr. Pierrepont. I took it leisurely now, rather dreading the forthcoming meeting with my unknown relatives. I was nervous about my appearance, which I felt to be much against me. I was excessively dirty, travel-stained, foot-sore and lame. I was a mean-looking little starveling at the best, and five days' travel over dusty roads, and lodging as I had, was not calculated to improve my appearance. What would these grand people think of one coming to claim relationship in this plight? Would they not spurn me from their door as a nasty vagrant, "a cumberer of the ground?" as the pious Mr. Thornhill used to say.

CHAPTER III.

TOWER HILL—DR. PIERREPONT AND THE LADIES, WHO
WERE ONCE YOUNG.

“ Good fortune and bad are equally necessary to man, to fit him to meet the contingencies of this life.”—*From the French.*

[To the patient reader who has accompanied me through the painful scenes of my first chapter, I feel like offering an apology for the minutia with which some of its apparently frivolous incidents have been told. But they form a necessary prelude to my story. We are all creatures of circumstances, and molded by our surroundings. How especially true is this of the formative period of a child's life? It has been said, “ The child is father of the man,” and no biography would be complete that slighted the period of childhood. Nay, more, to gain a proper insight into the nature of a man, we should go back to his ancestry and study causes that were at work before he saw the light. Moreover, I will pause to say that if the beginning has been simple and commonplace, so shall the end be grand and curious. To you that have been with me on this humble journey I promise fascinating incidents in strange lands. If you have slept with me in barns and lofts, I promise to introduce you, before I have done, to palaces rich with the accumulated splendors of a thousand years. I have shown you only the simplicities of nature, but I will yet make you acquainted with the subtleties of an art the profoundest ever known on earth.

You have seen a poor and friendless outcast boy scourged and abused, you may perhaps see him later as a man admired and feared. Have patience, and slight not the little things of life. The student that is faithful over small things will have reason to rejoice when he grasps the great results to which they are related. We are apt to neglect the secret springs of human action, but it is wiser to trace them out and follow them as far as possible to their causes and antecedents. That this is especially desirable in a narrative of thaumaturgical interest, needs no argument.

That class of readers which expects to dip at once into the heart of a book and pluck it out, without diligence, or those who have mind only for exciting incident, are not such as I expect to interest. My audience is of a different type. I write for those who wish to know themselves, and whose favorite study is *man* in all his phases, and nature as allied to man. For such I undertake to present a phase of human nature, novel almost beyond precedent, and worthy of their philosophic study. Others may close my book; they may never master its secrets or profit by its arcana.]

As I was loitering along, anxiously speculating about the reception I should be likely to meet with from my newly found relatives, a man drove slowly by in a chaise, and being still a few miles from Tower Hill, and not quite sure of the road, I doffed my ragged straw hat to the occupant of the carriage, and then addressing him timidly:

“If you please, sir, will you direct me the best way to Doctor Pierrepont’s place?”

“Why, I am just going that way, and will set you down there, my son,” said the man, graciously. “Get in; and who sent you?” said he, interrogating me, and evidently inferring that I was a messenger sent to procure the doctor’s professional services.

“No one, sir,” I replied, laconically.

“Ah! I see; sick yourself, eh? Well, you do look a little skimpy, that’s a fact.” He turned one keen, quick glance upon me that seemed to take in everything, and resumed, meditatively: “Arrested growth; want of proper nutrition; nervous prostration, and overtaxation of the muscular system.” Then, addressing me: “Rather narrow across the chest. Anything the matter with the lungs?”

“I am not ill, sir,” said I, with provoking brevity, anxious to avoid further personalities.

He surprised me with a short, quick question:

“Where are you from, boy?”

“Prov—” The lie was on my lips, but I checked myself; the keen eye of my interlocutor was fixed upon me. It was an honest eye and a stern one. I reflected that I was now out of danger, and the Providence yarn was no longer necessary. Besides, this might be a neighbor, who would know me hereafter. No, thought I, I will not commence my new life with a lie, neither will I tell more than is necessary; so I said I was from G——, Massachusetts.

“What was it you *started* to say before you answered me?” said the man, sharply.

“Me?” said I, innocently, to gain time.

“Yes, you, of course; why did you say ‘Prov’—?”

“Ah, yes!” said I, pretending to comprehend. “I came near saying Providence. It was a slip; I had the word in my mind.”

“Ah!” said the man, significantly. “And if you are not sent for Doctor Pierrepont, and do not need him yourself (although I guess I guess you do), what may be your business with him, my good lad?”

“Excuse me, sir, but it is private business, if you please, sir,” said I, firmly, yet with much deference.

“Ah! if it is private, you are quite right not to tell it; but you can tell me your *name*, I suppose, or is that *also* private?” he added, facetiously.

“My name is Theophilus Cardan Zell.”

“Heavens and earth! Why, you are my daughter’s child.” Bringing the horse to a dead stop, and raising the ragged palm-leaf from my forehead: “Ah, yes! my dead girl’s eyes and forehead. I am Doctor Pierrepont, and your grandfather. I am the man who has neglected and well-nigh forgotten my lost girl’s boy,” he added, in a tone of self-reproach; “but here we are at Tower Hill.”

We halted before a large country-house, finer than any I had ever before entered, and a few minutes later the kindly, gentle, silver-haired mistress of the place, and three younger women, fairly took possession of me.

“*It is Sybil’s boy, mother,*” said the doctor; so I was introduced.

Great indeed was the indignation of all as my story was gradually made known. The doctor said he would take the law on the man.

“Oh, let him go,” said the good old lady. “What do we care for *him* now? Let us rather be thankful that the dear boy has escaped.”

I was taken in hand for baths, a tailor was sent for post-haste. Meanwhile I was got into some clean clothes, improvised for the occasion, and in one afternoon I found myself transformed into what seemed like a respectable-looking boy.

My aunt Fanny, an elderly spinster, who seemed to be in authority about the house, took it upon herself to entertain me. She was sentimentally inclined, as I soon discerned. She remembered my mother as though it had been yesterday. She conducted me over the great rambling house, and pointed out the chamber that was once occupied jointly by my mother and herself. Then she brought out a faded album, its leaves turning yellow with age—her own album, of by-gone years (touching souvenir of Aunt Fanny’s girlhood)—a thing that was new on her sixteenth birthday anniversary, as I found by its dedica-

tory page. I was at once pressed to write in it. Between its yellow leaves were scattered, here and there, the remains of long-pressed flowers, now dried almost to a powder, yet exhaling a faint ghost of perfume, while the paper retained the phantom-like impression of their forms. I noticed that the last entry was dated almost twenty years ago. I had never before seen an album, to say nothing of writing in one. But there, closely following the gay inscriptions of her school-mates and young associates of years long past, I managed to scrawl in a big, sprawling hand my name and the date, to which I added, on my aunt's suggestion, "found at last."

This album scene somehow touched my young imagination strangely. My writing in it seemed like going back into the past.

"They are all dead or far away," she said, speaking of my fellow-scribblers in the album, adding: "I have not had the book out for years before; but your mother wrote in it, and I wanted you to be there with her."

She brought out from old cabinets and secretaries many precious souvenirs of my mother, including, to my great delight, a diary, which I shall have occasion to refer to hereafter. She was never tired of telling me about my mother, who, she declared, was the "gifted one of all us girls." And then she used to amuse them all telling their fortunes, and interpreting dreams.

"How did she tell fortunes?" I asked.

"Why, in various ways—by cards, by tea or coffee-grounds, by figures, and by looking in a crystal ball, and so *true*. But papa did not much approve of such things."

And then I was shown my mother's portrait in oil, taken in her girlhood, and a sampler she had worked, and even a silk dress that had once been hers. Here, too, were her books—mostly school-books, with a few gift volumes of poetry; for it appeared she had never taken many of her personal effects from the paternal mansion.

"Speaking of books," my aunt continued, "your mother had a singular taste in books. There is an old family library in the tower, and there she used to pass much of her time reading such weird and curious books. Swedenborg's works were her especial favorites," my aunt said.

I had never heard of Swedenborg before, but I made a note of it.

"When a child she was fond of fairy tales," continued Aunt Fanny, "and used to make up fairy stories, to the delight of the children."

Another mental note by me; I would read these "weird and curious books" that she loved, and commence with the fairy tales.

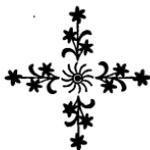
In the midst of this kind and sympathetic circle I soon felt quite at home. It was a home of comfort and plenty, with more than a dash of luxury—a thing hitherto unknown to me.

The doctor was quite a local magnate, with a commanding social standing in the county, due to his wealth and the prestige of being the head of an "old family;" for it must be remembered that respect for lineage still lingers among the New England hills.

His reputation as a skillful surgeon and physician extended over several counties, and his practice was very extensive for a country doctor. He was sometimes sent for to attend well-to-do people fifty miles off. In fact, my grandfather, considering his time of life, was much overworked; but he possessed an iron constitution and an organization made for endurance. His profession yielded plenty of money; but his family was expensive, and his own tastes extravagant. He took especial pleasure in possessing fine horses, which he liked to exhibit at the county fairs and races, and would sometimes back them for money. Besides, he gave a good deal in charity, both in services and in money. So, in spite of his large income,

he probably never had any great surplus, and was even pressed for ready money at times. However, he never seemed to suffer any anxiety from that cause, nor did he ever talk of retrenchment in his manner of life. No man was ever freer from the sordid or mercenary taint. He cared not particularly for money, but he felt himself entitled to everything he needed, and almost everything he fancied, though his desires were always within reason. He would have scorned the idea that he should deny himself or his family anything deemed essential to comfort for the sake of money. If he did not have the money by him, he always had the credit. As an American citizen of the bluest blue blood, a descendant of Puritan forefathers, he seemed to feel that nothing was too good for him or his.

He presented a curious mixture of democratic ideas fused with aristocratic tendencies—a thing not unusual among the older families of our Eastern States.



CHAPTER IV.

WHAT THE BOOKS CLAIM AN ADEPT MAY ACCOMPLISH.

“Whatever a man ardently desires, he very readily believes that he shall some time attain.”—*Dr. Johnson.*

I WAS put to school at once, and my aunts assisted me greatly to keep up with my classes by diligent coaching and patient drill at home; so I advanced rapidly in my studies and was able to keep up with the average pupils of my age. I became an indefatigable reader, and especially of all books I could find treating of the marvelous. It so happened that our library, which was extensive for a private collection, was especially strong in this direction.

The doctor took great interest in mesmerism, or animal magnetism, and had collected almost every book that had appeared upon it. From fairy tales and “*Don Quixote*,” I proceeded to De Foe, and afterward hunted out the rare works of Cardan, Paracelsus, Boehm and Swedenborg, with even a little exceedingly scarce work of Agrippa, some of them a little too advanced for my comprehension; but it was strange how a few months’ application to these erudite studies brought increased power of comprehension. I had a special affinity for these subjects, and they became easy to me.

But while I was absorbed in these abstractions, I lost nearly all of the usual and natural characteristics of boyhood. I was not like the other boys in school, and they lost no

time in finding it out. I was disliked and avoided on account of my singularity by my school-mates of both sexes. I was hated by the boys, and barely tolerated by the girls. This began to be a source of great misery to me, for perhaps no one ever had a greater anxiety to be loved. I did nothing to make myself unpopular, but I was, in the first place, a stranger, and, furthermore, was shy and quiet, absorbed in my own thoughts, and inclined to shrink from all the rough sports of boyhood; so, failing to make a good impression on my first appearance, some of the ruder boys gave the cue to the others to slight and avoid me, and it soon became the fashion.

It came to be understood among the boys as the proper thing to cut me on all occasions. I was "among them, but not of them." Gradually there grew up against me a system of persecution which would have become intolerable but for the interference of the teacher on my behalf. I would have fought desperately in my own defense upon anything like even terms; but I soon found it was useless to contend against the whole school, though I had the hardihood to attempt even that.

So, after a few months, I was very glad to be transferred to the village academy, which was within walking distance from our house. This change, however, brought but little improvement in my social standing, for I was still unpopular and still avoided.

I began to regard myself as a pariah, and one doomed to social isolation. Finding no remedy available in the natural course of things, I began to fall back upon my old friends, the books, and to hunt them for magic and enchantment. Could I not discover in their pages some secret power to *compel* recognition, to ward off this cruel persecution, to transform this antipathy into friendly regard?

One day I came upon a very old book, which proved to be a ritual of mediæval magic. It was a very good epit-

ome of the Hermetic Philosophy, and I became so absorbed in its mysteries that I forgot all my wrongs, forgot the hours, cared not for food or sleep. The morning sun found me still poring over its time-worn, faded leaves; for among the first things I read, and which stamped itself in letters of fire upon my heart, were the following:

“LIST OF THE PRIVILEGES AND POWERS
OF AN ADEPT.”*

* Said by a modern writer on magic to have been translated from a Hebrew MS. of the sixteenth century. To which the translator, himself an adept, adds:

“All of these powers are not easily attainable by all initiates. There are some of them which Solomon hath sealed with his triple seal. . . . Initiates know it . . . ; as for others, what matters it to science or to us whether they laugh, believe or doubt? Such, in fact, are the triumphs of occult philosophy, and we are in a position to brave an accusation of folly or a suspicion of charlatany when we assert *that all these privileges are real.*”

I. He converses with the seven genii who command the powers of the air.

II. He is superior to every affliction and to every fear.

III. He disposes of his own health and life, and can equally influence the health and life of others.

IV. He reigns with the higher, and is served by the lower powers.

V. He can neither be surprised by misfortune, nor overwhelmed by disasters, nor vanquished by his enemies.

VI. He knows the reason of the past, present and future.

VII. He holds the secret of the invocation of the dead.

Such are the seven transcendent privileges; those which rank next in importance are as follows:

I. To find the philosopher's stone.

II. To possess the universal medicine.

- III. To know the laws of perpetual motion.
- IV. To possess the secret of changing into gold, not merely all the metals, but the earth itself, and even the refuse of the earth.
- V. To subdue the most savage animals . . . and to know the words which charm serpents.
- VI. To possess the numerical art which gives the universal science.
- VII. To be able to speak learnedly on all subjects without preparation and without study.

Finally, the seven least privileges of the magus are these:

- I. To pierce at a glance the depths of men's souls and the secrets of women's hearts.
- II. To force Nature to give in to him whenever it may please him.
- III. To foresee all future events which do not depend upon a superior free arbiter, or on an indiscernible cause.
- IV. To give at once and to all the most efficacious consolations and the most salutary councils
- V. To triumph over adversities.
- VI. *To conquer love and hate.*
- VII. To possess the secrets of wealth; to be always its master, and never its slave; to know how to enjoy even poverty, and never to fall into abjectness and wretchedness.

Here was enough to satisfy the ambition of the most aspiring mystic. As for me, it fired my heart with enthusiasm, and I then and there resolved to give my whole life to the study and attainment of the hermetic science, and to go to the end of the earth if necessary to acquire initiation in its mysteries.

I had at this time no doubt of the absolute literal truth of all that was promised, and not much idea of the diffi-

culties to be encountered, though I surmised these from the intimations of my authors.

I read during the greater portions of the nights and in all my spare time, wading breast-high in mysticism. The greatest part of what I read was above my comprehension. It was largely enveloped in a cloud of allegory, metaphor, and exasperating obscurity. It was hard to discern what should be taken literally, and what figuratively. But I found a singular correspondence in regard to the leading features, as treated by the different authors.

Writers on magic have ever been cautious, enigmatical, and seemingly desirous of concealing their true meaning from the public, loading down their works with jargon next to incomprehensible to all but the few who have proceeded in their studies by regular stages, and who have the advantage of "illumination" from those who are more advanced in the mystic arcana. I had no teachers or interpreters, and my progress was slow. My ardor, however, increased with the difficulties I encountered, and I was soon surprised and delighted to find I was making real progress, and could understand and think clearly and rationally upon ideas and propositions that at first were far above my comprehension.

My devotion to these studies did not pass unnoticed by the family, and I do not think it was altogether approved; but no efforts were made to restrain me. My grandfather believed in freedom of development, and was glad to see me studious. My aunts were pleased to see me reading the books that were dear to my mother.

It came out in a family talk over the matter that the Pierrepoints had for generations been noted for their leaning toward mysticism; and in the days of the witchcraft excitement one of our ancestors had narrowly escaped prosecution on suspicion of having had to do with evil spirits. This ancestor it was who had collected most of the old and rare books in the library pertaining to occult-

ism, and since his time others of our race had added to them, down to grandfather, who scrutinized every catalogue he could get hold of for works on mesmerism.

Grandma laughingly ended the talk by saying to her husband:

“ Ah, yes! the Pierrepoints were ever an uncanny lot; and I remember, when a little girl, that the children were afraid to pass the mansion at night, for it was said that your father had regular meetings with Old Nick himself in the tower.”

“ For want of better company, doubtless,” said the doctor, who did not admire his orthodox neighbors.

So I was allowed to go on with my “ uncanny ” studies, and, after all, the doctor was not displeased, probably, to see the family trait cropping out in the youngest representative of the line.



CHAPTER V.

A SCORNFUL BEAUTY — THE ASTROLOGER'S LETTER— CHANGE.

“Men would be saints if they loved God as they loved women.”—
Saint Thomas.

“Those sciences which are remote from one another can not be extended without bringing them nearer and forming points of contact between them.”—*Condorcet.*

ATTENDING the academy at this time was a young lady, Estelle Carlton. She was a very beautiful blonde, a bright, apt scholar, with a refined manner and a bewitching smile. She was the belle of the neighborhood, and admired by all the boys as a paragon of grace. I had known her in the little district school, and from the very first was captivated, nay, enthralled, by her charms. This boyish worship of mine happened somehow to get out among the school-girls, who chaffed Estelle mercilessly about her new conquest; and being very sensitive to ridicule, the young miss saw fit to make all manner of fun of me, openly declaring her disgust for such an admirer, and showing her scorn of me upon all occasions. Whether at this time she really had such a dislike of me as she pretended, I do not know, though it is likely enough, as I was singularly lacking in all manner of attraction that could make a boy interesting. At any rate, her scorn of me accompanied her to the academy.

So great was my infatuation, that the more I suffered

from her ridicule and contempt, the more fascinating she seemed. Of course I was a fool, from every point of view, and was denounced as such by my charmer before the laughing girls, whose mission it seemed to be to torment us both. It was a pleasure for me to be in any way identified with this proud beauty, so their persecution was not without its grain of comfort to me; but to the girl it was far otherwise. She lost no opportunity of showing her aversion to me.

How it was possible for my affection to withstand such a storm of ridicule and contempt I can not now see; but it is certain that this cruel divinity held undivided sway over my fancy.

It was all I could do to keep my eyes off of her for a few minutes at a time in the recitation-room. I was always writing verses in praise of her, and receiving all manner of slights from her in return. For a long time it made no difference. She was the light and joy of my life, in spite of all her caprices. She would encourage me just a little, at rare intervals, by a mere look or some simple act of unwonted kindness, which would make me happy for several days, but only to be again cruelly cast down by some unmerited rebuke.

At last came the crowning indignity in the shape of an outrageous open insult, at a little party where I was doing the best I could to be agreeable in my shy way. This turned the scale. By a tremendous effort of the will, I resolved to banish the vain creature from my thoughts at once and forever. And not her alone, but all her sex. Magic would place me above the influence of all human love and hate. It was another incentive—if another had been necessary—to bind me irrevocably to the career of a mystic.

I think some such experience as this lies at the base of many a neophyte's aspirations. We shall see the proud Estelle again in this history.

So I became more and more of a recluse. My books were full of mystifications, but I applied myself with all the greater assiduity. The first requisite in the aspirant for initiation is obedience, and in this I was well schooled. I began to congratulate myself that my seven years under Thornhill were not entirely lost if his stern discipline had accustomed me to the prompt, implicit obedience so necessary in a neophyte.

Self-control and silence had also become habitual to me. Indolence—the peculiar sin of the student—was not in my nature. Faith, enthusiasm and will I had in abundance, and courage I hoped to attain. I was prepared for all manner of self-denial, and had already suffered almost every humiliation that one of my age could be subjected to. All of these conditions were favorable to my purpose.

My motives at this time were selfish. I desired to attain hidden knowledge and occult power for the sake of the rewards held out. Nor can I even now imagine any other sufficient motive to induce one to embrace the mystic life. There is a great deal said in the books about “disinterestedness,” and it is even set forth as a requisite for success. But I can not conceive of what use the powers and privileges of an adept would be to the possessor if he could not use them for his own benefit—not necessarily to the detriment of others, but as an innocent means for his own happiness and advancement. It is a well-known principle of occultism, however, that its powers should never be prostituted for base and unworthy purposes, and in fact can not be without serious consequences to the artist. All authorities agree on this point, and all are careful to caution the student at every point in his progress to avoid the abuse of his powers. Many cases are known where the disregard of this injunction has ushered in a long train of evils upon the transgressor. Loss of power, misfortune and a violent end being the usual consequences.

It is not permitted to disturb the usual order of Providence for purposes of injustice, as I have myself been taught by a bitter experience.

The unlearned reader must not confuse sorcery with magic. The former is indeed unlawful, baneful and dangerous to society; while magic is a beneficent science which teaches the art of employing invisible natural means to produce visible effects.

That it may be abused is no good reason for condemning it. Because the discovery of poisons has followed progress in chemistry, shall there, therefore, be no more chemical experiments? Because there are occasional explosions and loss of life, shall there be no more dynamite for blasting rock? Is there any among the good gifts of Heaven that man has *not* contrived to abuse? Then again, if chemistry has furnished poisons for the assassin, has it not also provided antidotes for the physician? So, if the black arts of sorcery have grown out of occultism, heaven-born Magic has alone given us both the explanation and the remedy.

As to the prevalence of selfish motives in the votaries of mysticism, if it be a selfishness within lawful limits, I do not see why it should be denounced more than selfishness in any other branch of human activity.

The pursuit of happiness is the divine right of all mankind, and animates even the religious devotee at the very shrine of his devotions. Properly understood, there is probably no such thing as pure disinterestedness in earth or heaven, because it would be a thing without equilibrium, and in itself contrary to all laws and all analogy.

I found that the four cardinal principles of magic were embraced in an incommunicable word which was partly a word and partly an act. That is, it commences with letters and ends with action. It is a word of four characters. It is not permitted to reveal it to any, but in its practical interpretation it means:

To know,
To will,
To dare,
To keep silence.

This embraces, first: knowledge of the ways and means to accomplish; second, the intention to perform; third, the courage to execute; and, lastly, in *silence* is typified not the mere habitual absence of expression, not alone the concealing of dangerous secrets from the unworthy, but also the complete shutting out of all extraneous things that would interfere with the purpose and intent of the operator, and especially the refraining from all boasting as to the results. Silence is, in fact, a cardinal principle with the hermetic philosopher, and is enjoined by all schools. It is said that all magicians who have boasted of their works have come to violent deaths.

It is partly for this reason that so little is known of magical science.

Inseparable from magic, and antedating it in antiquity, is astrology—the science of the stars, and their relations to human destiny. I found several works on this science in the tower library, and soon mastered its rudiments. I could not, however, at this time cast a horoscope, for want of the indispensable data known as an ephemeris for the year. This latter, I will explain, is simply an almanac showing the places of the planets of our solar system in a given locality for every day at noon. The same results may be obtained by trigonometry; but I was not then far enough advanced in my mathematics to admit of my resorting to that means.

Meanwhile I heard by accident of an astrologer, then living at Boston, who was said to be very skillful in the practice of his art. Burning with curiosity to know what the stars indicated in relation to my future, I wrote to the artist, remitting the small fee required, with the date of birth, and in due time received the following reply:

“ BOSTON, ———, 18—.

“ You were born under the influence of Mercury in good aspect with the moon, with Jupiter rising well dignified in the house of life, in opposition to Mars. This would give a medium, well-proportioned body, with a brilliant and versatile mind. Your Jupiter afflicted by Mars and the sun, before reaching a good lunar aspect, signifies the early loss of one or both parents, and it is probable that you saw little but trouble till you passed your fourteenth year, when, I judge, you met with some good fortune and a decided improvement in circumstances. Uranus in the mid-heaven, well aspected with Mercury, influences your mind and employment through life. Under his commanding influence you will meet with many strange adventures, and unless you are very careful, will be subject to accidents and sudden vicissitudes, for such is his nature. You will follow some avocation much out of the common way, and your inclinations will powerfully tend toward mystic arts. Having been gifted by Nature with a divining soul, you may study astrology with success. The exceptionally perfect trine aspect of Mercury and the moon will enable you to master many sciences easily and without the assistance of a teacher. You will be unfortunate in love and fond of solitude. You will travel extensively and live much in foreign lands, where at one period of your life you will suddenly rise by singular means to high honors, but afterward lose them as suddenly.

“ After your early privations you will ever be in comfortable circumstances, and there are many testimonies of wealth after middle life. Yours is no common destiny, and I can not undertake to enter into more particulars without knowing the hour of birth, which I advise you to ascertain, if known, that you may obtain a more complete nativity, which in your case more than in ordinary lives will prove invaluable, by reason of your liability to *sudden* changes through the influence of Uranus, which will require all your care (with the help of science) to avoid and turn to your advantage. This planet is yet a puzzle to astrologers; but, when dominant, it is sure to cause eccentricity, curious studies, out-of-the-way employments, together with sudden and unexpected turns of affairs either for good or evil, but too frequently of evil import. He gives, however, when modified, as in your case, great and

rare powers over the unseen agencies of Nature, and so conditioned, causes in the native a fondness for magic and sorcery, against which I would especially warn you, lest through rashness you encounter the dangers which attend the practice of these arts by those who have not been properly instructed in them.

"You should reach a good old age, unless prematurely cut off at some momentous crisis of fate, induced by a train of evil directions too powerful for your nature to withstand. I find culminating points of these evil directions in operation frequently in middle life, at which time you should be careful. Escaping these, you will reach old age. There are testimonies of a violent or very sudden ending which, with the present data, I can not undertake to interpret definitely.

"Truly yours,

"THOMAS LIECESTER,

"*Astrologer.*"

These predictions served to confirm my purpose. Greatly encouraged, I plunged deeper and deeper into mysteries, and as I found frequent allusions to Latin authors, I resolved to master that language, that I might pursue my studies with the more facility.

Meanwhile I was burning for initiation, concerning which my authorities were non-committal. However, I found some hints as to the preliminary steps, and these I immediately put in practice.

I dieted for forty days; bathed every morning in running water, rising early, and wore no soiled clothing; I confined my diet to vegetables and fruits; I spent many hours in silent meditation. But these exercises and observances—good in themselves—did not seem to bring me any nearer to initiation. Despairing of finding in this part of the country any one competent to instruct me in these mysteries, I concluded to defer the matter until such time as I could travel in search of an initiator. Meanwhile I applied myself with renewed energy to my Latin, and read with close attention all the books I could find

treating of animal magnetism, which seemed to me to be the great connecting link between the physical and the metaphysical sciences.

to volume

In this conclusion I was right, and a remarkable series of experiments has since abundantly confirmed it. Magnetism is the real key to magical science, and contains in itself the explanation of almost all the achievements and marvelous feats attributed to the magi of all ages. It is the common ground between materialism and spiritualism, where the natural and the so-called supernatural may meet and harmonize. It is the physical base upon which is reared the whole grand superstructure of occultism. It involves in its operation matter, mind and spirit. Its foundations are deep in the solid earth of physical science; but its superstructure reaches to the very cloud heights of speculation and conjecture, and it promises to serve as a tower connecting earth with heaven.

It was known to the ancient magi, but its secrets were studiously concealed from all but the few initiates, and were nearly lost to the world by the burning of the Alexandrian library in the fourth century.

It remained for Mesmer to recover, by the most natural and commonplace means, and without the aid of occult knowledge, this universal agent of life, and to introduce it, with all its glorious possibilities, into the domain of science and research.

It was understood between the doctor and me that these studies should form the prelude to a course of reading in chemistry, anatomy, etc., with a view to my qualifying as a physician; but this was not to be. In my twenty-first year my generous guardian died suddenly from an attack of pneumonia, induced by exposure. This threw everything at Tower Hill into confusion. It now came out that the doctor was deeply in debt, and his estate heavily encumbered.

I could not consent to remain any longer as a burden

upon these kind friends. I was anxious to go away, to encounter fresh experiences, and above all to seek initiation.

I would go to New York, the great intellectual as well as material metropolis—the center of American thought and civilization. There, if anywhere, I would meet with those competent to put me on the road to success, or, failing in that, I would seek the old world. I would go to Egypt, Arabia, India or anywhere, to find a man who held “in his right hand the keys of Solomon, and his left the branch of the blossoming almond.” Failing all this, I would seek the shrines and temples of the long-buried cities in those lands that witnessed the dawn of civilization. The words of Napoleon struck me with a peculiar significance: “There is the East, there is India.”

In a few days I was on my way to New York, with a light heart and a lighter purse, but with the hope, enthusiasm and radiant health of that glorious season of life when all the world seems young in sympathy with youth.

With the exception of my kind relatives, I left no one behind who seemed to regret my departure. My seven years at Tower Hill Farm had gained me not a single friend. Estelle condescended to bid me a hasty and frigid good-bye that went to my heart like ice. I wondered if there was anything in science that would subdue that proud and vindictive spirit which refused to a school-mate a kind word at parting. Oh! thought I, for the power that conquers love and hate. Oh! for the knowledge that “pierces at a glance the depths of men’s souls and the secrets of women’s hearts.”

CHAPTER VI.

IN NEW YORK — SINGULAR PROPOSITION FROM ONE BUSINESS WOMAN, AND A STORMY INTERVIEW WITH ANOTHER.

“That conduct often seems ridiculous, the secret reasons of which are wise and solid.”—*Rochefoucauld*.

I AM in New York, a green and awkward country boy, friendless and almost moneyless. For a few days the multiplicity of strange sights and scenes sufficed to divert my mind in some degree from the real gravity of my situation. I was intoxicated by the hum and activity, the noise, hurry and excitement of the great city; but soon I began to realize the pressing necessity of employment. I commenced, at first very shyly, to inquire among the merchants and shop-keepers for some opening whereby I might earn enough to insure food and clothing; but soon I found, not a little to my surprise, that this, for one in my situation, was no easy matter. No one wanted me upon any terms. Every place, it seemed, was already filled. Probably my appearance and want of experience were against me, and, besides, I was unknown and could give no city reference. There was, in fact, but few things I could do. My acquirements were not of the practical kind. I might doubtless have been taught branches of usefulness; but people in need of help in the mercantile pursuits do not care to be to the trouble to break in beginners, and especially to receive strangers into their con-

fidence. I spent many days rambling about over the vast net-work of busy streets, asking for work, but received no encouragement whatever from any one of the many applied to. The future began to look very dark to me. I was, it seemed, shut out from all the ordinary avocations of mankind.

After several weeks' tiresome, fruitless search for employment I began to think that there was really no place for me in the busy world. I had no trade.

[Alas! for the poor wanderer without a trade. I advise every young man to acquire a knowledge of some useful handicraft, no matter how humble. It may save him in the day of extremity from untold humiliation.]

My anxieties, as I saw my little money melting away, rapidly increased and became really distressing.

It is in circumstances like these that men are driven to despair, to crime and suicide. I have often wondered why in the larger cities there are not bureaus of industry established by the local authorities to provide some kind of employment for those who need it—a way of obtaining honest bread, at least, until something better can be found for the needy applicant. A society with this end in view could find no better field of usefulness.

One day, as I was passing along a prominent side street not far removed from lower Broadway, my eye caught the heavy silver door-plate of Madam Aurelian, Clairvoyant, Seer and Magnetic Healer. It was a fine, imposing brown-stone house, situated a little off from the roar of the business streets, and yet very central. It was on a street which had been devoted exclusively to fine residences, but which was now being encroached upon by the growing demands of business, and its buildings were gradually undergoing a transformation from dwellings to stores and offices.

Madam had Turkish baths, etc., for ladies. In fact, the entire establishment was exclusively for ladies.

The idea occurred to me to interview the lady with a view to employment. She doubtless employed help, and might have something I could do. I had not yet asked a lady for employment, although I had applied to hundreds of my own sex. I would try her, for a change; besides, I was naturally attracted by the novelty of the Madam's profession.

So I nervously ascended the flight of broad steps which led to her door, and timidly rang the bell, which was answered by a neatly dressed young waiting-woman who conducted me to a reception-room, where she said I might take a seat until the Madam could see me, she being engaged for the time being. Meanwhile, "would I please state my name and business?" I wrote my name on a card, but declined to state my business, as I said "it was of a private and confidential nature."

I waited for over an hour in the richly furnished room, where several ladies were waiting before I entered, and each was admitted in the order of her arrival; for the business of this house was conducted on the principle of first come, first served. Finally, I was ushered into the presence of the Seeress.

It was a large room, which had evidently once been the library of a fine private residence. It was finished in some rich dark wood. Its draperies, carpet and furniture were all of a somber character, and the windows were darkened so that a sort of twilight prevailed. The Madam, a tall lady, with luminous dark eyes and stately bearing, was seated behind a table in the darkest part of the room. The walls were lined with tall book-cases. Globes, electric batteries and various mechanical devices and scientific apparatus were stationed about. I was conducted to a seat in front, and near the Madam, where the feeble light of the room fell upon me, while the lady was in deep shadow. She was dressed in black, and wore few ornaments.

After inviting me to be seated, she said, in a deep but low and finely modulated voice:

“My young friend, you have called, I am told, upon confidential business, and I shall be glad to know the nature of it.”

“Madam, I am in search of employment, and thought you might have something for me to do.”

“And so this is your *confidential* business! And pray, what could you imagine I should be likely to have for you to do—I, who employ only girls, and whose business is almost exclusively with ladies?”

“Pardon me, Madam, I did not know much of the nature of your business, excepting what was conveyed by your door-sign. I thought there might be something—”

“No, I do not need you; you had better look elsewhere.”

“Ah, Madam! my case is a peculiar one. I have already been refused employment by everybody I have asked. The men of this city have no word of encouragement for me; I have ventured to-day to ask a woman. Besides, you are a magnetic healer; I have studied magnetism, and feel much interest in it.”

At this point the woman seemed slightly interested. She asked me where I was from, and I briefly stated the obscure place in distant New Hampshire, and the fact that I had studied there with Dr. Pierrepont, a physician.

Some other questions elicited the fact that I was a stranger, and without money.

She paused, regarded me closely for a minute or two, and then remarked, thoughtfully, and with some kindness in her tones:

“I am truly sorry for you, and should be glad to assist you to employment; but indeed I have no place for you in my establishment. By the way, what can you *do*?”

This was a poser, for of all things, I was not able to say in what capacity I expected to be employed; so I

blurted out that I was ready to do anything that would give me bread.

"Yes," said she, "but what *particular* thing do you feel best qualified to undertake?"

I replied that I had some education in mathematics and the ordinary English branches taught in a preparatory school, and some knowledge of Latin; and, I continued, with hesitation, "I have studied astrology, animal magnetism and *magic*."

At these words the Madam started as though she had received a shock from one of her own electric batteries.

"Magic?" said she. "No wonder the merchants of New York have no place for you; you should have mastered book-keeping instead. But how did you come to study, at your age, these singular branches of knowledge?"

"Because, Madam, I had a natural taste for them, inherited, they say, from my mother and from ancestors who had the same predilections; and then the books came in my way."

"Came in your way?" she repeated, with a smile. "Yes, I suppose they did, for, rare as they are, they always come in the way of those who need them; that is the experience of all mystics. But let me see what you know of magic. What is the first prime requisite of one who would devote himself to the study of light?"

I answered at hazard, generalizing from what I had read, and guessing her meaning:

"I should say the first requisite for an operator was knowledge, the next will, the next courage, and then silence, the great mystic virtue."

"Right," observed the Madam, "from your standpoint and your understanding of my question; but that applies to one who would be an adept. You have not yet been initiated in the mysteries?"

"No, Madam; and it is initiation I am in search of, if

it takes all my life, and if I have to travel over the round world for it."

These words, spoken with enthusiasm, evidently touched her. She replied:

"The first requisite in a novice is *obedience*; the second is industry; the third is silence. Do you think you could stand the test of obedience?"

"I beg you try me," I replied. "I have had much hard drill in it all through my childhood, and I feel that I should be equal to any test."

"Come to me at precisely three o'clock to-morrow afternoon, and I will see what can be done for you."

She arose as a sign that the interview was ended. I thanked her, bowed low and departed.

I retired in better spirits than I had enjoyed for many a weary day, feeling sure that I had awakened such an interest in the Madam as would insure me a place.

It was Saturday evening, and I was filled with dread at the thought of meeting my aggrieved landlady, to whom I was now four weeks in arrears for board, and totally unprepared to liquidate the debt. I entered the dreary sitting-room, which had now become gloomily familiar. It was such a room as in the average third or fourth-class boarding-house usually serves as reception-room, waiting-room and (by courtesy) the parlor of the house. It was in this room that I had first met the vinegar-visaged woman who presided over the place. Her husband was a seedy-looking, meek-eyed man, who was seldom seen by the boarders, and never known in any business transaction. A faded, much-worn carpet covered the floor. There were plenty of plain, sad-colored chairs, in various stages of dilapidation, ranged along the walls. A rickety round table occupied the center of the room, and a worn volume of Shakespeare, in very fine print, much thumbed and dog-eared, graced the table. Portraits of the landlady and meek husband, and a cheap print of an Arctic scene

(a ship locked between icebergs), afforded the only relief against the smoky paper, with its tiresome, monotonous figure, with which the walls were covered. The room was a symphony of blankness, leanness and desolation.

Enter my landlady, with much energy and a certain fire in her eye well calculated to strike terror to the heart of an impecunious boarder.

I greeted her in what I intended as a most conciliatory manner; but her features assumed a sterner and more uncompromising expression as she opened on me almost fiercely:

"Well, young man, it's four weeks to-night, and I hope you have the money."

"I am very sorry to disappoint you, Mrs. Clark; but I have no money to-night, having failed to get any place as yet, though I now have what I believe to be a sure prospect—a certainty of employ—"

"Well, I can't pay my bills on *prospects*, however sure they may seem to you. I must have money."

"Yes, Madam; I understand that quite well," I replied, in a low voice, and soothingly. "And I do not intend that you shall ever lose by your kindness to me. You shall be paid every penny, and soon. Depend upon it, the first money I earn is yours, and I have almost a *promise* of work for next week."

"You said almost the same thing last week, and I am getting sick of it. I need money for the butcher, and I am behind with the milkman, and then there is the plumber's bill for fixing the kitchen pipes, and nearly all the boarders putting me off with excuses, and *sorrows*, and *hopes*, and *prospects*. Why, there is Smith lost his job—and I have been feeding him now for three weeks, and Heaven knows when he will get work; and Jones, the tailor, working on half time, and that other country fellow looking for work in a planing-mill, and Nichols moping around sick, and *no money*."

She paused for breath, and then added:

“I am going to put a stop to it—and I might as well commence with *you*. You’d better leave what little baggage you have here and find some other poor, hard-working woman to feed you.”

This climax of misfortune, though not entirely unexpected, nearly brought the tears to my eyes. It was not alone to be poor and helpless, but to be suspected, ridiculed and turned out-of-doors as a dead beat!

I turned an imploring glance upon the angry woman, and replied:

“All that I have is yours until you are paid, and it is worth several times what I now owe; but do not turn me from the house now, when I am on the very eve of success. I need my clothing to make a respectable appearance with my employer. Let me stay another week, and you shall be paid or secured for every penny.”

“Very good; I am not a hard-hearted woman, though I may seem so, and I don’t believe you mean to cheat me; but remember, this can not go on. As I told Jones last week things must come to a head some time.”

With this Parthian shot, she bustled out of the room.

This dreaded crisis over, I was greatly relieved, and almost happy with visions of a lucrative salary and pleasant surroundings with the stately seeress. I would make myself indispensable to her, I thought; would gain her confidence and friendship. She would teach me the secrets I so much coveted, and then success—for did not the astrologer say I had “a divining soul?” Ah! yes, and also that about this time I should meet with a pleasant change of circumstances. Courage, then, and cheerful thoughts till to-morrow afternoon! This might be the last day of want and indignity.

Till the next day, big with good or ill fortune for me, seemed long to wait. In the morning I arrayed myself in my best apparel, and took care to be scrupulously neat

and clean; for these things go a long way with ladies, thought I, and I need every advantage.

A little before the appointed hour I presented myself at the door of my divinity, and was again ushered into the presence-chamber.

After a gentle greeting Madam Aurelian opened the conversation by saying that she had made this Sunday appointment for our interview on account of her being greatly preoccupied on week days. "And now," she continued, "tell me all about yourself from the beginning."

Accordingly, I gave a brief sketch of my life up to date, which seemed to interest my auditor considerably, and at the close of my statement she observed:

"You were rash to come here without letters, though it is not unusual for young men to do so. I understand that you brought no letters?" she added, interrogatively.

"I have no letters, Madam, to anybody in this city, but I have a letter" (opening my pocket-book to produce it) "from Professor Liecester, of Boston, the noted astrologer, which I beg you will permit me to show you."

I was glad of some excuse for introducing this letter, which I felt was somehow pertinent and likely to have weight with the seeress.

She smiled as I handed her the paper, but became more serious as she proceeded to read it.

"This is a brief nativity, I perceive, and from good authority, I must say. Professor Liecester is one of the few living astrologers whose words mean something. He says you have a divining soul," she added, musingly; and then, after a pause: "Well, my young friend, what do you expect me to do to aid you?"

I felt myself change color. I had expected to be retained at once and installed as some kind of a helper for the Madam; but, on second thought, it was all a presumption of my own. She had promised nothing of the kind.

Because she had listened to my story, and made this ap-

pointment with me, I had jumped to the conclusion that she meant to employ me. Was I, then, to be cruelly disappointed? She perhaps contemplated trying to aid me elsewhere. These thoughts passed swiftly before my mind, as I paused for a moment from sheer embarrassment; but my resolution was instantly taken; I would make one desperate effort to carry the citadel of my hopes. I felt that I *must* have the place.

"Madam," I said, very gravely, "I have no right to *expect* you to do anything for me; but I beseech of you—if it is not utterly impossible—to try to find a place for me in your own establishment. I will promise you the utmost fidelity, such as they say is rare among men. I do not care for the matter of compensation—I leave that to you; but do try to make me useful in some way. I feel that my fate depends upon your decision."

My earnestness evidently impressed her; she paused and regarded me thoughtfully. Shaking her head with a regretful expression, as though about to say something disagreeable, I suddenly interrupted her thoughts by saying:

"Pardon me, Madam Aurelian; you spoke yesterday of obedience; that led me to infer that you intended to test me in that regard, and aroused my hopes. You will not surely doom me to disappointment?"

[I wished by this remark to check the rising refusal and induce a reconsideration, on the ground of her having, in a manner, committed herself in the previous interview.]

"Ah! yes, I did mention obedience as the first virtue of a neophyte in magic; it was in reply to something that had gone before."

She paused for reflection. Some novel idea appeared to have taken possession of her mind. She broke the silence by saying, rather impulsively:

"You wish me to put you to the test of obedience, and that suggests to me the only possible way in which I could employ you here—perhaps the only way in which I could

serve you at all. It remains to see if you are equal to the trial. I can indeed furnish you a situation in this house, but only upon a very novel condition. It is that you assume the garb, manners and ways of—of a young woman.”

“What!” said I, jumping to my feet in amazement. “Do I understand you—that I must disguise myself as a woman—unsex myself? Why, surely, Madam, you ask something impossible—unnatural—unlawful, in fact—preposterous!”

“Very well,” she added, coldly; “you are the judge; and you boasted yesterday of your readiness to obey. If you are unequal to the test—”

“I yield,” said I, with sudden desperation. “Pardon me; the neophyte has no right to be astonished. I was taken by surprise for a moment; but I will undertake it, and do my best to obey all instructions. But is it not contrary to the civil law to assume the dress of the opposite sex?”

“It is, certainly; and on this ground you would be justified in declining; but there is hardly a possible chance of discovery; it is for no evil purpose, and I will see that you are protected. If you expect to become an adept in magic, you must not pause at petty difficulties and small scruples. A thing may be unlawful without being unjust. It is justice only that concerns us.”

“I yield,” I replied.

“Come to-morrow,” she said, “and receive your instructions. You will need a few days of preparatory schooling in the dress, ways and manners of our sex before you enter upon active duties. You will see what a nice girl I will make of you. Remember—*silence*.”

Promising strict secrecy, and to be on hand promptly the next morning, I took my departure, with a strange mixture of sadness and hope, mingled also with that kind of joyous expectancy that usually attends one when about to enter upon a novel experience.

CHAPTER VII.

DISGUISED AS A WOMAN.

“It generally happens that assurance keeps an even pace with ability, and the fear of miscarriage, which hinders our first attempt, is gradually dissipated as our skill advances towards the certainty of success.”—*Dr. Johnson.*

NEARLY all that night I lay awake, pondering upon my strange undertaking. Gradually I resigned myself to the singular requirement, and the first shock of humiliation over, I began to regard the affair as an adventure likely to be highly interesting as well as instructive. And after all, why not, thought I, try the novel experiment? Many women had attempted it with success, and had masqueraded in men's dress for years, undetected; nor did society seem to regard it as anything very serious, but simply laughed and wondered, and perhaps rather admired their adroitness.

Besides, what cared I for society—that refused me work and threatened me with starvation?

But could I succeed in this difficult rôle? How would I feel with a woman's dress dangling about my feet? How would I manage my hair and—good gracious! my beard, which had commenced to assert its existence? No matter; I would leave all these things to my preceptress. My business was to obey.

On the next morning I promptly reported to Madam Aurelian at an early hour, as arranged.

I was given an apartment in a secluded part of the mansion, and instructed to remain quietly locked in for the remainder of the day, when everything necessary in the way of costume would be provided, and my arrival in men's clothes would never be suspected by the attachés.

I was given a field-glass, to observe from my window the manner of walking of the women who might pass during the day on the street below. The Madam said it would require a great deal of close observation on my part to enable me to master the rôle I was to assume, and that everything depended upon my patience, aptitude and zeal. I was told that it might require a week's constant practice to acquire the feminine walk, and ways of handling myself, my hands, skirts, etc., before it would be safe to defy the scrutiny of the most stupid kitchen-maid in the house. She would, however, take care that my first appearance as a woman should be under the most favorable circumstances, and where I would not be subjected to a very rigid scrutiny.

I was to be known as her niece from the country, and would at first pass most of my time in her own consultation-room, which, she observed, was always darkened, and I could sit there and crochet, meanwhile closely observing every lady who entered, and making a study of the subject until I was deemed perfect enough in the new character to venture upon more hazardous exposure. My next destination was to be the public reception-room, where my duty would be to receive and entertain the lady patrons of the house while they were waiting on their turn to enter the consultation-room.

“After that,” said she, with an air of mystery, “there is a mission for you in an honorable career of usefulness that will amply repay you for all the patience and restraint of your apprenticeship. Ask me no more.”

I was requested to shave myself very carefully and apply to my face a certain compound furnished by the Madam—

a very pungent unguent that, she said, would retard the growth of the beard, which, however, would have to be gone over with the razor about once in two weeks, and, of course, in the strictest privacy of my room and under the greatest precaution.

She made a careful study of my hair and complexion before deciding upon the shade and style of a suitable chignon for me, and a lock of my hair was taken for comparison of colors.

My face and figure were singularly well calculated for the assumed character. I was slender and small for a man, and had a decidedly feminine cast of features. I would "make up very nicely," she said.

"You must be prepared to find yourself suddenly transformed from a short young man to a rather tall young lady," she observed.

"That will be delightful; I always longed to be tall," I replied.

"Your voice is good for our purpose," she continued, "but it will, nevertheless, require much training. Speak low, very soft, and in a delicate, mincing way. Your best plan will be to talk very little in the presence of women, until you are perfect in the part; but you must practice before me upon every opportunity. I will have you read to me."

The Madam now left me to my observations. Glass in hand, I watched from my window, all day, the walk of the lady pedestrians on the street. Ah! how little we really see, thought I, although claiming to be observers. We actually go through the world with our eyes shut in regard to many of the commonest things. Never before did I actually perceive the peculiarities of a woman's walk. There is considerable variety in it, too, though they do not differ so much from one another as men do. Yet there are well-defined differences in the walking of women; but there is one striking similarity—they all walk like

women, and not like men. On this day's observation I made notes, and already classified the different styles and variety of ladies' walks.

There is *the fine lady's walk*: Short step, slow, stately; a sweeping style of carriage; the head carried well up; straightforward gaze; eyes steadily to the front; very little movement of the head or shoulders.

The shop-girl's walk: Light, tripping—rather quick; they go in twos or threes, chatting lively, and frequently looking about curiously at passers-by of both sexes.

The sewing-girl's walk: Much like the fine lady's, but generally quicker; often languid, slightly stooping.

The servant-girl's walk: More masculine than any of the others; rapid, often with long stride; her heels catch her dress at almost every step; the arms swing like a man's.

The old woman's walk: Very slow, more or less stooping; feeble, abstracted in manner, especially when alone.

The school-girl's walk: Much like the shop-girl's, but quicker and with longer stride, more irregular; often romping and jumping about, with very coquettish ways; much observation which there is little or no effort to conceal; they regard nearly every face, and often stop before shop-windows. [They would gaze, fascinated, upon the Madam's sign, although passing it several times a day.]

I was favored with a call from the Madam for a few minutes in the evening, and to her I submitted my notes and imitated the different walks I had observed during the day. She was delighted at these indications of my zeal and industry.

“Your notes are good, as far as they go,” she said, “and do credit to your perceptions; but do not fancy that they are anything more than the crude beginnings. You are literally like a child *learning to walk*. When you are more advanced you will find many subdivisions for each one of your classes noted. The same woman will walk

differently under different circumstances, whether alone, with a gentleman, or with another woman. Besides, the main classification itself could be greatly extended; but you do not see representatives of all classes of women on this street in one day's observation."

She tried on the headgear which she had procured at great pains for me. Unfortunately, she said, she must fit it herself, as it would be manifestly impracticable to employ a hair-dresser. But she was evidently an expert, for, on looking at myself in the glass, I was struck with my own beauty. The lovely tresses of chestnut arranged in the most elaborate style of the time, contrasting with my pale face, already seemed to me to make the illusion complete.

Not so, however, with my companion; she had infinite difficulty in adjusting the chignon, and was not entirely pleased with it. It might pass with men, she said, who are very superficial observers of the details of women's toilet; but woman's eyes were sharper, and would detect every small incongruity.

A large trunk full of clothing had been deposited outside, which I promptly assisted the Madam to set inside the room.

"By the way," she said, "never do that again—never jump at a trunk or any heavy thing like that. You remind me of the lady in the fairy tale, who was transformed from a cat into a woman, and who managed to conceal her original nature very well, until one day at dinner, in the presence of numerous guests, a mouse happened to run across the room, when she forgot herself in the excitement and sprung for the mouse in obedience to her natural instincts. Remember this fable, and never rush forward to assist another lady to lift anything. You must come up to it so (reluctantly), take hold of it awkwardly, and pretend to lift; then suddenly let go and impotently try to push the article; finally, sit down on the

trunk, as though exhausted, and tell the other woman she had better send for a porter, for one might as well try to move a house. Besides," she added, "it will be necessary to take great care of your hands."

She regarded my hands with close attention.

"Oh, dear!" she exclaimed, petulantly, "there are so *many* things to consider, and all at once, too. Those hands must be washed in bran three times every day, and you must sleep in kid gloves. But I am dying to see you dressed."

With some instructions given in a very severe, matronly manner, she was about to withdraw to give me an opportunity to exchange my masculine attire for the pretty things before me, when she suddenly seized a bottle of eau de Cologne from the dressing-case, and drawing the stopper, she deliberately poured some of it on my head, saying, with mock solemnity:

"In the name of Science, I designate you, for the purposes of light, GERTRUDE. Henceforth you are to go by this name, and I enjoin strict silence as to any other, as long as you remain under this roof."

"Amen!" said I, fervently, "and may the gods approve and the stars be propitious."

"Remember the adage: 'The gods help those who help themselves,'" she replied as she disappeared, giving me an hour to dress and be ready for inspection.

"Or, rather, for dress parade," I laughingly rejoined.

I found everything necessary to a lady's make-up, down to the minutest detail—for the Madam would tolerate no half measures. I must dress like a girl, even from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet. The enormously long stockings, the garters, the curious underwear, the stays with the illusory puffing out at the breast, the skirts that seemed so cumbersome and heavy, were all adjusted with less trouble than I imagined. Lastly, the dress itself—of some plain dark goods, tasteful, I thought, but studi-

ously chosen to avoid attracting attention, was put on, and proved a very nice fit.

Viewing myself in the glass, I beheld what appeared to my eyes as a very demure, modestly dressed young woman with a thoughtful face (rather stronger than usual with girls of that age, in certain lines, and with features a shade heavier). To me there seemed little in the face itself calculated to betray me; but I fancied there was a certain expression of concentration about the eyes and forehead, such as I had seldom seen in a female face, though the same thing was present to some extent in the face of my new mistress.

I did not feel at all comfortable in my new dress. The stays seemed to be interfering with respiration, though I left them quite loosely drawn. In walking, it seemed to me that I was muffled about the ankles. I realized that the skirts would in themselves soon compel me to imitate the peculiar ways of women, so readily do we adjust ourselves to surroundings. The shoes, narrow and high-heeled, gave me as much trouble as anything; but, I judged, would also aid me in falling readily into the feminine walk and attitude. Fortunately, I had small feet for a youth; nevertheless, I required an extra-sized shoe for a miss; but then I was a tall girl, and the large foot did not seem extraordinary, considering my size.

While I was cogitating upon these points, the Madam rapped at my locked door, and upon entering and relocking it, turned upon me with the eye of an artist, and in one comprehensive glance seemed to take in everything I had thought of, and much more; for, while I had been congratulating myself upon the success of my disguise, she raised her hands deprecatingly, burst into a little laugh, and sunk into a chair, while I stood rather awkwardly, wondering what was amiss.

“ Well, if you ain't a goose, Gertrudel!”

“ Why, what is wrong, Madam?”

“ Oh, girl! you are *so* slouchy. You must tighten up that corset and give yourself some shape. The skirts are too high in front, and show below the dress behind. The dress itself must be altered.”

She whirled me around like a top—pulling here, pinning there, taking in and letting out. Finally, in disgust, she remarked:

“ It is no use until the corset is tightened.”

Whereupon she commenced picking me to pieces, as a matron might handle an untidy charity girl. The stays were drawn so tightly that I was really alarmed about breathing; but she said there was no danger, and I would soon get accustomed to it. Such a tightening up, primping, fixing about the neck, adjusting the ready-made costume for necessary changes—all this she deftly accomplished in a few minutes, and behold me now! I felt like a sylph.

One word about the much-decried corset. The war upon it by health promoters will never succeed. The corset, or something very similar, is indispensable to woman, and she will never give it up, unless indeed a general revolution in dress occurs to banish entirely the present type of European female costume, by establishing garments loose and flowing. Moreover, the corset is not half so bad as men imagine it. I soon got to like it, and I willingly put down a kind word for it.

Now I took a two-hour lesson in walking, sitting, rising; how to enter a room gracefully; how to greet another lady; how to talk, laugh, behave; how to compose my face to a pleasant, bland, innocent and charming style. Madam said that would be one of the hardest things.

“ You *must* get rid of that habitual frown,” she said; “ and your mouth is worst of all. Now say ‘ Blossom,’ and keep your lips in the same position permanently. Open your eyes wide—there, you have what we will call the infantile smile. Now say ‘ Prune,’ keeping the ex-

pression—that is, the demure look—proper for any casual meeting with gentlemen, or to conceal any temporary embarrassment. Now, Gertrude, practice these facial exercises frequently, for really, girl, your education has been sadly neglected.”

She now dismissed all reserve, and forbade me, on pain of her displeasure, to ever allude to the past, to ever speak of myself as other than a girl.

“*I command you to imagine yourself that which you assume to be.* Never even think of yourself except as a model young lady. Try to banish all masculine ideas. You were always much more of the feminine nature than the masculine, but now you are *absolutely* feminine. You shall see what wonders science can work and imagination perfect. Now, Gertrude, sit still; look me in the eye. Why, you are sleepy, girl, aren't you?”

She made a few passes; in two minutes I was sound asleep, I was in dream-land—a woman—a veritable woman. I met other women as a sister. I realized a certain antagonism to men, and yet a certain attraction to them. This was the crowning act of skill in my teacher.

Henceforth I was wholly in her power, receptive to her teachings, obedient to her wishes, expressed or even thought.

This was my first experience of hypnotism, in which I was destined to attain greater triumphs, probably, than any yet recorded on earth.

I was awakened by Madam, and assisted to undress, with a kind good-night and a maternal kiss.

I already regarded these things as quite a matter of course. My mind was in a state of half trance. I thought Madam was my aunt. Nothing could be more modest and delicate than her treatment of me. Nothing more distant from my mind than any impure thought towards her or any other woman. The past seemed like an imperfectly remembered dream; or, rather, the present was a vivid dream

which seemed like life. I forgot all inconsistencies, or instantly reconciled them to my reason—exactly as in sleep we fancy ourselves talking to a person long dead, and remember they are dead, and yet are not surprised.

The work of the sorceress was complete.

“Good-night, aunt,” I said, in a soft voice, and was soon again in dream-land—a woman of women. The men I met in my dream seemed strange and enigmatical, and in a certain sense terrible to me: natural enemies of my innocence, yet appearing to be my protectors. It seemed to me that I could penetrate their designs, and was superior to them. In all their servile attentions I beheld the tyrant or the tempter in disguise.

“Ah, gentlemen!” thought I, “if you wish to be merciful to yourselves, you will avoid me; for I am that strange and dangerous entity, a woman without a woman’s heart.”

I woke, finding myself in the same dreamy condition, fully impressed that I was a girl. I arose and dressed myself carefully, made my bed, and tidied the room neatly, for I understood that for some time to come I must care for my own room. After taking a light breakfast, brought to me by my kind aunt herself, I again fell off to sleep, and was awakened in the afternoon by my aunt, and requested to prepare to go out riding.

“Gertrude, you must take some exercise,” she said; “you will ride with me to the depot, where I expect to meet a lady friend from the country.”

I obeyed mechanically, and was conducted to the door, where a hack was in waiting for us. I attracted no attention from the girls in the house, as it was nothing unusual (so I learned later) for Madam to have special lady guests in the house for treatment, and the servants were trained to suppress all prying curiosity. We passed no one, save the waiting-woman, who seemed to take no notice of me. Away we sped for the station, where I followed my aunt

to the ladies' room. Here she left me, saying she would soon return, and for me to wait quietly. In a few minutes she bustled in, looked about the room in a searching manner, seemed to recognize me, rushed up while I rose to greet her, kissed me affectionately, and led me off to the carriage, and we drove back to the house.

On the drive back Madam changed in a twinkling the trimmings of my hat, and pulled out a white lace shawl from her reticule, replacing the black dolman I had worn on starting out.

That evening it was given out to the servants that Madam's invalid niece from the country had arrived that day, to remain for the summer.

I was no longer a prisoner, but secluded, to suit my invalid character. I was much in my aunt's company. She taught me to crochet and embroider as I sat with her in the consultation-room. I was taken out riding every pleasant afternoon, and was treated with deference by my aunt's women-servants, who saw at once that I was a favorite relative of the mistress.



CHAPTER VIII.

MADAM AURELIAN.

“I am a part of all that I have seen.”—*Tennyson*.

“High as is the destiny of woman, yet she has a closer affinity to the night side of nature than man, and is especially exposed to the temptations of Satan. Deceit, curiosity, indiscretion, the desire to enslave man by her charms, and to see the creations of her imagination realized, are the shadow side, and incline her to the study and practice of forbidden knowledge.”—*Ennemoser Hist. of Magic*.

THE daily routine I witnessed was an ever-changing panorama. Madam Aurelian had an immense patronage, which included the wealth and fashion of the city. Her reception-room was seldom without several visitors waiting their turn for consultation. She told fortunes, interpreted dreams, gave charms and amulets; but her chief business was as a magnetic physician, in which capacity she was very successful. Her fees were large, but most of her patrons were able to pay, and I have known her to bestow her services free upon the poor.

She had a few very rich customers among gentlemen who called for advice about the stock market. Her suggestions on such ticklish matters were discreet, and so artfully conveyed that, if success followed, she was credited with miraculous foresight, while failures were accounted the fault of the operator, who had presumed too much upon Fortune. As a matter of fact, I believe she was singularly happy in giving advice on business, and I

know that she was secretly consulted by some of the leading financiers of the city.

I was soon trusted to venture into the inner reception-room, where I mingled with the lady visitors with impunity. So far as I know, I was never suspected of any imposture. Singularly enough, I found myself a favorite. Ladies seemed attracted to me, and readily bestowed little confidences. I heard much confidential talk.

What a chatter that inner reception-room would sometimes present! Imagine a general commingling of female voices: "What a delightful little dog!" "I wonder if she can really tell the future?" "Oh! I never go to Moore's any more." "Isn't he disgusting?" "Oh, it's just horrid!" "I wonder how long we must wait?" "Well, if she can tell the past, why not the fu—" "I just love the country." "Ha! ha! ha!" (a little scream). "You horrid thing! I *don't* any such thing." "Well, if I ever *marry*—" (in a low tone). "I know I have seen him before." "Nell, have you any money with you?" "Say, ain't he just exasperatingly nice?" "We'll stop on the way back at—" "They say she has such wonderful things for the complexion."

Here the waiting-woman announces: "The next lady—No. 26;" and a gay, laughing woman suddenly looks at her card and turns pale, as though she had received a message of doom. But the self-possessed, polite attendant glances at her card and reassures her, with a soft: "Your turn *now*; please follow this way."

The remaining visitors, silent for a moment, giggle all round sympathetically, and perhaps some one says: "How frightened the poor thing seemed! I wonder if Madam tells how long one will live? I do hope she won't tell anything *bad*."

Some days all would sit silent as ghosts, unless some of us would start a conversation. It depends altogether on the kind of crowd, and whether they are of about the

same social grade. The poor affiliate quicker than the rich; the young much quicker than more elderly women. Many come in groups, and these are always chattering during the long waits.

Of course, no gentlemen are ever admitted to this room. The Madam will admit gents only on Saturdays, as announced in her advertisements. She often said she did not desire their business, but could not entirely exclude it.

For two months my time was spent amid scenes of this sort, alternated with other scenes in the consultation-chamber. Always with women—always making a close study of their ways, dress and conversation.

Every evening I was summoned by Madam to attend to a special examination of what I had observed during the day. If my deductions were false or fanciful, I was corrected.

“I want you to be *saturated* through and through with the subject,” she said. “You are now in the simple A B C of the study. I mean to teach you not only to judge of the character and capacity of the women you meet, but I intend that you shall be able to read their very thoughts; nay, more, to follow their thoughts by a sort of mental reflection back into the domain of retrospection, and so learn every act of their past lives.”

“Oh, dear aunt! and can you do that?”

“Silence, dear child, as to what I am able to do. The world says I can do wonderful things, and perhaps credits me with more than I deserve.”

“Ever since I first read of the hermetic philosophy it has been my wish and prayer to learn these secrets,” I replied.

“Your wish shall be gratified if you have patience and obey; but seek not to progress beyond what you are taught, lest you fall into hidden dangers which you will be unprepared to avert.”

“Is there, then, danger in these studies and practices?” I asked.

“Yes, very great and real danger; just as there is danger to the student in chemistry who insists upon trying experiments beyond his knowledge. He mixes incompatibles, and the next thing is an explosion by which, perhaps, he loses his eyesight. With us the danger is different, but ever greater and more disastrous. We deal with the chemistry of the soul. Accidents with us often mean mental derangement, apoplexy, insanity, madness, and even death.”

“But with proper care these dangers can be avoided, I trust?”

“Yes, to an extent—not entirely.”

“Why not entirely, if I may ask?”

“Because, unfortunately, our knowledge is not entire. We deal with only partially known agencies; and beyond a certain point there is danger even for the adept in science. Many have fallen victims to their zeal for hidden knowledge.”

So, day by day, I was instructed. For the present, my studies were confined to the branch of magic known as animal magnetism; for, as Madam soon informed me, it was her purpose to qualify me to assist her in that department.

She was herself very magnetic, and very powerful in throwing ordinary subjects into the magnetic sleep; but the constant practice was beginning to tell upon her own health; and besides, she said, there were occasionally patients that defied all her skill—persons she could not overcome; and her idea was that with my masculine will I ought to be able to subject any woman to the magnetic influence. It now came out why she insisted upon my disguise. Her professional work was confined to women. She needed a man's power without a man's presence. Hypnotism requires at first actual personal contact.

Ladies would seldom consent to place themselves knowingly in the power of one of the opposite sex, to the extent involved in the magnetic treatment. Her idea was to cultivate this power in me to the highest degree possible, and then in my assumed character—as a woman—to utilize this power to aid her in effecting cures.

She was enthusiastic almost to fanaticism on the subject of the curative power of magnetic agencies. "There was no disease that would not yield to it," she said, given only the operator of sufficient power. She had alone accomplished much and acquired a good reputation; but she was only a woman. What wonders might she not accomplish with a powerful male operator to assist her? There was a large class of cases, she explained, that specially required the positive male principle. In all this she was entirely conscientious. In fact, she seemed to me incapable of doing an immoral action. She was in all things as pure and white-souled a person as I ever met. It was simply that her enthusiasm for her art had induced her to resort to this sort of deception, only that she might thereby avail herself of the means of mounting still higher in the scale of excellence. She was a born physician, if there ever was one. Her greatest pleasure was to relieve pain in her own sex.

She could have gained thousands by descending to that kind of practice forbidden by the laws; but nothing would induce her to undertake this class of cases. I have seen her weeping when begged and entreated by some miserable woman to help her out of her trouble. But, no; on this point she was inexorable, not from fear of the law—for she was brave as a lion—but from principle. She extracted a solemn promise from me that I would never, even as I hoped for Heaven to help me in my greatest extremity, use any powers that I might acquire to promote any evil purpose, or to take an unfair advantage of any woman.

I have always aimed to observe this promise, and had I succeeded in keeping it *strictly* inviolate, I might have been saved some remorse.

I was soon given a new and higher class of study, which taxed my nervous energies almost to the extent of impairing my health. I had seen the Madam perform upon patients many times, and it seemed easy enough. Some of her regular patients she had such control over that she could influence them even at a distance. In most cases it was only a fixity of look—sometimes supplemented by a slight, soothing, undulating movement of the hands. She seldom required over five minutes to place a stranger under influence. She divided the magnetic sleep into three stages: the primary, which was but a partial subjection; the secondary, which was a controlled somnambulism; and the tertiary, which was a state of absolute, unconsciousness of pain, and also of complete subjection to the will of the operator. In this last stage the patient could be made to believe anything—however improbable or inconsistent—that the operator desired to impress upon her mind. She could be impelled to any action in obedience to the will of the superior mind. This last state was not always attainable with all subjects, though, in general, any subject that will succumb to the first fascination can, by repeated experiments, be brought to the highest degree of subjection.

The time came when I was required to try my powers, from which so much was expected, and I selected for the experiment one of the young women-servants with whom I had cultivated a cautious intimacy. My first trials resulted in total failure, greatly to my discomfiture. Time and again I tried to mesmerize Eloise, the bright young lady usher, with whom I was now very intimate as a daily companion. She seemed a willing subject, and, like all our help, was constantly subject to the influence of Madam; but I could not get beyond tiring my eyes and fa-

tiguing the patient, who would finally grow tired of the farce and laugh at me.

“Gertrude, you will never be like your aunt,” she would say, in a bantering way which bordered on derision. “They say it must be born in one—a natural gift. Perhaps you would succeed better in fascinating some young gentleman.”

I began to get discouraged.

Madam, however, would listen to no excuses. “Try again,” she would say after every failure. “Do as I do: *determine* to succeed. Be patient, firm, indefatigable. I had the same difficulties at first. After the first success it will become easier. It is a mere knack.”

That saying always provoked me—“a mere knack;” but nothing is truer, provided one possesses the requisite natural endowment.

But though I could not put Eloise to sleep as yet, I began to observe, to my great joy, that I was gradually obtaining a sort of influence over her. Was it a mere delusion of my imagination? Was it nothing more than the mere attraction of one friend for another that caused this girl to follow me about, to be always looking in my face, and now, when my eyes meet hers, she smiles with satisfaction; a look of strange contentment comes over her features; her eyelids droop, but only to open again, that her glance may again bathe itself in my eyes. Still no sleep. I tried all sorts of experiments of will power upon her with indifferent success; but one thing was certain—I could make her come to me from another room by an act of the will.

“Joy!” thought I; “I am gaining. Now for one grand trial.” The next time our eyes met, and I noticed that indolent, satisfied look and the drooping eye, I exerted mentally one supreme, unconquerable act of the will, and raising my hand, slightly fanned the air between us, never removing my glance or relaxing the will, which was now

almost cruel in its intensity. Her eyes opened, closed again, and remained shut a few seconds, but opened again with a beseeching expression, as though to say: "Spare me." My relentless, steady gaze answers: "Never! Yield now—sleep—dream—obey!"

Nearer and nearer came the passes, my hands almost brushing her face; I bend over her chair; the eyelids close for the last time, and the girl lies senseless before me. An expression of pain overshadows the pale face; the breathing is quick and irregular; the pulse throbs at high pressure—one hundred and twenty beats to the minute. The body of the inanimate girl sinks back limp and motionless.



CHAPTER IX.

CURIOUS EXPERIMENTS—AWFUL MYSTERIES, AND A SURPRISE.

“D’Lembert remarked to some one who complained of the clouds which certain demonstrations had left in his understanding: ‘Go forward, and faith will come to you.’”

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than you have dreamt of in your philosophy.”—*Shakespeare.*

WITH the satisfaction that comes of a first success, not unmingled with a degree of awe, I contemplated the reclining figure before me. She appeared to be in a deep sleep. To my questions she made no response. This was contrary to what I had been led to expect from my observations of Madam Aurelian’s practice. I became alarmed at the symptoms presented, and endeavored to bring the girl back to consciousness. In vain I tried the methods prescribed, and which I had seen Madam perform so successfully. In great alarm I ran to the Madam.

“Aunt, come quickly, for Heaven’s sake! I have Eloise asleep and can not awaken her.”

The Madam followed me back with her usual self-possessed air; but I thought I detected a shade of anxiety when she came up to where Eloise lay sleeping.

She lost no time seizing the girl’s left hand in her right, and placing her own left across the forehead of the patient, while I was directed to take the girl’s right hand in

my left, and with my right wave backward and forward over the patient's head.

"Now call her in a loud voice, and use the same effort to awaken that you used to overcome her."

It was fully five minutes, but seemed an hour to me, in my anxiety, before Eloise gave signs of returning consciousness. At length she opened her eyes languidly, and they at once sought my own.

"Gertie, Gertie!" she murmured, faintly, and fell back again unconscious.

Madam turned to me and said, gravely:

"You have overdone the matter in this case; but it is no more than might have been expected."

"Great heavens!" I exclaimed; "you do not mean that she is in danger?"

"Not now," answered the Madam. "But if neglected, she might have been. She was in a state of coma through the extreme violence of your efforts to make her sleep."

"Shall we not awaken her at once?" said I.

"No; she is easier now, and will soon fall into something like a natural sleep. It is better to let her repose for some hours undisturbed; though I will take care that she does not sleep too long."

She then explained to me that Eloise was a very sensitive and easy subject; that there was no occasion for the violent exertion used to induce the sleep; that she would have yielded to the influence just as surely without so much effort on my part, and that in future I must bear in mind that the mild power conquers, and the reserve power should never be called into action, save in the greatest of exigencies.

She continued: "Had I known that you possessed the power to so high a degree, I should have cautioned you. This experiment proves to me that you will become a great operator. For the power that will produce coma so quickly in a healthy subject, and under the circumstances

of this case, could produce death and recall the dying to life."

Eloise was allowed to sleep for about three hours, when she awoke of her own accord, but with a violent headache and other signs of great nervous disturbance. The skill of Madam Aurelian soon restored her to her normal condition; but henceforth she was a puppet in my hands; a glance, a nod, a motion of the hand, even an unexpressed wish of mine, was understood and obeyed. I could have caused her to jump from a three-story window by a simple act of the will.

I was now invited to practice daily under Madam's own eye, and her practical teaching was of the utmost importance in bringing this strange power into training. In a few weeks I had attained such proficiency in the art that few subjects could withstand my influence for as long as ten minutes; most would succumb in half of that time, and I occasionally met patients who would yield almost instantly.

By a series of experiments I found that, with Eloise's assistance, I could place my own mind in rapport with that of the sleeping patient, and by skillful questioning I could so direct the current of thought in the patient's mind as to carry it back retrospectively, presenting to the view of Eloise a series of mental pictures as the same were brought up in the act of memory exerted in the patient. I could carry this back as far as the earliest recollection, and bring out past events to the minutest particular which yet lingered in the memory of the subject, or which, by refreshing the memory, could be recalled to it. It was simply a panorama of scenes in the life of the patient, capable of being produced by the act of memory, and seen by Eloise in a trance state. Eloise, in turn, would describe the pictures to me. I was very anxious to acquire the art of mind-reading, independent of the aid of a third person; but I had not yet learned the secret of putting my own

mind in rapport with that of the subject in such a manner as to discern her thoughts.

At my earnest request, Madam Aurelian, with considerable difficulty, finally succeeded in throwing me into the trance state, and then placing me in rapport with one of my own subjects, when I was able to describe to her the phenomena that Eloise had previously described to me. But the trouble was that, if left to myself, I could remember nothing which I had seen in the trance state; though, when in it, I had made the most elaborate report of scenes which I explored in the memory of the magnetized person, even to the extent of describing the operations of the brain and the physical changes of the nerve cells going on during the progress of thought.

I was much interested in the reports which were written out by Madam of what I had seen in trance, and wished to continue the experiment; but this she positively refused, saying that in order to continue them I would have to yield myself constantly to her will, which would soon seriously impair my own powers and make me simply an instrument in her hands. Meanwhile I would lose the habit of command and the ability to act upon others.

Day and night I studied upon the problem of making myself at once subjective and objective. From magnetizing others I turned my will power inward upon myself, and with my eyes fixed upon some small, bright object I soon discovered that I could throw myself into the trance state at will; but also that, however interesting my experiences might be while in the trance, I could recall scarcely anything of them upon awakening.

At length I found a way of partially overcoming the difficulty. In the trance state, which was a condition of conscious somnambulism, I could write down what I was undergoing at the time, and upon awakening would find a full report of all I had seen.

This method made me independent of the assistance of

a third person; but it was attended with this disadvantage: that, after putting my subject to sleep, and then putting myself to sleep, there was no control left to carry on the operation; and although while in trance I could still control the other sleeper, there was no one to control me; and I had lost nearly all control of myself by voluntarily parting with my waking, conscious ego. The consequence was, that after fatiguing my mind while in trance, and exhausting its active powers in a sort of semi-conscious state, I would fall into a condition of entire unconsciousness—in short, into a normal sleep; and so one day the Madam found us both asleep—that is, my patient and myself. On a table was my written report of certain phenomena up to a certain point where the words became unintelligible.

She divined the situation at once, and released the patient from her mesmeric thralldom, leaving me to enjoy the natural rest which I so much needed.

Judge of my chagrin when, awakening some hours after, I found I must have lost control of my subject and left her exposed to the danger of catalepsy by remaining too long in the mesmeric state.

This was a second serious lesson, and this time Madam was almost angry with me.

“And so, Gertrude, you must experiment on your own account, must you, and toy with the things of life and death?”

I humbly explained the train of thought which in the course of research had gradually and naturally led me to this experiment, and craved pardon.

“Your zeal is pardonable,” she said, gravely, “but your disobedience is a serious fault, and one that, continued, may lead to fatal results. I command you to the silence and the solitude of your own room, with scant diet, for one week. Think well of your folly, and remember that for the second offense of deliberate disobedience our intercourse ceases.”

At the end of my week's solitude I was informed by Madam that the object I had in view could never be reached in the manner I had supposed.

"I am about to introduce you to a new line of inquiry," she said, "and one that will tax all your powers to the utmost. There is but one way known to science by which you can follow the thoughts of the magnetized person into the past, without the aid of a third person, while you remain in a normal condition of consciousness. It is by invoking the aid of a departed spirit, who will act as a medium of communication between yourself and the subject."

This was the first allusion by Madam to the awful mysteries of esoteric magic, of which I had read so much, but had seen nothing as yet.

I was filled with secret delight at this prospect of actual initiation—the realization of my dreams.

"But think not," she continued, "to enter rashly and unprepared into the domain of the dread unknown."

I was then told that a rigorous preparation was required before I could join in the ceremony of the evocation of the dead, which was nothing more nor less than the summoning by magic rites the spirit of some deceased person, and causing it to appear in the form of life.

"It must be the spirit of some person dear to you in life. In your case the choice points to but one person—your mother."

I started with misgivings, almost with horror, at the idea of dragging that revered name into such a discussion. Should I then seek by questionable, perhaps by unholy rites, to disturb the rest of that dear being whose dead face constituted by earliest recollection?

Madam seemed to divine my thoughts, and answered them.

"The idea startles you," she said, "and you shrink from it as from a sacrilege? But tell me, why should you?"

She is the best friend you have in the two worlds; herself a sybil, fond of mysteries during her earthly life. No other spirit will so readily respond to your invocation; no other so willingly aid you. In fact, it is likely that she is constantly near you, and has from the first prompted all your longings for wisdom and cheered you in all your progress."

"It is for me to obey," I replied, reassured and willing to be convinced by her words. She then informed me that in evocations it required either one or three persons; that, inexperienced as I was, it would be madness for me to attempt it alone.

"Hence," she said, "I must conduct it, assisted by yourself and one other person; that person shall be Eloise, who is most convenient for us, as well as the one most in sympathy with you by reason of your established magnetic control of her."

I was then told to collect all the memories of my mother, and any articles of hers in my possession which she ever made use of, and which "contained her impress."

I had carefully treasured up a few small souvenirs of my mother, which I now produced from my trunk—her miniature portrait, a lock of her hair, her diary (full of mystical thoughts and speculations), a piece of silk that she had once worn, some favorite books which had once been hers. I had also upon my little finger a gold ring she had once worn.

Madam conducted me to an apartment which formed one of her private suite, to which I had never before been admitted. It contained, she said, a very complete cabinet, with all things essential to magical operations, according to the most approved ritual.

In the room was a small altar, a strange revolving lamp and tripod, and jeweled regalia to be worn during the ceremonies.

The floor was bare, though scrupulously clean. I could

still discern faint traces upon it where circles had been drawn.

In a corner of this apartment she hung the miniature, which was draped in white, and near by, on a marble stand, were placed all the souvenirs of my mother, before described. The little picture was surrounded by a wreath of violets and white roses, the flowers she loved.

A day was then solemnly designated for the evocation, and as my own birthday anniversary was near at hand, that date was preferred.

Fourteen days before the time fixed I was instructed to commence preparations. I was, during this period, to direct all my thoughts intently upon my mother. I was not to go out—was to take only a simple and slight repast once a day. Every evening at the same hour I was to shut myself up in this room (now consecrated to the memory of my lamented dead), with only the dim light of a small funereal taper; and placing this light behind me, I was directed to unveil the portrait and remain before it one hour in silence, after which I was to perfume the room with a certain incense and retire from it backward.

Every day the flowers around the portrait were renewed. As day by day I conformed to these requirements I found myself gradually becoming magnetized. I was like one walking in a dream. Never before had I realized as I did then the overpowering force of imagination. When alone with the portrait and the pale, feeble light, a strange terror would come over me; the atmosphere seemed heavy with undefined, shadowy forms floating over and around me; I was conscious of surroundings that belonged not to earth. I felt myself nearing the border-lands which separate the living and the dead; I even felt willing to die, myself, and join those on the other side. Physically I was rapidly growing emaciated, thin, and so nervously sensitive that the falling of a pin disturbed me.

On the morning of the day appointed for the séance, we

three who were to participate, arrayed ourselves as if for a festival. We were directed to give no one the first greeting. We ate but one meal, consisting of bread, wine and fruit, which was taken in the magic cabinet upon a table spread with white. Four covers were laid (one being for the spirit), and a few drops of wine were placed in the glass intended for our phantom guest. This repast was made in silence in the presence of the veiled portrait. All that was used at this meal was then cleared away, except the glass for the dead and her share of the bread, which was left before the portrait.*

* It will be noticed by the student that the ritual of the preparatory rites dictated by Madam Aurelian on this occasion, closely resembles that prescribed by Alphonse Louis Constant, the great French thaumaturgist, in his book entitled, "Dogme et Rituel de la Haute Magie," published in 1854, and which is in itself almost identical with the ritual of Hermes Trismigestus, from whom the greater part of all we know of ancient ceremonial magic is originally derived. The evocation ceremonies are also similar to those described by the same distinguished author. How far these peculiar requirements and conditions of evocation are arbitrary, and how far essential to success, remains for further experiment to determine. I find several different methods of procedure laid down by different authorities; in all, however, there is a certain agreement on the subject of propitiating the spirit which it is desired to evoke, and also in regard to the ceremonies calculated to exalt and aid the imagination of the operator. *These things are real mysteries*, which I hope the reader will not tamper with, except it be from an adequate motive and with lawful object. Even then, let him first be sure of his own courage and nerve, and let him avail himself of all the safeguards known to science; otherwise—as all authorities agree—they are but works of darkness, dangerous to health and reason.—*Editor*.

In the evening, at the hour of my ordinary visits, we three (Madam Aurelian, Eloise and myself) repaired to the chamber in silence. Eloise and I were arrayed in white dresses richly trimmed with lace. We each wore a bunch of violets, our only ornament. Madam wore a long white robe embroidered with silver and a triple necklace of

pearls intertwined with crystal and selenite. Upon her head was a chaplet of vervain* leaves intertwined with a chain of gold.

* The verbena of our gardens—a plant of great magical virtue.—*Editor.*

She carried in her right hand a gleaming sword, very bright and sharp-pointed, its hilt richly studded with jewels; in her left hand she had a book containing the ritual.

Having enjoined upon us the strictest silence, to be observed all through the ceremony, she traced upon the floor with a white crayon a circle which passed between the altar and the tripod, inclosing the latter. She directed us to keep within this circle, and on no account to go outside of it.

She lighted a fire of cypress twigs, started from charcoal of alder and laurel wood, with which the brazier had been supplied, and soon from the tripod sprung a bluish flame which shed a pale, glancing and irregular light upon the surrounding objects. Some perfumes were lighted in a small brazier upon the altar, which I now saw for the first time uncovered, and noticed, in bright golden characters upon its marble top, the mysterious figure of the *Pentagram*.

Having lighted the fires, Madam commenced (at first in a low voice) the invocation of the ritual, opening with a prayer in which we all joined. She read choice passages here and there from the diary—once written by the hand of the deceased.

Seven times she cast fresh incense upon the altar fire, each time pronouncing the name of my mother.

The fire was now allowed to go out, but more incense was thrown upon the ashes.

At this point the most solemn invocation to God was made; we all joined hands, and silence was observed for fifteen minutes, when Madam commenced to talk to the

spirit as though it were present. She covered her face with her hands, directing us to do likewise. Thus, with covered face, we waited, kneeling for some minutes, when Madam suddenly broke the silence by calling in a loud voice three times the name of the invoked spirit, turning to the west.

Never shall I forget that scene, weird and terrible as it was, and invested with apprehensions of vague terrors to come.

The depths of the large mirror which was in front of us, with the altar between, seemed to grow brighter, the faint light of the nearly extinguished fire of the tripod disclosed dim, fantastic shapes, which surrounded us on all sides. Without any distinct sounds, there seemed to be an undefinable hum and whir and flutter in the air. In spite of the prevailing darkness of the room, there seemed a strange and brilliant light within us and about us. Madam threw some more perfumes on the brazier; the air was now intoxicating with the fragrance of incense. The figure of a woman arose before us near the altar. She was of medium height, dressed in black, of a face and form like the portrait, now grown so familiar to me by daily contemplation. I was the first to discern the apparition, and at the moment the only one of the three not at all affected by terror.

I sprung to my feet, made two steps toward the phantom, and in spite of the orders to keep silence, I almost shrieked the word: "Mother!"

Upon this, the figure seemed to dissolve and disappear.

Madam, with a look of reproach, gently drew me inside the circle again, set a few more twigs upon the fire and recommenced the evocations.

Eloise still knelt with clasped hands, her face deathly pale, and her form visibly trembling.

Soon the dark form reappeared plainer than before. I remained calm and silent. Madam Aurelian arose, and set-

ting the sword against the stand of the tripod, inside of our circle, she approached the altar and laid her hand upon the sign of the Pentagram.

At this point, as she informed me afterward, she was so terrified that she found herself unable to utter a word.

The form seemed to dilate and gradually to approach us.

Eloise fell prostrate upon the floor in a swoon.

The form came up to me and placed one hand upon my head, as though in benediction, while a sad smile lightened the face. I reached forward to seize its right hand in both my own; but there was nothing to grasp—the empty air alone answered to my touch. The figure withdrew to its former position.

Madam knelt at the altar, and for a few seconds seemed to be in silent communion with the spirit. Suddenly the light went out, a whirl and rush of cold air was felt, the sword fell with a terrific ring upon the floor, and we were alone in the silence and the darkness, nearly paralyzed with fear and terror.

Madam Aurelian was the first to recover herself. She produced a light, brought Eloise to, sprinkling her forehead with water and administering smelling-salts which she always had in her pocket.

I stood as one in a stupor, silent and abstracted.

We withdrew in silence, Madam locking the oratory and starting out to accompany us to the doors of our respective apartments. On the way, Eloise begged piteously to share my room and declared she felt that she would die of fright if left alone; but Madam Aurelian said it would never do for us to spend the remainder of the night together, as we might, by our combined fears and imagination, frighten each other out of our wits; but she good-naturedly summoned one of the waiting-girls from her sleep, to come and stay with Eloise, on the plea of the latter having been suddenly taken ill.

I can not dismiss my account of this séance with any-

thing more appropriate than the words of a celebrated modern adept, Eliphaz Levi (one of my dearest friends), who thus comments upon a similar experience of his own:

“Am I to conclude from this that I have evoked, seen and touched? . . . I am neither so far hallucinated as to believe it, nor sufficiently unserious as to affirm it. The effect of the preparation, the perfumes, the mirrors, the pantacles, is a veritable intoxication of the imagination which must act strongly upon a person already nervous and impressionable. I seek not to explain by what physiological law I have seen and touched; I assert solely that I have seen and touched . . . without dreaming, which is sufficient ground for believing in the absolute efficacy of magical ceremonies. I look upon the practice, however, as dangerous and objectionable; health, both moral and physical, would not long withstand such operations, if once they became habitual.”

On the following morning, after breakfast, Madam summoned me to the consultation-room, and after inquiring kindly about my health, she proceeded to explain the purpose of the last night's evocation.

“This is a great step in your initiation,” she observed, “and well worth all it has cost you, though your health has suffered, and we must take care to repair it by entire change of habit and abundant relaxation for some days to come.”

“I do not regret it,” I replied, “though I fail to see what was really gained, since the spirit gave us no communication.”

“No *verbal* communication,” answered Madam. “Spirits so summoned never talk audibly, and indeed can not, since they are but shadows projected upon the astral light, and possess no organs capable of causing the necessary vibrations of the air to produce sound. They have other ways of communicating intelligence.”

She then informed me that while she knelt at the altar

before the spirit, she was impressed that the needed information would be conveyed to her in a dream, and that during her sleep my mother had appeared to her in a dream. She said that henceforth I would be enabled to obtain an instantaneous, conscious view of the train of thought going on in the minds of my magnetized subjects, which, with spirit aid, would be reflected in the astral light, the latter being, as I understand it, the universal magnetic agent always present, though invisible to all but the initiated.

“The importance of this attainment you can not over-estimate, because in our profession it is necessary to read the past in order to inspire confidence in the patron that we can read also the future, which, by the way, we can not do directly.”

While she was talking I glanced at my finger, the one upon which I usually wore my mother's wedding-ring. I noticed that it was gone, and remembered that I had left it with the other souvenirs on the table in the oratory.

As Madam now arose to retire and prepare for the regular work of the day, I said:

“Please, aunt, let me have the key to the oratory, for I shall need it to gather up and restore to my trunk the souvenirs we have used.”

She took from her girdle the bunch of keys which she always carried, and separated from the ring the key I wanted, warning me to relock the room carefully when I had finished, and to return the key to her.

“But you need not hurry about that,” she said, “as I have a duplicate key to the room. Better join Eloise and take a stroll in the park this morning. You can attend to the souvenirs later.”

I acted upon her suggestion and spent the entire forenoon rambling about the park with Eloise, charmed with the sunshine, the freshness of the morning air, and the sweet breath of flowers.

It was almost noon when we returned, and after lunch, feeling very drowsy from the unwonted exercise and the heat of the day, I retired to my room and soon fell asleep.

The afternoon was far advanced when I was called by Eloise to prepare for dinner. This meal I always took alone with Madam. On this occasion she again referred to last night's séance, and went into a long explanation of the philosophy of esoteric magic, and the nature and uses of the various paraphernalia. She alluded specially to the magic rod, which she said was a straight limb of the almond or hazel-tree cut by a single blow with a golden knife, before sunrise, and at the moment when the tree is about to blossom. It contained, she said, a needle of magnetized iron, with some other peculiarities of construction, and was consecrated with much solemn ceremonial.

After she had described the rod thus minutely, she added:

“Of its uses and of the manner of transmitting it, I am not at present permitted to explain to you; but I will only say that it is indispensable for operations of transcendent magic, and most difficult to procure. Mine is especially powerful, and I shall seek an early opportunity to instruct you in the use of it.”

This conversation served to recall to my mind that I had not yet returned to the oratory to seek the souvenirs; but I did not interrupt her to mention the trivial circumstance. It was now evening, and I did not care to repair to the mysterious room amid the gathering shadows of night-fall, and secretly resolved to defer the matter until the next day.

Early on the following morning I went to the oratory and gathered up the little treasures pertaining to my mother's memory, to be again returned to my trunk. I found all lying as we had left them upon the marble stand, except the gold ring, which I looked about for in

vain. Supposing it had fallen from the table and rolled away to a more distant part of the room, I extended my search accordingly. I found two doors opening out of the room. I tried one and found it led to a closet used for regalia, robes, etc. I thought these doors might possibly have been ajar on the night of the evocation, and the ring have rolled through one of them into the adjacent apartment. I softly and rather doubtfully approached the other closed door, bent on finding the still missing ring.

I was no more acquainted with the oratory and its connecting apartments than is my reader, having never been in it, except as narrated. In my anxiety to find the ring I did not stop to weigh the propriety or impropriety of my intrusion into the adjoining rooms. I thoughtlessly seized the door-knob, hastily turned it, and found myself in the private sleeping apartment of the Madam herself. But that was not all—and not even the worst. Madam had *already arisen, was partially dressed*, was seated at a *dress-ing-case in front of a large mirror*. Her back was toward me. An *involuntary glance toward the mirror showed me, reflected therein, the face of my mistress, partially covered with white foam, and in her right hand—great heavens! it is—it is—a razor!* Like lightning the truth burst upon my mind. She was shaving! Madam—the most feminine of women—the most prudish woman in the house—Madam, the favorite of the fashionable world—the confidant of half the women of New York—Madam Aurelian! Was she, then, like myself, a *man in disguise*?

CHAPTER X.

A JOURNEY WITH AN OBJECT, AND A SECOND SURPRISE.

“I know an herb of an extraordinary nature. Warm it whilst thou crushest it in thy hand; then take the hand of another, and hold it till it is warm; and this person will have a great liking for thee for several days.”—*Van Helmont*.

“He that would be superior to external influences must first become superior to his own passions.”—*Dr. Johnson*.

OVERCOME as I was with amazement and chagrin, I nevertheless did not start or utter a sound. My habitual self-control and silence did not desert me. I instantly thought of the only safe way to act. I looked about in a dazed sort of manner, like one in the somnambulic sleep, pretended to take no notice of Madam (as I will still designate my employer), and quickly withdrew.

It all came to me—how she had evidently passed through the oratory in getting to her room the night before, and finding the door locked as usual, had relocked it on going through, forgetting that I had a key. The outer door being thus fastened, she had not thought it necessary to lock the inner one to her room.

It is often by such trivial accidents that the highest art and skill in deception breaks down before the simple persistency of Truth.

Madam certainly noticed the intrusion, but she also refrained from any demonstration.

I was greatly mortified at this discovery, and felt that it would disturb our present relations, for Madam was one

of the most secretive of mortals, and would not like that her mystery should be shared with another.

It was therefore with some trepidation that I looked forward to our meeting at breakfast. I resolved not to be the first to allude to the affair, and to be guided in my course by her manner of approaching it. If possible, I thought I had best convey the idea that I had been wandering about half asleep, and unconscious of my surroundings, which, in view of my weakness from fasting, combined with the late exciting experiences, would, I thought, be a plausible theory. I shrunk, however, from telling a direct falsehood; and between these conflicting feelings I wavered with many misgivings until summoned to breakfast.

But all my anxiety was needless, for the Madam greeted me exactly as usual. As I beheld again the smooth, soft skin of her matronly face, the gracious, womanly manner, the unexceptionable feminine air of refinement and dignity, I could scarcely believe what I had seen. I tried to convince myself that I had been dreaming.

No allusion whatever was made to the circumstance of my intrusion; but our mutual efforts to keep up a slight conversation upon indifferent topics was attended, I thought, with some constraint.

Madam finally referred to the state of my health.

"Gertrude, the trials you have lately undergone have proved almost too much for your strength. As I said yesterday, you will need a long period of relaxation to regain your usual health. I have a special mission for you which will serve a double purpose. It will give you change of air and rest, and at the same time render me an important service."

"I shall be most happy, Madam, to accept of it."

"You can now be trusted to travel alone," she said, thoughtfully.

"Yes, I should have no apprehension on that score,

though I rather shrink from it; I have so long enjoyed the shelter of your protection."

There was a silence of a few minutes, during which Madam seemed absorbed in deep thought.

She then said it was necessary for me to make a journey to the Adirondack Mountains for the purpose of securing for her a certain rare herb that was found only in that region of the country. It would soon be in flower, and she wished me to gather a quantity of it for special use in the laboratory. She described the plant minutely, and made a drawing of it, pushing aside the breakfast dishes to make room on the table for her paper. It must not only be gathered when in blossom, but should be cut only at the noon hour, being an herb of the sun. As it was somewhat hard to find, and not plentiful when found, she said it would take me probably a month to obtain a supply.

We repaired together to the library, where she had me copy from a botanical work the description of this herb.

"When am I to start?"

"This very day. We can lose no time, as the plant will not remain above three or four weeks in flower, and the journey will require several days."

"Very well; I will pack up at once."

Madam looked up at me in an absent sort of way, peculiar to her when she approached any matter of business.

"Let me see; how long have you been with me, Ger-tie?"

"It is a little more than a year," I replied.

"Dear me! so it is. How fast the time flies!" she said, wearily. "And in all this time there has been no question of compensation between us," she added.

"You furnished me with all I required, and I did not join you from purely mercenary motives," I answered.

She made a note upon her tablets; then, going to an *escritoire*, she brought out a package of bank-notes.

“Here is money for your trip. Be cautious and discreet.” She handed me an amulet of gold suspended by a tiny chain of the same metal. “Wear this about your neck. It is a talisman which has been especially consecrated for this purpose. While you wear it (observing diligently the usual precautions of our sex), no person may penetrate your disguise.”

As a still further precaution, she said I should take along the mastiff, “Neptune,” a dog of great strength and wonderful sagacity, who would serve as a protector in my rambles about the woods.

Then followed elaborate directions as to the journey, instructions about writing, and especially as to my return. On no account or pretense whatever was I to abandon my search for the plant until I received orders to do so. I was particularly to write when I started upon my return trip. On my arrival in the city I was not to return direct from the boat to her house, but for a special reason—which she did not explain—I was to proceed to the X—Hotel, where, she said, there would be some one from the establishment to receive me.

Accustomed as I was to strange and minute orders, with or without their purpose being known, I accepted all as a matter of course. It was a part of my mystic education to obey and ask no questions. It was the rule of the house.

I hastily packed, made my swift adieus to the inmates of the establishment, and lastly to Madam, who at parting said, with unusual emotion:

“Remember, silence. Peace be with you—farewell!”

Eloise—dear, beautiful Eloise, accompanied me to the boat.

“How nice if we could go together,” she said, the tears filling her eyes at the thought of separation.

“I shall miss you ever so much, dear sister; but don’t cry—the time will soon pass,” said I. “Of course, Madam could not spare us both at once.”

A few minutes more, and I was waving my handkerchief to her from the hurricane-deck of the boat, now steaming out, soon to bear me along the picturesque Hudson.

In due time I found myself very comfortably quartered in a pleasant village near the center of the Adirondack region. My trip had been safe, pleasant and agreeable. I had been the constant recipient of traveling courtesies from both ladies and gentlemen.

As a young woman traveling without escort, I of course sought the sole companionship of women, and was always welcomed and taken under the protecting wing of some elderly lady. No one could criticise the propriety of my conduct. I spent most of my time in reading, though I varied that employment with needle-work, in which accomplishment few ladies could excel me. I could draw a little, and amused my lady fellow-travelers by sketching. Several gentlemen sought my acquaintance, but I was never more than coldly civil to them, and this circumspection made me still more popular with my lady acquaintances, who seemed to regard me as a model of cautious innocence and lady-like propriety.

I immediately commenced my botanical rambles, and was fortunate enough to secure the companionship of a young lady with whom I scraped an acquaintance at the hotel.

The plant Madam had sent me for was known in the country, but so scarce that I only gathered one specimen in a week's constant search; and even for this small acquisition I had to return the second day in order to gather it at noon, according to the requirement.

My young lady companion was herself a botanist, and seemed to take as much pleasure in the search as though she had been directly interested. We became very intimate, and she confided to me that she expected soon to be married. Her speculations on this event are among the

most amusing of my recollections. I was soon quite convinced that I was no longer in any danger of detection, and while never relaxing my usual precautions, I could afford, in the company of women, to indulge in the utmost vivacity and abandon.

I received frequent letters from my mistress, full of affectionate solicitude for my health, and always with kind remembrances from Eloise.

No allusion was ever made in Madam's letters to the awkward affair of my intrusion. I began to congratulate myself on the presumption that she, through some singular absent-mindedness, had failed to notice my presence in her room that morning, and my heart was lighter for the thought.

As time passed on I did succeed, by great industry—assisted by my friend—in securing quite a collection of the medicinal herb, and so advised Madam by letter, expecting my immediate recall; but her reply directed me to remain for another two weeks, which I attributed to her wish that I should obtain the full benefit of the invigorating mountain air.

Six weeks were thus passed very pleasantly, and with manifest improvement to my health. The color came back to my cheeks, and I felt new vigor in every muscle and sinew of my frame. I began to feel a great longing to get out of my disguise and resume my natural character as a man. With something like alarm I observed that my feelings towards women were gradually undergoing a change. In place of my usual indifference, there was present the natural attraction of sex.

Was it because I had emerged from the sphere of Madam's personal influence? I thought so at the time, but I have since learned that there is a subtle and very powerful specific drug capable of inducing amatory indifference, which she may have administered to me without my knowledge. Whether it was due to that or to her mag-

netic influence, the absence of either would sufficiently account for my changed feelings.

It was on a gloomy, drizzly day when I arrived in New York, and was driven from the pier to the X— Hotel, which was the place designated by Madam for me to repair to on my return to the city. I began to reflect upon this singular caprice of Madam's. Why did she not permit me to return direct to her house? The thought gave me some uneasiness; but then there was no accounting for the freaks of mystics; they have so many fanciful notions, and Madam was so very eccentric—always preparing surprises. No one about the house ever knew what to expect, or could anticipate anything likely to occur. It seemed like a part of her domestic policy to keep everybody in the dark. Secrecy, which was naturally a strong propensity in her, had become by constant cultivation a second nature.

I could not, however, overcome a sensation of foreboding. The weather itself was depressing. A feeling of loneliness and dread came over me. I could not get rid of the apprehension that something very unpleasant was impending.

It was therefore with eager joy that I rushed forward to embrace Eloise, whom I met as I entered the ladies' parlor of the hotel.

She was alike overjoyed to meet me; but I saw at one swift glance that something unusual had taken place. The beautiful face was unnaturally pale, the eyes were red with weeping, and a certain look of pain was present, which went to my heart.

"Come to my room, Gertie, dear," she said, "for I have much to tell you; and mind, dear, you are to prepare yourself for a surprise."

"A surprise? Well, the world is full of surprises which should no longer surprise. I hope it is a pleasant one, Eloise."

“ No, dear; it is a very sad one.”

“ My heart told me so. Is our mistress ill?”

We were now at the door of her room; she gently pushed me in, and in answer to my question, she burst into tears.

“ Not dead? surely not dead?” said I, interrogatively.

Her convulsive sobs and tears were her only reply. I sunk into a chair, and thought it best to give her time.

She took from her reticule, still sobbing, a sealed package which she handed me in silence.

Opening it, a bank-check dropped out and a ring rolled away under the bureau. The letter was from Madam, and read as follows:

“ NEW YORK, *July* —, 18—.

“ DEAR GERTRUDE,—After what has happened it is impossible that our relations should continue. I do not blame you; I know it was all an accident. I inclose herein the ring you were looking for that morning. I had it on my finger on the night of the evocation, and wore it away to my room, intending to hand it you the next day.

“ I inclose also a check for two thousand dollars, your undrawn salary for the time you have placed at my disposal. I hope it may help you on your way until you are able to place your hands readily upon all that you need. I would request that you will kindly look after poor Eloise, who is a very worthy, helpless girl, and now left almost alone in the world.

“ It will be entirely useless for you to try to trace my flight, and even if it were not, no good could come of it to either of us. I ask you to keep strict silence as to all that has transpired since our acquaintance began. If you choose to continue your present incognito, you will find it very easy to do so, and you can earn a good income right here in New York by following in my footsteps; but if, as I divine, you will choose to resume your natural place, and devote yourself to the further prosecution of your studies in transcendental magic, I will give you this hint: you must find your complete initiation in the East. You will find it a path beset with thorns. Pause ere you decide to devote the noonday of your life to this most tiresome and

unsatisfactory pursuit. Would you not be happier to lead a more natural life and enjoy its simple harmonies, in preference to the Titanic struggle you must undergo in the pursuit of hidden knowledge? Would you not prefer to be the object of affection, rather than the sport of demons? On one side home and love and contentment, on the other wandering, isolation and unrest. It is for you to choose, and for you to abide the result. In any case, peace be with you.

“MADAM AURELIAN.

“P.S.—It would not be like a woman not to add a postscript. Do be kind to poor little Eloise.”

By the time I had finished the missive, Eloise had a little recovered from the extreme violence of her emotions; but her tears still flowed, though softly now, like summer rain upon green meadows.

“Now put by those tears, dearie, and tell me something about all this. I infer from this message that our mistress has left the city—am I right?”

“Yes; she left suddenly, about two weeks ago. No one suspected such a thing. She had packed everything quietly and prepared so secretly that at the last day she had only to send the servants away and to say good-bye to me, and bid me to bring this message to you.”

With every word Eloise’s grief seemed to increase, and between each phrase came a sob.

“Peace, child! Why grieve at the inevitable?”

“Oh, Gertie! I am so desolate since she left. I had been with Madam so long, and she treated me so kindly. And now I am alone in the world, except for you. Do let us keep together,” she added, passionately; “let us keep together, and live together, and *die* together.”

“Why, certainly, darling, since we are deserted and left alone together, we must comfort each other, like the babes in the wood,” I added, cheerfully. “But what did Madam do with the furniture and fixtures of the house?”

“Why, she hired the place all furnished and fixed up, and I heard her say that the lease was about up.”

“Is there any one living there now—any one in possession?” said I, with a sudden impulse to visit the house. “Let us go round there and take one last look.”

Eloise broke into a new fit of weeping. I got her to hurry on her things, and away we posted in the direction of our old home.

It did look desolate enough with the closed shutters. The sign was no longer on the door.

“If we only had a key,” said I.

“Oh! that reminds me,” said Eloise, fumbling in her bag—“that reminds me that I have not yet returned the key to the landlord. Any time before the first of the month, she said, would do.”

We entered, and together wandered about through the now silent and deserted apartments. All the magical apparatus had been removed from the oratory, but there was a faint perfume of incense pervading the room, and on the floor could yet be seen the dried remains of the vervain leaves which Madam had worn intertwined about her head on the night of the evocation.

As I silently looked on the place where my mother's form had once appeared, an unutterable feeling of sadness came over me.

She was gone—Madam, my faithful teacher, was gone—and as I beheld my companion in misery, my only friend, at my side, my heart went out to her as never before.

Why not, thought I, cast off this hated disguise, and reveal the truth to this poor creature? She will certainly cling to me more than ever in my true character. Besides, I did not see my way clear to long maintain my incognito under circumstances of such extreme intimacy as was now likely to be almost unavoidable, if we were to be long together. No, thought I, not yet. She is not in a

condition to bear the shock of such a surprise to-day. Besides, I must think.

All at once I found myself face to face with the alternative of remaining a woman or joining again the ranks of my own sex. The world was before me, and I could play upon its crowded stage in either character. "Well," thought I, "I will take the matter under advisement; there is no hurry."

I had become attached to my assumed character. I liked Gertrude as a charming, modest and rather adroit miss, who was popular and admired among her sex, while I could scarcely say as much of the male creature out of which she had been created.

It was not till I began to think of separating from the assumed character forever that I realized how much I was attached to it. Nevertheless, there was growing up within me a strong desire to resume my original and natural place. I was tired of playing a part, and had from the first despised myself for acting a perpetual lie. I might have been justified at the time I assumed it by the circumstances, thought I, but now it is no longer necessary. Thanks to Madam's liberality, I was raised above immediate want.

These thoughts passed rapidly through my mind on our way back to the hotel.

But what should I do with this poor, forlorn creature clinging to my arm? Her beauty, innocence and sweet disposition had long endeared her to me. Now, her weakness and unfriended condition invested her with a new and overpowering interest. Besides, had not Madam in her letter especially commended her to my care?

My thoughts were interrupted by my fair companion.

"Why, Gertrude, how glum you are since we entered that horrid room! What are you thinking about, dear?"

The silver notes thrilled me. Ah, me! if she only knew what my thoughts were at that moment. If she only

knew that I was thinking how I might honorably get away from her!

That evening after tea she accompanied me to my room. It seemed she could not bear to have me out of her sight.

This was my first night in the house. I knew she would insist on remaining with me. I began to study seriously what means I could adopt to get rid of her. But meanwhile we talked vivaciously of old times and of Madam's strange freak in leaving us so suddenly. Eloise no longer cried. Having freely relieved her overcharged feelings by copious tears, she was now almost happy in my companionship.

"After all," she said, "we still have each other, and you will not leave me, Gertie—say you will not. I don't know what it is to be alone, nor what to do," she added, plaintively; "and you are so brave and composed. I feel strong when you are by. How I wish I could be like you!"

"Tell me how you came to be with Madam?"

"Why, she took me from my aunt, who was living here at the time—my only relative, who has since died."

"How long were you with Madam?"

"Five years, nearly. I was a little miss but thirteen when she first proposed to my aunt to let me come and live with her. Aunt was very poor—a seamstress—and was glad to see me so well placed, for her health was failing, and she used to worry over what might happen to me in case of her death. She visited the Madam for advice, and then it all came out, and Madam offered to take me."

"I perceive that she took great interest in you, and she has referred to you in her letter to me," I replied.

"Yes, Madam seemed much affected when she took leave of me. Almost her last words were: 'Eloise, I must leave you, poor child! Wait for Gertrude, and trust her. She is a good girl and will help you.' Her very words."

“So, then, you are an orphan, Eloise?”

“Yes.”

“I never told you that I was one.”

“You are an orphan girl, too? Why, how jolly! Two of us—two orphans! Oh, I am so glad!”

“What,” said I, with mock gravity, “glad we are orphans?”

“Well, no—yes—oh, you know what I *mean*—I am glad we are orphans *together*.”

So, then, thought I, here is a new bond of sympathy and a new claim upon my protection. This poor child has never known what it is to struggle with the world. I tried to imagine what she would be best fitted to do for a living.

“What do you expect to do next? Have you formed any plans?”

“Oh, dear, no! I expect *you* to do that.”

I answered with a sigh.

“You are so much wiser than I,” she continued.

It was now growing late—the usual time for retiring had passed. I had not the heart to dismiss the girl, and she made no sign of any intention to depart. She evidently intended to share my couch. I became silent and moody. She prattled on for some time—I answered in monosyllables. Finally, she seemed to notice my abstraction.

“No doubt you are tired, Gertie. Shall we not retire for the night?”

I felt my face flush, but I turned away quickly, and replied:

“I *am tired*, Eloise; but all these things have raised such a turmoil in my brain that I feel I shall get no sleep to-night. I want to think about what we are to do. You can lie down while I go out on the balcony. I feel hot, and my head aches. I will sit out here awhile and inhale the fresh air and look at the stars.”

I took a chair in my hand and opened the window to step out, and then, fearing she would follow me, I turned around and bade her good-night.

She seemed to understand that I wished to be alone, and I heard her undress and get into bed, while she called to me through the open window to "beware of the damp night air, and not stay out too long."

"Ah!" thought I, "there are other things to beware of besides the night air."

I remained long on the balcony, in deep thought. Not for the world would I inflict the slightest wrong upon this poor girl. But how could I benefit her? For us to live in close intimacy was clearly inconsistent with the maintaining of my incognito. To explain all to her and assume my natural character would mean either marriage or separation. There remained no safe and honorable alternative. Separation and practical desertion of this girl I could not contemplate; it seemed almost cruel.

Marriage was equally objectionable, for it would involve the abandonment of all my hopes and aspirations. The Magi never marry.* If I would mount to dizzy heights of

*"If thou wouldst be loved by fairy queens, by sylphs and undines, and the beautiful damsels of light, be chaste as the moon toward earthly women; for the elemental spirits are oftentimes jealous of the daughters of men."—*Magical axiom.*

knowledge, I must have no incumbrances. Besides, even if I chose to give up the search for knowledge, and sacrifice all upon the domestic altar, was Eloise the kind of woman calculated to make me happy? True, she was charming, graceful and innocent; but she was also light, inexperienced and very deficient in education. She would be a sweet companion in leisure hours, but could never be a student. I felt that it was not in her nature to be studious.

I imagined us married, and how soon I might tire of mere softness and pretty ways. How I would soon regret

that I had given over all my grand aspirations, my intellectual birthright, for a mess of domestic porridge. I felt that I was not fitted for domesticity. Sooner or later I should rebel.

I arose and went into the room where Eloise lay in the soft, sweet sleep of innocence. Her bright golden tresses were loose, and fell in bewildering disorder over her plump, snowy shoulders, which the light cover only partially concealed. Her features were almost faultless in their regularity, and the marble forehead was in itself a marvel of beauty. One little hand and shapely arm lay carelessly outside the counterpane. The little hand was the hand of a lady, and seemed unfit for the rough work of life. It seemed fitter to serve as a model for genius to reproduce in deathless marble for the admiration of all time.

She had never seemed half so beautiful—her full red lips barely met in their limpid softness. They indicated a great capacity for love, but little firmness, and very little courage or fortitude.

Now came the crowning struggle. For one brief moment I felt that I could not give her up. I loved the sweet girl. She was mine by affection, mine by sympathy, mine by opportunity, and mine by the bequest of her late protector. I could not bear the idea that she might become another's.*

* Strange that this one selfish thought should precipitate so many marriages. How unworthy it is of a generous nature! How ridiculous, too! As though one had a sort of exclusive right to the possession of a woman—right of discovery, I suppose. Foolish man! Even in marriage thou canst not be sure of her love (mind, I say her *love*, not her duty) any longer than she is content with thee.

Nay, she might fall to one unworthy of her. I would awaken her, would tell her all, would offer her my love, would be accepted, and to-morrow I would make her my wife. It was a dangerous moment. It is at such a crisis

of one's fate that guardian angels are especially necessary. Mine seemed now to whisper: "Hold! be not rash. The mystic, above all men, should hold the reins of passion with the firm hand of Will, guided by Reason. This is simply a trial of your strength. Are you, then, to give way like common mortals to the first temptation—you, that aspire after the precious gifts of Heaven, which are reserved only for the wisest and the best?"



CHAPTER XI.

OUT OF A DILEMMA—AN OLD LETTER WITH NEWS—
PROMPT ACTION — RAPID CHANGES — ESTELLE, THE
MOUNTAIN BELLE.

“No man is the same to-day which he was yesterday or may be to-morrow.”—*Dryden*.

“Follow a shadow, it still flies you;
Seem to fly it, it will pursue;
So court a mistress, she denies you;
Let her alone, she will court you.
Say, are not women truly, then,
Styl'd but the shadows of us men?”

—*Ben Jonson*.

INVOLUNTARILY I turned away from this ravishing vision of beauty, for I felt it unsafe to remain. I walked out to my former seat in the balcony.

For the first time since I had assumed woman's dress I felt a great longing for a cigar.

The more I pondered over the situation, the more irreconcilable seemed the various alternatives presented to my mind.

It was clear that matters could not remain as they were, equally clear that I could not undeceive the girl without plunging into still greater dangers. I could not think of going away and leaving her to her fate. I was not willing to engage myself to her in any way. I was determined, above all things, not to compromise her.

But what should I do with her? How should I manage to save her from myself? Only one thing seemed clear:

this night's experience must not be repeated. Before tomorrow's sun set, this problem must be solved in some way. "God grant it may be in a way that I may not hereafter have cause to regret!" I murmured. I resolved that I would so act as that my mother in heaven might approve of my course.

And now, having actually exhausted every mental resource, I dismissed the matter, waiting for daylight, with something like a glimmering faith that the physical light would also bring to me the more glorious enlightenment of the spirit.

I discern the first faint streaks of light in the east and amuse myself by watching for the gradual signs of activity in the street below. The morning newspaper carriers are moving swiftly and noiselessly along, soon followed by scattering groups and single individuals hurrying past, some going home from night occupations, others returning from revels, a few very early risers starting out to walk, perhaps long distances, to commence their day's work. Soon the rattle and clatter of vehicles commenced—the early venders were abroad. The heavy beer-wagons, milk-wagons, market-wagons, omnibuses from early trains—all helped to swell the Babel of sound which soon grew into that continuous roar which was to last till night-fall. The sidewalks are now crowded with people. The sun is emerging in splendor just above the eastern horizon. It is to be a fair day, and I am glad of that.

One more look at Eloise before she awakes. What will she think of my sitting up all night?

Eloise is lying upon her side. The golden tresses sweep over and partially shade the pale cheek, flushed slightly now with the delicate rose tints of the peach.

I was again tempted to cast philosophy to the winds, to fold the lovely creature in my arms, to arouse her with a greeting of burning kisses, and to appeal to all nature for my vindication.

Instantly the answer came to my heart: "Yes, do so—do like the common herd, and *be* like them."

The magus is superior to others, precisely because he is capable of rising superior to the weakness of others.

I made a little hasty toilet and descended to the parlor.

An hour later, Eloise came running in, fresh as a rose.

"Why, Gertie! how soundly I must have slept. For, do you know, I never heard you go to bed or arise?"

"Yes, I noticed you slept well, dear, and I tried not to disturb you," I replied.

After breakfast we decided to go out. I had not much idea where, but I was sick of the house, and was in hopes that external objects would suggest some help to me.

We sought a quiet street. "Eloise," said I, "have you really no acquaintances in the city?"

"None whatever worthy the name. You know I never went out while living with Madam."

"Can't you remember some worthy woman who knew your aunt?"

"No. Five years is a long time among the poor of a great city—a class always moving about from lodging to lodging. I can not recall to mind a soul who knew us then."

That reminded me that I also had scarcely an acquaintance in all the vast city. My thoughts went back to my landlady of the boarding-house and the meek husband. I was not far from the house. The fancy took me to look in upon them. I was sure that Mrs. Clark would not recognize me in my present disguise, and to make assurance doubly sure, I resolved to introduce myself as my own sister, recalling the young man directly to the landlady's memory.

We proceeded to the boarding-house. I told Eloise that I desired to call here for a few moments, as a brother of mine once boarded there, and I would see if the landlady of the house remembered anything of him.

The usual summons brought an untidy girl to the door, and we were ushered into that well-remembered sitting-room where I had suffered such agonies of impecuniosity a little more than a year ago.

Mrs. Clark appeared in a dingy dress and unkempt hair, with the same jaded, harassed look which I so well remembered. She beckoned us into an inner room, in deference to our sex and our dress.

"Pardon, madam," said I, "but are you Mrs. Clark, the landlady here?"

She bowed, giving me a most scrutinizing look that was more like recognition than anything else I could imagine. I gave her no time for any exclamation, but proceeded calmly, yet rapidly:

"About a year ago," said I, "my brother, a young man named Zell, was boarding with you, if I mistake not."

The look of suspicion vanished from her face, and an expression of satisfied curiosity replaced it, as she said, with great complacency:

"Yes, yes; I was trying to think who you reminded me of. You are wonderfully like the young gentleman, to be sure; I might have known you were his sister; even your voice reminds me of him."

"Do you know where he went from here?" I asked.

"Well, now, to tell you the truth, I never knew. He couldn't get work, you see, for quite awhile, and then all of a sudden he found a place; and one Monday morning he comes to me in a great hurry, and, 'Mrs. Clark,' says he, 'I want to pay you for all your kindness, to me in difficulties;' and he paid me in full—sixteen dollars and eighty cents—which I was mighty glad of at the time, being hard run for money as I was. Yes, he was a model young fellow and a perfect gentleman, and I hope he has done well since. He must have left the city, for I'm sure that boy would never have gone anywhere else to board,

He was so contented here—though there are grander places, of course. By the bye, let me see; I do believe that there was a letter left here for him, and I kept it ever so long, thinking he'd call for it, and I don't know but I have it somewhere yet."

I begged her to do me the favor to ascertain if she had it now, as it might contain information that would help me to trace my brother's present whereabouts.

She left us, and was gone nearly half an hour, when she came bustling back, flushed and heated with her long search. She had a letter in her hand which looked as though it might have been deposited in the coal-hole for safe-keeping for the last six months. The postmark showed it to be from Tower Hill, and it was now nine months old. She permitted me to take it without any hesitation. I opened it before her eyes and stepped to the window to read it.

It was from my aunt Fanny, stating that a will had been found since I left, and that Tower Hill had been left to revert to me in fee simple, my aunts to have a life interest. She wrote that the will had been probated, and the executor was doing well with the collections due the estate, and was now confident of getting in money enough to pay off all debts and incumbrances, leaving the homestead clear. She urged me to return, or to "come right on," as she expressed it in the New England idiom.

I took leave of Mrs. Clark, and we walked on in silence for some time. I bethought me of Madam's check, and we retraced our steps toward the business streets, stopped before a prominent bank, entered, and I presented my certified check (which was made payable to bearer), and received a certificate of deposit for the amount, less a few hundred dollars which I took in cash.

Eloise stood by indifferently while these transactions were going on. No one could think less of money matters than she did,

"By the way, dear," said I, "how much money did you have coming from Madam?"

"Why, she gave me a bank paper—I have not thought of it since; here it is."

I looked at it—it was a certified check for two hundred and fifty dollars.

"Excuse me for asking," said I; "but, you know, these little matters are quite important. You had better have this cashed."

"Well, you see to it, Gertie, please."

I had the check cashed, and we afterwards deposited the money to her credit in a savings bank near by. As we were coming out of the bank we passed on the steps two nuns in deep black, who were just then ascending the steps.

This gave me an idea. I could have leaped for joy.

"Now, darling," I said, "I must tell you something."

She began to tremble, as though apprehending some unpleasant announcement.

"Oh, do not leave me!" she said, in pathetic tones.

"Say anything but that. If you go, I go with you—do I not, Gertie?" She added the last clause beseechingly.

"Eloise, be calm and reasonable."

I called a hack, and we both climbed into it.

"To the Ursuline Convent," I called to the driver.

"Now, child, you seem to rely upon me to care for you," said I.

"Yes, yes; a thousand times yes."

"Very well. I accept the trust," said I, "but on one condition."

"And that?" she said, doubtfully.

"That is, that you accept of my advice and do as I wish, without complaint."

"Very well, Gertrude; you are much wiser than I, and I know you will do what is best for me—only, don't leave me."

"Listen," I resumed, in a tone of mild command: "I

am obliged to be away for a few days on business of great importance, connected with my brother. There are special reasons why I can not allow you to accompany me. Besides, it would be a double expense, and we have need to save our little means and make them go as far as possible. It is too expensive a place for you at the hotel where we now are, and no suitable place for a young girl alone. I mean to place you with the sisters of the Ursuline Convent, where you will be pleasantly situated and safe while I am away. You need some schooling, too, Eloise, and the good sisters will teach you."

She was clinging to my neck, and I felt her hot tears on my cheek.

"Oh! I was so miserable all the time you were away before!" she sobbed.

"Remember, it is but for a short time," I said, "that we are to be separated—a very short time."

She made no reply, knowing it was useless; but her tears and sobs were an agony to me.

Nothing but a sense of duty could have enabled me to witness her present distress with calmness. I felt that this was one of those occasions when we must "be cruel only to be kind."

In less than an hour more Eloise had been formally booked as a boarder within the convent walls. It was an extensive building in the midst of shady grounds, and surrounded with high walls. The lady superior, a most affable person, immediately won my confidence. I took advantage of a favorable moment to beg her especial care of my friend, and she promised it.

"She seems like one in homesickness," said the sister; "we will soon make her feel at home here."

I felt that she was at least safe. I could but reflect that, in spite of our boasted civilization, a Roman Catholic convent is, after all, the only safe place we have in which to leave an unprotected young girl.

I hurried back to our hotel, and saw Eloise's baggage at once dispatched to the convent, exceedingly thankful that what had seemed an insoluble problem last night had been so well disposed of to-day. I say "disposed of," for I could not congratulate myself that it was solved.

That night, as I lay down to rest alone in the room where we had been so happy, and imagined Eloise also alone and, doubtless, convulsed with grief at this sudden enforced separation, I felt something like self-reproach; but it was quickly succeeded by the reflection that I had made a good choice of evils—so often the only alternative left to human weakness.

I resolved on the morrow to dismiss another troublesome lady friend. To-morrow Gertrude should be no more. She had served me well, and I felt very grateful and not a little attached to her. But Gertrude must go. I dreaded the change. Every condition has its own special advantages, its own attractions. As Gertrude, I had become habituated to many little courtesies, to much quiet deference from men, and was sufficiently versed in the mysteries of the universal freemasonry of women.

If the most accomplished and versatile of beaux claims as much, I will venture to assure him that he is mistaken. A woman is never entirely herself to any man—not even to her husband; she is a woman only among women. I had always secretly enjoyed the deception, and yet always despised myself for it. I had the satisfaction of knowing that I had taken no mean advantage of my disguise, and that, so far as I knew, no one had suffered any detriment from it.

I arose early on the following day, settled our joint bills at the hotel, and ordered my baggage taken to a large lodging-house in the busiest part of the town. Here I engaged a room at a time when the office was thronged with customers. I went straight to my room, and from the bottom of my trunk, which was filled with articles of lady's

apparel, I brought out the male attire that I wore on the day I became Gertrude. I had kept it carefully, on Madam's suggestion that it might be needed on some sudden emergency. I found it exceedingly convenient for the present one, for it would have been awkward to have to go out to purchase a man's suit, even for a sick brother (?), thought I, though it might have been managed. Almost anything can be managed in a great city, where curiosity is, in a measure, stifled by the multiplicity of affairs.

Off went Gertrude, disappearing piece by piece, consigned to the past via the trunk. "Gertrude, I love you; but nevermore be officer of mine." Now, behold me in my original habiliments! If I felt like a sylph when first completely equipped as a girl, I felt now like a gazelle in the free and mobile trappings of my own sex. I regarded myself in the glass. Alas! the same undersized, effeminate and rather ugly little man of whom I had still more than a dim recollection. I was half inclined to reconsider the matter and take Gertrude back to my heart. But no, it could not be; I must take Theo, for better or for worse. I could not play the sister act upon my aunts at home. Welcome, then, Theo, and see that you are worthy of the sister who once served you so well.

I resolved to make quick work of it. I locked the trunk and the room, came out by a hall, avoiding the office, walked round a block or two, to try my legs, and finally stalked into the office of my lodging-house, and in a very business-like manner stated briefly that a young lady who had engaged a room that morning had unexpectedly found friends in the city, and that I wished to settle her bill, and had an order for her baggage.

The polite clerk seemed to see nothing unusual in this theory. He did not take the precaution to compare the signature of the order with that of the register, and if he had, they were certainly near enough alike to satisfy the

most particular bank official. I paid a day's rental for the room, left my order, received for the trunk, and went about my business duly transformed.

I reflected that the strange, if not unique, experiment of exchanging one's ostensible sex at will, was not so difficult as generally imagined, and perhaps more common than we know. True, I was exceptionally favored for the successful carrying out of the part, both by nature and by the best possible training, as well as by a happy concurrence of circumstances.

I had learned much—I had overcome some degree of temptation. My long intimacy and association with the other sex had given me special opportunities to study them. It pleased me to regard the whole feminine episode as a part of my education; but I do not recommend this curriculum to my readers.

I immediately took passage for Boston, *en route* to Tower Hill. I longed to revisit the old homestead that had once known my mother's presence. I had an affection for the place, and a satisfaction in the thought that it would some day be mine.

I arrived there on a sultry August day, to the surprise of everybody in the house. I was eagerly welcomed by my aunts, with, I thought, just a shade of extra adulation, by reason of my present importance as the heir.

Aunt Fanny said "I looked delicate." She did not "think the city agreed with me," and she "feared I was in danger of going into consumption."

Of course I was compelled to invent a plausible story as to my employment and personal adventures during my absence. This was a case where the truth would indeed have been stranger than the commonplace and innocent fiction that I substituted. As it was, I was regarded as not only a considerable traveler, but a most venturesome one. New York seemed a long way off to these simple country people, who had hardly been out of the county

during their whole lives. I was therefore like one returned from foreign lands.

The place had never before seemed so attractive to me. The fields of waving grain, now ripe and ready for harvest, the green meadows, with everywhere the breath of new-made hay, the corn fields, with their broad leaves streaming in the gentle summer air, the delightful fragrance of growing vegetation now approaching the period of its greatest vitality—all combined to charm my senses and soothe my nerves, which had so long been kept at a tension by an artificial life.

The neighbors seemed now to feel more interest in me than formerly. Was it because the good doctor had left me the farm and manor-house? It seemed uncharitable to think so; but how else was I to account for the difference in their treatment of me since that very recent time, when I was hardly deemed worthy of notice, and remembered only as the poor dependent on my grandfather's bounty?

One day, in the course of my rambles, I met the proud Estelle, now a full-blown beauty in the prime of womanhood. I saw her afar off, tripping along the country road, and a momentary thrill of the old shyness came over me, a reminiscence of those school-days when her presence was to me like a dazzling sun that I hardly dared gaze upon; and when I did venture to regard the luminary it was immediately overcast with black clouds of contempt. I had a curiosity as to my present standing with her.

After the first greetings, which were cordial enough, though constrained, she said, in a manner that I thought rather patronizing:

“You have been absent what seems a long time, Mr. Zell. I am glad to see you back with us again.”

This was by far the most courteous speech I had ever heard from her lips. She had got rid of some of that girlish vanity, or it had become toned down by more serious

views of life. Suddenly the fancy seized me to try my powers upon her.

"And I am delighted to revisit the old scenes," I said.

"You have been in New York, I understand?"

"Yes."

"I suppose you found it quite different from our humdrum existence here in the mountains."

"I found it different, and painfully so," I replied, laying the foundation for a compliment.

"What was there about it so disagreeable, Mr. Zell, if I may ask?"

"Exile from the pleasant associations of school-days, from scenes and friends dear to me; in short, *banishment from those I love.*"

The faintest trace of a fugitive blush passed over her face; she answered, adroitly:

"It was no more than natural that you should have felt a little homesick at separating for the first time from your relatives; but in such a large city there is doubtless many things to divert one from gloomy reflections."

We walked on in silence for a few paces.

"Miss Carlton," said I, "I am glad to have met you to-day, I have thought of you so often since I have been away."

The well-remembered smile of triumph appeared for an instant, as she replied, archly:

"Well, I am sure it was very kind of you. Could you not find something more interesting to think of?"

She broke into a light laugh.

"I have often thought, Miss Carlton, that in my boyish enthusiasm and awkwardness I might have caused you some annoyance," I replied, in a serious tone.

"Oh, indeed, not that I am aware of," she answered, pretending to ignore the past, and perhaps wishing to draw me into an explanation.

"Thank you, Miss Carlton; I am relieved to hear you

say so. By the way, Aunt Fanny gives a party next Thursday evening, and means to invite you. Permit me to join in the invitation, and to assure you that without your presence the affair, so far as I am concerned, must be a grievous failure and disappointment. You will come, I trust?"

There was just a touch of tenderness infused into the last phrase.

"Thanks; I shall be most happy to accept," she said.

"If nothing happens to prevent, you may expect me."

We were now at her gate.

"Do let me hope that you will not *allow* anything to prevent," I replied, as I waved her adieu.

She was a superb specimen of mountain beauty—tall, of the blonde type predominant, yet with many of the brunette characteristics. Her hair, which was very abundant, was of one of those neutral tints of the light browns so hard to describe. Her complexion was clear, but differed from Eloise's creamy white by a certain delicate tawny or dusky tendency. She had a bright, animated glance and a most captivating smile.

I no longer felt any particular interest in her, except what grew out of an irresistible inclination I had to study her nature. Besides, I wanted something to amuse myself. Would the once scornful beauty still resist my approaches? I resolved to carry on a brief flirtation with her—not a very serious one, nor carried too far; but one that would afford a test, and possibly yield an opportunity for a just retaliation for the mortification she had caused me in the past. I divined that she had the same views upon me. She meant to captivate my fancy and enslave my heart, and perhaps to crush me again. I felt that I was now a little better equipped for the encounter than when, as a boy, I was driven to despair by her unkindness.

Aunt Fanny and the two other spinster sisters had a pet

scheme on hand—to give a party in honor of my return. It had been a subject of considerable discussion, and doubtless of much thought, to these maiden ladies, and now the arrangements were nearly agreed upon, and the invitations were being laboriously written out. They were engaged with these when I returned from my walk with Estelle.

“Aunt Fanny,” said I as I entered the library, “guess whom I have just met. Estelle Carlton—grown prettier than ever, has she not? You will be sure to invite her; she is my old flame, you know.”

“Oh, yes; we shall not forget Estelle,” replied my aunt; “but as to her having grown ‘prettier than ever,’ indeed I don’t think she is any great shakes. I never could see what folks find in that girl to admire. She is well enough, to be sure—I have nothing against Estelle, only—”

“Only that she is so charming,” I broke in, playfully.

“Charming, indeed!” said my aunt, ironically. “Well, she may be to young, inexperienced, callow boys; but I was going to say she is well enough, only for her over-weaning vanity and self-conceit. She fancies herself to be a great deal more attractive than she really is. To me she seems simply an exaggerated baby.”

Here Aunt Caroline chimed in: “I must warn you not to set your heart in that quarter, Theo, for Estelle has a sweetheart—Tommy St. Clair. Some say they are engaged already.”

I knew this Tom St. Clair. He was one of the very worst of my former persecutors—the very one who had of old done the most to set the other boys against me, to make me unpopular in school. I remembered now that he always used to be spooney about Estelle, and always wanted to be showing her little attentions; and I used to envy him the many pleasant smiles she bestowed upon him at a time when she never had anything but frowns for me. And so

he was still her favorite. I smiled to think that I now had a double motive for the flirtation. If I could only cut him out, thought I, it would be a sort of poetic justice.

But only for a time—just long enough to let both know that I *could* do it; then, I reflected, I will magnanimously withdraw and leave them to make it up and be happy. I did not stop to consider the right or wrong of the project. In fact, it did not present itself to my mind in the light of a moral question.

[I will say right here to the reader, in confidence, that I am conscious of a certain degree of moral infirmity. I have always been too much a creature of impulse, and while conscience generally makes itself heard with me in time to prevent any grave consequences, yet I am prone to parley with it about small matters.]

It is the evening of our little party—the party given in my honor, and that my dear aunts had bestowed so much thought and labor upon. It had been many years since similar festivities had taken place in the old mansion. The doctor, during the latter part of his life, would not allow anything of the kind. It was at a party in the family mansion that my father had first met my mother, and from that event commenced all our troubles. After that Dr. Pierrepont, though of a very genial and social disposition, could not bear to think of a party. It brought up painful associations of what he called “the loss of his favorite child.”

It was therefore determined by the three maiden sisters to make this a great social event.

The house was brightly illuminated, and its extensive apartments, profusely decorated with cut flowers and potted plants, were thrown open to our guests. The large double parlors were soon well filled with the young people assembled from miles around. I say young people, for my aunts said it should “be distinctly a young people’s affair.” These spinster ladies, the youngest of them

thirty-five years of age, had not learned to consider themselves otherwise than young.

Aunt Fanny herself, a thin, spare lady of forty odd years, was dressed like a girl of sixteen on this occasion. She wore a light dress of bright colors that might almost have figured at our last party, some twenty-five years ago. It was, in fact, of such an old fashion that it had almost come in style again by actual rotation and the law of recurrence; being originally of good material, well cared for, and worn but seldom, it had not suffered much from lapse of time. She wore heavy bracelets, and a rich necklace of gold beads (as large as gooseberries) which had belonged to her grandmother. It was an heirloom which had descended in the family from generation to generation, having originally been brought from England by the first American Pierrepont.

All these features of Aunt Fanny's costume, extravagant as they appeared in one of her time of life, might have been charitably excused with no more than a smile of compassion; but she did not stop here. She insisted on wearing corkscrew curls, which were prepared and adjusted to her thin locks with infinite trouble. Her small waist was made as tight and artificial-looking as whalebone and cord could possibly make it. She was radiant in all this splendor—the most conspicuous figure in the rooms, and perhaps the most vivacious lady present.

Her two younger sisters were more plainly dressed. Aunt Caroline wore plain white muslin, with a sash of watered scarlet, and a single pink rose at her breast.

Aunt Mary, the youngest of the sisters, was dressed in plain brown silk, without ornament. She was the practical one of the three—the real housekeeper, who looked after the kitchen and pantry, and who had with her own hands prepared the beautiful cakes and pastry, and made the confections that now set off the long tables in the dining-room.

Estelle arrived in good time, attended by that odious St. Clair. She looked entrancing in a soft, white, fluffy muslin dress and a cross of coral in her hair.

After a little promenading with St. Clair, which I fancied was partly for my benefit, I found her seated in conversation with Aunt Mary. I saluted her cordially and took a seat near her. She said, gayly:

“You see, I have kept my word, Mr. Zell.”

“Delightful in you to do so,” I replied, gallantly.

“What a charming party your aunts have made of it. I was just saying to Mary that I had not seen such gayety and brilliancy for ever so long—and for a midsummer gathering, too!”

“We mean to make it a little better than a funeral, at all events,” said I.

“Oh, you horrid! that comes of your being so long in the city. To talk of such a grave subject in connection with festivity,” she said, with assumed dignity. “However,” she added, graciously, “that reminds me of a speech I once heard from a married lady. She said that, in her estimation, a wedding was the next saddest thing to a funeral.”

“Unhappily married, I guess.”

“Yes,” she rejoined, in a thoughtful manner; “I imagine all marriages are more or less unhappy.”

“I hear, Miss Carlton, that you are soon to try the—what shall I say?—the experiment of matrimony,” said I.

“Well, the *idea!*” (with a little light laugh of derision); and then with an air of girlish affectation, in measured tones: “Well—I—guess—*not.*”

“Oh, pardon! I did not mean to be impertinent, but I heard that Mr. St. Clair was so fortunate as to be engaged to you.”

“Who *dared* say that?” she replied, with a little show of indignation. “Well, no matter; it is always the way; if one accepts little attentions from gentlemen—which one

can not help doing at times—they will have it at once that one is engaged. Why, they might as well say that you and I are engaged because we have this conversation.”

“And are we not engaged, dear Miss Carlton?” said I, wickedly. She looked up suddenly in some confusion.

“Engaged—in conversation,” continued I, calmly, bringing out the whole sentence.

“Oh! dear Mr. Zell, are you not getting really too smart for us country girls? I mean to tell your aunts to keep a good watch on you henceforth,” she said, with her best smile.

“In the presence of an enchantress one needs a little protection, surely,” I said, trying the effect of a very broad one, with the confidence that it would be all right.

“Now, don’t flatter, Mr. Zell; you used to be quite a good, sincere boy—in the old days,” said she, demurely.

At this point Mr. St. Clair came up, giving me a sinister look, and claimed her for a dance.

She excused herself to me gracefully, and actually managed to convey an air of reluctance to me, and of alacrity to St. Clair, at one and the same moment.

“A born coquette, if there ever was one,” thought I; “and, as such, lawful prize of war.”

I now transferred my attentions to a dashing brunette with dark eyes of peculiar fire and brilliancy—the recognized rival of Estelle, and perhaps the only one in the entire assembly who could successfully contest the palm of beauty with her.

To this lady, Agnes Clinton, I pretended to devote myself at frequent intervals during the evening. I observed that my partiality for the dark-eyed beauty was seen and noted by Estelle, whose eyes followed my movements. I pretended to avoid Estelle as though I considered her the property of another. She, however, took some pains to throw herself in my way. I strolled to the music-room, and soon after the enchantress glided in.

I returned to the ball-room, and lo! ere long, the tall, willowy form of Estelle again hovered in my neighborhood. My manner to her was studiously courteous, but indifferent. As she seemed to be following me, so I pretended to be trailing the fascinating brunette.

The latter I finally led to the supper-room, and devoted myself to her all through that repast with the assiduity of one completely captivated. Estelle sat near us, and on the opposite side of the table, and could not fail to notice the tender interest which I evinced for Agnes.

In vain the gallant St. Clair sought to entertain his companion in conversation. She sat like one abstracted, and could scarcely keep her eyes off of me and the pretty brunette. I pretended not to notice Estelle; but without looking directly that way, I knew about how matters were progressing. Her heart was so set upon conquest that she could not bear to see a rival carry off the prize. I knew that she was now furiously jealous, and it was part of my tactics that she should continue so.

Later in the evening we encountered each other accidentally near the embrasure of a window. I bowed, and was about to pass on, when she gently tapped my arm with her fan, and said, with that smile that few men could withstand:

“Stay a moment, Theo. Agnes is nicely fixed over there, with ever so many admirers, and I have hardly had a chance to speak to you all the evening.”

“Oh! pardon, Miss Carlton! I should not forgive myself if it were my fault; but I saw you so happy with Mr. St. Clair most of the time, and I have so many old friends to greet here, that I have, unfortunately, not had the chance before. But we are near neighbors, and I trust we shall meet often in future. I hope you have had a pleasant evening and enjoyed yourself?”

“No, I haven’t!” (in a pettish tone intended to be charming).

"Why, do not say so! May I ask the cause?" said I, with affected solicitude.

"Why, you have not once danced with me, and you *did* dance twice with Agnes; and you have been real *mean* to me—you know you have."

"Oh, *Agnes*, how can you say that? Nothing could be further from my intention."

She broke into a bitter laugh, and repeated after me:

"Oh, *Agnes*, how can you say that? Of course *Agnes* will not say anything of that sort—she has no reason, Heaven knows!"

I pretended to be a little confused at this awkward slip, which, however, was quite intentional, as the acute reader will discern.

"Well, really, Miss Carlton—" I commenced. She interrupts with:

"Why am I Miss Carlton, while Miss Clinton is Agnes? How funny! Please solve that little conundrum."

"I will," said I, rather gravely, "if you will honor me with your company for a little walk. Is it not very warm here?"

It was warm, and I felt it getting warmer in a certain sense, considering the drift of the talk.

She accepted my arm, and we retired to the conservatory, which, being equally sultry, we quickly abandoned for a stroll in the grounds. St. Clair frowned upon us savagely as we passed him on the way out.

It was a beautiful starlit night, and the moon shed a faint light through the thick overhanging shrubbery. I led her to a rustic seat under a huge sycamore-tree in a retired part of the grounds. On our way we had exchanged a few words on the subject of the late owner's care of the grounds, which she declared a paradise.

Once seated, she came back to the conundrum at the exact point where we left it.

"Now for your promise, Mr. Zell; I am all curiosity."

"Well, then, Miss Carlton" (she turned away her face, as though hurt), "to go back a little to school-days. You may not be aware of it, but Miss Clinton and I somehow got a little better acquainted than Miss Carlton and I. I used to be shy in those days, and I did not stand in the same awe of Aggie as I did of you. And, if you will pardon me, she was a little kinder to me than you."

"And pray, why did you stand in awe of poor little me?" she said, with an affectation of innocence.

I gently took her hand, which was not withdrawn, as I replied, in a voice touched with a little quiver of emotion:

"Simply because I *loved* you so well."

She started and looked up, with a beautiful light in her eyes. I caught the glance and fixed it with a clear, calm, passionless look—the look of magnetic fascination—the look of the serpent upon the doomed bird.

She endeavored to let her glance wander aimlessly away; but I knew it would return. I kept my hold of her hand and fastened her attention by keeping up a low, rapid talk, which ran on as follows:

ESTELLE: "I think you are very grateful to Agnes for her past kindness to you; but I trust you are too generous to remember all the foibles of wild, thoughtless school-girls."

THEO (musingly): "I remember only how completely I adored you, and how thoroughly you disliked me, and with the best of reasons, I admit."

ESTELLE: "Prepare yourself for a surprise, Mr. Zell. I know you used to like me, and that I was giddy and ungracious to you; but I am older now; and, besides, I did not dislike you in the least. No girl despises an honest affection. I only pretended to plague you, and keep the girls from bantering me. But," she added, with maidenly reserve, "all that, of course, has naught to do with the present."

THEO: "In the name of the awkward and bashful boy,

permit me to thank you for your kind words, which I shall never forget."

I kept my eyes fixed upon hers at every opportunity, but not with the intention of producing the hypnotic state—not now; I wished only to lay a foundation for future influence. I wished to accustom our eyes to the peculiar mutual contact, which would otherwise seem impertinent on my part to indulge in. I wished to cast the preliminary spell, which would cause her to think of me, to dream of me, and even to come to me, if I so willed. I was no longer a novice in these things, as when I practiced on Eloise's gentle blue eyes. Moreover, this was a different subject, and a far more difficult one to operate upon. Had Estelle known what I was about, she might easily have prevented it. There was a little awkward pause after my last speech, and Estelle very gently withdrew her hand, arose, shook out the folds of her dress with a graceful little movement, and said:

"Shall we not return to the house, Mr. Zell? Our absence will be noticed."

I conducted her back and left her in charge of St. Clair, who was leaning in a half-tragic attitude against the piano, where a blonde beauty was playing frantically, surrounded by an admiring group. He looked glum enough, and had reason, though he knew it not.

[Good-night, proud and false-hearted Miss Estelle. Henceforth there is no peace of mind for you, and no satisfaction with your St. Clair—not, at least, till the past is duly atoned.]

Soon after the guests began to withdraw, and our party was over.

After all had gone, my aunts and I dropped into chairs in the deserted banquet-room, which seemed strangely desolate, and talked over little events of the evening. Aunt Fanny was in an abnormal state of excitement bordering on hysteria. This scene had carried her back in

imagination to the days when she was *really* young and beautiful. She could not have escaped the conviction that her present efforts at juvenility were absurd and futile—mere cause for heartless mirth.

Alas! beautiful season of youth, who of us all appreciates you aright, till you have almost imperceptibly glided from us forever?



CHAPTER XII.

THE DANGERS OF HYPNOTISM—HE TO WHOM LOVE WAS
ONCE A PASSION, NOW MAKES IT A DIVERSION—
BEAUTY INDIGNANT.

“How beautiful she looked! her conscious heart
Glow'd in her cheek, and yet she felt no wrong.”

—Byron.

“Men are almost equally difficult to satisfy, when they have too much love, and when they have scarcely any left.”—*La Rochefoucauld*.

At first thought it may appear that I was taking an unfair advantage of Mr. St. Clair in availing myself of the rather unusual gifts and acquirements which I happened to possess, to influence the girl against him and draw her affections to myself. It may be said by the superficial, that I sought to drag in the hidden powers of nature—almost the supernatural itself—to my aid, instead of relying upon my own personal attractions. To such critics I answer, that in all my experience in occult science (and before my story is ended it must be conceded that I have penetrated a little into its mysteries), I have never yet seen any phenomena that can justly be called supernatural. It is only because we understand so little of nature that we talk so glibly of the supernatural. Mr. St. Clair was far my superior in the ordinary physical attractions that go to the make-up of the successful gallant. He was tall, muscular, handsome of feature, robust and sym-

metrical of build—all very natural advantages, you will say. I lacked some of these, but possessed another more powerful and effective than all of his combined; viz., the magnetic power; which, however, I hold, was equally the gift of nature. As to the interference with the free will of the lady, my secret influence, though formidable, was still only an influence. She might be influenced by the personal magnetism of St. Clair, or of any other man who acted unconsciously upon her. The only difference between his case and mine would lie in the fact that I knew how to use this natural gift so as to make it the most effective, while the other person used the same power without knowing how to direct it, perhaps without knowing he possessed it. It is then simply the advantage of knowledge over ignorance. I will here state that all persons possess some magnetism, though all have not the will and intelligence to direct it.

One of the most difficult feats in animal magnetism is to act upon another person without the formal concurrence of that person. In other words, to act upon another almost instantly at any casual meeting, and in the ordinary intercourse of social and business life. To do this requires at once a rare natural gift, combined with the skill and confidence that comes of long practice. Even then the operator will sometimes fail. Between adepts it would be reduced to a struggle of will, faith, skill, natural powers and scientific knowledge. The degree of success may depend upon the susceptibility, and even the physical health of the subject. In scarcely any two cases are the results precisely alike. They may even differ with the same subject at different times.

In what does the act of fascination consist? To this question Madam Aurelian had replied that it was "a mere knack," a mere trick of the visual organs. Externally that is true; internally it falls as far short of the truth as one would who undertook to explain the action of a loco-

motive by attributing it to the mere act of pulling the lever which throws open the throttle valve. Magnetism is an act of the mind. It is the will made into an act by instantaneous effort. I am not sure that any kind of visible contact is really a *sine quâ non*; but in the present state of our knowledge it is convenient.

Estelle's home was on the adjoining estate to ours, and on a clear day I could see her from our upper windows at work among the flowers. I frequently took walks in that direction, and without being much in her company, was almost daily in her sight, for a few minutes at least. Lovers make a grave mistake by always hanging about under the very nose of a woman. Occasional piquant interviews are more effective. Besides, a woman must not get the impression that one is so far gone in love that her constant presence has become indispensable to his existence.

Our meetings seemed almost accidental. There was simply the merest suspicion of interest on my part, differing by only a shade from complete indifference.

Some days after the party she made a formal call at our house, ostensibly to visit my aunts. I was barely civil during the afternoon, simply courteous at tea. In the evening we played chess, and at quite an early hour she took leave of us. Nothing more proper than that I should offer to escort her home—nothing more natural than that she should accept.

A midsummer night is of all times favorable for lovers. All nature seems in sympathy with them. Who has not experienced the charm of a moonlight scene in a garden, which we have all to ourselves, with only the gentle rustling shrubs and flowers for our companions, and the great silent trees overshadowing us like Fate? I suggested another ramble in our little park, which was graciously acceded to. How strange it seemed to me to receive favors and smiles and heavenly courtesy from this grand creature who used to seem as far from me as the nearest fixed star.

On this night she was sportive and more unconstrained than ever before in my company. She appeared to give free rein to her gentler impulses, and there was an absence of the peculiar tartness and reserve that usually characterized her.

"Ah! here's our old retreat," she said, as we approached the place of our former rendezvous.

"Where we *quarreled* the other evening," I replied. We seated ourselves.

"I have thought a good deal of what you said here the other night," she remarked, with an air of sadness.

This seemed to me to fairly lay the foundation for another tender scene. Perhaps now was the opportunity to test her real feelings.

"You attach an undue importance to my frivolous words, I fear," said I, carelessly.

"All my girlish caprice and rudeness to you in the old times has come back to me vividly. Mr. Zell, you really must forgive me."

She gave me her hand frankly, which I took with a gentle pressure and retained.

"Don't speak of it, dear Miss Carlton. I never said I blamed you for it. I deserved it all for being so demonstrative and exposing you to ridicule, for—in short, for being the fool you always said I was," I rejoined, with a smile.

"You will not then esteem me less for what has passed?"

"I am only too happy to have you for a *present* friend, and to hope that you will think kindly of me when I am gone."

A shade of real disappointment passed over her handsome face.

"Do you leave, then, so soon?"

"I do not expect to remain here long. I intend to travel in foreign parts."

"Ah, then, you will soon forget us all here," she said, sadly.

"Never; I shall think of you more than ever when I am among strangers; and, besides, one can not forget his first love."

"First love is very nice, no doubt, but last love is what counts," she replied, naively.

"Estelle, what if I were bold enough to say that you are my *last* and *only* as well as my first love?"

She trembled slightly and looked up timidly and doubtfully; presently rallying, she said, very gravely:

"I should not believe you."

"And why not, pray?"

"One does not rush off to travel away from the one he loves," she replied, pulling a flower to pieces and pensively regarding its falling leaves.

"Not when his love is *reciprocated*," said I, impulsively, emphasizing the last word.

She laid her head gently on my shoulder, stifling her sobs in the little perfumed handkerchief. She was in tears, real tears. Could it be that she was sincere? I had been cautious and non-committal in my words, but my acts and manner had implied much. Had I already gone too far? How should I retrace my steps—how terminate this singular colloquy? She was waiting now for the confirmation of all I had hinted at. Her swiftly falling tears were speaking to me. Very good; I had the right to put my own interpretation upon them.

"You weep, Estelle, because you suffer at the thought of distressing me by the inevitable refusal that I know must come."

She sobbed more violently, and, to my consternation, threw both arms about my neck and nestled her pretty head close to my breast. I felt her curls almost under my lips. I was now sure that her emotion was as genuine as Hamlet's ghost. It was almost as terrible to me. In

spite of all my efforts, something of my old passion for her was returning, and I felt myself trembling on the brink of a declaration, or some act that would commit me irrevocably. And still she spoke not; she did not corroborate my last proposition. I would follow that tack. I remained silent, making no further demonstration, but gently supporting her.

The silence, after a few seconds, became awkward, and seemed to confirm my last remark. She gently disengaged herself from my arms.

There was a touch of indignation in her tones, as she said, drawing back to the extreme end of the little seat away from me:

“You choose to misunderstand me; you are making a toy of me.”

I made no reply, and she continued, convulsively:

“You have seen fit to lead me on from one step to another till I have forgotten myself—forgotten propriety—outraged modesty.”

I was still silent, regarding her with a grave and serious look which was untranslatable to her. I was waiting for her to work herself up to a climax of indignation.

“You have played upon my feelings with deliberate intention to make me ridiculous.”

Seeing I made no answer, she looked at me in silence for some instants, her eyes filled with tears.

“I then conclude,” she said, in measured tones, and with much bitterness, “that you are simply a heartless, unprincipled, unfeeling scoundrel!”

I turned away my face to hide my joy.

“But, nevertheless,” she continued, “I forgive you; and, what is more, *I love you*—truly—wildly—madly, and you *shall* know it.”

She fell at my feet. She raised her eyes to meet my immovable, fixed gaze. She extended her hands imploringly. Her beautiful head swayed from side to side with a

little backward movement. Her feelings were now beyond all control. All pride, all self-respect, all sense of shame, had for the time vanished from her mind. Estelle's humiliation was complete. I saw the lovely form sink prostrate and unconscious upon the ground.*

* That the details of this incident may not seem to be exaggerated, I quote from an eminent American authority, W. A. Croffut, who in an article on the subject contributed to the *North American Review*, says:

"As a rule, responsiveness can be completely dominated and made to do anything of which they are physically capable. They could generally be induced to take poison or jump off the house, or throw themselves under a locomotive, or attack one another with deadly weapons."

French authorities are equally emphatic and unequivocal to the same effect.—*Editor*.

Then, for the first time, I felt a twinge of reproach. I lifted her to the seat, and by great effort, and not without anxiety, succeeded in restoring her to consciousness.

She came to like one awakening from a dream. Her wild looks thoroughly alarmed me. I trembled for her reason. I whispered a few reassuring words:

"You are ill, Estelle; we must hasten in. Be calm, and forget all this. Shall I take you to my aunt?"

"No; take me home to die," she faltered. I accompanied her home in silence and saw her disappear, in a half-dazed condition, inside her own door.

Whoever trifles with mysteries to satisfy a petty revenge will, like me, find by experience that Science tolerates no puerilities, and is capable of reacting upon her irreverent votaries. I was stung with remorse and shame not unmixed with alarm at my own temerity.

I retired in much distress of mind over the result of what by degrees I came to regard as a cruel experiment in pursuit of a petty revenge. Not that I for an instant contemplated anything more serious toward Estelle than a mere humiliation of spirit. By the exercise of my art I had simply so far subjugated her more passive will as to

cause her to forget her own dignity and to exceed womanly propriety by her vehement declaration of a passion that was in itself a mere creation of her imagination which had been systematically worked upon by my will. I knew that, left to herself, she would soon forget me, so far as any attachment was concerned; but I had given her a lesson that she would never forget. She, who made it a constant practice to enslave the fancies of men, while herself remaining cold and self-possessed, would remember this scene, wherein she had for once been repaid in her own coin. I had given her a taste of her own medicine, though in another form. Hers was like the more simple product of herb and flower, while mine was essentially the same thing, evolved by the complicated processes of the laboratory.

I now resolved to arrange my affairs for my departure for the East. Fortune had now made possible the realization of my dreams to travel in Egypt, Arabia, India and Thibet; wherever, in fact, tradition points to as the ancient sources of magical knowledge.

The business of the executor of my grandfather's estate was now settled, and the results had been far better for the heirs than had been anticipated. My own share of the estate I found sufficient to yield a moderate yearly income, which, with the ready money realized from the sale of some wood-lands which fell to my portion, and the money I brought from New York, gave me a liberal fund for immediate expenditure. I felt quite rich, and determined to proceed at once in quest of the much-coveted initiation. I had no particular point in view. I would leave much to what is called chance. My previous experience had served to convince me that all available means, all requisite agencies for acquiring knowledge, would somehow come to me whenever they became indispensable to my progress. This dogma was an article of faith to me; I believe it is to all mystics.

Intimately connected with the foregoing, and forming a necessary corollary to it, is the belief that no knowledge or achievement possible to man in his present state of development is beyond the reach of any aspirant who is inspired with the requisite personal qualities of the magus. These are enthusiasm, courage, indomitable will, patience, industry, perseverance and silence. Properly understood, these qualities *compel* success.

After long and strict self-examination, I came to the conclusion that I possessed all of these requisites in a degree sufficient to warrant me in proceeding with the mystic career.

I was not sure how far magic, as it has come down to us, is founded upon truth; but I was convinced that it was true to a certain extent. To just what extent was a part of my business to find out. Nay, if it was all a delusion and a humbug, I would follow it all the same. It should be my pleasure then to detect its fallacies, to expose its false pretensions, and to denounce its impositions. If false, it had held sway in the world long enough, and to expose and lay naked its absurdities I conceived to be a worthy life object. If true (as I preferred to think), no worthier object than its elucidation could engage human attention. I would search the world for proofs of its truth or evidences of its falsity. I felt especially "called" to investigate it; and Providence had set its seal on my commission by bestowing the means and leisure to carry out my inclinations; and, moreover, by a singular initiative had confirmed all my earlier predilections for mysticism.

Such were some of my reflections at this time, and, whether logical or not, whether right or wrong, they brought me to the inevitable conclusion that I was born to follow in the steps of Lully, of Paracelsus, and of my namesake, Cardan, even though in ever so humble a sphere of imitation.

With me action has ever followed closely upon inten-

tion. I started immediately for New York. I did not call to take leave of Estelle before my departure, nor did I call upon Eloise during my brief stay in New York. The latter I had never heard from since taking leave of her at the convent. I had given her no address to write to, representing that I was to make a flying trip, and was uncertain what direction it would take. I had thought it best for her that there should be no correspondence. In the hope of my speedy return the first days would pass, she would become, in a measure, accustomed to the new life, and afterward would be, I hoped, gradually weaned from recollection of her lost friend, and in time reconciled to the loss. Eloise would remember me only as Gertrude, and I would not have her disillusioned. I would live in her memory only as a beloved girl-friend, grown out of a fugitive acquaintance. In a short time she would think of me only as we think of a more or less interesting traveling acquaintance who has shared a journey with us for a few days or hours. In fact, that was exactly the nature of our relations, only our chance meeting was upon the journey of life. Nor was I, in my character of Gertrude, so indispensable to her as she imagined me to be. It was a sense of her loneliness, her inexperience, and want of self-trust, that caused her to cling to me with so much tenacity. I had no doubt that she would adjust herself to the new conditions without difficulty; but, at all events, I was determined not to see her again. My devotion to magic precluded all other attachments. Silence among mystics is not alone the habitual refraining from useless speech, but also the shutting out from sight and mind of all ulterior interests. So I left Eloise—as well as Estelle—to her fate. As Nature crushes a man who stands in her way as readily as she would crush an apple, so the devotee of science stops at no petty scruples in casting aside the little obstacles which would obstruct his way. He must learn to crush out from his heart all those ordinary weak-

nesses of human nature which contribute to molding the characters and destinies of common men. Wife, home, friends, pity, sympathy, love—all these are unknown to the initiate, or else hold a very subordinate place. One sentiment he indeed acknowledges, and must by no means ignore—the sense of justice. The magus, like other men—nay, more than other men—must keep himself innocent if he would be happy and successful.

I think the reader will decide that, considering all things, I had, up to this period of my life, given proof of a fair conscience, which, though liable to some slight aberrations, was, on the whole, true to the right.



PART II.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE AUTHOR GIVES GLIMPSES OF THEOSOPHY—THE SECRET BROTHERHOOD GRADUATE HIM WITH A TRIAL MISSION—AN ACCIDENT MAKES HIM THE GUEST OF A GERMAN NOBLEMAN—A RASH PROMISE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES — WHY GREAT LADIES SOMETIMES MARRY FAR BENEATH THEIR RANK.

“ And since he kept his mind on one sole aim,
Nor ever touched fierce wine, nor tasted flesh,
Nor owned a sensual wish—to him the wall
That sunders ghosts and shadow-casting men
Became a crystal, and he saw them thro’ it,
And heard their voices talk behind the wall,
And learned their elemental secrets, powers
And forces.”

—*Tennyson, in “ Vivian.”*

“ There is nothing makes a man suspect much, more than to know little; and therefore men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more and not to keep their suspicions in smother.”
—*Lord Bacon.*

I AM now approaching that portion of my life upon which the interest of my narrative mainly centers. In a certain sense, the present chapter might be regarded as the beginning of the story, all that has gone before being but incidental and preparatory; important only as treating of the formative period of life, and showing by what steps I was led on in a career destined to culminate in a

train of adventure that would be regarded as almost too extravagant and improbable even for fiction; and, for real life, certainly so phenomenal as to be entitled to record if for no other than scientific reasons. As the story is in itself so much out of the common way, so is my manner of relating it to deviate somewhat from the usual standard. I shall treat the matter not in defiance of conventionalities, but yet, in a measure, independent of them. Nor is this course entirely the result of my own preference. It is necessitated, in some degree, by the situation. My obligations as an initiate forbid me to enter into many details. It is forbidden us to disclose the inner secrets of initiation, and without these keys the minor incidents would seem tame and commonplace, and the entire ceremonial would lose its significance. We may indeed relate what we have attained and what we were enabled to accomplish; but we are not permitted to explain how we became endowed with the powers to attain and to accomplish. That constitutes "the sphinx," the mystery which every aspirant must work out for himself.

I shall therefore pass over fifteen years of my life with a few brief comments, and these are best gathered from the following soliloquy, which occurred to my mind as I was making a tiresome journey through the mountainous regions of central Germany.

It is summer—a sultry day, dusty roads, jaded horses, impatient postillion. I am alone inside the vehicle, which I have opened as much as possible to admit the fresh air. I am languid and unhappy, for I am suffering from impaired health and from dejection—two things that are frequently found together. For several days I had felt a foreboding of evil. The future, therefore, is fraught with something like terror, which I try in vain to banish. Tired of dwelling upon a painful subject, my thoughts revert to the past.

I reflect that it is now fifteen years since I left the old

New Hampshire homestead, to travel in foreign lands. Since then I have wandered over deserts, through forests and jungles, often surrounded by dangers from wild beasts and half-savage men. I have scaled mountains and navigated dangerous rivers; have passed through a series of frightful accidents, and encountered the perils of flood and cataract—in a word, have grown familiar with Nature in her wildest moods and in some of her most sublime aspects. I have undergone indescribable hardship and deprivation, including banishment from all civilized society—and all for what?

That I might gain some clew to the mysteries of Nature not elsewhere attainable; that I might find some struggling ray of Wisdom from the great past. Have I succeeded? Yes, and no.

I am wiser than I was, certainly. I have gained some little skill in magic, though less than I expected. I have found adepts, and gained initiation in some of the lower grades; but I am more dissatisfied than on my first setting out, for this reason, viz.: that I know enough to comprehend how very little I know, in comparison to what *is* known—to say nothing of what *may be* known.

The gray-bearded dervish who undertook to direct my studies found something wanting in my make-up, and declared that he was not permitted to instruct me beyond a certain point. With infinite trouble I finally extracted from him the reason. I was deemed unworthy to be promoted to the highest grades of adeptship, he said, by reason of some moral infirmity which the brotherhood had detected in my nature, and which would render the possession of certain gifts not only dangerous to me, but subversive of the moral order of the world.

The transcendent powers of magic are never imparted to the unworthy. Theosophy teaches that the soul of man passes through many phases of existence, and in every successive stage may be improved and refined. At death,

or soon after, the soul takes possession of a new earthly tenement, is reincarnated in the body of an infant whose opportune arrival is instantly taken advantage of for the purpose, and the person at once enters upon another earthly pilgrimage, during which new trials are presented and new opportunities afforded for improvement. Under proper culture and direction great strides may be made in one life-time; but it may take several incarnations, or, in other words, several different life experiences, to work out a moral taint. I was informed that I had existed in many previous bodies before taking possession of my present one. That in consequence of a very strong hereditary taint, transmitted through a line of ancestors noted for their selfishness and the undue ascendancy of evil passions in their nature, my soul long struggled in the depths of error and moral degradation; but that of late—that is, about two hundred years ago—a movement had been taken in the right direction, and for the last six generations of existence I had been gradually improving; and unless overcome and set back by some great temptation or a train of evils too strong to be successfully opposed, I was destined to become in time thoroughly purified from the moral defects of my spiritual nature, and made worthy of fellowship with the hierarchy of the true and good, who by the grace of God control the lower world of spirits.

After being instructed in the mysteries of Theosophy, the nature of spiritual life, and such other things as my teacher thought proper to impart, I was solemnly initiated in a visible brotherhood of mystics—still existing in India—who claim to be the successors of the ancient magi. This fraternity is governed by a high council, composed of wise men who act under the inspiration of the unseen powers (I am not permitted to be more explicit), which controls not only the affairs of the society collectively, but also the studies, acts and movements of the individual members.

I learned incidentally that, although these leaders can not positively foretell the future, they are gifted with premonitions which, in some measure, foreshadow events which are near at hand.

I was told that my destiny called me to Germany, and that some strange and unusual experiences awaited me in that country. I was given to understand that these experiences were essential to my further initiation, and without any information as to what I might expect, I was ordered to proceed to this part of the world and await events.

My teachers solemnly adjured me to be true to the light I had, and never to swerve from the precepts of the order, under pain of the certain retribution which follows one who, having once entered the realms of light and enjoyed its benefits, dares to prove recreant to his vows.

Just how far I am an instrument of Fate, just how far a free agent in this business, it is impossible for me to know. So far as I can discern, I am wholly and to all intents and purposes free. Yet I am conscious of some secret influence directing my movements. I am going toward Fate, yet at every step I shall appear to myself to be acting as a free agent, and shall have to account for my conduct in every exigency. I am, moreover, thrown entirely on my own resources, for I am not encouraged to expect any assistance from the brotherhood.

I therefore infer that I am upon trial upon my own merits. Given a certain situation, it is required to know how I will act in it of my own unaided volition. Nor have I any arbitrary rule of ethics to guide my conduct. I am to be by own judge of right and wrong, and to set up my own standard of justice, and then act up to that standard as nearly as my strength will permit. I also infer that I am to be tested in a twofold manner: First, upon the merit of the standard of justice which I have recognized as binding, and, secondly, upon my ability to

act, under great temptation, in accordance with my own standard.

At present I am but a chance traveler, and am now on my way to the capital city of one of the second-class sovereignties of the Empire.

Upon my arrival there I shall know no one and have no letters of introduction. I am about out of money, though that fact does not alarm me. I am now sufficiently advanced in adeptship to make my way in any country, civilized or savage.

Since my first starting out from my native land I had given myself but little concern on the subject of money matters, and I had never suffered for the necessities of life—at least, not under circumstances where money could have secured them. I was in the receipt of a small quarterly remittance from home, and in the course of my travels I was often given presents in return for such benefits as I was able to confer here and there at random along the line of my route.

I had acquired considerable skill in medicine. It was often in my power to relieve pain, to cure disease, both in man and beast. By clairvoyance I could reach the very sources of human misery, whether mental or physical. I made no charges for these good offices, but did not usually refuse the grateful offerings of the persons benefited, so far as such rewards were necessary to my comfort and subsistence. At every house where I stopped overnight, in the person of almost every fellow-traveler with whom I came in contact, I could perceive opportunities for kind offices, and in the majority of instances I could count upon substantial return of some kind, if I stood in need of it. But my resources did not end here. If need be, I knew how to command sufficient for my wants. The adept never need want.*

* Though the principles of our order forbid extortion or avarice, 'hey allow us to procure by just means all that is

necessary for our decent maintenance. Our leaders, who often find kernels of the choicest wisdom in Scriptural passages, quote the text: "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." (Deut. 25: 4.) We are to avoid the extremes of avarice and profusion. We are enjoined to confine ourselves to the satisfaction of reasonable wants, and to value wealth for its uses alone.

Absorbed in these meditations, and wondering in my mind what combination of circumstances was awaiting me in the near future, the thought occurred to me for the first time that possibly I was the dupe of the brotherhood, that my teachers had simply resorted to this expedient of sending me away on a fool's errand to get rid of a tiresome disciple. But I could hardly reconcile this theory with the fact that my late associates were undeniably men of gravity, earnestness and sincerity. At least they had appeared such to me, from all points of view and through a protracted acquaintance.

In the midst of these reflections, lulled by the close, sultry air, I yielded to drowsiness and fell into a sleep which lasted for some time, and from which I was aroused by a sharp peal of thunder. I awoke to find the sky overcast with threatening black clouds, the temperature falling, and a dull, roaring sound in the distance which seemed rapidly approaching us. We were now in a defile of the mountains—in a wild, rough, wooded country but thinly inhabited. My attendant, the postilion, was acquainted with the country, and he informed me that there was a lonely schloss about two miles distant, and a village about a league further on; but he knew of no nearer human habitation.

The dull, continuous roll of thunder reverberating through the canons, varied at intervals by loud, sharp explosions, apparently right over our heads, the blaze of lightning which flashed every second with renewed intensity upon the deepening gloom of the surrounding skies (now reduced to more than twilight darkness by the rapid-

ly gathering shadows), all together presented the most sublime and terrific spectacle I ever witnessed. Soon the distant roar was upon us, in the shape of winds which seemed to carry all before them. Gust after gust swept down the valley almost directly in our faces. The rain now fell in torrents. Our frightened horses plunged and reared upon their haunches. The driver, pale with terror, tried in vain to hold or even guide them. The wind increased to hurricane violence. Water, from innumerable gullies, streamed down the sides of the mountains, and threatened to engulf us in the narrow pass along which our frantic horses were now fairly flying in their panic. We were approaching a decline in the road. On one side the mountain loomed up almost perpendicularly to a great height, on the other the ground sloped rapidly at a sharp angle for a distance of perhaps two hundred feet. Behind us were the rushing waters, swollen almost to a river. The flood about us was now almost to the horses' bellies, and would have much impeded our progress but for the strong current which forced us forward. Our horses, large and powerful animals, were frantic with terror and utterly ungovernable. Just before us the rushing tide had made a deep cut in the road; suddenly our carriage makes a lurch to the left—sinks down—displaces its center of gravity, and turns over—horses and all. I take one despairing look at the steep bank and the watery depths below—and know no more.

It was days after the accident before I recovered consciousness. I awakened to find myself in a strange and richly furnished apartment. A comely matron—still almost youthful in appearance—first met my gaze. Though in the full bloom of health and vigor, there was a shade of deep sadness upon her face.

I contemplated her in silence, and recalled my last mental state. It all came back to me—the flood, the overturning of the heavy vehicle, the rushing sound of

waters, the expectation of death. Surely nothing could have saved us in that desperate situation. Was I, then, dead and in the region of spirits? Perhaps so; yet my surroundings had all the familiar look of earth. At first I was almost disappointed at the discovery. Surely, in such a terrific struggle of Nature's mighty forces—in the midst of the fury of the elements—surrounded by that scene of sublimity and grandeur, it were well to die.

I spoke—faintly, yet plain.

“Woman or spirit—whatever thou art, do I yet live?” said I, in English.

The lady, evidently astonished, answered me in the same tongue, with a very marked foreign accent:

“You are with friends; compose yourself; you were rescued from a frightful death by my husband, Herr von Eichman, and are now safe in our little mountain home, where, we hope, you are destined for a happy recovery.”

I had only time to murmur my thanks when I again lost myself in a state of semi-consciousness, in which I remained for many hours. In this state one is conscious of life, and yet wandering in mind and subject to many vagaries. In my delirium I fancied the woman to be Eloise, Madam Aurelian, and my aunt Fanny, by turns; while the men who sometimes appeared at my bedside—in the person of my generous host and his family physician—figured in my disordered imagination as the Eastern dervish and an Arab chief, from the latter of whom and his murderous band I had once narrowly escaped death.

My delirious talk to these imaginary personages was sufficient to convey to my attendants some idea of my adventures as a traveler and my vocation as a student of mysticism. Indeed, as afterward became evident, I had talked much of magic, of spirits, of divination, and—what impressed my superstitious friends most of all—I had shown that I possessed some knowledge of astrology.*

* The ancient science of the stars still has many votaries among people of leisure and culture in Germany. Eminently practical as are the middle and lower classes of this noble race, the learned among them are more given to abstruse speculation than are the scholars of any other European nation. While the masses seem content to float upon the surface of practicality, a few choice spirits have carried metaphysics to greater depths than have been reached elsewhere in the civilized world. Magic itself has some of its most eminent professors and generous patrons in the German states.

After a lingering fever of several weeks, during which I was nursed with the utmost fidelity under the watchful care of these hospitable people, I became convalescent and was able to observe somewhat of my kind entertainers and the surroundings.

The Baroness von Eichman, of whom we have already had a glimpse, was clearly a lady of gentle birth and high breeding; yet she exhibited in her manner none of the hauteur too often noticeable in ladies of noble lineage. Of medium stature, her form was symmetrical, while her movements were marked by a peculiar grace and suppleness. Her features, which were delicate and regular, possessed a loving softness of expression which reminded me of Eloise. But what impressed me most was the deep traces of sadness which always overshadowed her features when in repose, in spite of the habitual effort to be cheerful. It bespoke some cruel wound done to the spirit within. In company, her face was often radiant with a smile of good nature which was at once sweet and sad, and perhaps all the more attractive for the *sorrow which underlaid it*.

The contrast which she presented to her husband was so striking as to be marked by the most superficial of observers. The merest tyro in the study of human nature would say at once that she was his superior in everything except physical strength. Even in that, properly understood, she was still his superior, for the fineness and density of her organization, its elasticity, and the perfect

harmony of all the functional activities presented evidences of an organic quality which more than equaled in its power of endurance and its adaptability to external conditions any advantage possessed on his side by mere bulk.

The Baron, on the contrary, while of portly proportions, was of loose and flabby texture. He was of a nature which the ancient writers would have denominated "cold and moist." He was an honest man, and even kind-hearted in his way, but without warmth. His very touch was clammy. He looked suspicious and unhappy. His education had been neglected, and he lacked even a distant approximation to his wife's delicate tact and refinement. He was a man of practical affinities, whose sole enjoyment of life seemed to lie in his horses, his cattle, his fields, dairy, and the occasional diversion of hunting. But he was not capable of infusing even into his favorite occupations and amusements that ardor and intensity which makes them really enjoyable. His was a nature incapable of that divine thing called enthusiasm; in its place was a certain dogged obstinacy, which, however, gave to his character an air of gravity—and even consistency—which would else have been wanting to it.

Hence this man was capable of brooding over a suspicion, of nursing it in silence until it became a part of himself.

I divined all this in my first rational talk with him. I knew that he had his skeleton closet, and that it was securely locked from all the world, but was ever ready to fly open, as though by magic, for his own gloomy contemplation.

So both these good people had a separate cause of disquietude, and no small thing, either, since it was enough to darken their lives.

I looked about for a cause. In the first place, my Baron was a real, live, recognized, veritable noble of the

empire, married to a charming woman, evidently of birth superior to his own. They dwelt in this ancient and picturesque schloss, or castle, perched upon the mountain-side like an eagle's nest. Below them, in the valley, lay their cultivated fields and fruitful orchards. In the extensive pastures wandered their flocks and herds. On every hand were their devoted servants and retainers. No question of abundance here—no question of thrift. Everywhere ease, elegance, comfort and dignity. Even children were not wanting to this fortunate couple.

What, then, can it be that lies so heavily upon their hearts?

It seems that the Baron was out with a squad of his people on the day of the flood, looking after his cattle, was, happily, near enough to us at the time of our mishap to witness it, and, what was better till, he was intrepid enough to rush to the rescue, and, in brief, managed to save our lives (the postilion's and mine) at the imminent risk of his own. The postilion was unhurt, and had been sent on his way rejoicing. Me they had cared for through a long, tedious illness. Clearly, I am under great obligations to this brave man and his amiable wife.

Possibly I may be able to reciprocate. "Possibly," thought I, "there may be some means in my power by which this secret trouble may be reached and cured. What is magic for, if not to make people wiser and happier?"

Besides, a decent gratitude alone demands some return, and I have nothing to give them, unless it is my good offices. Like the apostle, I might truly say: "Gold and silver I have none, but such as I have I give unto thee."

But I soon discerned that my host, though cordial according to his nature, was very secretive. Here was a new difficulty. If he saw fit to remain uncommunicative, how could I, with any propriety, obtrude myself upon his griefs?

As day by day passed on and I recovered more fully the use of my faculties, I was led to conjecture that the trouble in this house was of a domestic character. Now, if there is one thing more than another which the discreet stranger hates to tackle, it is domestic troubles between man and wife.

When I thought of this, my gratitude showed a tendency to evaporate, or at least to ask the indulgence due to an honest debtor who means to pay, but needs time. I had almost concluded to take my leave with such earnest acknowledgment of my debt as seemed fitting, and to depend upon the future for means to clear off my obligations, when suddenly one day, while alone with the Baron in the library, the conversation took quite an unexpected turn, which changed my purpose. It was after dinner, and the pipes and tobacco having been brought, we were smoking in silence. The Baron was silent and reserved at all times, but never more persistently so than when taking his after-dinner smoke.

To tell the truth, I could not say to myself that I was yet very much acquainted with mine host. With the Baroness I had enjoyed many animated bits of conversation, and with her I could fancy myself already something more than a mere acquaintance. With her I felt myself almost on the footing of friendship, so genial and confiding was her manner. But thus far the Baron had baffled all my efforts to draw him into confidential discourse. The Teuton of the male gender is almost as hard to get acquainted with as the Englishman, and that is saying a great deal. This particular specimen was simply provokingly and painfully reticent. After a long pause I opened upon *mein Herr* with considerable freedom and spontaneity.

"Baron," said I, "I mean to take this opportunity to acknowledge a deep sense of obligation which I feel under to yourself and lady for the great kindness shown me since the unfortunate accident which occurred to me; or,

rather, perhaps I ought to say the fortunate occurrence—since it threw me into the companionship of friends so very kind as you have been.”

I addressed him in French, which I knew he spoke quite well.

He answered me only with a smile, which I thought almost sarcastic in its meaning.

After another pause, I added:

“Of course it will give me pleasure to repay this obligation in money, so far as may be in my power; but there are some good offices that money can not purchase, and such, I feel, you have extended toward me—a stranger.”

He frowned, but was still silent.

“Besides,” I continued, “I must never forget that you generously saved my life at the risk of your own. What recompense can I hope to make you in return for these transcendent favors? What that would be at all adequate—what that would meet my idea of gratitude?”

The frown gradually faded out of the Baron’s heavy face, and he was now complacently puffing his meerschäum. This was exasperating, and I resolved to wait for a reply, if it took hours.

After a pause of awkward length, he said, sententiously:

“Never mention money to me again, I entreat. For the rest, you are welcome. That’s enough.”

“Empty thanks are but a poor return,” said I, “for life twice saved.”

He answered, with some feeling in his tones:

“I should thank no man for saving *my* life.”

“You would thank God, perhaps, rather than the instrument of His providence?” replied I, curiously.

“No,” said he, with an emphatic shake of the head.

“Pardon me, sir,” I rejoined. “Am I to infer, then, that you do not appreciate the blessing of existence—you, who are surrounded with so much that is calculated to insure felicity?”

He laid down his pipe, and I felt that the moment was important. Looking me very hard in the face, he said, with dogged emphasis:

“You think me happy? I am one of the most wretched of men.”

“Impossible!” cried I, with well-feigned amazement. “Surely impossible—with health, rank, wealth, an amiable wife, lovely children.”

I noticed a slight frown when I came to the word “wife.” It was a bold, almost an unwarrantable thing, considering our limited acquaintance, for me to discuss such a subject with him; but he had invited the discussion by the first outbreak of confidence which he had ever bestowed upon me.

I was now silent, with the awkward air of a man who feels that he has ventured too far, and upon dangerous ground.

He was looking intently into the fire. At last he said:

“Would you do me a favor if you could, easily, and with no cost to yourself?”

“Most assuredly,” I replied, promptly; “provided, of course, it was such a favor as a man may rightly do.”

He resumed his pipe, and after a pause remarked:

“You’re an astrologer?”

This was my first intimation that he had any knowledge of my profession. He had evidently picked it up from my delirious talk.

I replied composedly that I had given some attention to star-reading while traveling in the East, where one hears so much of it, and added:

“In Persia people consult the stars about the most ordinary concerns of life.”

“Do you believe in it?” he asked.

“To be frank with you, and at the risk of being laughed at, I do,” said I, “though I seldom resort to it.”

“And why not,” he asked, “if you are skilled in it and believe it to be a true science?”

“Because all divination is fatiguing, and tends to interfere with the freedom of the will. It seems like flying in the face of Providence. I prefer not to use it, except in circumstances of grave emergency, and even then with reserve and diffidence.”

“Can you answer any question, yes or no, by means of it, if you wish?” said he.

“Yes, if the nature of the question be known to the artist,”* I replied.

* In astrological terms the word “artist” means the astrologer who resolves the question, and the querent is the person inquiring; the quisited is the person or thing inquired about.—*Editor.*

“Not otherwise?” said he, a little anxiously.

“Not otherwise; at least, not with certainty and satisfaction.”

“Please explain that,” said the Baron.

I then explained very briefly the system of horary astrology as it is taught in the standard treatises. Taking a sheet of paper, I drew a circle which might be compared to the tire of a wheel, and in the center a smaller circle which might be compared to the hub. From this center circle or hub lines radiated to the outer circle, like the spokes, and these lines divided the whole space between the circles into twelve equal parts, each part forming an arc at the outer circumference of thirty degrees, or the twelfth of a circle of three hundred and sixty degrees. These twelve parts are called in astrology, “houses,” and are numbered from one to twelve. Regarding my figure as a map, with the bottom upwards (and it really is, when completed, a map of the heavens), the main horizontal line crossing it in the center from east to west represents the line of the horizon; the perpendicular line crossing it from north to south represents the zenith and nadir, or

the meridian above our heads, and that beneath our feet. Now, the houses are numbered from the east towards the north, and thence around the circle to the place of beginning.

The inner circle represents the earth, the surrounding space between the inner and outer circles represents the zodiac, with its twelve signs named after the constellations.

These signs, with degree and minute ascending or descending at the time, are marked at the beginning of each house of the figure; and the places of the luminaries and planets for the time the figure is set, are ascertained by the help of astronomical tables, and carefully inserted in the figure in the sign, degree and minute, where they are found to be at the time. According to their location in the different houses, their distances apart, and their several aspects towards each other, or, in other words, according to their location and mutual relations, a judgment is drawn, governed by certain rules of signification and interpretation, as given by the recognized authorities upon the science.*

* All modern authorities are based upon the work of Claudius Ptolemy and his commentator, Placidus de Titus. Ptolemy wrote about A. D. 133. Sir Isaac Newton, in his chronology, admits that astrology existed nine hundred years before the Christian era. The recorded experience of nearly two thousand years confirms, with but few modifications, the original deductions of the great Egyptian philosopher; and but slight changes have been made in the system since his time, although innumerable writers and observers have contributed valuable data. The nature and influence of the newly discovered planet, Herschel or Uranus, has been partially ascertained in recent years, and thus astrology keeps pace with her sister science, astronomy. The number of books on astrology which have appeared even in the English language, would seem something marvelous to one who had given no attention to the subject. The best modern authorities on astrology in our language are: Lieutenant Morrison, H. M. S. ("Zadkiel;") Raphael, Lilly, Coley, Cooper, Partridge, Gadbury, Dr. Wilson (author of the celebrated dictionary of astrology) and Ashmand, whose translation of Ptolemy is said to be the best.—*Editor*.

Now, from the first house we answer all questions that concern querent's own mind and body. From the second, his movable wealth or substance, loss and gain, etc. From the third, all questions relating to brethren, neighbors, short journeys and messages. The fourth house denotes all matters relating to his father, also his own houses and lands, and, in general, the *end* of things. The fifth relates to his children. The sixth, his sickness, and also his servants and dependents. The seventh, his marriage, lawsuits, love affairs, description of wife, partners and associates in business. The eighth house relates to wife's property, querent's own death, also to legacies, wills, etc. The ninth house rules the querent's long journeys, also his religion, dreams, etc. The tenth concerns his honor, credit, avocations, also his mother. The eleventh, his friends and hopes. The twelfth, his enemies, also his griefs, sorrows and imprisonments."*

* Each of the houses signifies in general many other things besides those briefly mentioned in the foregoing synopsis; those given have a strictly individual reference to the person making the inquiry. Besides these, each house has many other general significations, according to circumstances.—*Editor*.

Having thus briefly sketched enough of the leading features of the system to give the Baron some idea of the data required, I proceeded to explain that any question submitted to an astrologer for judgment must be referred to its proper house, with the signs and planets therein, and that *hence* arose the necessity that the nature of the question must first be made known to the artist.

The Baron listened with close attention to this explanation, and seemed disappointed at its close to find that he could not submit a question for judgment without making it known to the astrologer. I therefore inferred that the matter about which he was so deeply concerned must be of a very weighty or delicate character, the nature of

which he was unwilling to disclose. For some time he seemed absorbed in gloomy reflections, and soon after we separated for the night.

On the following day the Baron invited me to accompany him on horseback for a ride over his estate. As we were walking our horses slowly along a shady avenue, after a long interval of silence he suddenly surprised me by the question:

“Are you a Mason?”

“I am,” I replied.

[As a matter of fact, I was made acquainted with the mysteries of Freemasonry in Egypt, and had carefully studied them in connection with the ancient rites from which they originally sprung; and here I will take occasion to say that Freemasonry means much more than its superficial votaries know or imagine. Many of its symbols have lost—so far as the masses are concerned—much of their ancient significance; others can only be properly interpreted by one initiated in magical rites and familiar with Oriental mythology.]

“Royal Arch?” continued the Baron.

“Yes; and far higher, for that matter.”

He gave me a sign, and I answered it. He went on to say:

“I have something to impart to you under the strictest injunction of secrecy.”

“Very well, sir; I shall so regard it.”

“Upon the obligation of a Royal Arch Mason, as toward a brother of that degree?”

“Yes, if you request it so,” I replied.

“Then listen. I am but a poor talker, and shall make it short. I asked you yesternight if you would do me a favor, and you expressed a willingness to do so.”

“Yes.”

“Well, I want you, as an astrologer, to tell me something for the relief of my mind.”

“ Yes.”

“ Something I have been anxious about for a long time.”

“ The more anxiety, the more ease and certainty in solving the question,” replied I; “ for it is held by astrologers that we should not resort to the divine science upon light and trivial occasions, nor yet upon the impulse of an idle curiosity, but rather for matters of importance about which the mind of the querent is deeply concerned. At such a time the sympathy with the unseen powers is strong, the figure is more likely to be radical, and the artist will be happier in drawing his conclusions from it.”

After another long pause, the Baron asked:

“ Are you willing to undertake it? Do not answer hastily, for it is a very grave affair.”

“ Yes, I will do my best for you.”

“ You will tell me the exact truth, according to your science, regardless of the results upon any one concerned?”

“ Certainly, the truth, by all means. Why should I wish to deceive you?”

“ No matter why; but do you promise?”

“ Yes,” I replied, rather emphatically.

“ Well, then,” resumed the Baron, rather nervously, “ I want to ask something about my wife.”

As he came to the last word, I felt the blood rushing to my heart. I already regretted my promise, for probably the question was one which involved her honor. How could I run the risk of injuring so good a soul, and one that had shown me all the kindness of a sister?

“ You are pale,” said the Baron. “ You fear to involve yourself, perhaps—”

“ I fear nothing, my lord, but the liability of injuring, by some error of judgment, the reputation or the peace of a good woman—of one, too, who deserves my gratitude.”

“ Well, at any rate I hold you to your promise, and I

charge you to be as careful to tell me the truth as you are to avoid injustice to the accused."

"Surely, sir, you do not mean to say that you suspect your wife of any wrong?"

"Not exactly; no—that is, no *present* wrong, except the wrong of deceiving me."

"That remark, my dear sir, may mean much or little," replied I.

"Take it to mean much," he answered.

I was silent, and he continued:

"I am called a baron—Baron von Eichman. It sounds well. Who made me a baron? My wife. Do you see anything in that?"

"Please explain," said I, in some confusion.

"Very well. We will come to the point. I was a poor man—a younger son of an impoverished house, which was wholly dependent upon the favor of our sovereign. I am not a courtier, no great scholar, simply a rough, plain man. My wife was the prince's daughter, reared in a palace. She was rich, great, handsome, as you see. All at once we were brought together. I was given to understand that I should ask her hand. I could see she cared not a straw for me. Nevertheless, she accepted me; she dared not refuse. There were whispers that she had been unfortunate in a certain love affair; but she was a princess, and people did not talk much. They simply shook their heads and shrugged their shoulders. Perhaps you have heard of great ladies marrying far below their station before my case. It happens once in awhile, when—when the lady has made a bad slip."

"Excuse me, my lord, if I venture to say that you do not talk like the philosopher I took you to be. Have you any fault to find with the lady?"

"None whatever, my good sir. She is true to me as the magnetic needle to its pole. I would even pardon the old fault freely if she would but confess it."

"Does she, then, deny the fact?" I asked.

"Why, to tell the truth, I have never taxed her with it," said the Baron; "but she has never confessed it," he added, naïvely.

"You can scarcely expect such a voluntary confession from a woman to her husband," I rejoined.

"Well, you see, I am not even sure she was guilty (though, from all the circumstances, I can not doubt it), and I want you to find out by the stars what I can never settle by earthly means."

"Why not—since you are so anxious to know—institute inquiries, and through your agents employed for the purpose quietly draw out the facts from people about the Court, who must know; and putting this and that together, you might satisfy yourself. Or, still better, ask her frankly. Better yet—forget the whole matter; consign your ugly rumors, with your suspicions, to the limbo of the forgotten past. The past can not be helped. Enjoy the present, look with hope to the future, despise the past."

He answered, wearily:

"Your advice sounds well. I can not accept it. For your first suggestion, it is impracticable. Very few at Court would know of such a thing. The few that know either would not or dare not tell. If any poor devil of a servant, for instance, was suspected of knowing too much, he would be sent away out of the country. As to the second point, I will never ask her. As to the last, I can not do it. So now, no more; consult the stars. The question is simply this: 'Was the woman pure before marriage? Yes or no.'"

"Hold, sir," said I, as he was riding away; "one word. Suppose she was guilty of indiscretion—of all you apprehend—what do you contemplate? Tell me truly—does it mean any evil to her at your hands?"

"Oh, none whatever," he replied; "not the slightest.

I simply want to know. It is my right to know, and I *will* know!"

"Then, on your promise that no evil shall befall her, I will undertake the inquiry," I replied.

I noted the hour and minute on my tablets, the time for which the figure of heaven was to be cast to determine the reputation of a woman in the estimation of her husband. Never had I undertaken a more solemn and responsible task, or one which caused me so much misgiving. But the promise had been wrung from me by the man who had saved my life.

CHAPTER XIV.

EXPLAINS ASTROLOGY—ELUCIDATES THE TRUE SYSTEM OF MIND-READING—HOW THE ADEPT READS "THE DEPTHS OF MEN'S MINDS AND THE SECRETS OF WOMEN'S HEARTS"—HAPPY ENDING OF A SERIOUS DOMESTIC COMPLICATION.

"I applied myself to study those books I had obtained many times twelve or fifteen, or eighteen hours day and night. I was curious to discover whether there was any verity in the art (astrology) or not."—*Wm. Lilly, the Astrologer; History of his Life and Times.*

"The art of magic is the art of employing invisible, or so-called spiritual agencies, to obtain certain visible results."—*Hartmann.*

AMONG the few books in my luggage which had been forwarded to my present abode from the last post station was a good treatise on the art of horary astrology, and to this I now turned my attention for the purpose of refreshing my memory.

I set the horoscope and pondered it long and seriously, carefully weighing all the testimonies. The figure was radical, for the ascending sign and its lord described the querent to a nicety. The significators for the lady also corresponded satisfactorily; but when it came to the ques-

tion itself the testimonies were so conflicting and so evenly balanced, pro and con, that I did not dare to adventure judgment. I saw enough in the figure to convince me that the lady had been involved in more than one love affair. There was evidence of scandal, of evil rumors and damaged reputation; but against these were some signs of rectitude and virtue so very decided and well fortified that I could not make up my mind.

All our authorities recommend great caution in questions of this character, and the book before me on this occasion, after interpreting all the signs for and against, leaves the topic with these words:

“The student will do well to avoid a positive judgment *unfavorable* on this head, unless *all* the testimonies are decided.”

I also remembered well the language on this delicate point of a very old book which I had seen in my grandfather's library. It all came up before me—the yellow, time-stained pages, the quaint phraseology, the old-style orthography and ancient type. I reproduce the extract here for the information of the curious reader:

“XIII. If out of Curiosity you should desire to discover whether a female Creature propounding a Question be a Virgin or not? Examine the business thus; viz.: If you find her proper signifiers posited in fixed Signs, free from all the ill beams of Mars, and no Infortunes in the Ascendent or fifth house, but her signifiers (viz., the Lord of the Ascendent, Venus or the Moon) in good aspect to the Sun or Jupiter, judge she is chaste and in no way corrupted; but if you find contrary Testimonies, you may conclude her otherwise, that she has been tempted, and consented to her own dishonor, a thing very frequent in this Age. After the same manner you may discover whether a *Marryed Woman* be concerned with any other person besides her *Husband* or not; but I shall not insist farther upon this particular, least some *Innocent Woman* should receive preju-

“dice from the hasty judgments of their jealous Husbands
“or others—not well experienced in this Art.”*

* The passage will be found in “*Clavis Astrologiæ Elimata, or Key to the Art of Astrology*,” by Henry Coley, London, 1676. Page 208 of 2d Ed. The work is now very scarce.

The quaint form of this extract will serve to illustrate the progressive changes our language has undergone, and also to convey some idea of the strange vagaries which our ancestors accepted as truth. While a belief in astrology still lingers in some minds, and is affected by a few people of antiquarian tastes, it is now generally discredited by the scientific world. It should be received with great caution by those enthusiasts disposed to give it credence; especially in deciding practical matters. No system of divination should be permitted to usurp the place of reason and common sense in governing the conduct. The unfairness of resorting to divination to determine the moral status of another, in a case of suspicion, is too obvious to need pointing out. Nothing but our author's enthusiasm and faith in his system excuses his singular temerity in this instance.
—*Editor.*

I resolved to give to my fair benefactress the full benefit of the doubt, and was secretly pleased to find in the figure itself good grounds for my indecision on the question of her guilt.

It was not without some misgivings that I met the Baron alone in the smoking-room after dinner on the day following my last interview with him. His cold, gray eyes met mine with a look of earnest inquiry, and I knew he expected an answer; but I dreaded to reopen the subject, and waited for him to interrogate me. Besides, I took a secret pleasure in forcing the reticent man to speak. I hoped his manner of opening the discussion might suggest to my mind some happier issue out of the difficulty than had yet occurred to me. He lighted his pipe with great deliberation.

“Well, the stars—what say they to mine question?” said he, composedly.

“They speak in very uncertain language, my lord,” said I. “I regret to say that the testimonies are conflict-

ing, and it is one of those cases where we are cautioned to avoid an unfavorable judgment, and, in fact, are, by some authors, justified in deciding for the innocence of the suspected party."

"Ach Gott! what nonsense!" exclaimed the Baron.

"I regret your disappointment, my lord, and trust you will credit me with an honest intention, at least."

"You say the answer is mixed; do you mean that it is partly good and partly bad?" inquired the Baron.

"Yes, substantially that."

"Can not you try again?" said the Baron, doggedly.

"It would be of no use, sir. The first figure is the correct one, let it speak as it will, except in a certain class of cases, in which this instance does not properly come."

"Well, what says it good and what bad? I insist upon the whole truth, and, by the way, why should it indicate *anything* bad, if she was correct in her conduct? I hope, sir, you are not trifling with me—I really hope you are not," said the Baron, with signs of indignant suspicion.

"Pardon me, sir; I am not in the habit of *trifling*," I replied, *with dignity*.

"I meant no offense," returned the Baron, quickly.

"I thought your chivalrous regard for the sex might have made you unduly scrupulous in this case. Perhaps you will be kind enough to explain the figure to me in detail, in the terms of your art, with your own comments upon what you call these testimonies."

"I shall do so with pleasure, my lord," I replied, "if it will give you the greater satisfaction."

I drew forth the figure and explained it fully, proving every point by reference to the rule of interpretation as laid down in the book. The Baron followed me with close attention. He was not familiar with the symbols used to indicate the signs and planets, but these I explained.

I showed him the description of his own person as shown

by the first house, its sign and ruling planet. It was correct, even to the mole on his left cheek. His wife, shown by the seventh house and its ruler, was also well described. I proceeded to the testimonies something after the following manner:

“Now for the question. Several planets in the seventh house is a sign of several lovers. But her principal significator in a fixed sign, free from affliction, is a good indication. No infortunes in the ascendent is a good testimony. Scorpio, descending, and Mars therein is suspicious; but Jupiter in good trine aspect to the cusp of the seventh is an excellent indication of honesty of purpose. The Moon’s north node, or dragon’s tail, in the fifth is certainly a sign of scandal. Jupiter afflicted by Saturn, and retrograde, and in the house of Mars, ruler of the seventh, operates to neutralize and contradict his good testimony. But Jupiter rules the tenth, or house of honor, where the beneficent Venus is found posited in good aspect to the Moon—a very good testimony.”

“It is, in short, a muddle,” said the Baron, in a tone of disgust. “However, I consider that there are too many evil omens to comport with innocence,” he added, moodily. And after a pause: “Well, is this the best you can do for me? Is this the extent of your so-called science?”

This came out in a tone so sarcastic that I was a little nettled as I replied:

“To be frank with you, Baron, occult art has other resources—resources that admit of no doubt and no uncertainty.”

“That’s what we want, by all means!” exclaimed the Baron.

I then explained to him the principle of mesmeric retro-spection, with which the reader is already acquainted. The subject, being in trance state from mesmeric influence, views the past through memory, and the mental

pictures thus projected upon the astral light become visible to the mind of the operator.

The Baron seemed to comprehend it better than I expected, but was a little incredulous. It did not commend itself so readily to his practical mind as did the more mathematical system of astrology. He was evidently a little suspicious of imposition. How could he know that the operator reported correctly what he saw present in the memory of the subject, if indeed he could see anything at all?

I reminded him that in all systems of divination faith was necessary. However, in mesmeric phenomena I should be able to convince him, at least, that there was no imposition. "Because," said I, "among the mental scenes presented there will reasonably be many that, when described to you, you will at once recognize as true—scenes in which you have participated, places that you are familiar with."

"But to make use of this method, her consent to subject herself to the will of the operator would be required," he said, thoughtfully, adding: "I doubt if we can induce her to submit herself to the trial."

"With your concurrence," I replied, "I will undertake to manage it."

"How?" said he, curiously.

"The Baroness is subject to headaches?"

He nodded in assent.

"The next time she is thus afflicted, you will suggest mesmeric treatment, and permit me to make a few passes about her head. If I do not throw her into the mesmeric sleep, I misjudge my own powers. After that all will be easy. I promise to resolve all your doubts, and this time to a certainty."

"Bravo!" exclaimed the Baron. "It shall be done."

"Let us play a game of chess to change our thoughts," said I.

The Baron was a fair player, and very fond of chess—partly, perhaps, because it gave him an excuse to be silent.

In a few minutes his hampered queen, surrounded by my hostile forces, gave him, for the time, more anxiety than all his wife's old lovers and his dark suspicions of her former indiscretions.

Chess is an excellent diversion for changing the current of one's thoughts; and probably few people know the danger there is in permitting the mind to dwell for a long time without relief upon a fixed idea.

It was chiefly because I had begun to realize the peril in which my friend was placed by the tendency of his mind to monomania, that I had consented to pursue the subject further, and, at all hazards, to either confirm or remove his doubts. Besides, my professional pride was involved, and—I am almost ashamed to confess it—my own curiosity was aroused. The horoscope revealed to me more than I was willing to admit. I wanted confirmation, though in my inmost heart I was already convinced that the Baron was right in his worst suspicions.

While we were engaged with our second game the Baroness came in looking very pale. Her husband gave me a significant look, and addressing his wife, said, with an appearance of concern:

“Why, my dear, you are looking ill; another of those headaches, I'll be bound!” Then turning to me as though from the impulse of a sudden thought, he continued: “Lady von Eichman is greatly afflicted of late with headache, which yields not to the usual remedies—”

“Oh! it's nothing—nothing at all worth speaking about, Mr. Zell,” said the lady, hastily interrupting her slow-speaking spouse.

The Baron bent forward and moved a chessman, while his wife seated herself upon a divan.

“What do you say, Mr. Zell, concerning this headache which makes a lady so miserable for half a day at a stretch

—is it *nothing*, or is it *something*?" Then, turning to his wife, he continued: "Mr. Zell is somewhat of a doctor himself, Barbara; I found it out to-day by accident."

"Are you indeed a physician, Mr. Zell?" said the lady, with interest.

During this little talk I had, with the exception of a polite movement of recognition when the Baroness entered, been apparently absorbed in the game. I looked up suddenly when addressed by the lady, and replied that I did not lay claim to that honor, though I had at one period given some attention to medicine.

"However, I believe you were speaking of headache. If it is mere *nervous* headache, I know a simple cure for it that will relieve in nine cases out of ten."

"Do please make me acquainted with it," said the Baroness, eagerly.

"*Ya, ya!* do please introduce us to the recipe," echoed the Baron, with a certain dry humor, which at rare moments would sometimes crop out in his usually staid conversation.

"There is no recipe," I replied, "and no medicine required."

The Baron looked up in well-feigned astonishment, and his wife looked amused.

"What then?" said he.

"Pardon me," said I; "it is difficult to explain, although very easy to illustrate;" and turning to the Baroness, I continued: "May I inquire, madam, if you are suffering with a headache at the present moment?"

"Well, I was somewhat indisposed from it, but it is easier now."

"Permit me to remove it altogether," said I, rising from the game, regarding her with a steady though mild expression, and slowly moving towards her.

She seemed a little confused under my unusual stare,

and was about to speak, when I lifted my hand in a warning yet persuasive manner, and said, softly:

“Pardon me, madam; please do not speak. I will relieve you in a moment of the headache, and, what is more, it will not soon return. Only look me steadily in the eye—the same as now. I will show you some curious things besides—if you are attentive.”

All this I said slowly and very gravely, making meanwhile the passes that, when properly executed, few can withstand.

She suspected nothing, and did not know whether to be amused or indignant. In two minutes she was beginning to feel the peculiar, soothing charm which characterizes the first stages of fascination. I became bolder, more aggressive, both in will and in the external manifestation of it. She was one of the easiest of subjects. In less than five minutes she was unconscious, and reclined upon the divan in what appeared to be a soft slumber.

I drew from my pocket a tablet and pencil, saying to the Baron, in a low voice:

“Do not speak; she is now in a trance, and can be sent wherever I will—either in time or space. There is no danger. Her mind shall go back to the scenes of childhood. I will call up a proof scene first, to convince you of the reality of the phenomena. I will take a scene of her seventh birthday anniversary, and as it becomes plain to my own view through her recollection, I will describe it to you. Go back to seventh birthday anniversary—evening,” said I, addressing the soul of the reclining woman.

The scene presented is a large double apartment, with floors of marble, lofty ceiling, statuary in niches in the walls. The room is lighted with clustered candelabra of great richness and most artistic decoration. A large painting, illustrating a battle-scene of the period of the Crusades, hangs upon the left wall. A young warrior in armor in the foreground of the picture rushes forward into

the thick of the deadly fray, bearing in his hand a shield upon which is emblazoned a lion rampant, upon a field of gold.

[I mentioned enough to designate the room, which I had never seen, but which was a prominent apartment at the palace of the reigning family, and one which proved familiar enough to the Baron.]

He at once recognized the room from my description of its furniture and decorations. He nodded approvingly, and I continued:

“On this occasion there is a children’s party. There is music by the royal band. The band, in uniforms of green and scarlet striped with gold, occupy the elevated platform at the upper end of the room facing the main entrance. There is dancing and games and much glee among the children, who have gathered here from many an aristocratic home in the city to grace the birthday-party of the august sovereign’s second daughter, the beautiful little Princess ‘*Dorothea Amelia Caroline Barbara*.’ The name is worked in wreaths of flowers, and extends in one place quite across the deep bay-window and its heavy tapestry.”

“Enough, enough!” said the Baron. “Pass on to about the fifteenth year.”

I did so, and there was presented a succession of scenes illustrative of this part of her life. I wrote rapidly, and told the Baron that to save time I must defer the reading of my notes till another time, as this sort of mental strain was very exhausting to the subject, and must not be unduly prolonged at any one time.

In a short time I saw enough to convince me of the frailty of the Princess. A young officer of the household was the lover. Every interview, from their earliest attachment to the *dénouement* and flight of the lover, was presented. I did not take time to put down the one hundredth part of what I saw. It was a series of lightning

flashes of thought which passed before my mind, through the memory of the sleeper, like a swift-rolling panorama. Her unfortunate slip was an affair of youth, of ignorance on both sides, of mere playfulness at first—an affair of opportunity, carelessly afforded by the blunder and inattention of the girl's governess, who was herself involved in a love affair at the time. These opportunities for meeting were rendered more frequent by stealth and cunning on the part of the young man, whose infatuation entirely kept from his view the terrible risk he was taking. As a matter of fact, no question of consequences appeared to have occurred to either of the young lovers, until they are discovered in a most compromising situation. Suddenly the youth disappears—is seen no more at Court. Rumor says he has fled, assisted by influential friends; that his flight was even connived at by the Government. The matter was investigated with great privacy. The young girl is sent away to a distant estate belonging to the royal house—to a residence but little frequented, an old castle, partly in ruins, surrounded by woods. It has been a serious question in the family councils how to dispose of her. Once her fate trembled as in a balance. It was a question of choice between a convent, an insane asylum, and a marriage, to be hastily improvised for the occasion. Her mother pleaded for her with tears, and her brother—the heir-apparent—had joined his entreaties to that of their mother to soften the heart of the stern father, who thought only of the disgrace and indignity inflicted upon the crown. The penalty for seducing a female of the royal house is death to the seducer. But the infliction of the penalty would involve the publicity of the facts, and of course the open disgrace of the Princess and her family. In order to screen themselves, the royal family had suffered the culprit to escape; nay, had secretly aided him to do so. Why might he not have been permitted to marry the lady himself? Simply because the law of settlement,

in this particular state, prohibits any daughter of the reigning house from marrying outside of the established church. Now, the young man belonged to a family notorious for its adherence to a hostile creed. Such an alliance could not be legally made, and if by any evasion it were brought about, would make too much talk, create mischievous agitation, and might even endanger the peace of the state. The Premier had boldly stated in council that such a thing was not to be thought of, and he would not be responsible for the effects of such an open violation of the constitution of the realm.

The family looked about for a victim. Young Von Eichman—younger son of an ancient but impoverished line—was suggested. His family was dependent upon the royal bounty, and would be delighted. The young man himself was wholly dependent on his uncle, and would not dare refuse. The happy suggestion was adopted, acted upon; a speedy and secret marriage was brought about, which was not publicly known till months afterward.

What was only a vague and suppressed conjecture to the sluggish brain of the husband, was a fact plain and patent to the inner circle of the Court at the time, and the scandal, kept alive in whispers for awhile, had long since outgrown its novelty as a nine-day wonder, and was now nearly forgotten.

Such were the facts as I gathered them from the mind of the Baroness herself. I had already learned enough. It was now growing late. Looking up from my notes, I said to the Baron that we had gone far enough for that time, and had better recall the Baroness to consciousness. Before he had time to object, I had already approached her, and by a simple movement, calling her name loudly, she was awakened.

The operation had lasted two hours; but she was not at first aware of the lapse of time, and of course entirely

ignorant of what had been going on in her mind while in the trance. Glancing at the clock on the mantel, she seemed surprised at the lateness of the hour.

"My headache has flown, and so has the time," she said, languidly. "Your remedy was as good as an opiate, for I must have slept a long time." Glancing at the chess-table, she continued, with a smile: "You chess-players are always oblivious of the time, and if I had not awoke when I did, I might very likely have passed the night upon the divan, for all either of you would have known; for if you had not played all night, you would have left me sleeping in the room."

"Why, how is that?" said the Baron. "Should not we have noticed your lying there when we arose to retire?"

"Not necessarily," replied the lady; "the victor would have been so elated at his victory, and the loser so vexed at his defeat, that both would have forgotten the presence of any third party in the room. At least, *you* would, Henry."

"Allow me to congratulate you, madam, upon the success of the treatment. I hope you will escape any future return of the malady; and if we have been guilty of any inattention, I crave your pardon," said I, politely.

Laughingly replying "that I was a great doctor to neglect my patients in that way," and that she should "hesitate about employing me again," she bade us good-night and retired from the apartment.

The Baron drew his chair closer to me and said, in a low and earnest tone:

"Well, what do you make out of it? I see you have taken a great mass of notes."

"Yes, but I fear I have followed the details too closely. And it takes time to record so many scenes, which are, after all, of a trivial character thus far; and you must consider that we have only been engaged two hours," said I, apologetically.

"Then you have not come to the point yet?" said his lordship.

"It will require another trial, perhaps two or three more," said I.

"What a pity we called her out of it so soon!" mused the Baron. "Heaven knows when we shall have another such opportunity! A good headache does not happen every day."

"On that matter you may reassure yourself. I can hereafter easily throw her into the trance state almost at sight. Once having yielded to the influence, the patient is ever afterward peculiarly susceptible to it, especially from the same operator."

"The deuce she is!" exclaimed the Baron. "Then why not repeat the dose to-morrow evening?"

"For the simple reason that such an unusual strain upon the brain must not be repeated after so short an interval. She must have at least three days to recuperate," I replied.

The Baron looked disappointed, yawned, and bade me good-night.

[I had resorted to this subterfuge simply to gain time. Some time inside of the next three days I must try to see the Baroness, unknown to her husband. I would then apprise her of the true situation, and urge her to confess the whole matter to her husband, as of her own free will. If she could be induced to do that before his suspicions became confirmed by other means, I felt sure he would be entirely satisfied, and even pleased at such a mark of her confidence. It was the continued deception, and that alone, that offended him.]

But how—how should I manage to convey to this high-spirited creature my cognizance of the one fact that, of all, she most wished to conceal and to forget? It would tax my powers to the utmost to subject her to the mortifying disclosure. No matter, it must be done; it was her only

salvation. Again, "I must be cruel only to be kind," and to that familiar quotation I now felt like adding the other saying of Hamlet's: "Oh, cursed spite, that ever I was born to set it right!"

I was fortunate enough to meet the Princess alone in the drawing-room on the following day, and as the Baron had left on business which it was expected would detain him until noon, I had no fear of interruption. Much as I dreaded to approach the subject, I resolved at all hazards to embrace the present opportunity.

The Baroness was in the best of spirits, and looked lovelier than ever in her morning-gown of pure white India muslin, which dropped in graceful folds from the neat-fitting waist. She seemed the very impersonation of grace, purity and matronly dignity.

After the usual morning salutations, an attempt at gayety on her part, and an awkward absentness on mine, I said, with much gravity:

"Madam, I must consider myself very fortunate in meeting you alone, as I have something of moment to communicate to you, and of a nature necessitating a strictly private interview."

"A communication—for *me*?" she inquired, with some surprise in her tone. "What can it be? Can it not be delayed until the Baron's return, for whatever it be that concerns me, must also concern my husband. We have no separate interests. Unfortunately, he is out."

"Pardon me, madam; it is *because* he is away that I seek this interview. Inseparable as your interests are from those of your husband, this is, nevertheless, a business for you alone to consider."

She looked up to me with something like alarm or apprehension.

"You amaze me, Mr. Zell. What communication can you properly make to me that my husband should not participate in?"

“Something which concerns yourself, and yet involves the happiness of both. Let me go to the heart of the matter before I render myself liable to misapprehension. Listen calmly. You are not happy—your husband is not happy. There is a secret cause of discontent. What it is you know and he suspects.”

“Really, Mr. Zell, are you not exceeding the ordinary bounds of politeness in saying so much? I am not sure that I rightly understand to what you refer, sir; but even admitting your assumption, how does it become *your* province to interfere with the matter?”

“That is exactly what I expected you to say, madam. It is a reasonable, just and proper sentiment. It would not be within my province as a casual acquaintance—perhaps not even as a trusted mutual friend—to interfere between man and wife, not even with the best of motives. But my interference arises entirely from your husband’s direct, positive request. You are aware that I am under obligations to him for saving my life, as I am to you for preserving it afterwards.”

I said this with much feeling and earnestness, and paused to watch the effect of it. She was evidently softened. The matter was taking a different direction from what she had apprehended.

“Go on—pray go on!” she said, in an agitated voice.

“Now that you know I have the authority of your husband in this business, you will permit me, with all respect, to speak boldly. Your marriage was a peculiar one.”

She started, looked up hastily, and dropped her eyes to the floor. I continued:

“It was hastily arranged—one might almost say improvised—and its solemnization even was almost secret.”

She drew a deep breath of apprehension, and I continued:

“For one of your rank this was strange and unusual. Moreover, your acquaintance with the bridegroom was

limited to little more than a mere interview. The disparity in your respective stations in life would have caused remark among people far less punctilious in these matters than are those who compose the society of these insulated courts. These things could not escape the notice of your husband. He naturally looked about for some explanation of this singular social phenomena. He finds it in an hypothesis based upon certain rumors which reflected upon—which raised a presumption of—some misfortune, some indiscretion, perhaps, on your part—”

She was very pale, agitated and indignant.

“It’s a man’s nature never to be satisfied, I think,” said she.

“Yes, and a woman’s nature to desire that the man she loves shall *not* be satisfied with anything short of love’s perfect consummation,” I replied.

After a pause she resumed, thoughtfully:

“What right has he to listen to these calumnies? If he thought the marriage too hasty, why did he consent to it? And as to its having been secret, that is entirely false. It was *secluded* and *private*, if you please; but not secret!” she exclaimed, with bitterness.

“Permit me, madam, to go back to where I left off. Your husband has brooded over these things until his suspicions have become an ever-present, haunting dream of disquietude. He feels a sense of injury, that he has been shut out from your confidence—was not only deceived at first, but is being continually deceived.”

“How deceived?” she asked, indignantly. “Does he dare accuse me of unfaithfulness?”

“By no means, madam; but he is deceived simply by your silence in withholding the truth from him.”

She blushed deeply, and turned away her face. Rallying, however, in an instant, I perceived that she was still bent upon concealment. She thought she had to deal only with ill-founded suspicion, or at best with but shrewd

conjecture. The lie had become almost a part of her life.

“And what does he imagine I have to reveal to him?” she said, with affected scorn.

“The truth. He would have you confess the facts that concern your honor and his own,” I replied, sternly.

“There is nothing to—”

I interrupted her half-finished sentence.

“Pause, madam—pause on the threshold of a falsehood, even though it be intended to shield your honor, which you value as life itself. Listen. *I know all*. I am not here to wring from you the confession of what you would conceal from all the world, your husband included.”

I then briefly explained the manner in which the facts had been elicited by me. She was, of course, overwhelmed with astonishment and mortification. She took refuge in tears.

I then explained that as yet her husband was not aware of what had been made manifest to me by means of the psychological phenomena of the night before, and continued:

“Now, then, to be brief: there is yet one way out of the difficulty. You have but to freely confess the whole matter to your husband. He must not know of this our interview. He must suppose that you make the confession freely, as of your own voluntary choice. You can say what must be true, that it has long weighed heavily upon your mind, that you have long wished to disburden yourself of the painful secret; but from a natural delicacy could never bring yourself to the point of making the disclosure; that you do so now freely, and crave his pardon for the delay. He will not really blame you. The marriage was practically forced upon you both. You did not seek to deceive him, and if you fell short of bringing him all that a husband expects in a bride, his loss was not due to any false inducements held out by you in advance.

Moreover, you have faithfully kept your part of the contract, and by this transcendent mark of your candor will have sealed it with a gem which is entirely gratuitous and outside of its stipulations. Mark me, he will be satisfied; you will be relieved. So great and powerful a principle is Truth that even in its most painful forms it works wonders."

She now realized at last my efforts to extricate herself and husband from the intricacies of their situation. Thanking me in the midst of her tears for my advice, she promised to act upon it at once, and withdrew.

On the following day I was waited on by the Baron, whom I found in unusual good humor.

"You need not mind proceeding with that matter of the Baroness," said he.

"I am only too thankful to be relieved of it," I answered, laconically, without seeming to expect any reason for his change of purpose.

But the Baron evidently felt that some explanation was due me, and he was not a man to leave any debt unpaid.

"The fact is," he continued, "the good creature has confessed the whole matter of her own accord. I don't know what could have put it in her head to do so all at once, but last night she told me all about it. It seems she has been wishing to do so from the first—ever since our marriage. I was right in my suspicions; but I can not and do not blame her. At least, not now."

"Baron," said I, with great earnestness, "I am truly thankful to Heaven that this unhappy affair is now settled. The manner of its termination seems almost providential, since it extricates me from a most painful position, relieves you from all distressing doubts, and places your estimable wife in the best possible light—the light of rectitude and honesty under circumstances of the greatest possible temptation to dissimulation. This happy termination of the affair is, permit me to say, in the highest de-

gree honorable to you both. Honorable to your wife, by reason of sacrificing all upon the altar of truth; to you, by reason of a magnanimity worthy of the noblest examples of antiquity. Henceforth you will prize her above all her sex, as that rarest of rarities, a wife who deems no sacrifice of personal vanity too great to be laid upon the altar of her devotion to her husband and to Truth. Before this grand act of integrity in the woman the weak errors of the girl must vanish as darkness before the sun. Is it not so?"

"Quite so," said his lordship, complacently, puffing his pipe vigorously.

I now determined to hasten my departure, already too long deferred. It was not fitting that I should prolong my stay under the peculiar circumstances. I was completely recovered from my illness. I announced that I must depart on the morrow.

The Baron would fain have induced me to remain, but I was inexorable. My relations to this amiable couple, and to each individually, were of too complex a character to admit of my remaining, and I felt that propriety alone demanded that I should leave them at the earliest practicable moment.

"Well, if you must go, you shall not go empty-handed," said the Baron. "My wife, as you know, is sister to Prince Karl Augustus, our reigning sovereign. You have no acquaintance at the capital. A letter from the sister to the royal brother will at once give you a respectable footing at Court, without which your life in Graffenburg would scarcely be endurable."

"I shall appreciate the letter highly, my lord, and it will add another to the many obligations I am already under for your kindness."

"If you speak any more of obligations I shall feel that I have cause of offense. It would be a pity that we should part in a quarrel. Think of all you have done for me, which no one else could do."

“I beg of you make no mention of it, my lord—especially of the phenomena; let the whole be forever a secret between ourselves.”

“So let it be forever,” said the Baron, solemnly, taking my hand. “Good-night!”

On the morrow I made hurried preparations for departure. The Baroness flitted about, and seemed anxious to avoid me. Once, for a moment, I met her alone in a corridor; she paused and extended her hand. “You have rendered me a great service, and one for which I am grateful,” said she.

“My recollections of your goodness will be life-long, madam,” I replied, with a low bow.

We had time for no further conversation then; but at the moment of my departure she handed me a letter addressed to his Royal Highness, Prince Karl Augustus.

“My husband has suggested this letter to my royal brother, which may help you to the *entrée* of the Court,” she said, graciously, “if you will accept of it.”

“Ah, madam, you are very considerate. With this missive from the Most Beautiful in the realm to the Most Powerful, my path should indeed be easy. Farewell!”

The Baron was to accompany me as far as the boundary of his estates. Madam stood at the window, the picture of tearful loveliness, waving a handkerchief at us as we rolled out of the spacious court-yard.

CHAPTER XV.

GRAFFENBURG AND ITS RULING FAMILY.

"The kingdom of heaven is compared, not to any great kernel or nut, but to a grain of mustard seed; which is one of the least grains, but hath in it a propertie and spirit hastily to get up and spread. So there are states great in territory and yet not apt to enlarge or command; and some that have but a small dimension of stem, and yet apt to be the foundations of great monarchies."
—*Bacon's Essay on Greatness of Kingdoms and Estates.*

IN autobiography, or any work purporting to deal strictly with facts, nothing is more desirable than accuracy and precision in detail; and, so far as the essential features of my narrative are concerned, I trust that the reader will have nothing to complain of in this respect; but in what is about to follow it becomes my duty to screen, in some measure, the innocent actors in the drama, and to conceal their real identity. The circumstances and events of this history will be faithfully related; but the time, the place, and the actual persons must, for obvious reasons, be left indefinite, or so disguised as to avoid their liability to an overcurious scrutiny. A sense of justice for the dead and a proper delicacy for the living alike dictate this course, and the reader will not fail in due time to recognize its propriety.

At the time of my story Germany was made up of an aggregation of independent states, small and large; all sovereign powers, united in a rather loose confederation for the purposes of common defense and the furtherance of

mutual interests. It was but little more than a general alliance, offensive and defensive, and the individual states (ranking variously as kingdoms, grand duchies, principalities, free cities, etc.) were not only independent sovereignties, but their rulers were nearly absolute within their respective territorial limits. Each little state had its own reigning family, in which the regal power was hereditary. Each had its little court, its ministry, its exchequer, and above all, its standing army. Nearly all had arrived even to the dignity of possessing a national debt. In all there swarmed an ever-increasing army of nobles and officials, in numbers generally much out of proportion to the producing classes of the people.

However onerous this system of a multiplicity of petty governments may have been to the great mass of the people, it must have been entirely agreeable to the privileged classes who ruled. The situation was one abounding in picturesque features. It was a fairy-land of little nationalities where grown-up children, in the gorgeous trappings of royalty, played at the fascinating game of kings and queens—of war and diplomacy—and aped the ways of statesmen and monarchs. Nor was the domestic life of the people within these petty states entirely devoid of certain arcadian features rarely to be met with in any other land. The peasantry, while comparing favorably in intelligence with any corresponding class on the Continent, were noted for the simplicity of their lives, no less than for their industry, economy, contentment and loyalty to their rulers. With an undercurrent of sturdy independence, fortitude and honesty, they united in a high degree the virtues of patriotism, public spirit and respect for authority. Their system of government was the natural outgrowth of feudalism and tribal development, and had come about so gradually, was so interwoven with all the institutions of the country, so much identified with all its traditions, so deeply rooted in the sympathies of the people, and so en-

deared to them by patriotic associations, that for many ages no thought of rebellion, scarcely a thought of innovation, appears to have occurred to these simple-minded, phlegmatic populations. As to the gentry, it was not for them to complain. The aristocracy, which was the oldest in Europe, was also the proudest and poorest. But it made up in arrogance what it lacked in wealth. And what other aristocracy in Europe had so much excuse for arrogance? What other could lay claim to so many royal alliances? What other had for so many centuries maintained territorial power? While the great feudal families of other nations had in most cases degenerated to a mere titled nobility, with but little more than a pedigree to distinguish them from the commonality, the barons of Germany had come down to civilization still clothed with territorial sovereignty, still dominant from their ancient castles over the surrounding populace. Nay, more, the German chieftain had in most cases increased his domain with the lapse of time. The representative of the old-time baron was now a duke, a grand duke, a prince, perhaps even a king, and the ancient patrimony of a few hundred acres of forest had expanded by degrees till it embraced whole counties, provinces and considerable states.

Among the reigning families of Germany, perhaps none could show a more romantic history than that contained in the annals of the house of Graffenburg-Hofhausen-Wimple-Steifan-Sigmaringen. Sprung from a source so far back in antiquity that the traces were lost in the mists of Gothic mythology, this family had, nevertheless, been noble from the earliest periods of written history. But the early chiefs of the race, though chivalrous and brave, and ever winning laurels under the standard of great potentates, were long obscure and of only local distinction. For many generations they were but little heard of beyond the precincts of their own comparatively small estates; and once, in the dark days of the family history, a series of disasters had

nearly reduced the line to extinction. The last male representative of the Von Wimple-Steifans, poverty stricken, returning wounded from the Crusades, had retired to his ancient castle to die, when the messenger of the rising and prosperous house of Von Graffenburg-Hofhausen arrived one day in hot haste, bearing a message of the highest importance from his lord. It was no less than a request for the hand of the beautiful (though portionless) daughter of the dying warrior knight of Wimple-Steifan. This saved the fortunes of the house, united its domains with that of a powerful neighbor, and consolidated both in the hands of a sturdy race destined to add new laurels to the already glorious escutcheons of the united estates. The new house flourished apace, and seemed to find favor with gods and men. Its quarterings increased; so did its lands. Its lords were rich, brave, handsome—glorious in war, shrewd and prosperous in peace, adroit in diplomacy, and favorites of the imperial Court. One of its sons, a fascinating courtier, had, it was whispered, captivated the fancy of an empress, and returned to his estates, at the end of a busy and honorable career, covered with dignities and decorations, and with the right to emblazon a coronet upon the ancient shield. The beautiful daughters of this house were sought in marriage by the most powerful of the neighboring nobility; but these haughty damsels looked high. The saying, "The Von Graffenburgs never marry without gaining an advantage," became a proverb of the country. No family was ever better managed perhaps, or by a succession of shrewder men, than the counts of Graffenburg proved to be, for several generations. The French Revolution found Graffenburg in the very front rank of the minor states of Germany. The modest domain of the early bandit chieftains of Wimple-Steifan had expanded into a principality capable of furnishing an important military contingent.

Graffenburg was a fertile country. Her rulers were rich

and economical. The rule of the reigning family was mild, beneficent, liberal and wise beyond the times. The little army was excellently disciplined, its arms of the latest and best pattern. The Graffenburgers were almost a Spartan people—willing, in their rough fashion, to endure any hardships and even to die cheerfully for the honor of their flag. In these times of trial their chieftains, the Von Graffenburgs of that day, proved worthy leaders of their brave subjects. We can not follow them through the bloody campaigns of the many evil years of those times, when their country was a part of the battle-ground of Europe, and when her soil was constantly resounding to the tread of armies; but enough that she emerged from those dark scenes in happier times, still victorious, honored and happy. Thanks to the bravery of her soldiers no less than the shrewdness of her rulers, Graffenburg came out, as the saying is, “on top.” In the later congresses of the European powers to readjust the status of the different reigning houses, Graffenburg gained new accessions of territory by the absorption of various insignificant fiefs wrung from the hands of mediatised lords, who were forced to accept a sum of money and certain empty titles in return for their lost sovereignty.

At the time of my entrance into her capital city, Graffenburg was among the foremost of the minor powers of Germany, with a population of over two millions of souls, with numerous ancient strongholds and several flourishing cities within her borders. Her fertile plains were dotted thickly with pleasant rural villages, inhabited by a contented people, who regarded with pride the august sovereign of their happy country. It was whispered that sovereign could any day receive from the imperial Diet a kingly crown to replace his princely one, if he saw fit only to demand it. Perhaps the fact that he did not see fit to acquire this new dignity, when it was within his reach, contributed to augment his popularity with his subjects.

The nobles would have preferred a king, but the honest and sensible middle class thought the prince was right to discard the trappings of royalty. Better, they said, to be the first of principalities than the weakest of kingdoms; besides, it was cheaper. Still, if the prince had changed his mind and become a king, the same people would doubtless have found reasons for approving his course; for in no other country perhaps is the maxim, ("The king can do no wrong,") more heartily accepted.

The reigning prince, Karl Augustus, was reported to be a man of considerable talent and culture—a patron of literature and the liberal arts, who was fond of drawing to his capital men of distinction in these pursuits. It was to this prince that I was to present myself as the bearer of a letter of introduction from his sister, the Baroness Von Eichman.

The train of events which had led to my being presented with this letter was in itself so singular and unexpected that I could no longer doubt that "manifest destiny" pointed to Graffenburg as the scene of those new phases of experience and trial foreshadowed by the Eastern sages as the necessary prelude to my further advancement in Theosophy. Thither I now directed my steps, full of doubt and curiosity as to the next scene of the strange drama in which it had been foretold that I was to figure as no inconspicuous actor. What would be the nature of that awful trial, what the issue of that struggle that was to decide my eligibility for the honors of promotion to the coveted grade among the sages? Should I prove equal to the test? I trembled to think that I might not, and that all my hopes and aspirations would then fall to the ground. I might indeed be found so far unworthy as to be expelled from the brotherhood, which it had cost me so many years of study and trial and obedience to gain admission to.

Ah! would that it were permitted me to relate the slow and painful steps by which that goal was gained; but that

is forever forbidden. To reveal the secrets of initiation would bring upon me, and also upon others, evils that I tremble even to think of. Enough that I had already sacrificed the golden years of youth and middle life, that for many years I had been an exile from the dear land of my birth, that I had traveled over the greater part of the world, sustained untold hardships and terrible dangers, all in search of initiation which was now only commenced, and the severest ordeal of all yet to undergo. Surely, thought I, the path of knowledge is not all bordered with flowers. Is this also vanity and vexation of spirit? Alas! did not our first parents, the now potent spirits, Adam and Heva, fall from their first estate through striving after forbidden knowledge? What reason had I to expect that my fate would not be similar to theirs? *But I had chosen my lot—had already passed the mysterious portals of that temple from which there was no issue but in death or victory.*

To those who can rightly comprehend the above reflections they will mean much. I am not permitted to speak plainer.

I consoled myself with the reflection that the prize was worth contending for; that to strive nobly and fail was better than to rust in indolence; and now onward with a stout heart to meet my fate.

CHAPTER XVI.

DR. ZELL IS INTRODUCED TO THE ROYAL FAMILY—HIS FIRST MEETING WITH THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

“The great are great only because we are on our knees. Let us rise.”—*Prudhomme*.

“Presentiments are strange things! and so are sympathies; and so are signs; and the three combined make one mystery to which humanity has not yet found the key. I never laughed at presentiments in my life, because I have had strange ones of my own. Sympathies, I believe, exist . . . whose workings baffle mortal comprehension. And signs, for aught we know, may be but the sympathies of Nature with man.”—*Charlotte Bronië, in “Jane Eyre.”*

THE capital of Graffenburg was a city of great antiquity, and the narrow streets and tall, ancient buildings in the older parts contrasted strongly with the later architectural effects of its modern owners. Under the late sovereign, the father of the reigning prince, it had been greatly improved and beautified in those quarters contiguous to the royal residence. In the newer parts, broad streets shaded with trees, and lined with magnificent buildings ornamented with grand porticoes and Corinthian columns, bespoke the march of improvement and the growing taste and ample means of the owners. Beautiful parks, under the constant care of the best landscape gardeners, and abounding in all the charming effects which these artists know so well how to produce (when backed by a public treasury), formed a pleasant feature of this gay capital.

These parks—connected with a system of fine drives for which the city was famous—had been much extended and improved by the Prince at immense cost, and were regarded by all classes of the citizens with great pride and satisfaction. Near the town a vast open place reserved for military reviews was conspicuous.

For me the chief interest of the place was centered in the great square, around which were clustered the magnificent public buildings devoted to those grand art collections for which the city was famous. The national library, one of the largest in the empire, the hall of sculpture, the royal galleries of paintings, the grand theater, all fostered and sustained by the state, and all easily accessible to the public, were each objects of interest to the traveler and of just pride to the citizens.

I took lodgings at the principal hotel, where I met many of the leading burghers at the table d'hôte, and was not a little surprised to find that so large a number of the best people took their meals at the hotels. Here I found the usual sprinkling of English and American tourists bent on sight-seeing and display.

When one has the *entrée* of fashionable or aristocratic circles in a strange city, he should lose no time in presenting his credentials. This is especially true of continental cities, where the unvouched-for stranger is not only a nobody, but may soon become worse than a nobody—an object of suspicion. The traveler in a foreign country should have some initiative to the homes and hearts of the people, without which he is but an idle spectator among the vulgar—merely tolerated by the authorities, who will keep an eye on his movements, as a possible enemy of society. What some people call “traveling,” without gaining the acquaintance of the substantial inhabitants of the country through which they may be passing, but seldom contributes to any good purpose. As an educating influence it is imperfect, and as a social factor it is an utter

failure. Results worth noting come only of contact with humanity. If solitude be what a man wants, let him seek it at home. The man of consequence, either at home or abroad, is best known by his connections. I insert this for the benefit of a class of American travelers of whom I have met and pitied many desolate specimens. They know nobody and wish to know nobody, and in consequence are themselves nobodies. Without the ready coin in their purses they would cut a sorry figure indeed in their stately but utterly friendless isolation. They should learn that man is a social animal, even in foreign countries, and that the "stranger within the gates" is properly the guest of the people with whom he sojourns.

Hitherto I had enjoyed but little intercourse with the great of any country. My experience had led me along the lines of the middle classes, varied by a few acquaintances among literary and professional persons. This fact should never daunt a man or cause him to shrink at a chance meeting with people of rank. Remember one thing: A man is everywhere only a man, and can by no possibility be anything more. Secondly, note this: The instincts of a gentleman will prompt him to do the proper thing under any and all circumstances, provided, of course, he maintains his self-possession. Third: Ignorance and vice are the only conditions that a man should be ashamed of, or that can properly exclude him from any society on earth to which he has gained the *entrée*. "The diligent man shall stand before kings," said Solomon.

Nevertheless, it was not without a little shiver of misgiving that I made my way to the palace, after having sent in my letter, and received from the Grand Chamberlain an invitation to call upon His Excellency at a certain hour on the following day.

I was ushered at once into the presence-chamber of the sovereign, who received me with dignified cordiality. My letter of introduction was lying upon the little stand of an

antique pattern by his side, and he gracefully raised the paper a few inches as he alluded to it in his opening words. He spoke in a voice rendered soft and musical by long training in the refined atmosphere of gentle and cultivated society.

“ Doctor Zell, you are thrice welcome to our Court; first, by reason of your credentials from our beloved sister; second, as a citizen of the greatest republic on earth, with whom our relations have ever been of the friendliest character; third, and not least, as a man of learning and science.”

While he was speaking, I observed the man closely. He was of commanding stature, being both tall and stout. His face was of the unmistakable German type, and might have found a hundred prototypes among the merchant class of his capital city. The brow was wide and massive, with the blonde hair of the true German. The clear, gray-blue eyes, which wore a mild expression, were yet strong and penetrating. His air was slightly imposing, notwithstanding the affability which he endeavored to infuse into his present manner.

In a few carefully chosen words I managed to thank his Royal Highness for his gracious welcome, and the kindly allusion to America, the land of my birth.

He now questioned me closely in regard to the East, the scene of my long pilgrimage, and finally led delicately up to the subject of my studies.

“ My sister in her very complimentary letter of introduction hints that your investigations have been in the direction of occultism,” he observed. I bowed, and he continued, not waiting for a reply:

“ I must introduce you to the Princess, who is much interested in these matters.”

As he said this I felt a chill pass over my frame; it was but for an instant, and I was barely conscious of a premonition, not precisely of evil, but of something significant and

startling; the nearness of some new and momentous turn of fortune. I had no time, however, to dwell upon this fugitive impression, for etiquette manifestly required me to express my appreciation of the honor implied, and the pleasure it would give me to be presented to her Royal Highness.

The Prince arose and conducted me to the apartments of his consort, the Princess Charlotte, famed throughout Europe for her beauty no less than for her varied accomplishments and learning. The Princess was found in her boudoir, a daintily furnished room opening into the palace library. She was surrounded with books, and attended by a single maid of honor.

The Prince entered unannounced and presented me in a graceful manner, saying:

“Charlotte, I have your permission to present Doctor Zell, the American gentleman we were speaking of last evening, who brings a special letter from sister Dorothea.”

She arose for an instant, and I beheld a lady apparently about thirty years of age, who looked at me through bright brown eyes that seemed to grow and dilate under the long silken eyelashes. I had only time to note the tall, stately form, the shapely breast and shoulders, the intellectual brow, and the luxuriant dark hair.

She bowed slightly, and in the sweetest of voices said:

“With such an introduction the doctor is not alone a pleasing visitor, but something more—a friend, let us hope, and above all, a fellow-student.”

Then followed an easy conversation about books, finally drifting to magnetism, in which I saw at once that the Princess was much interested.

The Prince finally arose, and as I arose also, thinking it a signal for the termination of the interview, he said:

“Do not hasten your departure, though I must ask you to excuse me, as the hour approaches for the usual visit of the Prime Minister. I wish to say that you are to consider

yourself a privileged visitor here. Our library is to be accessible to you at all times. The Princess is writing a book, and if you will occasionally place yourself at her disposal you will fill a long-felt want; namely, the want of an appreciative listener. The Princess will make you acquainted with the *savants*, and altogether we shall hope to make your stay tolerably agreeable."

The lady colored slightly when his Royal Highness mentioned her book; but it was said in a vein of pleasantry and passed over with a smile of gayety.

"Ah, yes, doctor, you are to consider yourself quite at home with us. You are to enlist in the army of my literary admirers. I am to bring you and the other learned people together, and we shall get on famously. On Thursday evening I give a levee, and shall expect to see you." She handed me a card richly embossed with the royal arms and the words, "Royal Levee," with date and my name, which latter she inscribed with her own dainty hand. "It will save all annoyance at the vestibule," she said.

I bowed myself out and retired charmed with their excellencies—with the splendor of the royal apartments, the novelty of the scenes presented, and the prospect of future intimacy with these amiable people.

The Princess Charlotte was an Austrian archduchess; her father was an emperor; the blood of a hundred kings circulated in her veins. Thirty generations of greatness, of pomp, of gentle breeding and delicate living. Surely if there is anything in the so-called laws of heredity, this high-bred woman most possess peculiarities and refinements above the ordinary representatives of her sex. To an American, nothing is so dazzling as hereditary rank, few things so fascinating as the contemplation of royal power and magnificence allied to ancient birth. There is a certain mystery about it. No wonder the illustrious families who are born to greatness and power imagine it is

by the grace of God. It is certainly not by reason of their own genius or achievement, and not always by the will of the people. I thought of the words of Shakespeare, about the "divinity that doth hedge a king."

We are apt to regard royal personages as something more than ordinary humanity. Yet face to face they differ not materially from the men and women we meet every day. "Stripped of her artificial surroundings, divested of the trappings of royalty, what is she more than another?" thought I; but impossible, in spite of reason, to realize it. The blood of a long line of imperial ancestors, the refinements of succeeding ages, the reverence of millions of people who have bowed to this family for a thousand years, all seem personified in this daughter of the Cæsars.

I thought I had never seen such beauty and intellectuality combined. In spite of myself I felt that my imagination was enthralled by this royal lady, who seemed to surpass all other women as Jupiter surpasses his satellites.

This imperial woman had condescended to make herself as a common mortal to me, had said civil things, had smiled graciously, and even pressed me to join the coterie of her choice literary circle.

For once I felt keenly my obscurity—my poverty and my almost total lack of all external advantages. It would be almost a week before that glorious Thursday when I might appear at her reception. I knew enough of courts to realize that an invitation from such a source was equivalent to a command. To decline or to absent myself, except for the gravest of reasons, would be to make myself guilty of the greatest discourtesy; and although I would fain have excused myself and avoided the gathering, I saw clearly that it would be impossible to do so without casting an indignity upon the royal pair, which would result in closing the doors of the palace against me forever. I reflected upon the sad appearance I should make in that brilliant assemblage. My costume was not suitable, and

my wardrobe afforded no resources adequate to the occasion. My funds were nearly exhausted. Alas! why had I been so careless about money? My next remittance from America would not be due for a month, and not positively certain to come even then. "How swift," I thought, "does expense and care follow upon worldly ambition." My slender means had been sufficient for the poor scholar, the devoted mystic, but how inadequate for even the beginnings of society life. I tried to think of some means of recuperating my slender purse. I was unknown in this place and consequently had no credit. Doubtless I might easily obtain a loan from my good friends, the Von Eichmans, but I shrank from resorting to them. For one base moment something like discouragement hovered over my spirit; but I laughed it away in scorn as I suddenly reflected that I had science at my command, and the powers of nature at my feet. My years of study and earnest endeavor had not been in vain. I had not felt the sting of poverty since that first memorable experience in New York. How different my situation now from what it was then! Yes, I knew ways of getting money, though I had scruples at using my superior knowledge and skill to extort from others their wealth, even to supply my necessities.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOW THE MONEY DIFFICULTY WAS TIDED OVER—CHESS IN GRAFFENBURG—SOME NEW ACQUAINTANCES.

“Whoever hopes to employ any part of his time with efficacy and vigor must allow some of it to pass in trifles.”—*Locke*.

“The game of chess is not merely an idle amusement; several valuable qualities of the mind, useful in the course of human life, are to be acquired and strengthened by it, so as to become habits ready on all occasions; for life is a kind of chess, in which we have often points to gain, and competitors or adversaries to contend with, and in which there is a vast variety of good and evil events that are, in some degree, the effect of prudence or the want of it.”—*Franklin*, “*The Morals of Chess*.”

ABSORBED in these reflections, and still undecided, I wandered into a public café of the better class, where I observed an assemblage of well-dressed people engaged in amusing themselves at various games. Nearly all were seated at tables and quaffing the universal beverage, the foaming Bavarian beer. In one corner I noticed that chess-tables were provided and a game going on. This game had long been my only pastime, and I had seen some fine playing among the dervishes of the East, who deem chess the only amusement worthy of a scholar.

I had heard and read much of the German school of play, for the Germans are among the ablest and most exhaustive of chess analysts, and their chess books are known and admired beyond the Ganges.

I strolled over to the chess corner, and my attention was

attracted by a game which was in progress between a young military man in the gorgeous uniform of the Royal Guards and a gentleman of Jewish physiognomy. The latter was middle aged, and plainly though fashionably dressed. He wore at his fob a massive gold chain, upon which was suspended a rich seal set with precious stones. It was evident enough that he was well to do, a man satisfied with the world and with himself. He was intensely absorbed in the game, which had reached a critical stage, and he did not seem to notice my approach.

On the other hand, the young officer looked up with good humor and bowed politely, after the custom of the country. He was confident he had the best of the game, and could afford to welcome a spectator. Your regular chess votary is never quite willing to be surprised in an awkward, hampered position by a casual visitor who happens upon him unawares, and has not seen by what successive steps of the game he has been led into the entanglement. The Jewish gentleman was sullen and abstracted, studying over his next move.

After taking what I thought a long time for reflection, he finally made what might have seemed to a young player a weak move, but it led to a series of exchanges which entirely altered the prospects of the game; and then taking advantage of the evident confusion of his adversary, he ended up brilliantly with an ingenious mate, which flashed out suddenly from a bishop in ambush, uncovered by a knight, giving double check with inevitable mate in the near future, to the evident chagrin of the young officer, who arose hastily, looked at his watch, and excused himself from further play on the ground of an appointment.

Now, for the first time, the Jew seemed aware of my presence. He nodded in a way I thought patronizing. His quick eye seemed to take in at a glance my plain attire, devoid of all ornament. He evidently regarded me as a starving clergyman or a poor tutor; but your Jewish

merchant, though possessed of a quick intuition in regard to social distinctions, is never discourteous. Besides, there is among chess votaries of all nations a certain freemasonry, which is the result of the affinity which comes of similarity in tastes.

"I congratulate you, sir, on the fine end-game. It looked almost irretrievable for black when I first came," said I.

"Yes, I was a little crowded; it all came from an oversight very early in the game," he replied, adding with spirit: "Why, it is absurd that the lieutenant should hope to win from me. Do you play?"

"Yes, occasionally."

"Ah! you have heard of me then, surely. I am Lichtenfelter, president of the club here. Your name, please?"

"Doctor Zell; a stranger in the city," I replied.

"English from your accent?" continued my interlocutor.

"I am an American."

The Jew stared at me for an instant, and I fancied a thought occurred to him that I might be a commercial agent and a possible customer. His look softened; he was becoming interested.

"Permit me to ask if you know any one here?" he said, diffidently.

"I have letters to prominent people at Court, but my acquaintance is as yet extremely limited."

"Ah, I see: you are connected with the embassy," he quickly rejoined, adding: "Well, sir, that America is a great country, but young."

Having uttered this weighty remark, he settled back in his chair with much gravity, as though the subject of America was exhausted and settled.

"Well, let us play," he said, directly. "What shall it be for?"

"I am not in the habit of playing for money," I replied.

“Not for money!” said he, in astonishment; “then, if not for money, pray for what?”

“We in America seldom play for anything more than the honor of victory.”

“Honor!” he repeated, derisively. “Honor is all well enough, but what do we live on? Honor? No. I play not for that honor. I play for a florin; say two?”

I put down the coins, and we set up the men.

The move fell to me, and I started with the conservative Giuoco-piano, the sound and cautious game which it is always prudent to adopt with a stranger whose analytical powers and chess strategy are unknown.

As we proceeded I soon saw that my adversary was no tyro. Up to the tenth move he made the most approved replies known to chess authorities. Then commenced a protracted siege on my part, with a stubborn resistance on his, and many an attempt to make unlooked-for sorties upon my camp. It was like a series of hard strains and twists between two wrestlers of nearly equal strength and skill, each laboring hard but vainly to gain a telling position. He seemed to anticipate and circumvent all my maneuvers. Up to the thirty-ninth move the game seemed nearly equal, but at this move I gained a slight—a very slight advantage; like the entering wedge of victory, but only the very sharp point of the wedge. This episode resulted in my gaining a pawn after an obstinate resistance. Then inch by inch, through a complicated end-game, I finally scored a victory by means of a succession of accurately calculated moves which went to make up a bewildering stratagem that I had conceived at the time of gaining my first advantage, back in the middle of the game. It was a maneuver in the East Indian style of play, and wholly new to the merchant.

Two or three moves before the inevitable mate my companion resigned the game.

We had played three hours. My adversary seemed much

mortified at his defeat. He could claim no oversight, for the game had been well defended all through.

He ordered refreshments (a hard game makes one hungry), and then gloomily regarding the position of the end-game, he said, moodily:

"Doctor Zell, you play quite tolerably—that is, for an American. Such a *young* country. I am strangely out of play to-day. Yet we will try it again if you are willing, and this time for double the stakes, eh?"

"Very well," I replied; "if you insist upon a money consideration, I submit to the custom of the country."

"A money consideration," said the Jew, musingly; "why, most assuredly money, unless you prefer houses and lands, stocks, bonds, and securities, mortgages and debentures. Yes, money is the most convenient of all. Say, shall it be five florins?" he added, banteringly.

"Ten if you like," I replied, now thoroughly indignant at the mercenary spirit he exhibited.

A shade of pallor crossed the face of the merchant as he put down the money.

He had the move, and ventured upon one of those openings of the king's gambit, known to chess players as "abounding in hair-breadth escapes and startling vicissitudes."

At one time every move marked a crisis, and the least mistake on either side would have been fatal. After two hours of Titanic struggle I was again the winner.

"You must join our club," said Mr. Lichtenfelter; "you play well, but we shall still be able to amuse you."

"I doubt not that you have players who could give me odds," I replied, with an affectation of modesty.

"*Ach!* certainly. I myself, when in good play, might give you pawn and move, I think; but then a player of your skill would not generally look for odds," said my companion.

We were both too much fatigued to think of further play

at that time, so my new acquaintance handed me his card, with a few words written in pencil on the back, which would serve, he said, to gain me ready admission to the club. He pressed me earnestly to meet him there on the following afternoon, and we separated.

As I deposited the winnings of the day in my purse, a new idea dawned upon my mind: Why not recuperate my slender resources by play?

I retired, my mind alternately dwelling upon chess strategy and the beautiful Princess Charlotte.

In my dreams that night my chess queen seemed endowed with life, and gradually assumed the personality of her Royal Highness. Yet I seemed to be playing her like the other pieces on the board, and was nearly distracted at last to see her in danger of capture, which seemed imminent. Then I thought my queen besought me with tears to save her, and that I thereupon exerted all my powers to do so; but the demon who was playing against me seemed to be unfathomable, sure, and deadly in his combinations. I was impressed with the conviction that if I lost the game both the queen and myself would be placed at the mercy of the demon, who knew no pity.

My game seemed irretrievably lost and I was playing for a draw. At last, to my great joy, I discovered a four-move combination that I thought must result in giving me a perpetual check. My queen smiled through her tears, and I awoke in a profuse perspiration. The morning sun was streaming in at my window.

In the light of events which followed, this dream seemed in some degree prophetic.

On the next day, at the appointed time, I sought out the club of my new acquaintance. Their apartments were in the second story of a high and venerable building in the heart of the old town. Upon presenting Mr. Lichtenfelter's card at the door I was ushered into the large assembly room by the porter, who announced: " Doctor Zell,

of America, introduced by the president." The latter came forward courteously, and presented me to such of the members as happened to be disengaged at the moment, and begged me to feel quite at home.

It chanced that one of these introductions was to Lieutenant von Elden, the young officer whom I had seen at the café the day before. Mr. Lichtenfelter, having presently excused himself to join his party, I became engaged in conversation with Von Elden, whom I found to be exceedingly communicative.

He was acquainted with all the current gossip of the Court, and not unwilling to display to me in his talk his familiarity with the great.

The Princess, he said, was a regular blue-stocking, caring for nothing but books and abstruse studies. Her receptions were but little more than assemblages of literary celebrities, with a few Court dignitaries to give éclat and color to these occasions.

From this genial young person I gleaned some useful hints about the dress and etiquette of the Court.

A guest might come in the uniform of any military organization he was connected with. A clergyman might come in his ordinary clerical costume. For literary people, plain black of a certain fashionable cut, with white waistcoats, were most approved, though the rule was not arbitrary. In short, the Princess was exceedingly unmindful of the strict requirements of fashion, both in regard to her guests and herself.

She had been quoted as saying that she considered a slavish conformity to fashion as unworthy of a person of intellect and culture. She disliked the monotony of court dress, and preferred more latitude to individual taste in order to develop the personal predilections of the wearer. The dress, she said, ought to mean something as regards the wearer—something besides mere conformity to a rule; it should embody in some degree his tastes, his ideas of

congruity and propriety; should, in short, be an outgrowth and emanation of his mind.

But these views, he informed me, were never popular, and there were certain fashionable leaders who still held sway in all matters of dress, in spite of the Princess's eccentricities. Von Elden more than intimated that he was himself an authority on dress, and had aided in inaugurating an innovation in cuffs at one time.

Lichtenfelter joining us, put a stop to the conversation, and I was soon engaged in a match contest with him for a considerable stake, and was again a winner. I now felt comparatively rich—and all pecuniary cares vanished.

"My children shall not want," said Hermes. "The adept shall be able to command his share of the useful and beautiful things of the world according to his needs."

But it was not in the matter of money alone that the club was useful to me, for it was the means of greatly extending my acquaintance. Chess amateurs of skill are almost always people of wealth and leisure. No others can afford the time to attain to excellence in this intricate game. Besides, only gentle people care for this sedentary, silent recreation. It will never be the game of the rough and noisy rabble.

"Chess is the gentleman's game par excellence!" exclaimed the enthusiastic Von Elden, as we retired to the refreshment-room, accompanied by Lichtenfelter and a certain Dr. von Bleisenbach.

The latter was a small man, middle aged, with a long nose and keen eyes.

"The game of pure intellect," said he.

"And with analogies to the struggles of real life," put in the merchant.

They all seemed to pause for a confirmatory remark from me, and I added:

"The only game with a literature of its own."

"Five thousand years old," said the doctor,

“ Played by all the great generals,” said Von Elden.

“ Beloved of the clergy of all denominations,” said the president.

“ And enshrined in the hearts of scholars and sages,” said I, raising my glass. “ Let us drink to it as the sole recreation of Genius.”

Dr. Bleisenbach then branched off in a learned disquisition on the antiquity of chess and upon certain disputed points as to its introduction into Europe.

This doctor, I learned afterwards from Von Elden, was a physician in ordinary to the Prince, and had a great Court connection. His rise was due to accident. The Prince one day slipped on the pavement and sprained an ankle; the doctor, who was standing near, sprung to his side, assisted him to a carriage, and on their arrival at the palace, showed so much tact and address in treating the patient that the Prince's attention was diverted from the sprain to the doctor. His great points were readiness and promptness. The Prince took a fancy to the new doctor. The latter was made one of the physicians in ordinary to His Highness. He was created a Von. His practice increased like magic; he was now the fashionable doctor of the capital. It was whispered that he possessed great influence with the Prince, and it was thought necessary to conciliate him in order to get on well at Court. These reminiscences of the little doctor were told to me confidentially by Von Elden on our way home from the club-house, and were cut short as we neared the point of divergence to our respective lodgings.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE RECEPTION AT THE PALACE.

“ Let those who would affect singularity with success, first determine to be very virtuous, and they will be sure to be very singular.”
—*Colton*.

“ Study has something cloudy and melancholy in it, which spoils that natural cheerfulness, and deprives a man of that readiness of wit and freedom of fancy which are required toward a polite conversation. Meditation has still worse effects in civil society; wherefore, let me advise you to take care that you lose not by it with your friends, what you think to gain with yourself.”—*St. Evermond*.

ON the evening of the reception I found myself in a crowd of fashionable people ascending the great staircase of the royal residence, and was ushered from the great central rotunda, along a stately corridor leading to the banquetting hall. Upon entering the latter, I was struck with the fact that the apartment seemed familiar, and could not at first account for this impression, until my eye rested upon the large painting—the battle scene of the Crusades—which had been presented to my mind through the retrospective trance scene brought up in the memory of the Baroness von Eichman, upon the occasion related in chapter sixteen of this history. Yes, there was the young warrior in the foreground bearing the shield with the lion rampant, upon the golden field. Here too were the other general features of the room: the ceiling of rich carved paneling, the magnificent antique clustered candelabra, the statuary, all as

seen in the memory of the Baroness; even the little stage or elevated platform at the far end of the room, where the musicians in scarlet, with green facings and gold cord, were even now grouped, with their music-stands before them, discoursing at intervals choice little gems from the great composers.

These entertainments of the Princess were conducted after a manner in some respects peculiarly her own. She prided herself upon the absence of all tedious formalities. Although reared in the strictest of courts, her salons were noted for the almost republican simplicity which prevailed. Her Royal Highness hated ceremony. It was even whispered that she was tinctured with liberal ideas—bordering on socialism, some said. All this and much more had been told me by Von Elden, who was a *habitué* of the Court. “Your announcement at the door is your general introduction to everybody in the room,” he had said; “and you need no other. Once within those sacred precincts, you are as a brother or sister, as the case may be, to every other guest present, and have only to mingle freely with the throng, and accost or be accosted according to the chances of the moment.”

I paid my respects to the royal hostess, whom I found surrounded by a brilliant group. She was all smiles, all animation, all benevolence. She had a rapid glance of recognition for every one, followed instantly by a pleasant look of satisfaction; but in the whirl and bustle attendant upon the rapid arrival of so many guests, there was of course, for her, no time for conversation. A word of welcome, a smile, was all that could be expected, and it was a wonder how she made these go around.

Von Elden came up, and taking my arm, he talked rapidly in a low tone as we promenaded the vast hall. He actually managed to tell me about nearly every one of the prominent people present.

The hall was brilliantly lighted. The music was soft

and voluptuous, and played with that wonderful correctness for which the royal band was famous. The male guests were many of them arrayed in splendid uniforms of military or knightly character, and the costumes of the ladies presented the usual delightful variety; but all were rich, sparkling and magnificent. The mingling of costly and delicate perfumes, the enrapturing strains of the music, the animation of the scene, all contributed to intoxicate the senses and captivate the fancy.

My companion was unwearied in describing to me the different distinguished personages. The tall man in brilliant uniform, and covered with decorations, was Count Ernestine, the Grand Chamberlain. The rough-visaged old gentleman with hooked nose was General von Wimple-Steifan, a kinsman of his Royal Highness—Field Marshal and Commander-in-Chief of the Army. The elderly, stout personage, with round red face and enormous rotundity of abdomen, was the Lord High Steward of the royal household—another distant relative of the Prince—who was paid a large salary for signing his name now and then, his deputies doing all the work of his official position. He was said to possess a great capacity for liquids. My attention was now attracted to an elderly, thin man dressed in a modest suit of some dark shade, with a ribbon and diamond star of a knightly order upon his left breast. He was of medium height, with a large head and thoughtful brow, and was engaged in conversation with a lady.

I pointed him out to Von Elden and asked who he was.

“Oh, that is the Prime Minister, Herr von Ebleman,” said my companion; “a perfectly uninteresting personage from a social point of view. In fact, he seldom attends Her Highness’s entertainments. I wonder what brought him here to-night.”

“He may be uninteresting from a social point of view, but if I am not mistaken he is one of the strongest men, intellectually, in the room,” said I.

“ Well, yes; a man of some talent, I own; but eccentric, and losing ground now, they say. He and the Princess are at swords’ points. He hates her, and she loathes him and his policy, and yet fears an open rupture with him. In fact, neither of them can afford *that*. Von Ebleman has been first adviser of the crown for many years, and was prime minister to the late Prince Leopold, our august sovereign’s father. He must have a great fund of state secrets treasured up in that capacious brain; but he is a man of few words.”

“ I do not see Doctor von Bleisenbach here,” I remarked.

“ No indeed; *he* never attends Her Highness’s entertainments. You must understand that there are two distinct parties or factions at this court. The doctor belongs to the Prince’s party,” said my companion.

“ But please enlighten me about the two parties: how are they constituted, and what is the nature of the issue between them? It might be useful to a stranger to know.”

“ Well, you see, the two parties are simply composed of those who side with Prince Karl, on the one hand, and with his wife, Princess Charlotte, on the other. The issue is not so well defined, but in general it is a bitter personal antagonism which has grown up between the Prince and his wife.”

“ And the cause?” I said, inquiringly.

Von Elden, leading me aside to the embrasure of a window, answered in a low tone: “ It is said that the Princess, who is very high spirited, became aware of some of her royal husband’s infidelities, which, between you and me, are so numerous and flagrant that she could not help but know of them. Then followed reproaches on her part and indignation on his. The Prince told her flatly that he would not give up his love affairs. His ancestors had had their mistresses, and he would have his. She stormed—threatened to leave him and return to Vienna. He smiled

at the idea of her getting any sympathy from her male relatives on such a grievance. Dreading the scandal that must follow the separation, the Princess resigned herself to the situation, but assumed an attitude of coldness and alienation towards her husband. They have been married four years and have no children—a matter of grave moment for state reasons. The royal pair treat each other with studied politeness in the presence of third parties, but secretly are at daggers drawn.”

“And so it has gone so far that people have taken sides?” said I.

“Very naturally—those who sympathize with the lady are called the ‘Austrian Party,’ while the adherents of the Prince are called the ‘Home Party.’ The fact is, the dispute is made a convenient handle for other issues to hinge upon; and the little domestic fiasco threatens to become the source of serious complications, and may even involve the peace of Europe before it is settled.”

“How so?”

“Simply because the Prince, who heartily dislikes his wife, is now bent upon getting a divorce. The Princess, in spite of all her eccentricities, is irreproachably correct in her conduct. The Prince dare not really offend Austria by casting unjust aspersions upon the character of a daughter of that imperial house. His family and numerous relations are constantly on the watch for some flaw in her conduct that may be made the pretense of invoking the authority of the courts. She is surrounded by spies and informers. All sorts of snares are laid for her. She is aware of all this, but she has a numerous party here and powerful friends at Vienna, and above all, an indomitable spirit.”

“Does our friend Lichtenfelter attend Court?” said I.

“I have not yet met him here.”

My companion smiled at my innocence. “Lichtenfelter here! Why, he is only a merchant and money-lender.

Ah, no! There is no one admitted here whose hands are soiled by traffic. Only those who have court armor, quarters, pedigrees. Take me, for instance; I have nothing but a commission and a pedigree. The people you see here are all nobles, with possibly a few exceptions of foreign notabilities or distinguished strangers. Our nobility is all of the landed interest. For the rest, our courtiers consist of army officers, high civil functionaries, professional and literary men of eminence, and diplomats.

"But where do I come in, who belong to none of these classes, and nevertheless am here?" said I, laughingly.

"You come in as an American, doubtless; a privileged people, who claim to be the peers of kings. An American gentleman can easily gain the *entrée* of circles which our own people of corresponding grade would never think of attempting."

"It's a mere matter of courtesy, I apprehend," said I.

My companion looked at me curiously, and I knew he was wondering by what strange initiative I had gained admission into this charmed circle; but he was too well bred to venture upon any audible conjecture.

I begged him to tell me more about the Princess, in whom I began to feel a great interest.

"She is a singular character," said he. "A melancholy woman, strangely infatuated upon the subject of death. She has the mummy of an Egyptian queen in her sleeping apartment. A human skull surmounts the canopy of her state bed. The Prince, who has a horror of death, and does not allow it mentioned in his presence, of course never visits her. He is reported to have said that he would as soon think of passing the night with a marble woman in the tomb of the Capulets. Her enemies say that she is ambitious of acquiring the arts of sorcery."

We now approached a brilliant group from whence emerged her Royal Highness; and Von Elden turning

away to address a lady acquaintance, I found myself face to face with the Princess Charlotte.

"Doctor Zell, I hope you are enjoying the evening," she said, in a silvery voice. I said I was enchanted, and the more so as such scenes were new in my experience.

She motioned me to a seat by her side, and then ensued a brisk talk about America, during which the Princess asked many unexpected questions, and showed much interest in republican institutions.

"It is impossible not to admire your countrymen," she said; "they are so grandly simple in their self-possession—so unconventional—so delightfully extravagant; in short, endowed with all the freshness and exuberance of a new continent just commencing to work out its marvelous destiny."

After a time the conversation turned on literary matters.

"I think the Prince spoke of your Royal Highness having a book in progress," said I. "May I ask to what branch of literature it belongs?"

"Only a little book of fairy tales to amuse children. I write a little to beguile the time," she said, with a sigh. "But I am so glad you referred to it, and for this reason: I am anxious to enrich my little book from original sources, and, pardon me, our sister intimated in her letters that you are learned in the folk-lore of many lands. Would you, as a great favor, come here and look over my work? Oh! I am so anxious to learn all that is certain of the world of spirits. Our time is so short here. A few days of pageantry, and all is over. Every palace has its mausoleum."

These few words gave me an insight into the workings of her mind. I saw at once a woman born in the purple, nurtured in splendor, sated with glory, naturally susceptible to all pleasing and beautiful impressions, and well calculated to enjoy the good things of this world, yet morbidly alive to the consciousness that youth was slipping

away from her; that beauty and glory must soon be surrendered; that the delicate physical structure now so much admired was destined for the great vaults beneath the royal chapel.

[Awful thought of death to the great ones of the earth, who have so much to leave!]

No wonder that they are so often morbidly interested in the mysteries of the tomb. I thought of Macaulay's thrilling account of King Charles of Spain celebrating his own obsequies; of Philip the Second contemplating the huge chest in which his remains were to be laid, and especially "the skull which, encircled with the crown of Spain, grinned at him from the cover." Perhaps this princess was approaching the mental state of Queen Juanna, another royal lady of Spain, who had sat year after year by the bed on which lay the embalmed remains of her husband, "appareled in the rich embroidery and jewels which he had been wont to wear when living," says the historian.

I promised to call at an appointed hour the next day.

I will pass over the further incidents of the evening: the dancing, in which the stately polonaise was followed by the bewitching waltz; the banquet which followed; the blaze of diamonds, the glitter of decorations, the heat and glare and excitement. All this lingers in a confused way in my memory; but to me the only incident was the conversation with the Princess, her invitation to call, and my acceptance.

CHAPTER XIX.

FURTHER ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE ECCENTRIC PRINCESS —A SUDDEN ENGAGEMENT.

“ You will, I believe, in general ingratiate yourself with others still less by paying them too much court than too little.”—*Greville*.

ON the following afternoon, at the appointed hour, I again repaired to the palace, sent up my card, and was promptly ushered into the apartments of the Princess. She was alone, and evidently expecting me.

“ You are very kind to come,” she said, motioning me to a seat.

I said it was a pleasure as well as a distinguished honor to wait upon her commands, and that I was only apprehensive of my utter inability to answer her expectations in the matter of literary assistance, though I anticipated much pleasure in the effort.

I now had an opportunity to observe her physiognomy, which I saw, on close inspection, was very remarkable. From the liquid depths of those dark eyes, so luminously sad, a whole history could be gathered. The expansive forehead, pure as marble, was shaded and relieved by the heavy masses of dark-brown hair of great fineness, bespeaking the delicacy of the temperament. The features were finely chiseled and regular; the mouth delicate, yet firm; the fullness and ripeness of the under lip showed great

warmth of temperament and much womanly tenderness; but the general impression conveyed was one of some great disappointment, not unmixed with a sturdy indignation, now grown almost habitual. It was evident enough that the better part of her nature was suffering from repression, and that her whole womanly self was in rebellion, baffled yet unconquerable—in a continual fiery protest against wrong and outrage, which yet could not be overcome.

Her manner was very composed and dignified—almost distant at times, yet not without a certain cordiality. There was nothing in it of that natural timidity which is generally present in a woman's first interviews with a stranger of the opposite sex. But the innocent nonchalance and disregard of all sexual distinction which was implied by a certain freedom of manner, was more chilling than any degree of prudishness or feminine shyness would have been.

She now spoke of her literary employments, and how she had been led into a certain line of investigation. She had been reared as a Roman Catholic, or rather in conformity to Roman Catholicism, for there was much skepticism in the private home atmosphere, and she had been early accustomed to think for herself. She had accordingly examined by degrees into the claims of all the leading religions of the world, and concluded that all were unsatisfactory, because founded upon pretended written revelation of doubtful authenticity. She had emerged from these researches a confirmed skeptic, though not a materialist. She wanted positive evidence of the existence of spiritual intelligences outside of living humanity. The loss of a sister, to whom she was greatly attached, had intensified her desire to find proofs of the future state. She thought the proper field for search of these proofs was in nature and human experience. She had therefore turned her attention to the study of alleged phenomena, such as miracles, ghost-seeing, warnings, visitations from the dead, etc.

"So," she remarked, in conclusion, "I naturally drifted to the study of popular superstitions: the folk-lore of all nations, fairy traditions, the banshee, demonology, etc. Why, I spent nearly a year investigating the German legends about the White Lady alone."

I had, of course, heard of this pet superstition of the aristocracy, but I begged to know the result of her special inquiries.

"I found the belief quite general throughout central Europe," she said, "and authentic records of the appearance of this phenomena are apparently innumerable. Almost every palace, castle or seat of an ancient family has its own more or less authentic tradition of the White Lady. These traditions present some variety of detail, and yet seem to agree in essentials. She appears in the palaces of Germany, by day as well as by night, whenever any important event, of either good or evil import, is about to transpire, but particularly when the death of one of the family is impending. She is always dressed in snow-white drapery, and carries a bunch of keys at her girdle."

"I have understood that the earliest recorded instance of this apparition occurred in Bohemia, in the sixteenth century, and has become famous as the legend of Bertha of Rosenberg," said I.

"Yes, I am well acquainted with the legend," she replied. "I have even been in the ancient castle where its incidents are said to have occurred. It happened in a family remotely connected with my own."

I remarked that the White Lady was generally regarded as an ancestral spirit, and that the legendary lore in regard to her had been thought to present analogies with that of a certain goddess of German mythology who is supposed to influence births and deaths and to preside over the household.

She said the apparition had been seen several times of late years, and gave several instances with dates.*

* It was seen in Berlin Castle, notably in 1628, 1840, 1850, and again, it is said, a little before the death of the late Emperor William.—*Editor*.

While we were conversing, pages and attendants were occasionally gliding in and out of the room, with messages, notes, etc., and receiving brief orders. A lady of honor sat in a remote part of the room poring over a book of engravings.

From a drawer in her *escritoire* the Princess now produced a formidable array of manuscript. It was written in a dainty, minute hand. As she leisurely placed the sheets of the opening chapters upon the table, she said:

“It is with much diffidence that I place these pages before you; but I am dissatisfied with my work, and it hangs heavily on my hands. Yet I can not abandon it. If I seek to do so, my thoughts revert to it again in spite of myself. And then the subject is so extensive. It is constantly enlarging, too. One is apt to be attracted into strange lines of inquiry, all diverging from the main track of investigation, and then from these branches to still others, till we finally reach the common source of some favorite theory; and then quite often something proves our former inference untenable, and a whole gigantic hypothesis falls to the ground, and one must begin again.”

“It must be discouraging,” I ventured to remark.

“Yes, discouraging, and yet delightful,” she replied, with a spark of enthusiasm in her eyes. “Without my work, my studies, and my delightful difficulties, life would be insipid.”

She now excused herself, and left me with the manuscript. I soon found it to be but little more than a compilation of data, not simply undigested, but not even arranged or sorted. She had bestowed great labor upon it in one way: she had waded through tomes and libraries of musty chronicles and archives to collect instances of remarkable phenomena, but she had no philosophical

method. It was simply a laborious marshaling of materials. It was, to begin with, a work singularly unsuited to the feminine mind, and no woman in the world's history has ever yet succeeded in a similar labor. In fact, few probably have ever attempted it. These immense monuments of philosophy, laboriously spun from comparison, analysis and speculation, whether conducted upon the inductive or deductive principle, are always the product of the masculine mind.

Such were my reflections after a protracted examination of the manuscript. I had not read any considerable portion of it in detail, but I had seen enough to measure the scope, the plan, the method and the style of the writer.

The Princess returned at last, and seemed anxiously awaiting my opinion.

"You have a great accumulation of very valuable data here," I ventured; "but it would require several days to do justice to your work. If your Royal Highness would permit me to take the manuscript to my lodgings, where I can examine it leisurely, I might, after due reflection, be able to make some suggestions as to treatment and arrangement," said I.

"And you can furnish some new facts from your own experience?" she said, eagerly.

"Possibly; but until I have read your work thoroughly, I can not be sure that anything in my own experience is really new. Your Highness may have it all here, in some other form, already."

"I am willing you should take the manuscript; but there is a better way. I wish to employ you as a literary secretary. Authorship is becoming too laborious for me. The mere hunting of authorities is fatiguing. Will you undertake the task?"

The announcement came upon me with the suddenness of an electric explosion.

I said that for some weeks to come I knew of nothing to

prevent my placing myself at her Royal Highness's command.

She rang for a page, and dispatched him with a message for an officer of the household.

In a few moments a grand functionary of the palace appeared, to whom she said, stiffly:

"Count, this is Mr. Zell, a literary man indispensable to me. You will see that he is properly lodged in the palace. You will apprise the Prince that I have added the American gentleman to my staff of secretaries."

The person addressed as "Count," shot out a curious look towards me from under his shaggy eyebrows. He was a little old man, almost hump-backed, in gorgeous uniform, with a saturnine frown upon his wrinkled face.

I was a little astonished at the suddenness of this arrangement; but it was all of a piece with many of the leading incidents of my life. The transitions in some destinies are of this character; abrupt, unheralded and unexpected; while in other cases Fate ushers in her changes more gradually, and one event seems slowly and tediously to prepare the way for another. Wherever the newly discovered planet Uranus has an important place or aspect in a nativity, this suddenness of events is indicated. Good or bad, the changes are sudden. That star dominates my nativity, as the reader will remember. I am therefore to be thrust headlong at events. I had learned to be surprised at nothing.

The next day I was duly installed in a very comfortable suite of apartments in the east wing of the palace. My sitting-room looked out upon a portion of the royal gardens. The scene directly presented to view from my window was an avenue lined with flowering rose-bushes in the foreground, but leading into shadows as the vista faded in the distance. How often our immediate physical surroundings present analogies—emblems, types and symbols of that which is to come. Never ridicule those who

observe signs. The world is full of signs to those who can read them. Omens possess a certain significance and truth for those who believe in them.

CHAPTER XX.

IN THE SHADOWS OF ROYALTY—RULES OF THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLD.

“An extreme rigor is sure to arm everything against it, and at length to relax into a supine neglect.”—*Burke*.

THE furniture of my room was of the sixteenth century. It was rich, massive and well preserved, the more perishable parts having been renewed from time to time, and restored in strict accordance with the original style. Upon every article was conspicuous, in bronze relief, the crown and cipher of the royal family.

I received from the officer of the household an illuminated parchment, surmounted by the royal arms. It was partly printed and partly written, and being translated ran to this effect:

“In the name of Karl Francis Augustus, by the grace of God, Prince of the German Empire, reigning Prince of Graffenburg and Wimple-Steifan, Margrave von Hofhausen, and Count of Zigmaringan. The Grand Chamberlain of the royal household to Doctor Theophilus Cardan Zell, greeting: You are hereby attached to his Royal Highness's Board of Secretaries, and will report to her Royal Highness, the august Princess Charlotte, till further orders, at two P. M., daily. You will acquaint yourself with the regulations of the household, as set forth in the manual herewith,

(Signed)

“ERNESTINE,
“Grand Chamberlain.”

It was countersigned with the usual illegible and quaint signature of German officials, and in the blackest of ink, written at an angle, with the most bewildering of flourishes,

The parchment had attached an enormous seal fastened with yellow ribbon.

I understood that this formidable official instrument constituted me a regular attaché of the palace (of the first class) conferred certain privileges and immunities, and entitled me to compensation at the pleasure and discretion of the sovereign.

I must refer briefly to the Manual of Regulations of the royal household, which accompanied the document. It was a thick volume, closely printed, in Gothic German characters, and contained a complete code for the guidance of the employés or attachés of the royal household, from the Grand Chamberlain to the lowest menial servants; setting forth their several duties, and the rank, title, precedence etc., of the officials. It was written in rather an antiquated style of composition, and consisted of extracts from old statutes, judicial decisions, and decrees issued in several different reigns. It contained many regulations which I judge must have been obsolete and long since disregarded. But the whole mass was regularly printed annually, by the authority of the Grand Chamberlain, in conformity to immemorial usage.

In the opening pages of this manual were several general directions applicable alike to employés of all grades; from which I reproduce a few extracts. For instance, ¶ 8 declares:

“The person of the sovereign is sacred and inviolable. To intrude upon his privacy is a high misdemeanor. To enter to his presence unbidden, or to commit any rudeness in his presence, may be construed as treasonable.”—*Judicial Decision.*

¶ 13. “Whoever bringeth deadly weapons into the presence of the sovereign (other than the Court sword allowed by regulation to certain officials), or whosoever in anger putteth his hand upon his sword-hilt in the presence, may be deemed guilty of high treason.”—*Extract from an ancient unannulled decree.*

Then follows a long string of penalties for attempting the life of the sovereign, plotting against his peace and dignity, or being privy to any of these things, ending generally with the phrase, "shall suffer death."

The regulations pertaining to the other members of the royal family were also set forth in detail. I noticed particularly those relating to the royal consort and ladies of the blood royal, which were quaint and peculiar.

¶ 30. "Whosoever shall intrude unbidden upon the privacy of the wife of the sovereign may be deemed guilty of high treason."

¶ 37. "Whosoever shall violate the chastity of the royal consort, or of any female of the blood royal, shall suffer death, confiscation of property and attainder."

¶ 38. "Whosoever shall alienate the affections of the royal consort shall suffer death, confiscation and attainder."

¶ 59. "Whosoever shall use any witchcraft, necromancy, enchantment, or magical arts for the purpose of annoying, molesting, or injuring any member of the royal family, or whosoever shall use any of the aforesaid or other diabolical arts for the purpose of corrupting, or debauching, or alienating the affections of the royal consort, or of any princess of the blood, shall suffer death, with or without confiscation and attainder, or perpetual imprisonment, or banishment, according to the enormity of the offense."*

* By an ancient usage of the realm, all offenses of this sort come within the special jurisdiction of the privy council, a body composed of certain notabilities, some of whom are members by hereditary right, some ex-officio members by reason of holding certain court positions, and others are summoned by writ at the pleasure of the sovereign.—*Author's Note.*

Another rule prescribed that the penalties of high treason should be inflicted upon any person who should orally or by publication prophesy the death of the sovereign.

The decrees against sorcery had come down from the age when witchcraft and demoniacal possession were generally believed in, and especially denounced by the church.

It is now many years since there has been a prosecution for witchcraft in any civilized country. Yet in nearly all the European states the old statutes against it stand unrepealed, and remain as curious relics of a semi-barbarous age.

I have since marveled at the readiness with which I accepted the proffered position in this royal household, and thus subjected myself to strange and unusual exactions, and, for all I knew, might lay myself open to unjust suspicions. I was not impelled by necessity, for I had won considerable money at the chess club, and was no longer under anxiety on that score. Nor was I actuated by ambition, for I had no aspirations for political or social distinction. The only motive I can now distinctly trace my action to was curiosity; to know something of home life in palaces, and of the individual life of the royal personages. I felt a vague sense of attraction for the psychological points involved in a close study of the Princess's character and conduct. Possibly a certain sympathy for the woman, (arising as much from the similarity of our studies as from the peculiarities of her situation), had something to do with my willingness to accept her invitation; for the rest, it was a strange resignation to fate. It was the indifference of the adventurer launched upon the sea of circumstance. I had always an affinity for the nearest thing, the present duty, the passing opportunity, the immediate, the proximate, and the direct opening tendered and thrown in my way, as it were, by an overruling Providence. This principle had been inculcated by the society of the Theosophic brothers, under whose tutelage I had lived so long.

My duties at first were, as it seemed to me, merely nominal, and at no time were they ever well defined. I reported at the Princess's apartment every afternoon, and was received more as a friend than an employé. My time for the first week was spent in going over her manuscript, which I did with some care and attention, but only to

confirm my first impression of the utter inutility of her work.

There was description, citation, and reflections thereon, more or less relevant, but little comparison—scarcely any semblance of analysis, and not much attempt to reason from cause to effect. What she had apparently sought to accomplish was what her countryman, Ennemoser, afterwards successfully effected, viz. a *comprehensive history of magic*, in all its phases—a *tracing back and sifting of miraculous phenomena in all ages*. *

* “The History of Magic,” by John Ennemoser, translated from the German by William Howitt, in two volumes, London, 1854. This work, to which is added an appendix of the most remarkable and best authenticated stories of apparitions, dreams, second sight, somnambulism, predictions, divination, witchcraft, vampires, fairies, table-turning, and spirit-rapping, selected by Mary Howitt, is included in Bohn’s Scientific Library. It is an exhaustive, learned and very valuable work.—*Editor*.

In such a work the perception of analogies, the reconciliation of apparent differences, and the final discovery of a common ground for all marvels, was the great desideratum. But this was to be the laborious work of many years; the work of an indefatigable student and logician; of one starting out with a well-matured plan, and slowly and patiently making his way towards its accomplishment.

But this effort of the Princess was a mere groping in the dark amid phantoms, with no guiding star to illumine, and no word of incantation to control.

On the first favorable opportunity I expressed these views very freely and with the utmost candor to Her Highness.

A faint smile for an instant lighted up the sad, pale face of the authoress; but there was no surprise, no shade of vexation at my adverse criticism.

“And how would you proceed in the same inquiry?” she asked.

After advertng briefly to the two methods known to philosophy—the inductive and deductive processes—I remarked that her work thus far had been but a preparation for induction.

“But,” I continued, “I should start out with an hypothesis already formed, and should expect to prove it from your mass of data, eventually, by both methods.”

“Please explain your hypothesis and its grounds,” said she.

“Simply, that in one word is found the true key of all well-authenticated occult phenomena, all so-called miracles; that word is *magnetism*. My grounds are in facts and inferences innumerable, that *point* towards my conclusion.”

“Then you would set up a theory and endeavor to fit your facts to it?” she said, naïvely.

“I would, Your Highness, in certain cases, and especially in *this* case, where a hidden force that has been indicated by the marvels of all ages is suddenly disclosed to full view by a series of experiments which prove, not only its existence, but also its fitness to answer all the requirements needed in the hitherto unknown factor.”

This led to a full discussion of the subject of magnetism, which from my long acquaintance with it, and my peculiar advantages for cultivating and practicing it, I felt competent to present in an entirely new light to Her Highness.

She evinced an eager curiosity, and expressed a desire for some practical demonstration of the power which I could no less than promise to give whenever it might suit Her Highness to witness the experiment.

Up to this time my audiences with the Princess had been short and subject to all sorts of interruptions. Though apparently free from any organized or conscious restraint, she was nevertheless seldom alone; and from what I had observed I could not see how it would be practicable for her to secure, without suspicion, the neces-

sary privacy for a series of experiments in magnetic phenomena; but I did not voice these misgivings at that time.

I had already noticed some slight indications of espionage, but nothing very pronounced as yet.

The rule that no one might enter her apartments unbidden was evidently much relaxed; for certain officials, pages and ladies of her suite, seemed to have an excuse for entering almost at will, and it was said that the Princess herself had done much to break down this and other forms of strict etiquette, by encouraging such freedom, especially at certain hours. Whether or not privacy was possible for her at other hours of the day, I did not as yet know.

Since my installation in the palace I had met the Prince but once, when I came rather suddenly upon him in an alcove of the library. He smiled graciously, and entered into a conversation which was kept up for a few minutes, when he excused himself on the plea of other engagements, and said it would give him much pleasure to be better acquainted with me.

CHAPTER XXI.

A MILITARY REVIEW—THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE BECOMES CONFIDENTIAL.

“The Heart has reasons which Reason does not understand.”
—*Bossuet.*

“My mind is troubled like a fountain stirred;
And I myself see not the bottom of it.”

—*Shakespeare.*

SHORTLY after my interview with the Princess, recorded in the last chapter, I was summoned to attend his Royal Highness the Prince in his cabinet.

He received me graciously, and after some general conversation gave me a special invitation to attend a review of the troops which was to take place on the following

day. Upon my acceptance of the invitation it was arranged that I should report at the head-quarters of General von Wimple-Steifan at a certain hour, and should there be assigned to a place on the royal staff.

About eight miles from the capital was a considerable plain, a portion of which was devoted to grand military reviews, sham battles, and those complicated maneuvers with large bodies of troops for which ample space is required. To this place the royal party repaired at an early hour, and took up quarters in a handsome pavilion occupying a commanding position upon the summit of a hill overlooking the plain. On our way out I rode by the side of the Prince, by special command, and I fancied that His Highness on this occasion took especial pains to show me such marked courtesy as could not escape the observation of any one in the distinguished party, and was calculated to strengthen my footing at his court. A spirited conversation was kept up, and the Prince explained to me that the camp ground we were approaching was once garrisoned by a Roman legion. Our pavilion was built upon the site of an ancient Roman fortification, and in excavating for its foundations some curious pottery and coins had been found which were now to be seen among the treasures of the royal museum. The day was fine, and soon the troops began to form in great numbers upon the plain below. The brilliant and diversified uniforms, the shining steel of arms and helmets, the gorgeous trappings of the horses, the waving plumes and flags flying in every direction formed a scene to strike the imagination; while the animating strains of martial music from several fine regimental bands appealed to the deepest emotions of the heart.

Lieutenant von Elden, in his brilliant uniform of the Royal Guards, was attached to His Highness's retinue, and to him I was indebted for much helpful information in regard to the military maneuvers going on before us. Gen-

eral von Wimple-Steifan, the commander-in-chief of the army, surrounded by a brilliant and very numerous staff, was galloping about the field in all directions with an air of earnestness and anxiety, such as one might look for in a real engagement, where great interests were at stake. In fact, a grand military review in Graffenburg was regarded by all concerned as a very serious affair, and every one, from the commander-in-chief to the newest recruit, seemed to realize the importance of the occasion, and to feel that his personal honor and that of his particular corps was involved in making the affair a complete success.

The Prince was a connoisseur in military matters, and regarded the appearance, equipment and evolutions of his troops with a critical eye. He had lately had under consideration some innovations in the uniform of the infantry; and after much deliberation, and the acquiescence of a council of war, had actually changed the number of buttons upon their coats.

His little military contingent was, in fact, among the best appointed in the empire. No expense was grudged to improve its equipment, no pains spared to perfect its discipline. The latest weapons, new, neat-fitting uniforms, the brightest of steel, the glossiest and most spirited horses, the most efficient artillery—all formed distinctive features of the army of Graffenburg. And now the flower of this army was assembled for one of its great periodical reviews—to crown the labors of the season by an exhibition of its skill in the most complicated evolutions known to modern military tactics.

Inexperienced as I am in military science myself, I will not undertake to interest the reader in a detailed account of the movements of the troops. To my mind, the whole scene left but a confused impression of moving masses of uniformed slaves, responding almost automatically as other slaves touched the springs. But Lieutenant von Elden was eloquent and enthusiastic in his efforts to ex-

plain the strategic principles underlying the various and complicated movements of the troops. His talk was full of military terms, such as concentrics, eccentrics, deploying, enfilading, oblique points, echelons, etc., of which I only half comprehended the meaning. To me it was a confusion compounded of the sounds of bugle, kettle-drum and clarion, the regular strains of bands near and far, the scampering of mounted orderlies hither and thither, amid clouds of dust, and later the charging of cavalry, the booming of artillery, winding up by all the troops falling into line and passing in close order before the pavilion of the Prince for inspection.

At the close of the affair the Prince received the general officers at the pavilion, and all partook of a collation. Von Elden, who sat near me, remarked, *viva voce*, that I was evidently getting on well at Court—was, in fact, obviously a favorite with His Highness.

“On the contrary,” I replied, “I have seen the Prince but seldom, and have had but one or two short conversations with him before to-day.”

Von Elden looked puzzled as he thoughtfully remarked in reply:

“The Prince, or the Prime Minister—which is the same thing—has something in view for you; there is nothing more certain.”

“Why do you think so?” I rejoined.

“Because you have been treated with conspicuous distinction, and in public, which means to all observers, of whatever rank, that you are hereafter to be regarded as a person of consequence, and, I may add, of privilege. I have heard that you sustain a confidential official relation to the Princess, and it is doubtless for this reason, and to avoid all occasion for scandal or gossip, that His Highness has seen fit to indorse you publicly.”

I colored slightly, remarking that I hoped the most malevolent would find nothing in my conduct to justify

anything like scandal in relation to the august Princess, and I could not see wherein I needed the indorsement of the Prince to screen me from suspicion.

"Do not flame up so, good friend; you have a good deal to learn yet about this court. You remember what I told you of the two parties, the patriots and the Austrians?"

"Yes; but I do not see how I am interested in *their* issues," I replied.

"You may not be interested in them, but they are interested in you."

"I don't know why they should be," said I.

"No one can sustain a confidential relation to either of the royal pair without being an object of interest to the partisans, however sincere may be his desire to keep neutral between them; and, besides, it is pretty difficult to remain neutral, for either he will love the one and hate the other, or else he will hate the one and love the other, you see."

"I neither love nor hate," I replied, coldly.

Was Von Elden trying to pump me? thought I, or was he endeavoring to give me a friendly warning? Perhaps he was employed to interpret the events of the day to me; perhaps to pave the way for some kind of overture from the Prince, boding no good to my royal mistress. I secretly resolved to be doubly on my guard towards all points.

The absence of the Princess at the review was not much remarked, as it had been some years since she had taken part in state pageants. Her participation upon such occasions was, therefore, no longer expected, and her absence had come to be regarded as a matter of course.

That evening, upon our return to the palace, I was summoned to her presence in the little boudoir adjoining the library, which up to this time had been our only place of meeting. She seemed agitated, and also embarrassed

by the presence of her French waiting-maid, Nanette, who constantly hovered near us. This girl, whom hitherto I had not taken much notice of, was small, thin, active and neatly dressed, with a shrewd and comely face, an attractive manner, small hands and feet, and soft, refined ways. She was evidently a favorite with her mistress. The Princess, motioning me to a seat, said, with a look and tone of reproach:

“So they dragged you away to their stupid review to-day. Pray, how did you enjoy it?”

“It did not interest me in the least, madam; but might have been rendered more tolerable, and even delightful, by Your Highness’s presence.”

“Well, how complimentary! Really, you may yet become something of a courtier. In time you may even become as false and servile and hypocritical as the rest.”

“I hope not, Princess,” I returned, gravely, reddening slightly.

“Continue to hope, if you hope for heaven; for a baser lot never—”

“Nanette, dear, I think I left my fan in the oratory—fetch it me.”

When the girl was out of hearing she continued, hurriedly, and with great earnestness of manner:

“They are preparing to use you against me. Beware; there is a plot on foot to ruin us both. I will not believe that you would betray me.”

“Betray you? Never.”

“Swear upon this crucifix.”

“I swear never to betray you.”

Then, bending forward across the table, she hurriedly whispered:

“I must see you alone. Nanette will soon return. From the eastern door of the library a corridor leads to the oratory. Secrete yourself there at midnight, and wait in the darkness till I come. The signal of my presence

shall be the whispered word, 'Fidelity;' your answer, 'Till death.'"

"But, Your Highness, a clandestine meeting—with you—under existing circumstances, and the rules of the palace—if detected—"

"Means death to both," she coolly replied.

"Oh, well, if that is all," said I, with an air of indifference, as Nanette appeared at the door. "I thought it might be something serious, you know."

The girl approaching with a graceful courtesy, said she had made a careful search, but had not found the fan.

"Return instantly, my dear, and look again. Search the entire chapel if necessary. That fan was the gift of my sister, who is now in heaven," said the Princess, feelingly.

As the girl retired, Her Highness continued:

"Mistake not my motive, which is such as a woman of honor dare own. While there is some risk, there is not much danger. You will come?"

"Yes, if you command it," I replied, with spirit; "and as to *danger*, please understand it cuts no figure in this case."

She beamed upon me a quick smile of pride and satisfaction, bright, yet cold—like sunshine on mountain-tops—as she murmured, in a firm, low voice:

"I need a friend—one who can look death in the face without flinching."

She extended her hand as a signal that the interview was over. I pressed it gently, lifted it to my lips, and suddenly impressed a kiss upon it—fervent and fiery, like the lava of volcanoes. It was impulse made action. This liberty was unprecedented in our intercourse, and bold even to rashness. It savored of familiarity, of taking a mean advantage of the situation, to assume a license otherwise unwarrantable; but as our eyes met, and I read the expression of those glowing, wondrous orbs of the

Princess, I knew that her lofty soul had not misinterpreted me. She had allowed for the exaltation of the moment and the spontaneity of the act, which was one of homage to beauty in distress.

I withdrew to the library, which I was privileged to visit at any and all hours, and there in an alcove gave myself up to reflection. There was an open book before me, in case of a surprise; but my thoughts were far away and occupied with that far more wonderful and entertaining work in which I had just come upon a new and startling paragraph, the commencement of a new chapter which might be full of delightful mysteries. I mean the book of human nature, as exemplified in the charming person of the Princess Charlotte. For the first time since I had parted from my dear, innocent Eloise, I found myself interested in a woman. Was *I* in love? I dared not acknowledge that. To yield one's self to this passion is almost fatal to the hopes of the aspiring adept. Does the mystic never love, then? the reader may ask; and I reply: Within the limits of permission, yes. The magus may love as we love a flower, a gem, a beautiful scene, music; but he can not yield himself wholly to the passion. He must be its master, and not its slave. He must keep himself above it, and the passion under his feet. In other words, the adept must never permit himself to think that any one woman is indispensable to his happiness.

Nothing merely temporal, nothing merely mortal, is indispensable to the true hermetic philosopher. We are taught, as was held by Kircher, that "love in its ordinary sense is a kind of fever." Perhaps few sayings contain more wisdom in the same space. Love is indeed a kind of fever, and has many of the characteristics common to other fevers. Like them, it is an abnormal state of the system, marked by increased heat, acceleration of the pulse, and a general derangement of the functions; but what is more important to know is this: it may be pre-

vented. By watching certain premonitory symptoms, and acting promptly, the disease itself may be aborted, its course checked, and the patient restored with but slight annoyance, instead of the painful and dangerous shock to the system which is otherwise inevitable. One of our leading authorities in occultism has said:

“He only is fit for the pleasures of love who has conquered the love of pleasure.”

To yield to love is to become a slave to the passion—nay, too often one becomes a slave to the very *object* of the passion. A shadow of a shadow overshadows us and dominates our God-given will—that *will* which, to those who are masters of it, is capable of transforming a pain into a pleasure.

Such were my reflections as the hours wore slowly away that brought nearer and nearer the moment of that adventurous meeting. I tried again and again to analyze my feelings, to cross-examine myself as to this woman. I had to own a certain attraction towards her, a strong sympathy, some admiration, and finally a fascination, less on account of the woman herself than for her exalted station and the mystery of her yet unfathomed character. I persuaded myself that there was a strong element of curiosity which went to make up the strange interest I felt in the Princess. I flattered myself that though on the extreme verge of mental independence, I was as yet free from the domination of Love.

It is thus that Reason sometimes offers to the Soul excuses for the Heart.

CHAPTER XXII.

THRILLING MIDNIGHT ADVENTURE WITH A DAUGHTER OF THE CÆSARS—NEW THINGS IN HYPNOTISM.

“The choice of examples is far more important than their number; a few truths completely unfolded, throw more light upon the system than a greater number of theories which are partially discussed.”—*La Croix*.

MIDNIGHT approaches. All is still in this part of the great building. I proceed noiselessly to the eastern door, out into the corridor, which I find dimly lighted. It is a narrow hall branching off from one of the main corridors of this wing of the palace. It conducts me to the great chapel, which is the private place of worship of the reigning family. As I creep along cautiously, I hear the footfalls of some night-watchman in the distance. I am aware that sentinels patrol these halls and corridors, at regular intervals all night, so I hasten my steps and enter the door of the chapel. Here all is dense darkness, and the stillness of death prevails. I can hear the beating of my heart. After waiting what seems a long time, I hear what appears to be the opening of a distant door. The lightest of footsteps are approaching—nearer; I feel the slight motion of the air; I hear the rustle of skirts, and suddenly, with awful distinctness, the whispered word, “Fidelity.” I reply, in a whisper, “Till death.” Instantly the light from a dark-lantern was released by a slide, and a weird

scene presented itself to my eyes. The Princess, arrayed in black, with a thick veil thrown away from her face, lantern in hand, stood before me. Her glowing, luminous eyes shone wildly from a face of ashy paleness. Never did a living creature seem more like a visitant from the tomb. She gracefully made a gesture of salutation by touching her forehead in a peculiar way, then glided to the door by which I had entered, and softly bolted it. She motioned me to follow her. We were in a small room with high ceiling, its walls hung with pictures of saints. Toward one side was an altar in antique marble, backed by statues of the Virgin and Child, and richly ornamented with gems. Around us the paraphernalia of a shrine. I almost stumbled into a silver font containing holy water. The Princess glided behind some drapery, and feeling along the richly carved panels of the ancient wainscoting, suddenly touched a spring which snapped—rather too loudly I thought. The woodwork swung open upon its concealed hinges and disclosed an iron door, to which the Princess applied a large key of ancient fashion, but bright and new as though made yesterday. The bolts moved with a little creak. She paused and pushed the slide of the lantern over the light. We listened intently to find if the noise had attracted any attention, but heard nothing.

“There is but little danger,” she whispered. “We are at considerable distance from the beat of the sentry; the chapel doors are fast, and no one enters here at night. Now follow me to the domain of the dead.”

We descended by a narrow stone stair-way and landed far down, where a cluster of arches sprung from the stone floor to high above our heads in the darkness. She led the way to the right, over the damp pavement, and drawing another key from her girdle, unlocked an iron gate in front of which was a low-arched door fastened with a padlock, which had the appearance of once having been sealed, for strips of parchment to which particles of red

wax still adhered were hanging about it. This door opened into an octagonal chamber with marble floor and lofty ceiling. The latter was elaborately carved with allegorical subjects emblematic of death. From the center hung a chandelier of silver, with numerous wax candles in the sockets. She lighted these, and the walls reflected back the light from many colored mosaics, which were worked in beautiful designs and embellished with ornamentation of gold and precious stones. All around us in deep niches in the walls were the coffins of the departed members of the reigning house of Graffenburg. Some of the older coffins were of stone, but there were others of iron, copper, lead, etc., besides many of costly woods, richly carved.

"This is a much-neglected apartment, but will serve my purpose," said the Princess, speaking aloud for the first time.

The words came to me in hollow tones, and went echoing along the gloomy arches till they died away in the darkness. She closed the door to shut out the gloomy vista of the retreating vaulted ceilings and dark archways.

"Death and its concomitants we are apt to neglect, but he never neglects us," I replied.

"Here we are at last quite safe from all eavesdropping," resumed the Princess. "You are doubtless surprised that I should conduct you to this gloomy apartment, or to any place, at this hour" (here she colored slightly); "but it is the only available spot where we can be secure from interference. I am here in the interest of science. You have promised to instruct me in hypnotism. It was my duty to provide the opportunity, it is yours to keep your word. There is no time to lose. I wish to be thrown into the trance state; and forget not that I am a princess of Austria, and the daughter of an emperor!"

"It is enough if I remember that you are a woman,

protected only by your virtue and the honor of an American gentleman," I replied, gravely.

I motioned her to a seat on an ancient sarcophagus near us, where the light shone full on her face. I had greatly improved since the days of Eloise and Estelle, but here was no easy subject.

I suggested to Her Highness an easy, restful position which could be maintained without discomfort for several minutes. I requested her to place her right thumb upon the left wrist, and commence counting at the same time, counting each beat of the pulse, and dismissing every other thought from her mind. I walked to and fro for about ten paces before her, passing her about once a minute; when immediately opposite the subject, I passed my hands three or four times vigorously downward over her head and face. This process I kept up for five minutes, when I seized her by both hands, one in each, in such manner as to enable me to press my thumb steadily and firmly into the palms of her hands near the root of the thumb. I now requested her to look me steadily in the eyes. I withdrew my right hand from her left, retaining her right. I then said, stercly:

"I intend to close your eyes so that it will be absolutely impossible for you to open them."

Then with my right hand I made a few passes over her face, ending by placing my hand, with the thumb firmly resting upon the lower part of her forehead, just between the eyes, the fingers resting upon the top of the head. I now requested her to close her eyes; then pressing with my right thumb upon her forehead, and with my left the palm of her hand, I said, in an emphatic tone:

"Your eyes are closed fast, and you can not open them!"

As she failed to open her eyes, I knew the operation was thus far successful.

I now removed both my hands from all contact with the

subject, and requested her to interlock her fingers; then, making two or three passes over her face, I said, with positiveness of tone:

"Your hands are fast, and you can not open them!"

Again successful, I made an upward pass over her face, and said, softly:

"Now you can open your hands."

I now requested her to arise, and as she did so I said:

"I now propose to make you perfectly rigid, so that you can not move a muscle in your body."

Then making a few passes over her face, I said, in a firm tone:

"You have lost the power of motion; it is impossible for you to move!"

This was the fact. The marble statues that looked down upon us from their niches in the wall were not more rigid than her limbs at this moment.

I now made an upward pass.

"Now you may resume your seat."

Whereupon she sank gracefully upon her seat.

Thus far only the muscular effects had been tested; the first stage only had been passed. I now proceeded to the mental tests, and caused the Princess to forget her own name. I occupied but little time with the hallucination tests, finding my control complete.

The second stage passed, I proceeded to operate upon the sensory nerves, causing numbness and temporary insensibility of the right arm. The subject did not wince at the prick of a needle. Third stage passed.*

* Up to this point the author has here presented the latest and most approved methods known to the best authorities on hypnotism; and, contrary to his usual custom, has given it in detail. The process, as above set forth, may be easily tested, and if followed *minutely*, can not fail of satisfactory results. I have often tried it myself with complete success. I paid a French adept a considerable sum for this secret, which is all comprehended in the above narrative. In his zeal for scientific accuracy, in this case,

our author seems to have forgotten his habitual reserve, and has here revealed freely to the world what physicians and scientists have lately thought best to conceal from the general public. The reader is cautioned not to tamper with this process without the preparatory knowledge which comes of a mastery of the subject of animal magnetism, with a thorough course in physiology and therapeutics. No good results from it are otherwise attainable; and the operation, in ignorant or unscrupulous hands, is fraught with some dangers, and open to objections which will be obvious to the thoughtful student. Fortunately (except in very rare cases) no one need be the victim of this art against his will. In hypnotism, pure and simple, it is absolutely essential that the subject yield a willing obedience, *in the first instance.*—*Editor.*

Resuming the mental tests, with a view of disclosing any latent clairvoyant powers in my subject, I accidentally came upon an important discovery. From the body of the Princess I observed the outlines of another, or duplicate form, being slowly evolved. The new outlines were snow white, and formed an exact counterpart of the body. It seemed to proceed out of the body, and afterwards to hover near it. I was greatly alarmed, and should doubtless have been overcome with terror, but for the power of the Pentagram which I wore upon my person. Tearing the particle from my bosom, I pronounced the awful name of the presiding genius of the air, and besought light upon the strange phenomena going on before me, when suddenly it was given me to know that the white form was the interior substantial part—the soul, which never dies. I am particular to say the “substantial part,” to prevent any false inference which might arise in the reader’s mind from the shadowy nature of the new body. But I was especially given to understand that the interior man is the substantial person; and the exterior body the unsubstantial. It seems that in this case the connection between the soul and the body was unusually weak and feeble; so that by a slight impulse from either within or without, the soul of the Princess might be detached or separated from the body, the latter remaining uncon-

sconscious, though still performing some of the involuntary functions of life. I knew this was possible in some cases, but had never before seen an example of it. Swedenborg was able to go out of his own body at times, returning at will to resume its occupancy. The same is related of Pythagoras, Appolonius of Tyana, and a few others.

I now addressed myself to the disembodied spirit, and (thanks to my long training in Theosophy) was able to do so with success. In this state the apparition is incapable of making a sound, but can make itself understood to the intuitional powers of the operator. The whole interior of the mind of the Princess was diaphanous, and clearly visible to my spiritual vision.

I had no time for the retrospective process, illustrated in a former chapter, but curiosity led me to try the experiment of sending the spirit upon a mission. I therefore requested the Princess to go to the apartments of Prince Karl, and find out and report what was taking place there at that moment.

I had learned incidentally that the Prince and some of his confidential advisers were in the habit of consulting together late at night, frequently protracting their conferences until daylight, when they would take their repose till near noon.

The spirit immediately brought to view this vision:

Scene: An apartment of the palace. Present the Prince, the Prime Minister Ebleman, and Dr. von Bleisenbach, all sitting around a table upon which are papers, writing materials, pipes, tobacco, a bottle of wine, and glasses from which the councilors occasionally sip.

There is a pause, broken by the Prince, who says, addressing Dr. Bleisenbach:

“And this girl Nanette, think you she is reliable? Is it not possible that she may betray you to the Princess, or at least put her mistress upon her guard?”

“Quite possible, Your Highness, without doubt. She

is French, and the little devil is capable of anything; but thus far her reports are confirmed by other testimonies."

"And she reports nothing in the way of conjuration of spirits? no incantations or rites that might be construed as sorcery? no secret interviews between the charlatan and Her Highness? nothing as yet suspicious in their intercourse?" mused the Prince.

"Pardon, Your Highness," explained the doctor; "up to last evening such was the case, but yesterday evening, after the review, she sent for the American and acted strangely. The conversation could not be overheard, as she sent Nanette to the oratory on some fool's errand, presumably to get her out of hearing. She, returning, finds them conversing in low tones. Her mistress sent her away the second time, but when she returned the man had gone."

"Depend upon it, Nanette either can not or will not tell it all," resumed the Prince.

"Give them plenty of rope, and see if they do not hang themselves," broke in Ebleman from behind clouds of curling tobacco smoke, which he paused to blow in the air.

This remark seemed to inspire the Prince with a new idea, which he advanced with eagerness:

"That's it, doctor; we must give them more opportunity. Hitherto our mistake has been in watching them too closely. Instruct Nanette to keep herself out of the way more when they are together—ay, let her even ask permission to retire. We must give this happy pair at least a chance to get acquainted, eh, Ebleman?"

"By all means, Your Highness. It is a most weighty suggestion of Your Highness to put them off their guard until the intimacy becomes habitual, and then entrap them in their wickedness, suddenly and unexpectedly."

[It was thus that the Prime Minister was in the habit of insinuating his advice upon his master. He usually led up to a point by some hint, and the Prince would seize the

suggestion and present it as his own. His Highness even fancied that it *was* his own, and of course stood committed to the measure without the trouble of any argument or persuasion on the part of his minister. This method of winding his way into approval had long been habitual with the crafty minister, and no man knew how to use it more skillfully. He had made a study of the mind of his chief, and could divine its movements and tendencies. He could almost predict what the Prince would decide upon in any given contingency. There was a double advantage in this way, for if the measure succeeded, it was creditable to his policy as Prime Minister; if it failed, it reflected partly upon the Prince, who had formulated and advanced it. Besides, it flattered the self-love of the Prince at the moment, by decoying him into the belief that he had originated the measure which was really due to the more fertile and inventive mind of his councillor.]

“Very well, Your Highness,” replied the doctor; “your commands shall be obeyed; and it is understood that our surveillance shall be modified, or rather, entirely suspended, for, say, two weeks?”

The Prince looked up to the Prime Minister for his approval.

“Well, yes, we will say two weeks, to carry out the idea of Your Highness. It may, of course, be necessary to extend the time; but let us see what a fortnight will bring forth. By that time we may look for secret meetings, and afterward we may redouble our vigilance,” replied the minister.

The Prince now spoke of the incidents of the day’s military review, from which I inferred that the domestic plot had been dismissed from further consideration for the present; and being under some anxiety to see the Princess restored again to her normal condition, I summoned the shadowy spirit form, and solemnly adjured it to resume

the body of the Princess. Here a new difficulty presented itself. The spirit form approached the reclining body of the Princess, but either could not or would not re-enter it. I was given to understand from my attendant spirit that the soul thus disengaged from its mortal tenement is averse to re-entering it, and has a tendency to yield to the attractions of the spiritual zone, which exists above the earth just outside our atmosphere. This accounts partially for the difficulty experienced in resuscitating a drowning person. In drowning, the spirit is quickly disengaged, and the body, though capable of resuscitation, has passed through all but the very last stage of dissolution. I was at a loss how to proceed, and moreover greatly alarmed at the situation, for I was aware that every moment added to the danger that the disembodied soul might escape beyond my control and fly away to the region of departed spirits. In that case the Princess would, of course, never awaken from the breathless trance in which she now reposed. Perhaps it was already too late. Horrible thought! She might even now be numbered with the dead. I was in an agony of remorse and terror.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AT DEATH'S DOOR—WAS IT A DREAM-LIKE REALITY, OR A REALITY LIKE A DREAM?

“The somnambulistic state is, therefore, extremely dangerous, because by blending the phenomena of the waking state with those of sleep, it constitutes a sort of digression between the two worlds. The soul agitating the springs of individual life, while plunged in the universal life, experiences an inexpressible happiness, and would willingly loosen the nervous cords which keep it suspended above the current. If the will should plunge therein by an impassioned effort, or even abandon itself entirely therein, the subject may die.”
—*Levy.*

“But learn thyself to triumph over fear by wisdom, and spirits will come down out of heaven to serve thee. I, Solomon, thy father, King of Israel and Palmyra, have sought and obtained for my portion the holy Chocmah, which is the wisdom of Adonai. And I have become the king of spirits both of heaven and of earth, the master of the powers of the air and the living souls in the sea, because I possess the key of the Secret Gates of Light.”—*Reputed Clavicle of Solomon, addressed to his son, Rehoboam, from an ancient Hebrew manuscript.*

I EXERTED all the power of will at my command and succeeded in arresting the phantom and holding it near the body. I then invoked the aid of certain potent spirits; but, alas! I had no paraphernalia with which to conduct the incantation ceremonies, no magic sword to hold the turbulent spirits in subjection, no magic wand to rule the aerial genii. In my despair I wished myself dead, and even contemplated suicide. I felt in some degree responsible for the death of the Princess. I would die with her, I thought, and hand in hand our souls might take their flight to the world of spirits. This thought inspired me

with the courage of desperation. I called upon the mightiest names in the universe; I spoke the awful words that even the greatest masters hesitate to utter, when fortified by all the precautions known to the magical art. The sepulchral apartment seemed to swarm with ill-defined and dreadful forms. I felt my breath leaving me, when suddenly I heard the voice of my Asiatic tutor softly murmur, "Peace." In a moment all was still, and my courage seemed restored. I beheld at some distance the tall, familiar form of the Master of the Brotherhood. There was a look of reproach, almost a frown, upon his face.

"Peace, rash son of the West! What hast thou done? Knowest thou not that the utmost limit of safety has been reached? Venture not to invoke without thy magic rod and sword, and the altar of perfumes. But for my timely help thou wert lost, as well as the royal lady."

"Oh, master, save her!" I implored.

He waved his hand for silence, and approaching the Princess, he muttered a few words in the mystic language of the Brahmin priesthood; then breathing seven times upon the form, and touching the reclining body of the Princess with the magic staff, he called loudly upon Adonai to restore her. The spirit form seemed to dissolve, and disappeared from view. Slowly signs of animation reappeared in the face of the Princess. She gasped, breathed, spasmodically at first, but soon more regularly.

"Thank God, she lives!" I murmured.

I looked up to thank the Brahmin, but he was gone.

The Princess was sleeping calmly. The light of the candles blazing from the silver chandelier reflected back from the richly ornamented coffins of the princely dead, which reposed upon shelves around us. Ghostly shadows flitted about the walls and across the distant columns and archways. I experienced a feeling of sudden awakening as from a dream. I had evidently swooned away under

the influence of the awe inspired by the weird scene, had been unconscious for some time, and was now but just recovering, having relapsed into a fearful dream, whose climax of terror had awakened me. It was then all a dream—the soul transference, the council chamber vision, the restoration of the soul to the body, the Brahmin and all. Was it all a mere hallucination which I had interpreted as a new and startling psychological phenomena? Surely I thought there must be some significance to all this. But time was passing, and it behooved us to return in season to the upper air. I therefore recalled the Princess to consciousness by a few upward passes.

I did not relate to her what had happened me while she lay wrapped in the magnetic slumber. Certain scruples stood in the way. I was fearful of shocking her gentle nature and adding to the griefs and apprehensions which already weighed down that delicate organization. Besides, why should she be annoyed about a mere chimera of the mind? Then the council scene and the implied conspiracy—I surely had no right to tell her of that, because it was not only indelicately suggestive of our relations, but it involved other people who might be innocent of all evil intention toward us.

“Ah, no!” thought I. “It may be a warning, and as such I will bear it in mind; but it shall rest with me alone. We ascended the damp stair-way and gained a higher level, which proved to be the vast cellarage of the more ancient part of the building. The castle had been built in the side of a hill, and now formed the rear and part of the left wing of the modern palace. The Princess appeared entirely conversant with all its rambling passages, which to me seemed bewildering. She led the way to what appeared to be a main corridor, which we followed for some distance; then turning sharply to the right, we found ourselves in a long, narrow passage, which conducted to a stair-way; up this we climbed, and the Princess ap-

proached a little door that opened into a deserted summer-house, almost hidden by dense shrubbery. We emerged into a park. The morning stars quivered in the motionless air. A deep silence pervaded the place.

"We are now in the most unfrequented part of the palace grounds," spoke the Princess. "I thought it not best to return as we came, by the chapel, and have availed myself of an ancient secret way which I once discovered by a happy accident. It has been unused for generations, and is now unknown, I believe, to the present authorities of the palace. Here we must part. Follow this avenue, which will lead you to the western gate, and this key opens the wicket door, when you will find yourself on the ancient Roman Strasse. Your absence from the palace will not, of course, be noticed, as it will be thought you have spent the night with a friend in the city."

"Has Your Highness any remembrance of what seemed to occur to your consciousness when in the magnetic sleep?" I ventured to ask.

"Oh! I have had such a *beautiful* experience," she replied, with enthusiasm. "I am now conscious of new powers and increased susceptibilities for happiness. I am entering on a new phase of existence. Why, I am capable of leaving the body and floating away into the blue ether of space."

She looked grand in her enthusiasm; her glowing eyes flashed in the early morning light; her whole impassioned nature seemed expanding and impatient to burst the bonds of physical control, and soar away among the stars.

With a gesture of farewell she left me, and her graceful figure glided away through the shrubbery in the direction of the palace.

"Strange and beautiful creature!" I murmured to myself as she disappeared. "To what are you leading yourself and me? A prison or the scaffold, perhaps. Do I love

you? No. I am simply interested. I will study you as one would a book," said my inner self.

I wandered about the old town through the early morning, and returned leisurely to my lodgings in time for breakfast, which was always served in my apartments by my faithful Swiss valet, who had been allotted to my service by the Princess from the day of my installment in the palace. No one appeared to have noticed my absence during the night. I often took long rambles before breakfast, and in the great hive of a palace the movements of an insignificant inmate passes unnoticed in the throng. Every one is absorbed in his own affairs, and intent upon the punctual performance of those special duties assigned him.

The rules and regulations of this great household were strict; yet within certain limits, and for one circumstance as I was, there was considerable liberty of action. I was, in fact, more like a guest at a great hotel than anything else I can think of; but my employment upon the literary staff of the Princess gave me a certain prestige and privilege out of all proportion to my nominal rank in the household; which latter, as I learned afterwards, was about the same as that of an upper servant.

My mind was greatly disturbed by the events of the night. I could not think of anything else. I threw myself upon my couch, but could not sleep. The beautiful Princess was constantly present. Was she indeed verging upon insanity? as some of her detractors alleged. Nothing that I had seen in her previous conduct or conversation indicated any mental weakness, but rather the reverse. Eccentric she undoubtedly was; devoted to science, I was willing to allow; imprudent, certainly, in the matter of last night's adventure—a thing perhaps reprehensible; but it was impossible for me to consider her conduct in the light of a moral obliquity. It seemed hard to condemn this woman, who was simply indiscreet, where all

around was baseness and undisguised sensuality. The licentiousness of this court was proverbial. The *liaisons* of the Prince were notorious, and his gallantries were carried on with all manner of women, from duchesses with sixteen quarterings to milkmaids and kitchen-girls. In such an atmosphere of sensuality this hot-house flower was expected to remain untainted, pure and immaculate. Hired minions dogged her footsteps to obtain some clew that might be used to blast her reputation and serve the purposes of her enemies, in the front rank of whom stood her faithless husband.

All these things might well have elicited sympathy from even a sterner nature than mine. I tried to convince myself that it was sympathy alone which caused me to feel an interest in her. All that day my thoughts centered upon the unhappy woman, nor could I divert them to other subjects. I seemed under a spell; impatient for the next interview, and yet nervously apprehensive for its results. I reflected upon every look, action and word that had passed between us on the previous night. I reproached myself for want of tact and delicacy. I was at times fearful of having made a bad impression. Had I not been bold and presumptuous at first, and afterwards awkward and stupidly silent, when I might have been vivacious and entertaining? But why all this anxiety, since I am not in love?

And why was I irresistibly impelled to dash off the following impromptu, which came to me like the wail of a soul in agony? (*Alas! my own soul!*)

OH, LOVE! THOU ART THE ONLY THING.

I.

Oh, Love, and Youth, and Hope, and Song,
Of ye I dream—to ye I sing;
A sad farewell to all, and long.
Oh, Love! thou art the only thing.

II.

Last night I dreamt I was still young,
 My life yet in its glorious Spring;
 But Morning all my heart-strings wrung;
 (*She* loves me not); the only thing.

III.

Talk not to me of riper years,
 Which honors, fame, and riches bring,
 (They also bring their griefs and tears);
 Oh, Love! thou art the only thing.

IV.

"The only thing;" yet thing of care—
 (For she may die). The wedding-ring
 Oft proves a hamper and a snare
 To stifle love; the only thing.

V.

O, kindly Death! I welcome thee;
 Thy friendly mantle o'er me fling;
 For what is life to one like me,
 Bereft of love? *The only thing.*

[Oh, transcendent woman! Before thy power the maxims of philosophy, the deductions of logic, and the terrors of laws, are alike futile and inoperative. Altar fires pale before the diviner sparks emitted from thine eyes, and the greatest triumphs of magic ever achieved on earth were done by thy beauty, with Love for the magician!]

CHAPTER XXIV.

AT THE CRISIS OF FATE.

“Every desire, however innocent, grows dangerous, as by long indulgence it becomes ascendant in the mind. When we have been much accustomed to consider anything as capable of giving happiness, it is not easy to refrain our ardor, or to forbear some precipitation in our advances and irregularity in our pursuits.”—*Dr. Johnson.*

I WAS not summoned to attend Her Highness until the next afternoon. I approached her apartment, trembling with suppressed anxiety. How could I meet her whom I had weakly indulged in a whim that must have compromised her in her own estimation? And yet I had not even remonstrated when she suggested the secret meeting. Perhaps she was not entirely responsible for the act, and I was too ready to aid and abet in a proceeding which, if not actually criminal, was certainly censurable and indefensible, according to the received code of morals and proprieties. What would she now think of me if, haply, the enormity of our act should present itself to her moral sensibilities in a moment of coolness and lucidity? Would she not justly reproach me for not having evinced the moral courage required to discountenance an act which was unworthy of her sex and position?

But all such reflections were set at rest as soon as I was face to face with the Princess. I found her calm and dignified as usual; nothing to indicate the slightest embarrassment, or the consciousness of having done anything im-

proper. She welcomed me as usual with that smile of strange fascination. I saw at once how it was that I had so easily fallen in with her proposition; how impossible it would be for me to refuse her anything!

I was bound to her by some powerful attraction. I was under a temporary fascination impossible to resist.

As I entered, Nanette came up in the most natural manner, and asked permission to retire with the only other maid present to the conservatory, within easy call.

The Princess graciously assented, adding: "I shall not need you for an hour, probably, but if I do I will call you."

"Now, Doctor Zell, quick! do not lose a minute. I long to be again in that delicious state which seems to exemplify the death of the grosser part of our nature, and the life of the ethereal element. It is what I have dreamed of and despaired of ever finding on this earth. It is death in life, and life in death."

"But surely Your Highness had heard of mesmerism before; nay, perhaps had seen it practiced," I ventured.

"I had read of it, but thought it charlatanism; and as to seeing it practiced, you must know that would never be allowed me. These experiments must never be known. But proceed—and then, after I am asleep, you had better withdraw from the room."

She reclined upon the silk-embroidered divan; a few passes, and she was like one dead. I silently left her to her repose, retiring to the adjoining library.

Every afternoon for several days she insisted upon being put to sleep. I suspected at the time, what afterwards proved true, that she was suffering from some severe nervous malady, and desired the magnetic treatment for the relief she experienced from it. At first, and for several days, I left her to awaken naturally from the sleep thus induced; but as she became more and more susceptible to the influence, her slumbers gradually became prolonged,

and sometimes extended into the night. This alarmed her attendants, and attracted attention, causing some comment. Nanette whispered to the German maid of honor that the American doctor was drugging her mistress with opiates, and the latter took it upon herself to caution the Princess about the dangerous habit she was indulging herself in, and delicately urged her to consult the Court physicians. The Princess assured her that such fears were groundless. "She was never better. These afternoon slumbers were just what she had long needed. As a matter of fact, she was improving in health, and was stronger than she had been for years, and entirely free from pain. The distressing headaches had vanished. She awoke refreshed, invigorated, buoyant in spirits, and her morning hours were enjoyed with a zest and gayety unknown since the bright days of her girlhood." All this the Princess impressed upon the mind of the faithful Fraulein von Wimple-Steifan, ending with a strict command to say nothing about it to any one, and to remember that Dr. Zell was a physician of note in his own country, and came vouched for by the highest authorities in the world. She declared she would have no other physician, and she enjoined upon all her immediate female attendants to "send quietly for the American," if anything unusual should occur to her at any time.

As day by day she subjected herself to the mysterious influence, so the periods of her unconsciousness were prolonged. Her sleep, though more easily induced, became sounder; and on one occasion she slept continuously for nearly thirty-three hours, when Nanette, becoming alarmed, sent for me.

It was after midnight when a page rapped at my door and delivered a brief note from Nanette, summoning me to the bedside of Her Highness.

I was ushered into the sleeping apartment of the Princess, and found her reclining upon a magnificent state bed,

beneath a gold-embroidered canopy. She was in a deep, trance-like slumber, and it seemed as though the very breath had almost left the body, so feebly was the act of respiration going on.

"She has been sleeping, sir, since yesterday afternoon, and, as usual, she left strict orders that no one should awaken her; but fearing something wrong, I ventured to call you," said Nanette, with some agitation of manner.

Thinking it prudent to get rid of the girl for a few minutes, while the operation of recalling the patient was going on, I sent her away on the pretext of requiring the Princess's bath to be got ready, at the same time cautioning her to raise no alarm, but to let all be done quietly, assuring her that her mistress was in no danger. As she slipped away upon her errand, I tried the usual methods of awakening upon the patient, by upward passes and calling her name; but to my horror and amazement, found all ordinary means ineffectual to recall her to consciousness. I was now thoroughly alarmed, knowing that the condition of the Princess must soon attract general attention. Doubtless the best way would be to leave her to sleep on for some hours longer, with occasional efforts to arouse her; but that would be dangerous. If she did not awaken by morning, the entire Court circle would know of it; the Court physicians would be summoned; the Prince himself would be apprised of her condition, and my complicity in the affair could not be long concealed. The doctors, mistaking the nature of the case, might kill the Princess by their blunders, and I should be blamed. Blamed! ah, that is too mild a term. I should be censured, nay, condemned, and liable to be held accountable for her death. Even now I was placing my life in jeopardy by the very act of coming into the bed-chamber of the Princess. To do so without the authority of the Prince, at this hour, and in the capacity of a physician, when not duly authorized by letters patent, was, under all the rules and regulations of

the royal household, a capital offense. Yes, if surprised there by any one in authority, I was a lost man. For far less men had been immured in noisome dungeons for life, there to undergo the misery of a thousand deaths. I realized the danger, but did not yield to the fear of it, though I confess the cold chills crept over me as never before. Instantly there flashed into my mind the scene of my vision in the crypt beneath the great chapel. What if that dream foreshadowed the truth? What if the conspirators should seize this opportunity to surprise us? The Prince himself might arrive at any moment. I sprung for the bell wires, and by the help of my Yankee pocket-knife, which contained a dozen little tools in combination, I severed the wire. This would prevent them from summoning aid, and I might contrive to deal with whoever should come singly. Meanwhile Nanette was liable to return at any moment. How could I manage her? How pacify and reassure the maid, so as to prevent her from giving an alarm and summoning other aid?

I had no time to devise any plan, for even now I hear her footsteps in the hall. Stealthily she approaches the door. I was at that instant bending over the bed of the Princess, my ear to her heart, to catch its faint pulsations. The door opens softly, and I turned to behold—not the dainty figure of Nanette, but the commanding form of Prince Karl!

CHAPTER XXV.

IN DEADLY PERIL—THE UNPRECEDENTED SUGGESTION.

“Desperate courage makes one a majority.”—*Gen. Andrew Jackson.*

FOR an instant he paused and regarded me in silence, a dark frown overshadowing his face. His hand—as though instinctively—sought the hilt of his sword.

I drew back and confronted him. I was indeed surprised, and in a most compromising situation. My worst apprehensions seemed about to be realized. I felt faint; all my blood seemed rushing to my heart. I faced the Prince with the courage of despair.

He broke the silence, speaking coldly and calmly, while a sinister smile played over his features:

“You seem quite at home here, Mr. Secretary.”

“I am at home anywhere that Duty calls me, Your Highness. I was but just summoned here by the Princess’s attendant. Her Highness, it seems, thought proper to leave orders to have me called professionally should she fall ill. I find the Princess in a trance from which she may soon, I trust, be awakened, if the case is left in my hands.”

“Yes, yes,” growled the Prince, moving further into the room, and his eyes seeking the bell-knob, a few paces distant.

Now, to my consternation I noticed that the bell-button which he had his eyes upon was not the one which I had just disconnected. From where I stood I could distinctly

read upon the little silver shield surrounding the button the word "*garde.*" There were two bells, then; one communicating with the servants, probably, and another with the guard chamber, where a small detachment of the royal body-guardsmen were always on duty. I realized the mortal danger of the moment; for if he touched that button the room would in three minutes be filled with armed men; I should be overpowered—should disappear forever from the light and liberty of the moving world; I should never more be seen among men.

He was between me and the fatal button; he was armed; his manner sufficiently indicated that he was relentless, and would listen to no explanation. There was but one thing to do: to stop his progress and fix his attention, without arousing his suspicions.

Assuming an air of calmness and self-possession, I beckoned the Prince to the bedside of his wife, at the same time moving a little toward the fatal bell. Confident in his sense of security, the Prince allowed himself to be diverted for a moment from his purpose, but he was now almost within reach of the bell.

"You have great assurance, stranger," spoke the Prince, with much hauteur in his tone. "I wonder if you would be so cool if you knew the fate which awaits you?"

I looked into his eyes fixedly; I concentrated in that look all the power that nature and art had given me. The last words of his speech were uttered with a certain dreamy indistinctness.

"What fate, sire? To what do you refer?" said I, without moving my eyes from his.

"You die to-morrow morning at sunrise," said he, with icy calmness, while the saturnine smile still lighted grimly his stern face.

I made no answer; my look was fastened with desperate intensity upon those stolid blue eyes. I determined that he should be transfixed to the spot. To divert his atten-

tion, I exclaimed, raising my open hands: "Hold, merciful Prince! listen to my explanation!"

"I know enough," said he, hastily.

I made a feint as though to kneel at his feet, but instead I drew quickly from my vest pocket a small vial. Then gaining an erect attitude, at the same time placing myself a little more towards the bell, and between that object and the Prince, I said impressively, without taking my eyes from his:

"Do not move, sire. To move is death to us all. This vial contains a liquid explosive as yet unknown to your chemists. If I but drop it to the floor, we are hurled to eternity. If you move or raise any alarm, I will use it!"

He gazed at me incredulously, but there was that in my look that convinced him of my earnestness. He was now very pale, though calm. He in turn was surprised. He evidently thought it best to temporize. I pointed to a chair near the couch of the Princess.

"Be seated, sire. You are used to command, but for once you must obey."

He moved to the seat doggedly. At this point he thought me a lunatic whom it would be wise to humor till help came.

I quickly moved to the door and turned the key, deftly removing the stopper from the vial as I turned.

"Madman!" muttered the Prince, his hand on his sword.

With my thumb over the mouth of the vial, I walked rapidly towards him, with the same fixed gaze. When within five feet of him I released the volatile contents of the bottle, which, mixing with the air, diffused a soothing, pleasant odor, and filled the space in front of the Prince with a fine, mist-like vapor. He could no longer see me. He was spell-bound to the spot. To his senses I had vanished, and in my place a thousand weird, fantastic shapes appeared.

The Prince was no coward, but he was superstitious. He looked about him with a confused air, and tried in vain to rise to his feet.

"Holy Virgin!" he ejaculated, in a hoarse whisper, "save me from the sorcerer!"

I now approached, and with an air of concern, exclaimed:

"Great heavens! Your Highness is ill. Alas! you are paralyzed—you can not move!"

He tried to speak, but could not utter a word. He looked pitiful in his terror and helplessness.

I knew his condition of bewilderment was due to the effects of the volatile drug, and would soon pass off. I was at a loss what next to do. Escape from the palace was possible for me, but successful flight was clearly impracticable. The Prince would soon recover; I should be apprehended by his vigilant police before I could reach the environs of the capital. Besides, I could not think of forsaking the unfortunate woman whose wayward but innocent caprice had drawn us both into a whirlpool of ignominy and danger. I could now have disarmed the Prince easily, but that would have been a confession of weakness on my part. No, I would leave him his sword. To take it myself would imply that I depended upon mere ordinary physical force for my defense. Besides, if I had to use it against him, it would but the more surely settle my own fate. I should be held to have committed murder and treason. What, then, could I do with him? I wished him no harm, but his recovery to consciousness meant my sure condemnation and the Princess's ruin.

"Would that I might change places with him," thought I. "How freely would I extend to him the magnanimity which he denies to me." Suddenly the thought flashed into my mind *that I might exchange places with him*. I was familiar with the theory of the transmigration of souls after death. Why might there not be a transmigration in life? Once in India I had seen an experiment made by a mystic

of high grade. By his art he had succeeded in exchanging bodies with a poor rustic who had been previously hypnotized. After the exchange the ignorant rustic spoke with the learning of the sage, while the sage exhibited all the boorishness of the unlearned churl. I had doubted the reality of the act at the time, and thought it only a trick of jugglery, but now I resolved to try it. It was absolutely my only hope of rescue from a cruel fate.

I followed the same method that I had seen the Brahmin use. I first threw the Prince into the magnetic sleep—a thing perfectly easy in his bewildered state; then I invoked the most potent of the invisible powers by an incantation taken from the sacred books. I used again the awful name which I had been adjured by my initiators never to pronounce except in the greatest of exigencies, or in the presence of death itself.

Instantly the room seem crowded with spirits. I fell lifeless to the floor. I was present only as a disembodied spirit, and as such mingled with the others. I saw the Prince's spirit leave his body and mingle freely with the rest. It was given me to know that many of the phantoms present were those of the Prince's ancestors, and that they were somehow inimical to me. I *felt* their opposition. I was like a man in a quarrel surrounded by the friends of his adversary. The ghost of the Prince glared at me in a menacing way. I felt that I was about to engage in a desperate and unequal struggle; but I had no fear of the result, which I knew must end in victory or death.

The Brahmin had impressed on my mind, at the time I witnessed the experiment of transmigration, that its successful accomplishment was the most difficult achievement known to Magic. Failure meant death to either the operator or the subject, sometimes to both. For if the disengaged spirits failed to make the proposed exchange of bodies, they would wing their flight to the zone of those who have departed this life.

My soul was indeed "in arms and eager for the fray." I looked about for a familiar face in that ghostly company. Oh, joy! my mother—my angel mother was there, her face beaming with a sweet, sad smile of hope, not unmixed with anxiety. "She has come from heaven to encourage me," thought I; and inspired with the thought, I pressed through the hostile throng until I stood over the prostrate body of the Prince. I claimed it as my own. I conjured its late owner to yield me possession.

"By what right?" said the opposing spirit.

"By the right of conquest," I answered, "by the right of superior fitness, and by the right of self-defense, which leaves me no other resource."

At this point nearly all the surrounding spirits seemed to make solemn and indignant protest. Useless all, however, for the potent sovereigns of the elemental spirits were there to overawe them.* There was the dread form

* The elementals here referred to consist of: 1. "Gnomes," or spirits of the earth; 2. "Salamanders," fire spirits; 3. "Sylphs," spirits of the air; 4. "Undines," spirits of the water. The last two are the most friendly to man. The aerial spirits are the most potent and also the most difficult to control.—*Editor*.

of Gob, King of the Gnomes, with the sign of the bull upon his breast; there was the fierce and terrible Djin of the Salamanders, with his emblem of the Lion; the bright and graceful Paralda, Queen of the Sylphs, with her sign of the eagle; and the beautiful, fateful Nicksa, Queen of the Undines.

These were bound to my service by virtue of my initiation, but I did not feel entirely reassured until the bright, commanding form of Adonai appeared in a blaze of light, which dazzled like the noonday sun.

I was in the midst of a hand-to-hand conflict with the spirit of the Prince, and we were struggling with desperate fury for the possession of the Prince's body. No words can narrate the mysteries of that struggle any more than

words can describe the nature of the soul itself. I, myself, do not now realize fully the nature of that terrible contest of souls, but it impressed me chiefly as a conflict of Will and Faith, and in these the Prince proved no match for me. His feeble will, unfortified by knowledge, recoiled before my unflinching determination. His spiritual powers were untrained for battle, while mine were disciplined by the highest culture on earth.

The spirits of his ancestors now came to his assistance with many threatening gestures, and my defeat from their united onset seemed imminent, when suddenly, in trumpet tones:

“Peace!” commanded Adonai. And then, addressing the Prince and his party: “Yield to what must be!”

Then to me, in a tone of mild reproof, he continued:

“You have triumphed, justified in part by the necessity of the hour; but know that, as your motives are not entirely innocent, so shall your success not be without alloy. From your folly learn wisdom.”

I felt my inner self entering the brain of the prostrate body of Prince Karl. I knew no more; the whole phantasmagoria vanished from my sight; I was lost to all consciousness in sleep.

When I returned to consciousness I found myself in a richly furnished room which I had never before seen. I was lying in the state bed of the Prince of Graffenburg. The attendants addressed me as “your Royal Highness.” I perceived that while my mind and memory remained the same as formerly, my body was strangely different. Accustomed as I had been to a corporeal frame of moderate height and proportions, I was at first not a little surprised to find myself much larger. I thought I was in a dream, and had much difficulty in convincing myself that it was all sober reality. I called for a mirror, and when it was brought I started in horror and amazement from the

strange presentment reflected back as my *visual counterpart*. The face shown in the glass was *that of Prince Karl*, greatly enfeebled by illness, but still clearly and unmistakably the Prince's face.

"How long have I been ill?" I asked of an attendant.

"A little over two weeks, Your Highness."

By cautious inquiries I gradually gathered that I had been found insensible upon the floor of the Princess's bed-chamber, and that Dr. Zell, "the American," had also been found in the same apartment, in a state of unconsciousness.

Slowly and gradually the scene of the transmigration came dimly to my memory. Was it all a dream? Nay, I was alive—I was in possession of all my senses—I was there present in a scene of life and reality; I was surrounded by realities.

My anxious attendants seemed to be watching every movement I made, every indication of returning consciousness I exhibited. It was evident I had undergone a long and dangerous illness, and this was the first sign I had shown of being in my right mind since I had been picked up in the trance and brought to the sick-room.

Dr. von Bleisenbach, who had retired for a little rest, was hastily summoned, and his surprise and gratification was visible in his features as he approached my bed and tried my pulse and temperature.

"God be thanked, sire! you are again conscious. Do you know me?" he said, softly.

"Yes, doctor; but tell me—what became of the American?"

"He lies in prison, Your Highness, awaiting your recovery and your further pleasure. He has been prostrated with brain fever, they say, since the morning of his arrest."

"Let him be released instantly," I said, with decision.

The doctor looked incredulous, as though doubting my sanity.

“ Yes, dear friend,” I continued, guessing his thoughts; “ let him be conveyed to the hospital as soon as he is able to be moved; and, in the meantime, let him have the best possible attention which the city affords. See that he is provided with all necessary comforts. *It is my earnest wish and command.* I charge you with the execution of this my solemn order. Fail not, on pain of my displeasure.”

Seeing the same look of incredulity on the doctor’s face, I thought it prudent to add, in a significant tone:

“ Justice shall be meted to him later.”

The last sentence had the effect of reassuring the doctor; but he still seemed much concerned and distressed, evidently thinking my humane order due to the vagaries of a disordered mind. He answered, hesitatingly:

“ Your Highness’s commands shall be obeyed; but pardon me, sire, in your present unfortunate and enfeebled state, the Princess is—that is, has been, of course—the supreme authority, and in a matter of so much importance would it not be proper that Her Highness should be made acquainted with your wishes?”

“ Ah, yes, the Princess; summon her at once.”

The Princess soon appeared, pale and agitated; she timidly took my offered hand, gazed earnestly in my eyes, not without sympathy, but with evident alarm and dread.

“ Princess,” I said, softly, “ fear not; I am better, and my reason has returned. I have given orders that Doctor Zell be released from arrest, and that he be provided with every necessary comfort and the best of medical aid.”

Dr. Bleisenbach looked greatly relieved, and the lady seemed astonished, but evidently gratified. She murmured her thanks for my recovery, and, with a sweet smile of gratitude, promised to observe my orders in regard to the American. Dr. Bleisenbach now gently interfered to prevent any further converse at the time, which he said

might overexcite me. At his request I swallowed an anodyne, and soon after sank into a gentle slumber.

From this time my recovery was rapid. Dr. Bleisenbach, who proved to be a thorough physician, was in constant attendance. His whole soul seemed wrapped up in the case. Not a morsel of food passed my lips but under his inspection. He watched every symptom, every motion of the nurses. He was indefatigable in his attention to such details as cleanliness, temperature, aeration and diet. He administered the medicines with his own hand, and for some days would admit no visitors except the Princess, and she only for a few minutes each day. If his own life had depended upon my recovery he could not have been more devoted. Meanwhile, he indulged me in frequent short conversations.

On the third day after my interview with the Princess, above related, the doctor brought me the pleasing intelligence that I was undoubtedly on the road to speedy convalescence, and might soon venture to receive the ministers of state for short conferences. He informed me that Dr. Zell was getting much better. He had been removed to one of the best military hospitals, and was convalescent, but still weak, especially as regarded his mind. Strange to say, he had apparently lost his memory. His whole former life was a blank to him, and he labored under many hallucinations. Among other strange things, he fancied himself the prince. In short, his physicians feared he was hopelessly insane.

Soon came the Prime Minister, a shrewd, elderly man, with grave looks and insinuating manner. He had evidently passed through a period of great anxiety on my account. Indeed, the entire Court had been in consternation, fearing the event of my death, and apprehending the changes and troubles that might follow. I could see that the joy and triumph at my recovery was general and unfeigned. The Patriot Party could not conceal their glad-

ness. "God save the Prince" had been on every tongue; "God be thanked" was now, in turn, the universal sentiment.

The minister was full of business, "but would not venture to trouble me with affairs till I was much stronger." The Austro-Prussian embroglio had broken out in a new place. The former power had made some new demand, and Prussia had sullenly resisted, as usual. Their relations were "strained," and the smaller states of the confederation might soon be called upon to take sides between them in the Diet. Bavaria had shown strong Austrian leanings, and had made some overtures, through her diplomatic representatives, to induce us to take the same side; or, to use the exact expression of the minister, "had tried to precipitate us to side with Austria," etc., etc. This the Patriots of Graffenburg had, of course, opposed. "But during Your Highness's late unfortunate illness, and the temporary supremacy of the Princess and her adherents, we were near being overpowered and almost committed to the Austrian. Except for Your Highness's recovery, (by the gracious will of Heaven,) the state were lost."

"By the bye," continued the minister, "the American adventurer, released from arrest by Your Highness's orders, harbors the strange delusion that he is the prince of the realm, and clamors loudly for his imaginary officers."

"Unfortunate man. My orders are that he be treated with all consideration."

"Yes, I understand, sire, until you have time to investigate the charges. This clemency is admirable, and will have a good reactionary effect when we come to inflict the necessary punishment," said the minister.

"In the Austrian matter continue non-committal. Put them off with fair excuses. Conciliate the Prussian interests and the Patriot influence. Reassure my faithful subjects of my early recovery. For the rest, let our in-

ternal affairs proceed as usual, and use your best judgment in all things," I said, wearily.

"And the Princess, Your Highness?"

"Ah, the Princess," said I, doubtfully. "Well, she naturally must be consulted until I am on my feet. I will instruct her concerning my wishes."

The minister looked surprised, and shook his head aside at the doctor, as though to say, "He is not yet himself by a long way." Then with many kind wishes for my restoration to complete health, he took his leave.

Up to this time my interviews with the Princess had been few and short. Day by day she had called and made inquiries. But Dr. Bleisenbach was not of her party. He always intimated that she had best not remain. "I was not yet equal to a meeting with her," he said. "The excitement of conversation would be too much for me," etc., etc. Thus he had put her off by virtue of his authority as my medical adviser. It was evidently the desire of the Patriot faction to prevent the Princess from gaining any influence over me in my weak condition. It was their policy to screen me from all Austrian influence, until I showed better indications of returning to myself.

Besides, everybody knew the Princess had long been estranged from the Prince. It was suspected she had no love for him. She was lying under a strong suspicion of improper relations with the American. "Why was Doctor Zell present in her room that night, contrary to all rule and precedent?" "What had happened there at our meeting?" No one knew. Nanette was discreetly silent; she had seen nothing. There was a vague but strong suspicion of foul play at first, and threats of dire vengeance on the stranger; but calmer councils, aided by the influence of the Princess, had prevailed, and the luckless adventurer had been simply detained in prison to await my commands. What was the surprise of the Patriots when my wishes became known? They evidently thought

me strangely lenient, and must have attributed my magnanimity to feebleness of mind, consequent upon my illness. Surely, my unlooked-for clemency was in strange contrast to the policy which the Prince had all along maintained.

I now sent for the Princess, and dismissing all attendants from the room, I had my first memorable conversation with her in my new character of Prince and husband.

She approached my bedside with downcast eyes and constrained manner. She was evidently in some fear and dread.

“Princess,” I said, tenderly, “I doubt not that you have passed a season of anxiety and perplexity since my illness. I shall have to rely much upon you in the immediate future, for I feel unequal to affairs of state.”

She looked up astonished, as much by my manner as by the import of my words.

“It is long since you have so addressed me, sire. I shall hope to prove worthy of this new kindness,” she said, sadly and doubtfully.

“Ah, madam, I fear I have done you wrong in the bitter past; but forgive me. I need you—the state needs you—”

She burst into tears and, violently sobbing, interrupted me. I paused to allow of this vent to her overcharged feelings; then soothing her with kind words, I continued: “A great change has come over me—one you may never understand. *I am not the same man I was!*”

[How terribly significant these words were, she, poor soul, could not know, and was never to know.]

“You are very good,” she sobbed.

“You forgive me, then?”

She answered by a torrent of weeping, and laid her tear-stained face upon the pillow beside me. Finally she spoke:

“I never was untrue to you—even in thought, my lord; but enemies have come between us—and—you was—have

been—very cold and cruel and suspicious, have you not?"

"Yes, no doubt I was, if you say so; *but I remember almost nothing now.*"

She looked up in amazement. "Nay, be not astonished," I continued. "This sickness has worked strange effects upon my mind. I have lost nearly all memory of events previous to my being taken down. I have even forgotten my mother tongue."

[Our talk was in French, and I never had acquired the German language well enough to speak it.]

"I have forgotten the run of state affairs, and even the arrangement of the rooms in this palace. I remember nothing, or next to nothing, of the army, and can not recall the names of my general officers. I know not the condition of my treasury, nor even where my treasure is stored, nor that I have any treasure—save, indeed, yourself."

Her look of wonder was now changed to one of compassion and tenderness, sweet to behold.

"You shall now be my only confidant," I resumed. "It is necessarily so, for owing to this strange lapse of memory, I am at the mercy of all. I must depend upon you for everything; and no one else must know any more concerning my mental condition than we deem it wise to disclose."

I then gave her some vague general directions, the substance of which was to keep matters of state as much as possible *in statu quo* until I got better.

As she was about to leave I said, carelessly:

"See that the American is cared for with kindness. Let him be treated with the utmost consideration."

"Would you have me call upon him?" she asked, gravely.

"Yes, if practicable; that is, if you think it advisable. But then, on second thought, is it advisable—considering

all things? Would it not cause too much comment? Well, I leave it 'all to you; but at all events, I wish him well cared for."

She looked puzzled and a little confused.

"You are very magnanimous, my husband—and—and—and I am so grateful, on my own account as well as that of the unfortunate man who came to my room that night. I was in a trance, and Nanette sent for him, as a physician. I knew nothing of it till afterwards," she said, with innocent frankness.

"Oh! I understand all that, Charlotte; it is all quite plain to me. In fact, Doctor Zell explained the reason of his presence to me at the time. It was a little irregular, of course, but justified by the exigency. Give yourself no uneasiness."

The look of surprise that came over the mobile features of the Princess was succeeded swiftly by a smile of gratitude. Her emotions were too great for words. She imprinted a kiss upon my forehead and departed silently, ringing, as a signal to my attendants, that our interview was over.

In a few days I was well enough to go about a little from room to room. I spent most of my time in the apartments of the Princess, to the amazement and alarm of the Patriot Party. The old partisans of the Prince in his domestic quarrel, those who had been the bitterest enemies of the Princess, trembled with misgivings to see the persecuted woman all at once restored to full favor. Many sought to establish themselves in her good graces, now that it seemed probable she was to become a power in the state.

The Princess, strangely happy at this turn of affairs, was nevertheless not exultant; still less did she indicate any disposition to revenge herself upon her old enemies. To be loved—trusted—to see herself at last appreciated, was in itself a delight which seemed too great to be lasting. She could scarcely believe it true. She was now

everything to me that a woman by any fortuity of circumstance can be to a man. She was in kind solicitude, a mother; in compassion, a sister; in affection, a wife; in attraction, a mistress; in tenderness, a devoted nurse; and in culture and intellect, a delightful companion. I was entirely in love with her, and happier in the enjoyment of her esteem than in the possession of all the riches, power and glory of an enthroned sovereign.

Soon came deputations from cities and provinces with congratulatory addresses from my faithful subjects. Of course I could not understand them without an interpreter. The Princess took it upon herself to reply to them.

I devoted a few hours each day to the study of my little principality; its extent, cities, provinces, counties, great estates and leading families, its means of communication, natural resources, manufactures, commerce, etc. Our system of taxation and revenue, the exchequer, the army, the expenses of government; these and many other things were necessary to know, and of all these I was at first as ignorant as a child.

I remembered distinctly everything that had happened in my experience as Dr. Zell, but I knew nothing, except from hearsay, of the past life of the Prince; nor had I any interior conception of his feelings, modes of thought, his sympathies or antipathies, except that in my appetite for food I found myself craving certain articles of diet for the nourishment of the body that in my former character I had never preferred. The Princess would say, "What will you have for dinner to-day, my dear?" and if I hesitated, she would perhaps suggest some favorite dish of the Prince, which, being set before me, I always found acceptable, notwithstanding it was entirely new to me. I therefore inferred that the body hath its own needs and preferences independent of the mind. The body of the Prince, which I now occupied, required somewhat different constituents to sustain it, and these in different propor-

tions, than did that of Dr. Zell; therefore it soon developed different preferences in the matter of foods. But although this was among the first of my anomalous experiences in the strange body, it was by no means the sole nor the principal particular in which I discovered a tendency to conform to the tastes and habits of my predecessor. I had no direct mental traits from the Prince, yet my own mentality acted through his brain and physical organs, and from these latter there constantly emanated a certain influence which gradually forced its impress upon my feelings.

I had previously inhabited a smaller and more compact body, with less bulk and physical strength, but greater activity. As my mind became accustomed to act through the medium of a more sluggish brain, I found I could not think so quickly as before, and was longer in reaching conclusions. The weight and bulk of my new body was strange and inexplicable to me. It gradually came to effect every mental manifestation, and until the complete adjustment of my mind to its new environment, I felt much embarrassment. It was as though the ponderous Jupiter should suddenly commence flying around with the swiftness of nimble Mercury. The slow and steady flow of blood, however, soon showed its effect upon the mind that had once belonged to a more fiery temperament. The mind, on the contrary, reacted upon its new material envelope, and in time the pulse became quicker and the circulation more rapid. Thus mind and body acted and reacted each upon the other, and strove to attain an unstable equilibrium.

The Princess once remarked how much I reminded her of Dr. Zell.

“Why surely, my love, I do not at all resemble your friend,” I replied.

“No, there is no outward resemblance, I admit; but in your ways of thinking, and in your expressions, and even

in the tones of your voice, there is at times a *something* that reminds me of him."

"Did you find Doctor Zell an agreeable companion?" I asked, carelessly.

"He was sufficiently agreeable and very interesting; but his chief merit was in his strict sense of justice, combined with frankness and good sense."

"We ought to visit him," said I.

She received the suggestion with evident pleasure. I immediately ordered a close carriage, and we drove to the X— Hospital, where we found the patient comfortably quartered and well attended.

I can not adequately describe my sensations on finding myself face to face with my former physical self, now relegated to the dominion of another soul.

It affected me strangely, and as the whole affair is something new in human experience, so is it all the more difficult to convey an impression of to another. Imagine meeting one's own double—yourself—as you have a thousand times beheld your image reflected in the glass, only with the light of another Mind and Will gleaming from your eyes. I grew dizzy and nearly lost my self-control. I became conscious of a certain operation of my mind which was entirely outside of and beyond all control. It consisted of an impulse of the mind to precipitate itself upon the physical structure that formerly belonged to it. It was evidently the effect of near approach and contact with long-established affinities, the mutual attraction of like for like. It was the result of a tendency in Nature to reassert the common order in place of the exceptional.

I grew faint, and was carried breathless from the room. The Princess, in great alarm, followed. I recovered in a few minutes, and begged her to return and interview our old friend, but excused myself from participating, on the ground of indisposition.

She was evidently much pained at witnessing the effect

upon me of the meeting, and attributed it to everything but the true cause, which, of course, she had no means of divining.

She returned and spent a few minutes in the presence of Dr. Zell; but he did not seem to recognize her. He talked incoherently, like one demented. The surgeon in attendance said he had been laboring under unusual excitement since the moment of my entering the room.

As we were about to depart, the chief medical officer informed us that the patient had been pronounced hopelessly deranged by the medical staff of the hospital. His insanity was of a mild type. He labored under the delusion that he was the reigning prince, but in lucid intervals would express surprise when informed of his hallucination. He seemed to be unable to recall anything of his past life, but in his delirium had several times mentioned the names of the Court notabilities, and his mind wandered to the army. Such was the account hastily given us by the medical man as we were about taking leave of him.

“Why were you so much disturbed on meeting that man, my husband?” said the Princess, earnestly, after we were seated in the carriage.

“I can not say, my dear. You know I am not very strong yet; and—it is a mournful spectacle to see a noble mind in ruins.”

“You were not formerly so sensitive,” she said, pensively.

“I was not formerly anything like my present self; my terrible illness has transformed me. I sometimes imagine I have been, as the religious people would say, ‘born again.’”

The Princess preserved a mournful silence for some minutes, and then said, tremulously:

“Surely, my husband, you do not think harshly of that Mr. Zell?”

“Far otherwise,” I replied, emphatically. “I have

ordered for him the best possible treatment, as you know."

"Yes; but why did you show so much emotion at meeting him? You do not—you can not—believe the absurd things that my enemies have dared to insinuate of me?" she said, with flashing eyes.

"I leave you to judge by my actions, since you do not seem entirely satisfied with my words," I replied, smiling.

"Do not misunderstand me," she said, excitedly. "I am satisfied with your words, and more than satisfied; but, pardon me, your action was just what I could not understand; what I can not reconcile with your assurances."

I guessed her thoughts. She imagined that there might still be lurking in my mind some painful suspicions of her intimacy with Zell, and she feared the recurrence of that coldness and jealousy which had so long dominated the mind of her husband and embittered her life.

It was a prayer for the continuance of that love and confidence that for the last few days had dawned upon the neglected wife, and given to her life a new charm which seemed too beautiful to last.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE UNPRECEDENTED REALIZED —LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF PRINCESS CHARLOTTE.

'Impossible is the adjective of fools.'—*Napoleon*.

It may not be uninteresting to the reader to know how the singular change in the character and manner towards herself of her (supposed) husband impressed the Princess Charlotte. Fortunately, I have the means of reproducing, for the entertainment of my readers, some of the most secret thoughts of the Princess, as gleaned from the pages of her diary at the time. In these extracts the reader will now view me from the standpoint of another person.

It will be remembered that the Princess could know nothing of the real metamorphosis that had taken place in the person of her husband. Physically he appeared the same to her at this time as all along before. Physically he was the same, but mentally he was—as the reader knows—no longer himself—but the late Dr. Zell. By no imaginable means could the Lady Charlotte have known or even suspected the actual fact, as the reader has been made acquainted with. Even if I had myself undertaken to reveal all to her, she would not for a moment have believed it. She would certainly have attributed the entire tale to an hallucination of my mind. It is hard for the mind to realize a thing which is unprecedented in human experience, and especially when appearances are contradictory, and the evidence of the senses is against the alleged phenomena or fact. Besides, the impression was general that the Prince was still laboring from the after effects of brain fever. It was in the air that he was “queer,” “not quite himself,” and so forth; and it was whispered that he was beginning to develop tendencies to insanity that had long been hereditary in his family.

If I had told the Princess that I was Zell in the person of the Prince, she would probably have smiled sadly at the strange conceit, and have thought at once of the family tendency to mania. How could I ask her to believe such a strange asseveration in opposition to the evidence of her senses? Was not the Prince before her in his proper person, as she had always known him?

What a fatal error of most people—this regarding the body as the real man, when it is simply the vehicle of the outward and physical manifestation of the true inner man, who is *the* man. As well mistake a man's clothes for his person. The body is simply the outward garment of the man, which, by long habit and convention, we have come to regard as the man himself.

LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE
OF GRAFFENBURG.*. Wednesday.*

The Prince seems almost as well as ever but for his mind and memory, which I now greatly fear he will never fully recover. He seems to have forgotten everything. Names, facts, places, dates, events, his own family; even our marriage he says he has no recollection of, nor anything that took place previous to his illness. He has even forgotten his native tongue, though, strangely enough, he remembers the French, and also some English words. He continues kind and even tenderly courteous to me, which is the most remarkable thing of all.

Thursday.

The Prince is studying the German language with great application, and one would think he never had known a word of it. I am to teach him, as he is anxious that his loss of memory shall not be known to the Court.

To-day we went all over the palace together, and everything seemed new to him. He took great interest in the apartments lately occupied by Dr. Zell. I hear that unfortunate man is daily becoming more and more hopelessly demented. I shall never cease to reproach myself with his misfortunes.

Friday.

I fear the Prince is indeed going insane; he is so fond of me. No lover could be more attentive. He actually knows nothing of our past differences, and I hope he never may. I forgive him all his past cruelties, his suspicions, neglect, and all his injustice in the past. I am perfectly happy, except that I pity poor Zell. The Prince has also from the first indicated much solicitude for the American, and has shown a magnanimity as admirable as it was unexpected.

Saturday.

The Prince ordered Dr. Zell to be removed to Castle Hofhausen-Wald, one of His Majesty's most picturesque residences in the mountain country. We made a farewell visit to the American at the hospital, but he did not seem to recognize either of us. My husband, as has been in-

variably the case when visiting Zell, was greatly agitated, a result which, he says, is always caused by painful reflections at seeing so noble a mind disorganized.

The doctors say there is no hope of poor Zell's recovery. His mind is a blank, save for occasional short periods, when he imagines himself to be a king or ruler, so near as they can make out from his wild, incoherent ravings. What a strange form for mania to take in the case of one so unambitious and scholarly as he was. I shall remember him with gratitude as a man of tender sensibilities, kind impulses, and a chivalrous nature worthy of knightly ages. The interest I formerly felt in his strange personality seems now to be wholly transferred to my dear husband, who I fancy to be in many little ways more like Dr. Zell than like his former self. Of course this must be purely imagination, for two men could hardly differ more widely in all things than the Prince and Zell.

NOTE.—Husband generally refers to him in conversations with me as "your friend," or, "our poor friend Zell."

Sunday.

The Prince wishes to be always with me, and seems lost when out of my presence. His desire to recover the practical knowledge which has gone from his mind is so great that he gives himself no rest from his studies, while his anxiety to conceal his real mental condition from others is painfully evident to me, his only present confidant. The courtiers are only partially aware of his true situation, but from his changed attitude towards myself, and many little indications, they generally conclude that he is going into the queer ways of his grandfather, who never was considered quite sane, and who became more and more eccentric up to the time of his death.

I have something to live for, since I have become indispensable to him. My only anxiety is lest he should suddenly go back to his former frame of mind, and should again mistrust me.

Wednesday.

The Prince, since his illness, seems to have lost all interest in the army, and now leaves the entire control to General von Wimple-Steifan, who seems much grieved at the apathy of his sovereign. The fact is, my husband has lost all remembrance of his old military leaders,

excepting the General-in-Chief and one or two other officers. Curiously enough, that coxcomb, Lieutenant von Elden, is one of those remembered. Hence His Highness seldom gives audience to military men of late, though he is gradually extending his acquaintance among the officers.

All this was quite true. I did not remember the officers, simply because I never knew them, and I recognized Von Elden because, as the reader will remember, he was one of my earliest acquaintances.

Everybody knew me, even to the peasantry, who saw my effigy stamped on the coins, but I knew only the few acquaintances of Dr. Zell. I was obliged, from the very nature of the situation, to live in a constant alternation of simulation and dissimulation. It was necessary for me to appear to be what I was not, and to studiously conceal from everybody, even from my wife, my real identity. The things I pretended to have forgotten I never knew.

To add to my discomfort, I soon discovered that my new body was not nearly so hardy and compact as the one I had exchanged for it. My present body was loose-jointed, and not fitted to resist the encroachments of disease. There was a scrofulous taint in my blood, my digestion was not good, and the circulatory system worked imperfectly. I was constantly taking cold, and always suffering from some bodily infirmity which, in my own body, I had never experienced. The consciousness that these were the inexorable conditions of my new existence had a very depressing effect upon my mind, and went far to counterbalance any little satisfaction I might have felt on account of my exalted station and its concomitants. The Lady Charlotte was, after all, my only consolation, and even towards her I was practicing a cruel deception.

A natural lover of truth, I bitterly regretted the necessity which compelled me to maintain an assumed character. I began to hate the mask I was forced to wear, and longed to cast it aside.

One day, in our rambles about the palace, I managed that we should direct our steps, apparently by accident, towards the apartments lately occupied by Dr. Zell. Upon my suggestion we entered the now deserted chamber. Here were the doctor's books and papers scattered about carelessly as he had left them hastily on the night when he had been summoned to the bedside of the Princess. Among his papers I found the original draft of my little poem ("Oh, Love! Thou Art the Only Thing,") which is given near the end of chapter twenty-three. [Page 277 and 278.—*Ed.*] I read it as though for the first time, and then handing it to the Princess, I remarked, carelessly:

"A love song, as I live."

She read it, and observed in some confusion, while a slight color suffused her usually pale face:

"Poor fellow! he must have been disappointed in love at one time."

"Yes, and at a *recent* time, too—see it is dated only a few weeks before that strange episode that led to his and my illness."

"True, indeed," she replied, blushing deeply.

"He might have been in love with Your Highness," I said, musingly.

"Oh, no doubt!" she exclaimed, now visibly annoyed; "as though there were no other ladies in the world. Of course—"

I interrupted this ironical speech, saying gently and in low tones:

"Not that I blame him, still less do I censure you. If he admired you, the fact does honor to his taste."

Her eyes filled with tears as she said, with much feeling:

"That is a sentiment worthy of a great prince. I am proud of you, my husband. Such expansion of soul raises you above the stars."

"If I should love another woman with a passion like this"—glancing at the verses—"could you forgive me?"

“Not formerly; but now I could. You are raising me to your own spiritual altitude,” she replied, with earnestness.

“Let us hope that neither will have occasion for such magnanimity; but if we should—”

I paused, divining by the expression of her features that some sentiment was pressing for utterance, and quite willing to be interrupted on the threshold of a remark that I felt had not been sufficiently considered, and might be misconstrued.

“I now love you *unselfishly*, for your own sake as well as for mine,” she said, impulsively.

“Each for the other, and both for each, and God for all. Though we may not control love, we may, by the aid of the divine spark within us, control our *actions*,” I said, embracing her.

“In that sphere where love is eternal we shall smile, perhaps, to remember our petty jealousies here,” concluded the Princess, with the radiant look of one inspired by a sublime intuition.

CHAPTER XXVII.

NANETTE—“YOU PROMISED TO MAKE ME A COUNTESS.”

“Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,
And men below and saints above,
For love is heaven and heaven is love.”

—*Scott.*

I HAD seen Nanette, the pretty French waiting-maid, frequently in the apartments of the Princess since my convalescence, and had observed that she regarded me with significant glances, which, however, I pretended not to notice. Once or twice I thought she appeared to be trying to throw herself in my way, but I managed on these occasions to escape from her.

One day, as I was passing along by a side corridor in a part of the palace little frequented, I met her face to face. With a look of reproach she thrust a letter in my hand as she hurried past me. It was scrawled in bad French, and a literal English translation would read like the following:

“ROYAL HIGHNESS,—Why are you so cruel to your poor Nanette? All the time you were ill I was refused admission to you. Now that you are well (for which I daily thank the Virgin with tears of joy) you do not notice me. What have I done to merit this coldness? My heart is breaking. Surely you will see me. You have not forgotten my fidelity—my devotion—and all the delightful past. I can not believe it.

“Dear, kind Prince, you will not refuse poor Nanette a private audience. I have much to tell you, but what can I say here, except that I am, as ever, all your own

“DYING NANETTE.

“P.S.—Let me entreat that it be soon, *mon ami*, for my heart is indeed bleeding. Please let me come by *the usual way*, for you know it will not do for me to attempt to pass the orderlies at your door. Oh, let it be to-night. I can steal away from the Princess after nine. When you hear three gentle raps on the door leading to the private stair-way, your heart will tell you it is your faithful, despairing

“NANETTE.”

This impetuous message, with many errors of orthography (for Nanette was illiterate), was blotted and blurred as though with tears.

I now remembered that the girl had been employed by the late Prince Karl as a spy upon the Princess.

Doubtless there was another and more tender bond of sympathy between them; and if so, no wonder that she should feel astonishment and grief at the altered attitude of her patron.

Although much dreading secret interviews of this kind, lest my dear Charlotte should hear of them and be dis-

quieted, I nevertheless thought it best, in this case, to meet the girl and listen to her grievance.

Opening out of a private room—one of the magnificent suite of apartments especially devoted to the personal occupancy of the late Prince, and now retained by me—was a door leading to a back stair-way, which in turn communicated with a small anteroom, itself connected on one side with a grand drawing-room known as the White Hall. The anteroom also opened upon one of the narrow, dark corridors which branched from the main central gallery of the palace.

These great central halls or galleries constituted the main arteries of communication to all parts of the building, extending as they did in two directions from the rotunda, and connecting the two wings with the central part of the palace.

The little back stair-way had evidently been planned to facilitate secret meetings, and also, perhaps, to enable the Prince to retire quietly and unobtrusively from any public assemblage in the White Hall when he chose to do so.*

* Such facilities are a common and characteristic feature of the old palace architecture. The more ancient part, especially of Graffenburg Castle, was honey-combed with secret passages, many of which were now entirely out of use and almost forgotten. If these back stair-ways could talk, they might afford basis enough for both tragedies and comedies. How fortunate that inanimate things speak not, except by mute suggestion!

It was just past nine that evening when Nanette stealthily approached the anteroom from the dark corridor, and entering by means of a private key, mounted the back stairs and rapped timidly at my door.

I was alone and expecting her, but I did not anticipate the dramatic scene that was to follow.

It was one of many similar cases wherein I had to suffer for the sins of the man whose place and power I had in a manner usurped.

Enter a slight and elegant female figure in a soft brown robe which fell in picturesque folds from the slender waist, that was encircled by a gold cord carelessly looped and suspended in front. For the rest, she was attired with that refined taste, harmony of detail, and grace of outline which, in its highest perfection, only a French lady can attain.

Nanette was a fine specimen of the delicate beauty of Alsace-Lorraine. For grace of carriage and movement I have never seen her equal. She knew how to infuse into the simple act of entering or leaving a room a greater charm than the average Court lady could display in an elaborate *tête-à-tête*.

She approached with a little impulsive movement which she contrived to invest with a captivating air of naïveté. It expressed all of a child's eagerness and spontaneity combined with the timidity and intuitive reserve of the modest maiden. The entire movement was executed with what might have been the studied grace of an actress, but with a naturalness that an actress might envy.

I thought from her movement that she was about to throw herself into my arms. If such was her intention, she restrained herself in time, warned probably by my look of surprise, or by something unexpected in my manner of receiving her.

She recovered herself with admirable self-possession, and dropped quickly and gracefully into a kneeling attitude at my feet. It was the artistic movement of a born actress. She now presented a picture perfect in every detail. Every curve of her figure, every fold of her costume was artistic, and seemed to fall into perfect harmony with herself and the situation.

I assisted her to arise, and led her to a divan, where we seated ourselves. The following colloquy ensued:

PRINCE (graciously): "What can I do for you, my dear child?"

NANETTE (very gravely, and with eyes that seemed ready to weep): "Oh! Royal Highness, why this cruelty? What have I done? (sobbing), what failed to do?" The rest of the sentence was lost in a flood of tears.

PRINCE (soothingly): "Calm yourself, my child. I do not understand this grief or its cause."

NANETTE: "In the bright, happy days—of yore—you did not say, 'my child,' but '*my love*,' 'MY DARLING,' 'MY BEAUTY!' Oh!" (weeping.)

PRINCE: "In the terrible illness I have passed through, Nanette, I have forgotten many things, as you have doubtless been informed. You will perhaps find it difficult to believe me when I assure you, on my honor, that I know not to what you refer. Tell me all, therefore, my dear child, all that you have to complain of. If I have ever wronged you—ever promised you anything—tell me truly, that I may make amends."

NANETTE (with convulsive sobs): "Yes—I heard my lord had forgotten much; but—I—never—can realize—that he should—forget *me*." Then calming herself a little: "As to promises, dear heart, you *did* promise to make me a countess; but afterwards (do you not recall it, Highness?) you said 'Not now, it will make too much talk.' These were Your Highness's words. I did not insist. I cared not for a coronet when I possessed your love; but now, ah, me! I have neither," (weeping bitterly).

PRINCE (sternly): "How did I come to promise that you should be made a countess, Nanette? What service had you rendered to the state to earn that distinction?"

NANETTE (impetuously, growing indignant, and apparently suspecting she is being made game of): "Royal Highness—once my suitor, now as a stranger, listen:

"Five years ago I was a peasant girl, trimming grapevines in my father's little vineyard. I was innocent, and no maiden of the valley told her rosary more faithfully or visited the village shrine of the Virgin more regularly.

“ I set out for Paris to become a waiting-maid in a great family. My father, honest soul, gave me his farewell benediction, saying, while the tears streamed over his furrowed cheeks, ‘ be honest—be true.’ In Paris I was honest and true. Transferred to the family of our ambassador to your Court, I came here to your capital, still honest and still true.

“ The Princess took a fancy to me, and my employer, willing to oblige her in so small a thing, gave me up to her.

“ I came to this palace as lady’s-maid to your wife, the Princess (and how very good she has always been to me). I was still honest. *Your* eyes rested upon the new maid.

“ You gave me no peace. I sought to evade you; you followed me.

“ Finally you sent for me here—yes, here, in this very spot (witness it, Heaven!) you flattered and importuned me, and even then, in that terrible moment, I was still true, and remembered my promise to my father. I even related it to Your Highness.

“ You made light of my scruples, scouted my objections, and lavished gold upon me to send home to my parents. I was grateful, and, indeed, dared not refuse your gift.

“ Then you besought me to drink your health in the wines of my native land. After your generosity, I could no longer refuse you this courtesy, but I was still desirous of remaining honest and true.

“ Importuned further by Your Highness, I tried in vain to appeal to your magnanimity to spare the unprotected girl in a foreign land, though I felt that I was in your power, and that a word from Your Highness might have consigned me to a prison; but I dared to withstand you—Nanette was still true.

“ Then what did you do? Oh, Prince!—here—almost where we sit, you knelt at my feet and vowed that you

could not live without me. Yes, you did. You said I should be a countess.

“It was hard for me to see that noble head bowed in supplication to a poor little peasant girl like me; but I did not yield until you told me that (as a reward for a rich gift to the shrine of the Holy Virgin) the blessed Saint Veronica had appeared to you in a dream and promised you the love of Nanette.

“Then at last I fell weeping and almost fainting into your arms.

“How well I remember it. It was after a grand review that day. You wore the uniform of a general of the Hussars, with golden epaulets, and knightly orders sparkling on your breast.

“I gave up all for you, and when, after I refused you nothing, I gently reminded you of your promise to make me a great lady, you put me off with honeyed words, begging me not to insist, because it would make a scandal.

“What did I care to be a countess, so long as I had your love?

“You never gave me the coronet, dear Prince, but you did bestow this” (exhibiting a ring) “at a time when you were greatly pleased with Nanette. ‘Take this,’ you said, ‘and if you ever need a favor, bring or send it to me, and by this token I will grant your wish, if in my power.’”

She paused and handed me the ring. It was a signet, bearing upon its broad bezel the royal arms of Graffenburg. Only the Prince was entitled to wear such a ring. I was convinced the girl had told the truth.

During the latter portion of her recital I had risen from my seat, and was anxiously pacing the room before her.

I perceived that she was much agitated, and had spoken with the vehemence of despair. I could not doubt that she had been greatly wronged. I was apprehensive she might end the scene by plunging a poniard into her bosom.

I reflected that the exigency called for the gentlest treatment. I replied:

“Dear Nanette, I accept all that you have said as true, though I remember it not in the least. I admit that your beautiful brow seems fitted for a coronet, though charming enough without it. Be not cast down. I perceive there is much to excuse your fault, and the merciful Virgin Mother will intercede for us with her Son—that Son who pardoned Mary Magdalen. Like her, let us ‘go and sin no more.’

“In the matter of the promise which you claim of me (to make you a countess), if you insist upon it, I will keep my word though it cost me my crown; but if you love me, you will not urge that promise. I am surrounded by enemies. They say I am insane, and if I should ennoble a pretty lady’s-maid the people would have too much reason to believe them. The Prime Minister (who is almost indispensable to me at this juncture) would resign before he would take the responsibility of attaching the great seal to such a patent of nobility. The indignant populace would storm his house. We should be in danger of revolution. Besides, Nanette, although I might, by an arbitrary exercise of power, make you a *countess*, only the King of kings can make you a *lady*.”

“Oh, sire, I do not insist—only say you love me again!” said Nanette.

I approached the now hysterical girl and imprinted a kiss upon her forehead.

“Yes, yes, you shall be my sweet sister for evermore,” said I, deeply moved.

She clung to my neck passionately, but I gently disengaged her hands, saying as I did so, with much gravity:

“Sister, I have lately been confronted by Death, and have almost felt his icy touch upon my heart. Forgive me that I am changed. Return now to the Princess. Let us be henceforth as repentant fellow-sinners before God.”

I led her gently to the door, hoping to escape another scene, but the passionate girl would not depart without more kisses, which, I believe, she would have exacted had she known it was to endanger her soul's salvation.

[But I don't believe it would; do you, dear reader?]

Nanette returned to her duties, and remained faithful to her mistress up to the time of the latter's death, as related in the concluding chapter.

Then I thought it wise to send her home to her own vine-clad hills. She did not go empty-handed, you may be sure. The simple little beauty had, after all, made the fortune of her family.

I was glad to have time and distance separate us.

I heard that she afterwards led a pious, devoted life, and was much respected by all who knew her. May angels lead her by the hand.

Kind and prudent treatment of this misguided girl reclaimed her for society. So might many of the so-called "fallen" women be reinstated. Apropos, why do we never hear of fallen *men* as sustaining any necessary relation to the fallen women?

CHAPTER XXVIII

CURIOUS TRADITIONS OF THE PALACE—A TRAIN OF EVIL DIRECTIONS—DR. ZELL AT HOME—FINALE.

“Do you remember, dear, that day we passed
Down that dim avenue where sun-gold beams
Trembled thro’ leaves that murmured in their dreams
And waving rings across our pathway cast—
Our velvet pathway, love, narrow, new grassed?
You, slim and fearless, on your dappled mare,
Robed all in black; only your pale-gold hair
Gave color to that dear dream of the past—
That and the soft, sweet flush of throat and cheek.
Your eyes were wet, I think, and low and clear,
Your words—but I remember all you said.
Do you remember how I tried to speak
And could not? Oh, do you remember, dear?
Kind Heaven! I had forgot that you were dead!”

Selected.

IF now I had been admonished by the suggestions of my better nature, if I had acted up to my best inner convictions of right and justice, I might have emerged from this great trial of my moral character with honor, and have, moreover, saved myself from all the evils which followed; but I was confident in my strength to resist temptation, full of curiosity, and animated by a strong inclination to enjoy for a time the novelty of my surroundings. Besides, I was delighted with the society of the Princess, whose charming versatility enabled her to appear each day in some new light, and to exhibit a never-ending succession of new and charming phases of individuality, checkered and alternated in such pleasing variety as to afford me a

constant theme for study and speculation. In a word, I was infatuated with her.

Thanks to the methods which I had acquired in the East, and which all occultists will understand,* I soon

* Among the resources of magic are certain short and effective methods of acquiring any branch of knowledge that may be desired. "The adept may speedily learn any art or science easily and without a teacher," says one authority. The advantage of these methods, which are not entirely unknown outside of art magic, consists principally in a certain discipline of the mind which enables the student to concentrate his thoughts intensely upon the subject in hand to the exclusion of everything else; coupled with the ability to discern the salient points which are fundamental to all sciences, and which, once seized, the rest is easy. The science of inference is the key to every other science. Thus there are short cuts to knowledge, notwithstanding the adage that there is no "royal road" to it.
—*Editor*.

mastered the German language, by the assistance of a few books and some instruction in pronunciation from the Lady Charlotte.

In a few days I found myself proficient enough in it to carry on conversations with those about me, and one great source of embarrassment was removed.

I spent several weeks in rambling about the palace, inspecting its numerous and varied apartments and their furnishings, studying the arrangement and system of the royal household, and familiarizing myself with its routine. I spent whole days in the vast galleries, profusely hung with family portraits of the royal line—"getting acquainted with my ancestors," as I once observed to the Princess, greatly to her amusement. She was, of course, not surprised that one who had forgotten his mother tongue should also need some refreshing of the memory with respect to many other things with which he was once familiar.

No nook or corner of the vast edifice was left unexplored, from the deep burial vaults to the long-neglected,

dusty recesses of the topmost garrets of the dome. The latter I found cluttered with the accumulated rubbish of centuries: discarded furniture and fineries of long past time, great chests containing archives and papers, so ancient and obsolete that now even vault room was denied them, and they were relegated to attic lofts—the oblivion of old houses. In nearly every room I found interesting and curious features. Here was an apartment that had not been used for fifty years. A death or some family tragedy had happened in the room, and it had been shut up ever since. Some rooms are unfortunate and proscribed. There, again, was a suite of apartments which were once occupied by a beautiful daughter of the house, a favorite of her family. One day, as the tradition runs, while out riding she was thrown from her carriage and brought home lifeless. Her father, eccentric even in his grief, gave orders that everything in her apartments should remain forever undisturbed. His orders are observed even to this day, for it is a superstition of the house that to change anything in the room would be to disturb the repose of the dead. The principal apartment of this suite is called “the room of the spectral maiden.” It is almost a hundred years since the unfortunate girl occupied these rooms, but everything remains, as to locality, exactly as she left it on the morning when she dressed for the fatal drive. Tapestries have faded and hang in shreds; carpets and clothing are moth-eaten and decayed; the upholstery is sadly dilapidated; the solid antique framework of the furniture alone remains comparatively uninjured. There lay, scattered about upon the table, the little articles of the toilet, and there lies her prayer-book, its golden clasps still shining bright from out the dingy covers of the once rich leathern binding. It must not be moved, but gently raising the cover, I find its leaves faded with age. How long this is to continue as one of the traditions of the palace I know not; no one else knows; it

has become a "time-honored" affair. Once a week the room and contents may be dusted in the presence of a functionary of the household; once a year, on the anniversary of the fatal day, prayers for the dead are read here by the Court chaplain, and a requiem is chanted by the choristers.

I mention this room and its history because it impressed me strangely at the time. In palaces, as in nature, art and literature, it is the out-of-the-way things that are most quaint and curious; besides, the incident serves to illustrate the idiosyncrasies of the Graffenburg line.

Another of the Prince's ancestors, upon the death of his beautiful young wife, for whom he entertained a romantic affection, sought to preserve her body in high wines, which he caused to be often renewed. I was shown the apartment in the vaulted basement where this singular embalming was made, and where the royal mourner was wont to repair regularly, at set times, to remain for hours alone with the dead. This custom he kept up during his life, but on his demise the body of the dead princess was, with his own, deposited in a sarcophagus which rests in the great vault beneath the chapel.

In the muniment-room, or treasure vault, under triple locks and seals, which it is death to pass, except in the presence of certain high functionaries of the household, rest the crown jewels of Graffenburg, many of which are never used except at coronations. A squad of soldiers of the Royal Infantry Guard is always on duty at the palace, and special sentinels pace night and day before the strong doors of this treasure-room, which is cut out of the solid rock of the hill, underneath the most ancient part of the castle. Three different grand officers (with as many different keys), duly empowered by a warrant under the great seal, and attended by three members of the privy council, appointed by the sovereign, are necessary to open the vault or remove the contents. I caused it to be

opened for inspection, and was gratified to find that my predecessors had here stored up a vast amount of gold and silver coin of the realm against a time of need—the savings of many generations of thrifty and cautious rulers. I had a curiosity to see and handle the robes, the ancient crown, ring and scepter used in coronation ceremonies.

But I was not long permitted to divert myself by these toys and fancies. A long train of serious vexations was in store for me. The Prince, as I have intimated, had been fond of women, and had retained many female favorites. As soon as it was generally understood that I was well and about, some of his former mistresses began to throw themselves in my way. This was observed by the Princess, and I could see that it was a source of anxiety to her. I tried to evade these harpies in every way possible, without offending them; but I thought it policy to treat them with affability and the semblance of good nature, to avoid their dangerous enmities. The case of Nanette, given in the last chapter, will serve as illustrative of this class of annoyances; the others were more or less analogous to it.

Meanwhile, the diplomatic relations between Prussia and Austria were becoming strained to a degree which threatened to involve the smaller states of Germany in the most serious complications. These two great powers, which in turn dominated the German Federal Diet, were always at issue during this period of German history, and their differences several times had nearly caused a disruption of the confederation. Only a strong secret alliance of nearly all the smaller states, in a condition of armed neutrality, sufficed to keep the two rival giants apart, and maintain the peace of the empire. There was constant plotting and counter-plotting, not only by the two rivals for supremacy, but also among the smaller states, many of which leaned to one side or the other. There was an atmosphere of jealousy, suspicion and distrust on all sides,

every one afraid to trust his neighbor, and planning for a safe maneuver or alternative in case of actual war. Graffenburg had hitherto maintained a judicious attitude of neutrality towards both of the powers, notwithstanding the influence of the Princess Charlotte, which was rendered nugatory by the opposition and firmness of the late Prince Karl. Now, however, that the Princess seemed restored to favor, great apprehensions were felt among our subjects that we were about to fall entirely under Austrian influence, and in case of hostilities would be at the mercy of Prussia. The latter power had a strong garrison in one of its dependencies, at no great distance from us, and could mass a large body of troops upon our frontiers at any moment. Our agent at Berlin was constantly writing of the increased suspicion of that Court, and cited many indications of coolness towards Graffenburg. Our peaceful population was becoming thoroughly aroused to the gravity of the situation. The Patriots were greatly in the majority, and while not distinctly for Prussia, were to a man opposed to Austria. The Princess Charlotte, it will be remembered, was an Austrian archduchess, and she was entirely in sympathy with her family. She was for Graffenburg interests, of course, but if it came to a struggle between Prussia and Austria, "she would die before she would consent to our joining the northern power." Besides, she contended, it was not for our interest. "Austria would certainly win. Austria would protect us from Prussian invasion," etc., etc. My ministers thought differently, and I was inclined to agree with them; but how could I resist the tearful entreaties of my wife? On this point she was inexorable. "It was the only favor she would ever ask of me," she said. Between her and the Austrian coterie on one side, and an anxious ministry and angry populace on the other, I was in hot water, ever waxing hotter. In any other country there would have been a revolution.

Our Court swarmed with Austrian and Prussian spies. The latter power—thinking us about to pronounce for Austria—began to plot against our ministry and to foment sedition among our people. The story was circulated throughout my dominions that I was mentally deranged, and unfit to reign, etc. My Prime Minister threatened to resign. The heir-apparent—a nephew of Prince Karl, and a popular young nobleman, ambitious to come to the throne—was known to favor the home party. He covertly encouraged Prussian influence and countenanced the rumors of my insanity.

I instituted a rigorous secret police, and was successful in arresting Prussian emissaries with papers showing their complicity in a conspiracy for deposing me and placing the heir-apparent on the throne as Prince Regent. A little later I detected a plot against my life. I was now like a man chained to a powder magazine which at any moment might be exploded. Some of my leading men about Court were known to be in the pay of my enemies, secretly working for my downfall, and for the accession to power of the young heir-apparent.

I had lost nearly all my powers as an adept. I could no longer command the invisible forces. Nevertheless, they were able to annoy me. It is the misfortune of an adept fallen from power that the spirits he has once summoned never entirely leave him; and his control of them once lost, they delight to torment him whom they were formerly compelled to serve. They afflicted me at first mostly at night. My dreams were haunted by innumerable specters. These malicious demons, now free of all control, assumed horrible and threatening forms too terrible for description. One horrid shape particularly followed me incessantly, and became a constant dream of terror. It was a thing of dreadful malignity which froze my blood to behold. Out of consideration for the sensitive reader, I will not attempt to describe this awful presence

in detail, but it is known to all occultists as Astaroth, the impersonation of terrors, the avenging spirit of retribution.*

* I forbear a minute description lest the phantom should fasten itself upon the imagination of some overimpressionable reader, and taking on an objective form, should haunt his dreams. One of his favorite forms is the hippopotamus, with a head taken from the skeleton of a colossal ox. He is an irreconcilable enemy of man, and the special terror of initiates before they have learned how to overcome him by skill and courage. By some authors he is vaguely referred to as "the keeper of the threshold" (that is, of the elemental spirit zone); but he is nowhere correctly depicted—perhaps can not be—as he appears differently to different people. To all alike he conveys an impression of almost paralyzing terror—save to the adept, whose abject slave he is and must remain, unless the master by some fault loses his control.—*Author's note.*

I was not, however, so much frightened by the Thing as annoyed at its constant and persistent reappearance.

I was able formerly, in the height of my adeptship, to drive it from me by a word; but now it remained and assumed an attitude of defiance. Even this I managed to endure as long as it was confined to dreamland; but judge of my horror when one day at a Court levee, in the presence of hundreds of people assembled in one of the great halls of the palace, I distinctly saw this Thing of Dread peering at me from the further end of the apartment. It was all I could do to keep from crying out with terror. There was the hideous Presence in plain sight among the brilliant throng of courtiers, yet no one else could see it. Invisible to the outward natural eye, but visible to the spiritual senses of him whose eyes had been opened by initiation. Henceforth I knew, unless help came to me, I was a doomed man. No army, no treasure, no diplomacy, no earthly power could screen me from the malignity of the Thing. It would reappear at the most inopportune times. In the council chamber, at the banqueting hall; nay, on the street it was liable to obtrude itself. Always

unexpected, always without warning, and always when I was least on my guard.

My actions upon these occasions could not be accounted for by those who witnessed them. Perhaps I would start, change color, and raise my hands involuntarily, as though to screen my eyes from the hateful sight. On several occasions I fainted outright. Once or twice I actually shrieked in spite of myself. Of course, those around me were ready to believe I was indeed losing my mind. The damaging rumors circulated by my enemies were assuming the form of certainties. The plotters and agents of the heir-apparent redoubled their exertions, and soon there were ominous whispers of a state commission of lunacy, a summoning of all the notabilities of the realm in grand council, to decide upon my fitness to reign.

But as yet these suggestions were uttered only in whispers. No one was bold enough to take the initiative. As yet no one about Court felt himself sufficiently sure of his ground to lead off in the preliminary steps of this dangerous proceeding. My friends did not wish to, and among my enemies no one felt himself strong enough to attempt the desperate step.

In the midst of all these troubles the Princess was taken ill. She sunk rapidly, and soon it was announced by the doctors that she was beyond the aid of all medical science. She died in my arms at near the hour of midnight of the thirteenth day of her illness. She seemed conscious at the last moment, and anxious to say something, but she was powerless to utter a word. As those wonderfully beautiful eyes opened upon me with a smile of tenderness for the last time, and became fixed in the rigidity of death, I turned away my face (moved by a strange attraction), only to behold, grinning at me in the corner, the Demon of Terror. Little did the weeping attendants clustered around the dying bed of the Princess imagine that a laughing fiend was present to gloat over their sorrow and my grief.

This was more than I could endure, and in my desperation I mentally vowed to emancipate myself from the thralldom of the demon at any cost. Gazing at it steadily, I said, mentally: "I will again have you under my feet, vile slave! though it be at the price of all that I hold dear, even life itself."

Then it came to me like an inspiration how, by a supreme act of renunciation, I might conquer the dread enemy.

The next day I had passports prepared for Dr. Zell. I conferred upon him the diamond cross of our highest order of knighthood. I transmitted a million francs for his credit in New York. At my wish the Theosophic brothers, whose novice I was, aided me to restore to the rightful Prince, in his retirement, the soul that formerly belonged to him. I, in turn, regained my old person in Dr. Zell.

Concerning the process of this restoration I am forbidden to speak. Enough that it was difficult and dangerous, taxing the resources of occult science to their utmost limits.*

* The further elaboration of the theory of soul transference, it is thought by the society, would subserve no useful purpose, and might lead to experiments dangerous to life and reason. The solitary case of it (in modern times at least) afforded by my own experience is regarded by the brotherhood as entirely exceptional—one of Nature's rare freaks.—*Author's note.*

One morning a feeble, tottering man walked vacantly and aimlessly about in the princely galleries of Graffenburg Palace, where the day before I had walked. It was the same form, wearing the same royal robes. No one noticed the change, and yet Graffenburg had changed rulers.

The same day dispatches came to the capital that Dr. Zell, "the American," had crossed the frontier, and was already in French territory.

The Prince frowned. "And who is this Zell? The name sounds familiar, but yet I know him not."

In vain the courtiers try to explain; he does not seem to comprehend or remember. The attendants shake their heads and exchange significant glances.

"Ah, yes," they whisper to each other, "His Highness's mind is going fast since the Princess died. He was so fond of her in those last days."

The rightful Prince was restored body and soul to his hereditary rights and dignities; but, alas! he never realized it. The shock of metempsychosis was too great for his already impaired health. He was but a mental wreck, destined to drag along for a few wearisome days, with no knowledge or recollection of the drama in which he had been an actor.

I heard of his death soon after my return to my native land. The heir reigns in his stead to-day.

I returned to Tower Hill Farm—to the life of a philosopher. I found that my relatives were all dead. Indeed, there are no people now living in the country who have any recollection of me.

I learned that Estelle finally married Mr. St. Clair, lived with him unhappily a few years, and died still young and childless.

I ought to have married Estelle. After all, she was my only genuine love—my true affinity. I often dream of her now, dream that we are still school-mates together, that I love her to distraction, and that she scorns me. Or again, that she smiles upon me, and then I awaken radiant with happiness, and the thought keeps me in a cheerful frame of mind all the next day.

I am writing now under the very tree where we sat together on the night when the scene was enacted which is recorded in chapter twelve. She no longer repulsed me then. I could easily have won her, and might have settled down to a useful and happy life; but no, that was not to

be. I was already too far advanced in magic, and was immersed in the pride of knowledge. Ambition had already usurped the place of love.

Eloise became a *religieuse*, and died a devoted sister in the convent where I left her. She must have grieved long and bitterly for the lost Gertrude. How glad I am that I treated her fairly and justly.

Of the three women who were destined—each for a few sunny hours—to color my fate with the rose tints of love, doubtless the beautiful and gifted Charlotte of Graffenburg was by great odds the superior in intellectuality; but she was never mine in any true sense. She was the unconscious victim of my fatal curiosity—that unworthy curiosity that has caused the ruin of so many men and women through their uncontrolled passional attractions, to which it is often the primary moving impulse.

And now alone—amid the scenes of my youth—in the contemplation of Nature's mysteries, and in a retrospection not altogether unpleasant, I live till the next chapter of existence opens.

I might have been—even in this incarnation—the greatest thaumaturgist of this age; but my career was darkened by covetousness. If I had, at the moment of my first great temptation, but given up to the rightful owner the things of Cæsar; if I had nobly sought to make restitution of what came by accident to my possession—crown, princess, glory—ah, then I might have won an imperishable crown and controlled kingdoms of the ethereal universe. Instead of a merely mortal princess, I might have enjoyed the society of the transcendently beautiful daughters of the spirit zone, whose charms are to those of earthly women even as gold to dross, as diamonds to glass, as the sun to candle-light.

My narrative is told. I aspired to be as a god, I fell like a man.

My last legacy to initiates is comprised in these words:

Attribute to everything its true value. "The things which are above are as the things which are below." In the material look for the signature of the spiritual. All things come to him who rightly wills and waits.

THE END.

APPENDIX BY THE EDITOR.

THREE NOTABLE CONVERSATIONS.

By request, I subjoin three conversations had with the late Dr. Zell, which it is thought will be of interest, as embodying his opinions upon vital issues of the day.

Notwithstanding the seer's habitual reticence, he would occasionally express himself freely, though always tersely, and with the air of one entirely convinced.

One evening the conversation turned on

WOMAN SUFFRAGE.

I remarked that the woman suffrage movement seemed something phenomenal in the intellectual progress of the race.

DR. ZELL: "Not at all; many similar delusions have swept over the world before. There is nothing new."

SECRETARY: "Then you consider it a delusion, doctor?"

DR. ZELL: "It is a chimera born of the disordered intellectual antics of abnormally constituted female agitators, mad for notoriety."

SECRETARY: "Why do you say 'abnormally constituted?'"

DR. ZELL: "They are females in whom the masculine principle is unnaturally predominant, by reason either of age or of a state of disease consequent upon functional disturbance or organic defect.*

**Illustration from Natural History.*—"This latency of male characteristics is clearly illustrated by what frequently occurs to old hens. It is well known that a large number of female birds, when old or diseased, partly assume the secondary male characters of their species. Waterton (*Essays on Nat. Hist.*) gives a curious instance of a hen which had ceased laying, and had assumed the plumage, voice,

spurs and war-like disposition of the cock. The opposite case of the assumption by the male of female characters is illustrated by the fact that capons sometimes acquire the sitting instinct of the hen. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th Ed., page 247, vol. iv.) Article "Breeds." The italics are ours.

Here we have typified in the lower animal creation those twin freaks of nature, the masculine woman and the effeminate man, and both are shown to be the product of abnormal conditions.—*Editor*.

"The fundamental cause has a physical basis. It is essentially *an old woman's movement*."

SECRETARY: "It seems to be gaining ground very fast, and if it opens to women new fields for usefulness, why is it objectionable?"

DR. ZEIL: "It will never obtain. It *seems* to grow, because Man (the real power) tolerates these fancies, in ordinary times; but in moments of public exigency speculative sex theories are brushed aside, and the women are relegated to the nursery, or to some place of security."

SECRETARY: "What relation, then, do you hold she sustains to man?"

DR. ZEIL: "Woman is man's charming little sister, to care for and protect. No amount of shrieking will make her anything else."

Here my wife interposed, exclaiming:

"It is just *because* you men have failed to protect her that she now seeks to protect herself."

The doctor replied only with a grave look. He would not contend with a lady for the last word. He often ended discussions by leaving the other side with an apparent advantage. He cared not for a verbal victory, but his incisive sentences would haunt the memory of his adversary for a long time.

When we were alone, I resumed:

"It's a popular saying that 'the hand that rocks the cradle moves the world.'"

DR. ZEIL: "Perhaps so, if there happens to be a *boy* in the cradle—a boy like Napoleon."

SECRETARY: "Or a *girl* like Joan of Arc."

DR. ZEIL: "The Maid of Orleans captivated Charles VII. by her beauty. He kept her with him on his campaigns to stimulate the ardor of his superstitious troops. She was a mere picturesque enthusiast."

SECRETARY: "Yet you must admit that women have often wielded a great influence."

DR. ZELL: "Yes; it is owing to the magic of their beauty and the charm of their weakness."

SECRETARY: "Is there any charm in weakness, *per se*?"

DR. ZELL: "It is man's nature to fondle that which is weak and confiding, and to antagonize that which is presumptuous and aggressive. Woman's happiness and sole influence lies in her ability to please Man. Nature has defined her true function, as it has that of all created things, from an atom to a sun."

SECRETARY: "Yes, sir; but how do you prove that Nature has decreed her to remain subordinate to man?"

DR. ZELL (pointing to the Bible): "The same infinite Being who said, 'Let there be light' (and there was light), also said to Woman, 'Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.'—(Genesis, iii: 16.)"

THE LABOR QUESTION.

ONE day there arrived at Tower Hill a consignment of books from Boston. Among them was a copy of George's "Progress and Poverty." I read it with attention, and was shocked at such audacious disregard of the rights of property. Remarking upon the popularity of the book, and the general complacency with which it was regarded, Dr. Zell replied that it was "not a sign of the *complacency* of property holders, but rather of their utter indifference;" whereupon:

SECRETARY: "It seems to me that these anarchical tendencies of the times must eventually affect the values or prices of real estate, by causing a general distrust of the security of titles."

DR. ZELL: "Undoubtedly, if the movement should become national."

SECRETARY: "What would be the effect?"

DR. ZELL: "The more cautious and far-seeing land-owners would unload to the more venturesome. Capitalists would then begin to emigrate, taking their wealth out of the country, as happened in France before the Revolution and Reign of Terror."

SECRETARY: "The allied forces of labor, thoroughly consolidated, might do almost anything in a country like this, even to the confiscation of property."

DR. ZELL: "They will never be so consolidated—there are insurmountable obstacles inherent to the situation. The farmers will side with the property interest whenever they see their homes in real danger."

SECRETARY: "Yes, but the farmers seem to be in it, to promote sedition."

DR. ZELL: "Only to the extent of obtaining certain just concessions. They are an intelligent and conservative class, and will stand by the rights of property."

SECRETARY: "But what if the discontented classes *should* be in the majority and become dominant, and *should* attempt to carry out their programme of overturning existing institutions, might not they accomplish it?"

DR. ZELL: "It is one thing to be in the majority, and quite another to become dominant. If dominant, they might succeed in driving much of the capital out of the country and causing a bloody revolution; but it would end by leaving them in a worse situation than ever."

SECRETARY: "Is there, then, no remedy for the grievances of the poor—are the toilers always to be at the mercy of capital?"

DR. ZELL: "Relief for real grievances must come by organizations prudently conducted, on appeal to the sense of justice of mankind. There is nothing but sound in your last question. Labor is free, except as it chooses to fetter itself. Restrict your pauper immigration, and the Labor Question will take care of itself. *All men of real worth belong to the working class.*"

SECRETARY: "What do you think of a national system of co-operation, or communism?"

DR. ZELL: "Sheer idiocy, sir; the dream of demagogues and ignorant enthusiasts; a thing impracticable by the very constitution of the human mind."

SECRETARY: "If all sovereignty is vested in the people, the people then are omnipotent in the state, and it is only a question of their will, as it seems to me."

DR. ZELL: "No, sir; the minority would fight for their individuality, their homes and their property; many would seek an asylum under some stronger government. The soil of our country would be drenched in its best blood. Besides, the sovereignty of states lies not with mere numbers; it is wielded by the *intelligence and wealth*

of the country. No truer sentiment was ever uttered than that 'The wealth of the state is the state.'"

SECRETARY: "But may there not be intelligence without wealth?"

DR. ZELL: "Wealth is of itself an earnest of the intelligence behind it. If there be anywhere great intelligence without wealth, it will shortly become intelligence allied to wealth. The two things, rightly understood, are inseparable, and together they rule, and always will rule, the world."

GOVERNMENT.

I ONCE asked the doctor what form of government he thought the best for mankind.

DR. ZELL: "That form, whatever it may be, which best performs its functions at the least cost to the people."

SECRETARY: "What do you hold to be the proper functions of government?"

DR. ZELL: "To administer justice, protect life and property, and to guarantee to all the enjoyment of their reserved rights."

SECRETARY: "Are not republics best calculated to promote the interests of their people?"

DR. ZELL: "Not necessarily. Republics are on trial. Through their majorities they may yet prove to be the worst of despotisms."

SECRETARY: "Are not the people the safe and proper custodians of their own rights?"

DR. ZELL: "Some people may be, and others not."

SECRETARY: "Are not the results happier for all where the people govern?"

DR. ZELL: "As the people never govern, I can not say."

SECRETARY: "Surely ours is a system of self-government. If the people do not rule here, be kind enough to tell me who does?"

DR. ZELL: "The leaders rule here and everywhere. The mass in any country is simply a mob. The masses follow the chieftain of the hour, and indeed can not do otherwise. The world is governed by its true kings—the heroes and able men. It can never be otherwise, since *Nature produces leaders to lead.*"

FINIS.

Index to Subjects and Authors.

- Adam and Heva, 215
 Adept, privileges and powers of, etc., 57, 319, 324, 325
 Adjustment of mental and physical conditions, 299, 300
 Adonai, 289, 290
 Advice, 187
 Advice to initiates, 329
 Aerial genii, 267, 289
 Affinities, 301, 328
 Affiliation, 94
 Agitators, female, abnormally constituted, 331
 Agrippa, Henry Cornelius, cited, title-page, 55
 Air, spirits of, 267, 289
 Alexandrian Library, 68
 Alienation, conjugal, 237
 Alter, in magic, 109
 Ambition, 58, 329
 America, discussed, 226, 239
 A minister's methods, 268
 Amulets and charms, 92
 Analogies, 251
 Ancestors, 48
 Ancestral spirits, 169, 288
 Ancestry, 48
 Animal magnetism, 68
 Antipathy of dissimilar things, title-page
 Apparitions, 110
 Appolonius of Tyana, 268
 Appendix, 331
 Arabia, 69
 Aristocratic tendencies, with democratic ideas, 54
 Ashmand, 183
 Astaroth, 325
 Assurance, 81
 Astrology, 65, 175, *note*; 182, *note*; 188
 Astrology, horary, explained, 181, 185, 188, 192
 Astral light, 113
 Astrologer's letter, 66
 Attention, 319
 Attraction (passional), 329
 Author's preface, 19
 Austrian and Prussian rivalries, 294, 322
 Avarice, forbidden, 172
 Awakening, from the mesmeric trance, 100, 272, 282
 Awful mysteries (of evocation), 106
 Bacon, Lord, quoted, 166, 207
 Bertha of Rosenburg, 243
 Bible, the, 33, 34, cited, 172
 Bibliography of occultism, 182
 Biography, Dr. Johnson's estimate of, 21
 Boehm, 55
 Bossuet, cited, 253
 Bureaus of industry, suggested, 71
 Burke, cited, 247
 Brain, action of in thought, 103, 268
 Brontë, Charlotte, cited, 216
 Brotherhood of Mystics, 169, 327
 Byron, quoted, 155
 Cabinet, a magical, 14, 106
 Called (for a career), 163
 Cardan, 55, 163
 Cards, and card-playing, 38

- Catechism, the Assembly's
 Shorter, 30
 Cat, fable of, 85
 Charles VII. of France, 332
 Charms and amulets, 119
 Chemistry, 95
 Chess:
 The game of, 193
 Antiquity of, 233
 Club in Graffenburg, 229
 German school of, 224
 Giucoco-piano, 227
 Openings of, 227
 Literature of, 224, 231
 Morals of, 224
 Strategy of, 227
 Chocmah, 272
 Circumstances, force of, 48
 Clairvoyance, 171, 267
 Clavicle Solomon, addressed to
 his son Rehoboam, 272
 Clovis Astrologiæ Elimata, cited,
 190
 Coley, 182, 190
 Colton, cited, 233
 Communism, discussed, 334
 Compelling success, 163
 Concentration, 87
 Condorcet, cited, 61
 Conduct, 70
 Conscience, 146, 165
 Constant, Alphonsi Louis, 108
 Convents, Roman Catholic, 137,
 138
 Conversations, notable, 331
 Cooper (astrological author), 182
 Coquette, 149
 Correspondences, doctrine of, 330
 Corset, the, 88
 Courage, 163, 284
 Court dignitaries, 235
 Court life [see also Royal and
 Palace], 234
 Croffut, W. A., quoted, 161
 Crystal ball, 52
 Curiosity, 329

 Damsels of Light, 129
 Dangers of magic, 95
 Daughters of the Spirit Zone, 329
 Death, 238, 240, 264
 Death in life, 280
 Death, realization of, 22
 Deduction, 252
 DeFoe, 55
 D'Lembert, cited, 100
 Demons, 324
 Demon of Terror, 324
 Desire, power of, 55, 279
 Destiny, 66
 Determination, 98
 Diary, 52
 " Used in evocation, 109
 " Of a Princess, 305, 307
 Dieting for initiation, 67
 Digression between two worlds,
 272
 Diplomacy, 322
 Disguised as a woman, 81
 Disinterestedness, a negation, 63
 Divination, 181, 190, *note*; 193
 Divining soul, a, 66, 77, 78
 Dogma, 162
 Dogme et Rituel de la Haute
 Magie, 108
 Don Quixote, 55
 Dreams and Dreamland, 89, 92,
 229, 324
 Dress, harmonies of, 230
 Dress, woman's (effects on a
 man), 87
 Drowning, 271
 Drug, curious specific, 121
 Dryden, cited, 132
 Duplicity, 32
 Dynamite, 64

 Editor:
 His introduction, 9
 His notes, 108, 109, 161,
 161, 182, 183, 190, 251,
 266, 289, 319, 332
 Reports conversations had
 with the author, 331
 Egypt, 184
 Elemental spirits, 289
 " " Jealous of wom-
 en; *note*, 129

 Emblems, 246
 Employment, 71
 Ennemoser, cited, 92
 Ennemoser's History of Magic,
 251
 Enthusiasm, 63, 96

- Ephemeris, 65, 182
 Equilibrium, 300
 Esoteric magic, 105, 114
 Evil spirits, 324
 Evocation, 103
 Examples, choice of, 262
 Experiments, curious, 102
 Extraordinary herb, 116
 Eyre, Jane, extract from, 216
- Fable of the Cat and Woman, 85
 Fairy queens; *note*, 129
 Fairy tales, 53
 Faith, 63, 290
 Fancy, 233
 Farmers, their affiliation to property, 334
 Fascination, 156, 196, 280
 Feminine walk, 84
 Fires, magic, how fed, 109
 Folk-lore, 243
 Formative period of life, 48
 Fortune, good and bad, 43
 Fortune-telling, 52
 Franklin's Morals of Chess, 224
 Free agency, 181
 Freemasonry, 184
 French authorities on hypnotism, 161
 Frown, the masculine, 88
 Future events, to foresee, 58
- Gadbury, 182
 Games, 37
 Gates of Light, 272
 Genii, 57
 Genii, the Seven, 57
 Gentleman, instincts of a, 218
 George's "Progress and Poverty," 333
- German:
 Aristocracy, 210, 211
 Army, discipline and equipment of, 255
 School of Chess, 224
 Legends, 243
 Mythology, 243
 Nation, dedication to, 3
 People, 210
 Scholars, 175
 Sovereignties, 209, 211
- Germany:
 A typical city of, 216
 Rulers and people, 209
 Smaller states of, 210
 Under the Federal Diet, 209
 Gnomes, 289
 Government:
 Discussed, 335
 Functions of, 335
 The best, 335
 Greatness, 216
 Greville, cited, 241
- Hallucination, 266
 Happiness, pursuit of, 64
 Hartmann, cited, 188
 Haunting spirits, 224
 Headache, 195
 Heart of a book, 49
 Hebrew MS., translation from, 57
 Herb of love, 116
 Herb of the sun, 116
 Hermes, 231
 Hermetic Philosophy, 57
 Hermetic Science, 57
 Herschel, 66
 History of Magic, Ennemoser's, 251
 Horoscope, 65, 181, 188
 Household royal [see Palace], 276
 Houses, in astrology, 133
 Howitt, William, 251
 Hypnotism, 89, 153
 " Dangers of, 155, 266
 " Secret methods of, 255
 Hypothesis, in relation to magic, 252
- Idiosyncrasy, 321
 Illumination, 59
 Illustration from natural history, 331
 Imagination, 89
 Impecuniosity, 135
 Incantation, 269
 Incense in magic, 109
 India, 69, 162
 Individuality, 234
 Indolence, 63
 Induction, 252

- Infatuation, 319
 Initiation, secrets of inviolable, 167, 215
 Initiation, preparatory rites of, 87, 112
 Intelligence and wealth, 334
 Intoxication of the imagination, 112
 Introduction by the editor, 9
 Invisibility, a drug for, 286
 Invocation of the dead, 104, 109
 " " Elementals, 288
- Jackson, Gen. Andrew, 284
 Jews, characteristics of, 226
 Joan of Arc, 332
 Johnson, Dr., cited, 21, 55, 81, 116, 279
 Jonson, Ben., cited, 132
 Justice, 80, 165
- Keeper of the Threshold, 325
 Kissing, 259
 Knowledge, indispensable to the adept, 65
 Knowledge, pride of, 329
- Labor question, discussed, 333
 La Croix, cited, 262
 Learning to walk, 84
 Leaders (popular), 335
 Levi Eliphas, cited, 112, 272
 Library, Alexandrian, 68
 Library, at Tower Hill, 53
 Life impressions, 106
 Life, lessons of, 21
 Lilly, William, quoted, 188
 Literature of astrology, 182
 " " chess, 224, 231
 Locke, cited, 224
 Love:
 And hate, 58
 A fever, 260
 A generous, 309
 A lyric on, 277
 Analogies of, 260
 Analysis of, 260, 277
 As it concerns adepts, 260
 Curiosities of, 261, 329
 First and last, 159
 Magnanimity of, 309
 Men's for women, 61
- Nature of, 260
 Sir Walter Scott's words on, 309
 Temptations of, 131
 The only thing, 277
 To conquer, 58, 261
- Lully, 163
- Macaulay, T. B., cited, 240
 Magi, the, 169
 Magic:
 Altars, 106
 Cabinet, 106
 Cardinal principles of, 65
 Dangers of, 95
 Defined, 188
 Fires, 109
 Incense, 109
 Lamp, 106
 Not sorcery, 64
 Perfumes, 109, 112
 Regalia, 106
 Resources of, 319
 Rod, 114
 Sword, 109
- Magus, 165
 Magical axiom, 129
 " Paraphernalia, 14, 16, 106
 Magnetic influence, 156
 " Sleep, 281, 282
 " Passes, 97
 Magnetism, 157, 280
 " Stages of, 97
- Maid of Orleans, 332
 Manual of Court Regulations, 248
 Marriage not for adepts, 129
 Marriages, how precipitated; note, 120
- Masculine principle, the, 331
 Maxwell, quoted, title-page
 Medicines-Magnetica, cited, title-page
 Medicine, the universal, 57
 Memory and mind pictures, 102
 Men, hard to satisfy, 155
 Mental discipline, 319
 " Phenomena, 103, 268
- Mesmer, 68
 Mesmeric sleep, 281
 " Retrospection, 102, 192, 196
 Mesmerism, 68

- Metamorphosis, 304, 328
 Metaphysics, 175
 Midsummer night, for love, 157
 Military review, 254
 Mind-reading by retrospection, 196
 Mistakes of lovers, 157
 Money, 41, 223
 " Difficulties, 223
 Moral taint, 169
 Morrison, Lieut., H. M. S., 182
 Mother, 21, 22, 23, 32, 51, 52, 74, 105, 110, 133, 289
 Motion, the perpetual, 58
 Motives, 63
 Mystic fraternity, 169, 327
 Mysticism, obscurities of, 59, 62
 Mythology, Oriental, 184

 Napoleon, cited, 69, 303
 Nativity, 66, 78
 Nature, 43
 " To subdue, 58
 Neophyte, 63
 New England:
 Aristocratic tendencies of, 54
 Domestic discipline, 28
 Inquisitiveness, 45
 Landscape, 43
 Puritan notions, 54
 Sunday superstitions in, 27
 Newton, Sir Isaac, 182
 New York City, 69, 70
 North American Review, cited, 161
 Notable conversations, 331
 Numerical art, 53

 Obedience, 28, 75
 Oblivion (of old houses), 320
 Occultism, 9
 Omens, 216, 247
 Oratory, 114
 Organic quality, 175

 Paine, Thos., 36
 Palace [see also Royal and Court]:
 Apartments of, 233, 274
 Architecture, 311
 Burial vaults, 263
 Chapel of, 262

 Curiosities of, 319
 Galleries of, 311
 Library of, 221, 253, 257, 260
 Life in, 276
 Manual of, 247
 Private apartments of, 311
 Rooms proscribed in, 320
 Routine, 276
 Rules of, 248
 Secret passages, 311
 Spies and intrigues of, 277, 324
 Traditions of, 318, 320, 321
 Treasure room in, 321

 Pantacles, 112
 Paracelsus, 55, 163
 Pariah, a, 56
 Partridge, 182
 Penalties for violating rules of the royal household, 248
 Pentagram, 109, 111, 267
 Perfumes, in magic, 109, 273
 Phantasmagoria, 290
 Phenomena, 12
 Philosophic methods, 252
 Philosopher's stone, 57
 Pilgrim's Progress, 33
 Placidus de Titus, 182
 Planetary influence, 12
 Planets, 192
 Powers of the air, 267, 289
 Prayer, 32
 Predictions, 58, 67, 170
 Premonitions, 219
 Preparations for evoking the dead, 106, 107
 Presentiments, 216; *note*.
 Privileges and powers of an adept, 57
 Progress and Poverty (George's), 333
 Property, rights of, 334
 Prospects, 76
 Providence, 64, 163
 Prudhomme, cited, 216
 Ptolemy Claudius, 182
 Pythagoras, 268

 Raphael, 182
 Reality of magical phenomena, 47

- Regalia, in ceremonial magic, 14, 106
- Reincarnation, 168
- Remembrance, 318
- Renunciation, 327
- Resources of magic, 17, 57
- Responsives, 161
- Retrospection in mind-reading, 94
- Rings, 315
- Rising above externals, 116
- Ritual, magical, 56, 108; *note*
- Rehoboam, advice to, by King Solomon, 272
- Rochefoucauld, cited, 70, 155
- Roman Catholic Convents, 137, 138
- Royal:
 - Chapel, 262
 - Levee, 233
 - Mistresses, 236, 277, 322
 - Reception, 234
 - Household, manual - of, 248, 276
- Saint Everemond, cited, 233
- “ Thomas, on love, 61
- “ Veronica, referred to, 315
- Salamanders, 289
- Savage animals, to subdue, 12, 58
- Science, 223
- “ The universal, 58
- Sciences, their relations to one another, 61
- Scotch Presbyterians, 24
- Scott, Sir Walter, cited, 309
- Scripture, cited, 172, 218, 333
- Secret Brotherhood of Theosophists, 166
- Secret passages in palaces, 311
- “ Processes of hypnotism 265
- Secret of transmutation, 58
- Secrets of women's hearts, 58, 69
- Self-control, 63, 116
- Selfishness, a law of life, 63
- Sentiment, 308
- Serpents, to charm, 58
- Seven Genii, 57
- “ Least privileges of the adept, 58
- Seven transcendent privileges of adepts, 57
- Sex, facility of disguising, 141
- Shakespeare, cited, 36, 100, 253
- Signs, 247
- Silence, 15, 63
- Singularity, 233
- Small things and their relations, 49
- Society, 81
- Solar system, 182
- Solitude, 63
- Solomon, King, words to his son, 272
- Somnambulism, 272
- Sorcery, not magic, 64
- Soul, 267
- “ Connection with the body, 267
- “ Detached from the body, 268
- “ Nature of, 290
- “ The substantial part, 267
- “ Transference; *note*, 327
- Souls disembodied, 268
- Souvenirs, in evocation, 106
- Sovereignty of the people, discussed, App., 334
- Spectral maiden, the, 320
- Sphere, personal, 301
- Spiritualism, 242
- Spiritual zone, 271, 329
- Spirit, disengaged from the body, 268, 271
- Spirit life, 288
- Spirits, tricks of, 325
- Spirits will serve the adept, 272, 289
- Spirits, wounded, 175
- Sport of demons, 124, 324
- Study, social effects of, 233
- Success compelled, 163
- Suddenness of events in some lives, 246
- Sunday observance in New England, 27
- Supernatural, the, 155
- Suspicion, 166
- Swedenborg 53, 268
- Sylphs, 129, 239
- Symbols, 246
- Sympathy of similar things, title-page, 216, 250

- Talismans, 119
 Tennyson, quoted, 92, 166
 Thaumaturgy, 329
 Theosophy, 166
 Traditions of a palace, 321
 Train of thought, to view, 196
 Trance state, 103, 192, 196
 Transcendental magic, 123
 Transmigration, 287
 Trial mission, 166
 Trifling with mysteries, 161
 Trigonometry, 65
 Truth, 116, 207
- Uncanny studies, 60
 Undines, 129, 289
 Unique experiment, 289
 Universal agent of life, the, 68
 Universalists, 24
 Unprecedented, the, realized, 303
 Uranus, 66, 182, 246
 Usages of a royal court, 252
- Van Helmont, cited, 116
 Vervane and verbena, 109
 Virgin, shrine of, 315
 Visible contact in hypnotism not
 a *sine quâ non*, 156, 157
- Warnings, 243
- Wealth, secret of, 58
 White lady of Germany, 243
 Will, 63, 290, 301
 Wilson's Dictionary of Astrology, 182
 Witchcraft, 59
 " And sorcery, decrees
 against, 249
- Woman:
- Affinity to the night side
 of nature, 92
 - Apostrophe to, 278
 - Characteristic walks of, 84
 - Discussed, 332
 - Dr. Zell in the disguise of
 a, 81
 - Herself only among wom-
 en, 139
 - " Man's little sister," 332
 - Of the spirit land, 329
 - Mental peculiarities of, 245
 - Suffrage, discussed, 331
- Word, the incommunicable, 65
 Words, magic, 64
 " Mystic, 288
 World of spirits, 169
- Yankee curiosity, 45
 Youth, 69
- Zadkiel, astrological author, 182

