

DREAMS OF THE DEAD

BY

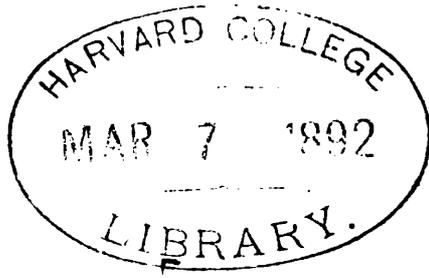
EDWARD STANTON

Edward Stanton

**“To die — to sleep —
To sleep! perchance to dream, — Ay, there’s the rub,
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
Must give us pause.”**

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DREAMS OF THE DEAD

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INTRODUCTION

My old friend, Edward Stanton, in asking me to introduce his book to the reading public, is moved, no doubt, with the desire to show that he is not entirely alone in his belief that his daring venture is justified by the awakened condition of the popular mind on subjects philosophic, mystic, and religious. Holding a firm faith in the growth and spread of broader, more correct views of the deepest questions of life, in the average human mind, my judgment is in hearty accord with Mr. Stanton's, as to the wisdom of his final decision to publish what was first intended for the private perusal of a small circle of close associates.

I have known the writer of this strange tale for very many years. I knew him as toddling infant, schoolboy, youthful student, and closest army comrade in bivouac, camp, battle and Confederate prison. As we have grown old together, and the memories of the hardships and excitements

of war have become dimmed, we have retained our good fellowship in common tastes and habits.

I am not at liberty to expose any of the secrets of my friend's personality ; nor is this necessary, for he has told all that need be known by the reader regarding his private life. I can accept, however, almost any of his relations of startling, sometimes grewsome experiences, easier than the one contained in that hint to Randolph Cecil, of his possessing a knowledge of common law.

When the manuscript of this story was placed on my desk, and my eyes caught the sombre title, "Dreams of the Dead," I could not resist a cold chill, lest the author had brought to light some very occult phases of his life, which I hoped were buried in the oblivion of healthful forgetfulness; but not many pages had been turned, before I perceived that all fears were groundless, — that my life-long companion had launched no bark on the stormy sea of morbid reminiscence, but that he was recounting some very peculiar events of a psychic experience.

Sharing the religious scepticism of Stanton, I have been shocked by none of his implied doubts of the biblical cosmogony; and the teachings of

Hasta the sage, and of Cecil the mystic, appeal to my reason almost as much as they seem to have affected the author himself.

A very striking, interesting article on the influence of ancient Asiatic thought upon the European mind appeared not long ago in one of the leading French reviews. The writer of that essay, in treating some very suggestive branches of his theme, proved satisfactorily to any unprejudiced mind, not only the immense influence of the esoteric doctrines of Zoroastrianism, Brahminism, and Buddhism, in formulating the most precious traditions of the early Christian faith; but he also showed clearly the true origin of metaphysical speculations upon which are based the soundest systems of German philosophy. It cannot be disputed that many of the most beautiful inspirations of modern poetical genius have been drawn from that deep well of spiritual truth, hidden from all but the most earnest searchers, within the secret recesses of Buddhistic philosophy. The educational result of the wide and intelligent reading of the two exquisite poems, "The Light of Asia" and "The Light of the World," written by that true mystic, Edwin Arnold, has been beyond calculation. The intellectual judgment of thousands

has been broadened to a purer conception of divine regard for the spiritual needs of humanity by the light cast on the character and services of the two most perfect examples of true manhood ever vouchsafed to mortals in the flesh, Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, and Jesus, the Christ.

My purpose in referring to the impress on the western mind of this very ancient Hindoo, or rather let me term it Aryan, speculation, is to account, partially, for the tendency of belief shown by the author, in receiving so readily his dream-teachings. We wonder, as we read, whether Stanton has learned the secret of "dreaming true." When one has caught that supreme, occult mystery of "dreaming true," no outward sorrows of existence, no petty disappointments of personal ambition, no effects of moral lapses even, interfere with the real life of the physically unconscious self, when it has become *spiritually* conscious.

Knowing the taste in reading of my friend, and how deeply he was impressed by his thorough study of the secret doctrines of what Christians call Paganism, I can understand how, even unrecognized by his own intellect, his dream-life was influenced by such study.

I am unable to believe—and I think most readers will share my doubts—that Edward Stanton, a fair type of the “every-day sort of man,” really had such weird adventures or had them exactly as related; but as regards the teachings received in that old temple, and the impulse for a purer moral life gained from those teachings, there can be no difference of opinion; and in this belief I think other readers will agree.

I must state that Randolph Cecil is not, in all respects, a mythical personage. I am proud to acknowledge a slight acquaintanceship with a noble mystic—an honorable member of the “Order of the Red Cross,” to whom the author has given a fictitious cognomen. I can vouch for his power on psychic lines, and do not scrutinize too closely Mr. Stanton’s assertions regarding the hypnotic trance.

I think those people who have levelled the barriers of bigoted religious, materialistic, or scientific creeds, and who are courageous enough to walk into the open field of eclecticism, with no trace of the binding shackles of inherited or acquired prejudice, have reasons for congratulation in the signs of the times. There are many causes producing their cheering effects in the mental

atmosphere of even the narrowest theological, materialistic, and so-called scientific circles. The evidences of human possibilities on the physical plane, especially in respect to man's mental powers, are confounding the old-time scientists. The proof of spiritual powers possessed by sensitive persons still in the flesh, removes the basis of materialism; and, finally, the acknowledged truths in regard to the superiority of certain moral precepts of one, at least, of the great world-religions, antedating exoteric Christianity by several hundred years, should teach modesty to the theological circles; so, as a conclusion, the judicious eclectic is probably the wisest atom in the great mass of human ignorance.

To go more into detail on the broad subjects of interest suggested by my friend, the investigations of modern physical science have corroborated the most extreme views held by the old alchemists and magicians; that is, the wondrous tales of occurrences called supernatural, and ranked in the minds of *enlightened* moderns as superstitions, can be satisfactorily explained by proven facts, established by the careful experiments of the various schools of French and German hypnosis.

The patient and thorough labors of a selected body of scientific men, organized as the English and American Psychical Societies, have proved to the minds of all who have given these questions intelligent study, the most astonishing facts, — facts which go far to establish the spiritual existence of the individual soul after the dissolution of the material body.

But such is the natural, and perhaps divinely inspired, scepticism of the mortal mind, that those people who have failed to receive personal evidence from across the threshold, remained unconvinced. The doubting Thomases are waiting for the thrust of the hand into the bleeding wound. Whether what my friend relates in this extraordinary book will convert a confirmed sceptic — provided such an unhappy one shall read it — is extremely doubtful; but to the wavering mind, longing for some reasonable faith in an intelligible purpose in this existence of sorrow, suffering, and often deadly disappointment, this recital of abnormal, or seldom granted, experiences will appeal with some force; else my own impressions are no criterion of guidance in judging the feelings of others.

As my old comrade, Stanton, has excused me from any personal expression of opinion regarding

his literary style, I am not expected to point out errors of construction or of proper sequence. I suppose he had excellent reasons for a certain repetition of idea, which no one can fail to notice; but let the professional critics point out the faults.

It may, perhaps, be appropriate, to inform my socialistic friends, that Captain Stanton is a sincere believer in social and industrial reform, and an ardent disciple of the economic doctrines of Edward Bellamy. If I could have controlled his pen when he was engaged in recording the teachings received in the old Mountain Castle, I should have increased the size of this book by many pages — pages devoted to giving some practical plan whereby men could bring quickly that day when the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity shall be established. Stanton tells us all to look between the lines of his writing, that before any outward forms of a truer social life are possible, the inner spirits of the nations must be inspired from the Eternal. His guide has told him that the glorious day will soon dawn, but that a terrible social convulsion may precede the rising of a brighter sun that shall shine on a western Commonwealth of industrial peace and happiness.

One final word: I believe that the moral effect of "Dreams of the Dead" ought to be most excellent, whatever shall be the individual opinions of its readers as to the occurrences narrated.

EDWARD S. HUNTINGTON.

“I once dreamed a common dream. When I awoke I told all from beginning to end. The angels said, that the particulars tallied with what they were talking about ; not that these were the same as I had dreamed, but corresponding and representing thus every one of them was so singly.” — SWEDENBORG.

DREAMS OF THE DEAD

CHAPTER I

I AWOKE the other night from a deep sleep, — that is, it seemed to my consciousness I had awakened; though I realized my body lay in the bed, in the depths of slumber, while my hidden self was in possession of all its mental faculties, but away from the physical form. I could hear the wind moan through the pines just outside the open window, and the splash of raindrops, as if there had been a sudden summer shower. I could even hear the deep, regular breathing of my sleeping personality, but with no idea of any connection with it.

From early boyhood I have been subject at long intervals to attacks, during which no effort of will could move my body or any of its members. Such trances, called "*nightmare*," have been experienced by almost everybody; but the state of

consciousness I am now describing was sharply different from catalepsy, or the old-fashioned visitations of slumber. Twice before in my life had I been in my present condition, — freed, apparently, from the limitations of physical sense, and from the shell of an earthly body, — but previously in similar states I had been urged by a nervous fright to return at once to my normal condition. Emboldened by the safety of the former experiences, I determined to use this freedom from the trammels of sense to transport myself in thought to a distant place; for I realized I was beyond the bounds of mortal estimates of time and space. Still a little timid, however, I hesitated, lest by going too far from my body, which had served me so faithfully for fifty years, I might not be able to return.

Just as my courage came, and as I was ready to use my will for astral journeying, I felt I was not alone; there were other spiritual forms about me. Suddenly a voice called my name. I use the term voice to express a wave of thought which took the semblance of spoken words, though I doubt whether a physical ear could have caught a sound. Startled, naturally, but with boldness born of my strange state I answered the appeal by inquiring

who was addressing me so familiarly. Immediately the reply came:—

“Do not ask who we are, nor who it is that especially speaks to you. We are friends who have come to warn. We are forms generated from living brain-cells still active in decomposing, disintegrating bodies laid away in consecrated earth. We are dreams of the dead clothed in attenuated material shape.”

“Dreams of the dead?” I replied; “then I must be, in my present airy figure, merely a dream of my poor body sleeping so peacefully on the bed below me.”

“You say truly; but when your dream is finished you can return to your body, and take your place with living men, whereas we must return to our horrible abode in yonder city of graves; nor can we be freed to join our spiritual selves in higher realms until the last atom of brain tissue of our earthly shells has gone to dust. May a redeeming fate speed that hour!”

“Then do all the dead dream, and do all these dreams take shape in astral forms?”

“Even so,” was the reply, echoed by a ghostly chorus; “and these dreams have a devilish influence over many earthly affairs. Ghouls, vam-

pires, elementals, and these wandering, mis-shapen thoughts of brains, uncontrolled by spiritual consciousness, perform untold mischief by influence over weak wills in living bodies.”

But just at this moment sudden fright seized me, and with one strong wish I regained my sleeping body; and it was with a refreshing sense of relief I found I could move hand, foot, and head. With a long sigh as I awoke, the resolve was fixed in my mind, that when I could no longer use this earthly frame, it should be consigned to the furnace of cremation; for there can be no brain-cells left to form thought in the chemical constituents of clean white ash.

CHAPTER II

FOR several days following the weird experiences of that night of ghostly visitations my mind was filled with conflicting emotions. The bright sunshine, the practical affairs of life, and the logical assurance of my waking senses, drove all metaphysical speculation from my thought during the day; but as night came on I could not interest myself in my accustomed reading. The interviews with those grewsome ghosts, of what I was then disposed to call disordered fancy, would persist in distracting my attention from the matter of the printed page. Argue as I would with myself, with appeals to my common-sense, — attributing the appearances of that gloomy night to a disordered imagination, or a disturbed nervous condition, — I could not convince my inner consciousness that the whole vision was the result of temporary hallucination. I was very sure that never in my waking moments had any such strange ideas as “dreams of the dead” come into

my mind. I had often thought it possible that a person, by fierce and prolonged concentration of will, might free himself from bodily limitations, and leaving the body in a state of trance, might place his transcendental ego in temporary unison with the higher mind and by this means discover facts taking place at a distance; but no such dreadful fancies as had taken shape in those silent midnight hours had ever troubled me.

After an evening of such musings, but with no settled conviction on the matter, I went to my bed, determined, if I could once more leave the physical body and retain a clear realization of self, that I would explore the realms of thought without fear, and perhaps to some purpose. Expectation and desire brought their result. Just as the clock in the adjoining village was striking the hour of twelve, I awoke—or it seemed that I awoke; but, in attempting to take a more comfortable position in the bed, I found my will had no control of the body. I at once perceived that I was again in the astral shape. Remembering the fixed determination of waking hours, I formed in thought the wish to interview once more some wandering spirit. Immediately a voice, from one close by, said: “I am with you, and at your com-

mand. Though I can find the company of plenty of souls such as I, it is very hard in all my astral wanderings to meet with the intelligent souls of living bodies."

"Tell me," said I, "what you mean by 'intelligent souls of living bodies.' Do you mean you meet with light shapes of men still in the flesh, but who are not conscious of separation from their physical frames?"

"I do," replied the dream-spirit. "In deep sleep it is often the case that the animal soul of man, clothed in astral form (I observe you seem familiar with this term), roams through space; but with no guiding control of intellectual judgment. Such a soul cannot discriminate between the true and false in what is seen in the astral light; so it carries back to the human consciousness a jumble of strange experiences which the physical subject calls his dreams. But in your case it is different. In entering your astral form you have brought your whole spiritual entity. Your present shape, invisible to all earthly eyes, contains the four higher principles of your human personality. The two *lower*, the material shell and the spirit of vital life, are on the bed yonder!

“Then what are the four principles constituting my present individuality? I certainly feel myself to be a complete man now, with every mental faculty in my possession. Indeed, I feel more intelligent, and better fitted for real work than when I am hampered with that material form.”

“You must know,” said my visitor, “that every human being is constituted with six principles. First, the earthly body, made up of countless life-cells, each cell being a germ of individual vitality, even possessing a low grade of intelligence. Second, the general vital principle, which holds the millions and millions of germs; constituting bones and tissues, the brain, heart, lungs, and other organs, in control and united action. This vital principle is a mysterious force which holds each living body in shape and activity, as the forces of what are called gravity and electricity hold the universe in order. Third, the astral body, a perfect counterpart of the grosser earthly body; but constituted with such attenuated matter that it is invisible to the mortal eye, though plainly perceived by all beings in the astral light. When you have educated the power of vision really in your possession, in your present shape, you will be astonished to see how filled is all space with

these astral inhabitants. The fourth principle is called the animal soul, possessed by all forms of earthly life, even animating with low intelligence the members of the world called vegetable. The oak as it moves in the summer breeze is conscious of an individual existence, through the possession of this soul, termed animal. The fifth constituent principle is an attribute of human beings only. It is the intelligent, the earthly mind, the power of abstract reasoning. The sixth principle is termed the Spiritual Soul, the only human quality that survives the decay of the body. It is the real individual, the higher self; and it retains its personal identity through manifold experiences gained by repeated incarnations in form after form of physical life on this and other earths. There is a seventh principle which my knowledge does not yet penetrate. As all manifestations in matter are only exhibitions of the Great Will, the seventh principle may be the one eternal mind of which we are all a part."

This information given me by my astral visitor, though requiring many words in written expression, was communicated by what may be described as brief flashes of thought, occupying barely more than a moment of time, as measured

by bodily sense. The theories of the seven principles presented by this spiritual teacher were not new; and it occurred to me that perhaps this particular dream of a dead man, given through my unknown ghost, was an old superstition retained by those atoms of his brain which had vitality enough to group together in orderly combination. Curious to know something of my astral companion, — his name in life and what the circumstances of that life were and how long since his earthly career in bodily form had ceased, — I expressed this wish in thought. Immediately came the reply, giving the name of a friend who passed away by sudden illness seven years ago, and who had been buried in a distant western town.

“Were you conscious of your own death? Did you realize the preparation for burial? Could you hear the words spoken by the people about you?”

“Fortunately, no!” was the reply. “The shock of physical death brings a delirium of soul, mind, and spirit; so all consciousness ceases for quite a long space of time, — that is, in my own case it was so. When I awoke I did not realize that my body was dead, and that this thin form

was my only soul clothing. You must understand that no mundane soul can remain long away from its earthly body, be that body living or dead; so when I first came to a realization of my death, though away from my corpse at the time, I was soon drawn to it by a mysterious attraction, and then the fact of my death came to me with horrible force. The spiritually minded of this earth, the few exceptional men and women who have conquered the attractions of flesh, and who have aspired to an understanding and a practice of the higher teachings, are never delayed by the mundane lodgings. Such spirits, purified already, are not hampered in their flight to higher realms by the astral form; the latter is left with no intelligence to haunt the body, until both perish by the disintegrating hand of time. But with the majority, to which your unfortunate friend belongs, the spiritual self, — the sixth principle, — and the mind, or intellectual principle, must remain with the shadowy figure, until either the physical body perishes, or until all earthly desires are overcome by intense aspirations for a knowledge of holy truth. But I must not keep you longer in your present state, or you may join the melancholy throng who lament, too late, their lost opportuni-

ties and mistaken paths. Join that sleeping body now; we shall meet many times yet before you shall be called upon to suffer with my suffering. I may teach you truths that shall save you from my fate. Adieu, for three of your earthly nights; then call my name. But do not venture this abnormal experience too frequently."

"One question before I return to my natural sleep," said I. "Since the death of your body have you gained in knowledge of things material and of things spiritual; or are you still in the same bonds of ignorance that bind all mortals?"

"One word must content you now. Angels from the superior regions of divine thought are devoted in their labors to educate such souls as I in the higher spiritual knowledge, and to lead us away from the gross mundane inclinations. As humanity in the flesh is constantly taught to shun the paths of selfish sin, by inspirations from the eternal mind, so are we poor ghosts, held in durance by our animal longings, instructed by messengers from the realms of pure truth. When next we meet, it may be that you shall see for yourself the transcendent glory of one of these angelic teachers. Farewell."

CHAPTER III

ACCEPTING the admonition of my old friend, as well as taught by my own common-sense, I did not allow my thought to dwell on any mystical matters for three days after the last experience. I busied myself in the most practical ways; nor did I mention to any one the new theories of life and death so strangely communicated to me. I had no wish to be looked upon as a lunatic. Indeed, I had banished the whole subject so entirely from my mind, that it was quite a shock to find myself, in the middle of the third night, again away from my body, and to hear the greeting of my friend: —

“I want you to try your powers of astral vision to-night, and also to accompany me on a little journey.”

With these words I felt myself drawn through the air at a rapid rate, and for the first time while in this state realized my power of vision. The figure by my side was a refined image of my friend

Barton, who had given me his name in our last interview. In life he had been a lively, jovial fellow whose face had not belied his real character. He had been self-indulgent, sensual, a lover of the grossest forms of animal enjoyment. Now his countenance expressed only care-worn anxiety, sorrow and remorse, but, withal, a patient resignation to fate. Looking away from my companion the air seemed to me full of forms rushing in every direction; but with such swiftness did these figures glide, I could only now and then obtain a glimpse of their faces, and by those I could distinguish I was not tempted to peer closer. Malignant leers, savage scowls, idiotic stupidity and inane smiles, were the prevailing characteristics of all the ghosts that I could see as we swept along. Suddenly there seemed to be a pressure upon my left arm, — my friend was at my right, — and in looking to see what caused this I recoiled in horror. My pen cannot describe the distorted form with the devilish face that forced itself closer and closer upon me. Gustave Doré, in putting on canvas the satanic grins and malicious mouthings of the imps of Dante's "Inferno," does not approach the delirious venom exhibited by this loathsome object now attempting to seize my

arm. Barton noticed my agitation, and, with one strange ejaculation, drove my unwelcome neighbor away.

“Who was he?” whispered I.

“That was a foul vampire — the most loathsome form of an astral body. I am sorry you should have seen one of those devils so soon. You will meet with many dreadful shapes, but with few so repulsive as this one just encountered. These astral forms of the dead represent the sum-total of thought contained in each parent brain of the physical body. If that thought in its aggregate has been justly inclined, no matter how much the influence of earthly passions may have led the subject away from spiritual truth, the astral figure will not be abhorrent; it will only call forth pity, and in the purified heart, love. But a large proportion of the flitting shapes now around us, are only temporary forms of mortal men and women who possessed no saving spiritual qualities. These spectres are animated by no higher principle than the simple animal soul. Hovering near the earth, the little life remaining to them will soon be spent. Others are like myself, trying to conquer earthly desire, that their higher principles may be freed for further spiritual progression. Then a few

are empty shells, retaining the animal soul, but whose real selves have already gone to heavenly rest, in order to gain fresh strength for further earthly experience."

Perceiving that my companion did not voluntarily inform me further, regarding what he had termed *the vampire*, I did not press him on that point, though I could not rouse my interest at once to all that was so new to me; for the abhorrent image of the ghoul, with his lolling black tongue and bloodshot eyes, seemed to haunt my thought to the exclusion of everything else. What if, on my return to my room, I should find that cruel beast with my body, helpless on its couch, bereft of its guardian spirit! Barton noticed my disturbance, and gave me some slight comfort by the assurance, that no ghoul, vampire, or dangerous spirit of any kind, could penetrate the aura surrounding an earthly body, unless that aura contained a congenial thought-atmosphere. "These ghosts we see about us are following thought-inclinations toward receptive abodes in the brains of mortal beings, who are at this hour plunged in slumber. They will be busy until waking hours, weaving curious thought-patterns in drowsy brains; and the results of this idle

employment of time-weary spirits will be told as strange dreams by the recipients. I was on a foolish errand of this kind when I first discovered you in astral form."

"And who were the other ghosts with you that night? There seemed to be a throng of airy figures."

"All were astrals of the dreaming dead; but they were not all such spirits as you should encourage. You are not yet blessed with a finished will; and several of the souls present that night would have been most glad to take advantage of any yielding of your intent toward the wrong, to develop any unworthy thought you might cherish."

"Then obsession is a fact?" I asked.

"In very rare cases, yes. When the will of man or of woman is totally weak, it is possible for a strong spirit to enter the body of such an imbecile, for a short time, and use it as an instrument for material pleasure and sin. In cases of alcoholic abuse on the part of subjects with exhausted will-power, the danger is very great that the astral body of some waiting, wicked intelligence may take possession and hold devilish carnival, until a waning vitality calls it back to its own decaying carcass."

During this intercourse of thought, which could hardly be called a conversation, we had been moving through the air with a rapid, though almost imperceptible, motion. I had distinguished nothing above or below me. My attention to the ideas presented by my spiritual comrade were only occasionally distracted by some especially disturbed features of a passing ghost. It is not strange that my whole being was agitated by these new and dreadful revelations of a world beyond human consciousness. I had so much to ask my companion that I could not decide where to begin. Strange to relate, I had now no nervous fears regarding my ability to return to my sleeping body; for my friend assured me a single wish would transport me back, as thought travels with speed quicker than a lightning-flash. This prompted me to ask, —

“Why, then, do we appear to be moving through space? If we, at this moment, are beyond the measurement of time, why should it require this apparent journey to reach the destination you have chosen?”

“Merely to accustom you to astral methods, and to give you a semblance of time in which to observe the myriads of flitting shadows of the dead.

We will now return and complete the lesson of the night. I wish you to visit our most aristocratic city of the dead, Mt. Auburn."

In a few moments we were there; but it did not seem like the quiet, beautiful retreat that it had appeared to my earthly sense when I had last visited it; for now the avenues and paths were filled with throngs of airy figures, and what struck me with especial wonder, I could see through mounds and blocks of stone as if they were transparent, and I could perceive plainly the different bodies as they lay in the grave. I asked for an explanation of this, and my friend said:—

"You are new, indeed, to the powers of your abnormal sense. Matter, as it is called, is no obstruction to the clear sight of mind. Yonder block of granite is made up of separate millions of atoms and molecules, but the force that holds them in a concrete mass is mind. The power of mind, as exemplified in your abnormal condition, conquers all limitations of matter. You see everything, now, in the clear light of reality. You are beyond the illusion of earthly sense."

As he finished, we came to a tomb with a row of bodies within, all decently reposing in their coffins, and apparently in a fair state of preservation. On

one of these coffins sat the figure of a very aged man with a long gray beard. His features were regular in shape and his expression had a certain tinge of dignity; but upon closer examination his face showed such sordid anxiety, and such gloomy sorrow, that I felt sure here was a case that might teach a lesson. I asked my companion if he knew who he was, and what he had been in life? The reply was: —

“I have talked with him many a time in my visits to this place. My spiritual guide, who has done so much to wean me from earthly longings, and who will do much more, I hope, has counselled that poor old miser in vain. He was in life one of the wealthiest men of the Boston of seventy years ago. He has often told me the story of his lowly origin and how, by self-denial and a keen sense of values, he had gradually accumulated property in land and buildings. In life he was a monopolizer of real estate; a hard landlord and close watcher of his own interests. His only ambition was to accumulate land that promised future profit. Hear him talk now. He is so earth-bound that he cannot rid himself of the sordid attraction, though he has the higher principle of his spiritual nature continuously urging him away. When his body was

laid in the grave, a mistaken refinement had placed his corpse in an air-tight casket, with preserving fluids injected in his veins; in consequence of which there can be no estimate formed of the date of time in the future when his astral body will be freed from the chemical action of those selfish brain-atoms. He has seen his sons buried beside him; men who increased his earthly fortune by wise investments, in some of whom the spiritual attributes were so developed that they were not bound by earthly desires. They were capable of the effort necessary to free their higher selves from mundane attractions, in order to enter higher stages of progression."

"Did not these sons strive to awaken the higher principle in their father that he, too, might shake off the illusions of matter?" I asked.

"Certainly they did; and they were aided by angels from the upper spheres, but all such labors were in vain. This form before us, when in material body, was possessed of an extraordinary will; his brain-atoms were like iron in their workings. In life no room was given in his thought to any ideas but those of property and profit. Fate has ordered that as he has sown so shall he reap. Mind is everything! All forms of

matter recognized by earthly sense are illusions of thought; but so strong are these illusions that the lower individual expression of the one supreme mind is influenced by them. Thus, in the case of this ghost of a once powerful personality, his thought on earth was so strong in the direction of selfish accumulation of the highest values in mortal consideration, that the particles of matter constituting his vehicle of thought — his brain — were firmly established to move in one direction only. When his higher principle can overcome these illusions, they may be liberated for a real existence. But why should I condemn him, so long as I cannot overcome my own earthly longings? Let us address this poor, greed-consumed spirit. You will notice that we astral shapes use the same modes of familiar talk that we did on earth. We like to deceive ourselves with the idea that we are still in life, and we actually do have a powerful influence over mundane affairs.

“ Good-evening, old friend ; I have brought with me an astral form, whose body is still in physical vigor, and now lying in peaceful sleep in its home not far from here.

“ We have not long to stay at this present visit. Will you not tell my friend some of your

experiences since first you found yourself free from your earthly body? He asks, has the time seemed long to you?"

"Does he not know that time is measured only by earthly heart-beats, and by the passage of mortal events? In the realms of thought there is no time. By mortal measurement, seventy revolutions of the earth around its parent orb have taken place since my poor body was laid in that cemented vault. Since then I have seen my sons and daughters here around me, clothed, as I am, in astral vestments. The companionship of the different members of my family as they arrived, one after another, was comfort to me, but they would not stay. While on earth they had used my money, accumulated with so much care and shrewdness, benevolently, and were not over-anxious to increase my hoard. The good works of my daughters aided in drawing my sons out of the ancestral ruts; and they seemed lured by fancies that I consider vain, to get away from earth. Their astral shells are still here, but armed with no intelligence. Now I am alone. The few powers of thought left me in my present shape are growing weaker, and still weaker; but I cannot leave interests on earth that owe their whole existence to an energy born of

that shrivelled brain below me." With these words he pointed to his own coffin, in which nothing could be seen but a few remnants, though the head seemed still intact.

"Are you conscious of any interests in earthly life, or of any of the purposes of that life, beyond those connected with the gratification of self, which in your case seemed to be summed up in the one object of accumulating fleeting earthly riches?" I ventured to ask. "Or, in other words, do your brain-atoms form any pictures, except those relating to title-deeds and money-values?"

"When first I came to self-consciousness in this astral form, I did have dreams of other things; but these dreams faded away before I was joined by my eldest son. I could not understand why he talked of higher realms of being. How can I leave to careless hands the result of all my labors! It is the hidden impulse of my shrewd thought upon the mind of my grandson, a leading capitalist, as I once was, that enables him to hold my property together, and to continually increase it. Let those who will follow what they call spiritual leadings, my only wish is to keep life enough in this shadowy form to help my heirs in their efforts to pile up more gold."

At this point my guide suggested that I should return to my body. He gave me one parting word of advice: "Remember," said he, "everything is mind. You, in your earthly form, are not limited by the matter constituting that form; every atom of material tissue is subject to your will as expressed in thought. Keep that thought in harmony with the ideas given from your real self, the unconscious Ego (a living portion of the Eternal Mind), and you will enjoy perfect physical and moral health. I shall see you soon, and we will take another lesson in the astral light."

CHAPTER IV

WHEN I awoke the morning after my late spiritual journeys, my mind was in a whirl of conflicting ideas. Is it all a dream? Can it be possible that all our mortal conceptions are so erroneous? Are we living in such a state of illusion? What then is the purpose of existence? In attempting to rise from my bed, I found my limbs were stiff and rheumatic, and shooting pains, like neuralgia, were tormenting my head and chest. Evidently my poor frame, in the absence of its spirit, had caught a severe cold. Now is my chance, thought I, to test the power of will over matter! If I am in reality a spirit, as I certainly was last night, why cannot I control all these nerve-cells of my body, to make them harmonious with my healthful intent? If thought is being, I command by will, that every material atom of this body shall obey my desire. At once all pain ceased, and I was as unconscious of my physical frame as I had been the night before, except that

a strong appetite for breakfast gave me knowledge of a material existence. This fact of conquering by force of mind the inharmonious arrangements of my bodily atoms did much to persuade me that my spiritual experiences of the night before had been more than dream-hallucinations; and I felt warranted in continuing, if possible, the astral investigations. I decided, however, not to repeat the experiment intentionally for some nights, as I was a little fearful of a possible reaction on my nervous system. I was in no haste to exchange permanently my present body for such as any one of those I had met the previous night. The effect of all that I had seen was a general feeling of dread and horror. Then the statements of my friend seemed conflicting, one with another. If mind is the ruling force in nature, and all manifestations of what we term matter are only illusions of bodily sense, how is it possible for the material atoms of brain to chain these astral bodies to their dead physical forms? My spirit-friend, although seven years dead, has not yet sounded all the depths of truth. Why did he take me to the miser, held by sordid longings to the affairs of earth in which he could no longer participate? Does he imagine that such an example is needed

by one who, if he have any virtue at all, possesses that rather exceptional trait of contempt for wealth? He might have shown me an earth-bound spirit of another kind, as a warning to a man of my character. Title-deeds and land-certificates would never hamper my spirit in its flight from earth. I wonder what the mundane attractions are which interfere with Barton's progression! He was a good-hearted fellow in life; generous, and of manly impulses. Well, if I continue these abnormal attempts, I may arrive at some conclusions. For the present, I know a good meal awaits me. Poor, poor ghosts! Can it be true?

One week of hard work in providing for the material subsistence of myself and family drove all my thoughts from shadowy wanderings; and I had almost convinced myself that the strange events of those three nights had been simply dreams, when on the Sunday following this week, as I was sitting alone on my piazza in the twilight of early evening, I felt the breath of a cool draught of air on my face, and at the same moment a touch on my shoulder. I turned my head and saw distinctly my friend Barton, not in astral form, but apparently in flesh and blood, as in old times, though his countenance bore the same

care-worn look as in my vision. He approached me close, and whispered, "At midnight I will call at your bedside ; be ready for another lesson !"

I confess it was not with great eagerness that I retired to my bed. The dangers connected with these attempts to penetrate the unseen world were fully comprehended. It was, therefore, nearly midnight before I could quiet myself to sleep. There was only a brief loss of consciousness, however ; for I soon awoke to a sense of bodily freedom and ethereal personality.

"Come, now, with me to another city of the dead," was the first flash of thought that was impressed upon me from the spirit-atmosphere.

"You have seen how thronged with ghosts were the paths and avenues of that resting-place (falsely so called) of the material bodies of the earthly aristocracy. I want you now to visit with me the humble graves of the people."

With one thought my friend Barton and I were in a large burying-ground of neat appearance, but with no such material manifestations of costly granite and marble carving as we had seen at Mt. Auburn. With my powers of spiritual vision I looked about me, but the whole scene was one of quietude and desolation. No such throng of ethe-

real shapes as had filled my sight at Mt. Auburn was now visible. On the contrary, the graves seemed empty; only occasionally could I catch view of a misty form, and that so weak as to be scarcely perceptible. Asking for an explanation of this apparent absence of ghostly figures, which presented such a contrast to the city of the dead visited in our last aerial flight, Barton informed me it was a striking fact, confirmed by his many wanderings through the sepulchres of the dead all over the world, that in those burial lots where the lowly of the earth were laid no such throngs of astral forms were met as characterized the tracts of ground devoted to the bodies of the rich and worldly important.

“How do you explain this fact?” I asked. “It would surely seem that those children of earth who have been narrowed in life to only the barest sensual pleasures, with no opportunities to taste the joys of intellectual culture, would be longer earth-bound than the spirits of mortals who have had their inner eyes opened to deeper joys than can be obtained from sense-gratification. It would seem that these poor martyrs of a destiny of physical toil would carry to their graves no seeds of spiritual hope; that their longing ambitions would

be satisfied only by tasting, with abnormal powers, earthly joys debarred to them while in the body."

"Your opinions are formed from your earthly judgment. A more careful thought will teach you the clearer truth. Men and women who have found life on earth easy and comfortable, whose physical desires have been most amply gratified by an unfair division of nature's material gifts, are not so easily weaned from the false delights of flesh. The magnet of physical life, in an earthly form, holds their higher principles chained to astral personalities. But is it strange that the spirits of those human beings, who have found life so hard and toilsome, should find no such attractions to earth? Rather do they long to flee to other realms, — realms where the grim hand of want and sorrow can press no more heavily upon them than it has already done upon earth. Before we part, we shall have the chance to interview many of these wanderers who have found life so bitter. When their poor souls, now so ignorant, shall have learned the higher truths, they will perceive that their earthly sufferings, and the apparently ill-adjusted relations of their past lives, have their compensation in an eternal existence. As I am still in the mundane region of thought myself,

not yet able to free my real self from this astral form, I cannot teach you the higher spiritual knowledge ; but this I have learned from my angel guides, that every individual must pass through all the phases of material experience, until he has conquered selfish desire in every possible form in which desire can come. The personal experiences gained during the period of one short earthly life, whether experiences of physical ease and sense-pleasure, or those of bodily deprivation and discomfort, count so little in comparison with the vast sum of events that must come to pass before each separate spirit becomes an equal sharer in the total knowledge of the one eternal mind. The astral plane of spirit-development in which your poor friend is now struggling answers to the idea expressed in the Purgatory of your Roman Catholic Church. If we poor astrals have any germs of the higher spiritual principles, we shall, of our own free will, liberate our higher personalities from the earth-attractions, and enter the realms of pure being ; where, away from all illusion of sense, we can see things as they are. If, on the contrary, we have been tried in the furnace of experience and found wanting in the redeeming spiritual traits, our identity wanes gradually away

and our bodies, physical and astral, perish. Let us now open conversation with this ghost near by. It seems to be the astral form of a woman. She appears in deep grief and has evidently just come to the realization of her bodily death."

"Before we approach that stricken figure, I wish you would clear my opinion on one point," said I. "These scenes are all so new to me, and some of your teachings appear so contradictory: I should like to know how it was that you appeared to view in your old physical form early this morning?"

"The figure you saw was entirely a subjective image of your own brain. Wishing to let you know I should call for you that night, I impressed your thought with my presence. Immediately your waking consciousness drew upon the old brain-photograph of my physical form, as it had been printed in your memory years ago. We astral souls have the power to impress many mortal minds that are sensitive to sub-conscious influences. Tricky, mischievous astrals, not only spirits of the dead, but elemental gnomes and elves, often deceive the curious investigators of what is called "spiritual phenomena" by false impersonations and apparently intelligent communications; but

all such messages should be received with caution. In regard to the seeming contradictions of some of my statements to you, in our intercourse thus far, you will understand more clearly, as you investigate more deeply and as you are able to meet with the true angels of light, who can instruct you in the higher knowledge which is still far above my grasp."

At this point of our interview, which could hardly be called a conversational episode, — as such a term would be interpreted in mortal spheres of being, — the air about us was filled with whirling shapes. It seemed as if the mighty rush of an army of astral forms would sweep my friend Barton and myself along in the throng. For one moment, losing my identity of personal thought, I felt helplessly absorbed in the will of this vast body of ghosts that appeared to be occupying all space. In this brief loss of individual consciousness a most devilish impulse took possession of me; but just as I was about to yield to the sweeping force of this astral mass of thought, I saw a most brilliant flash of light and felt myself quickly drawn to one side, away from the onward rush of an evident evil impulse, and my whole being was filled with a sense of peace and comfort, and the same sort of

spiritual joy that had often come to me after successful resistance to physical temptation.

Conscious of the presence of an influence more refined and attractive than any I had before realized in these astral experiences, I felt there must be near me an angel from the upper atmosphere, though the light was so dazzling at my right side that I was unable to distinguish any form. My friend who had been drawn away with me from the violence of the onward rush of evil spirits gave me to understand that we had been saved from great danger by one of those superior spiritual beings who had entered the higher regions and who was entirely freed from all earthly tendencies.

“Why can we not see the form of this spirit? The effulgence of his presence permeates my whole being with a joy unknown before; still I can see no form. Are you, who have shaken off the earthly sense of sight, limited as I?”

“At this moment, yes,” was Barton’s answer, “though there have been times when I could perceive the beautiful outward shape and heavenly features of these perfect beings. It has only been in rare moments when all earthly desires have been lost in the one thought of God; when all

regard of separate personality has been resigned in favor of the pure condition of the Universal. As human beings in the flesh are unable to penetrate the astral light, and generally deny the fact of any forms of life unknown to physical sense, so, many of these mundane spirits in astral form deny the existence of the angels who have reached the spiritual atmosphere. Faith is needed in the astral state of being, as well as on earth; but those who refuse the light must stay in darkness. This angel now by our side will guard us until this evil thought has disappeared.”

“Can you explain this ghostly army that came so near bearing us away? It seemed for a moment that all the devilish inclinations of my life were concentrated in one personal impulse to wreak some gigantic evil.”

“That dread gathering of force, which appeared to you as composed of separate malignant astral forms, was an organized band of evil thought. All the cruelties of man to man on earth; the devilish promptings to lust of money greed, of cruel oppressions, of unbridled sensual gratification, have their birth in that foul, unholy band of naked wickedness—psychic sin, stripped of every shred of good intention. All the deeds of desperate vio-

lence, rapine, private and national warfare, dastardly murder, owe their incentive to the discipline of that army of lost souls; dreams of the totally depraved of earth, whose material bodies have not yet returned to dust."

"What then has become of the higher spiritual principles of the unfortunate individual ghosts forming the rank and file of this dreadful army?"

• "The higher spiritual selves of such doomed beings as cannot resist the magnetism of evil, neither on the plane of earth, nor when liberated from flesh, waste away from lack of thought-sustenance. The sixth and seventh principles of man often leave his physical body before that change called death. Fate, or, more correctly, Karma (the sum of all individual earthly deeds), often sentences the hopelessly depraved soul to loss of any spiritual entity; and, as I have explained before, an astral body, unanimated by higher longings, perishes with the disintegration of animal tissue."

My companion had scarcely finished this communication, before that bright light at our side, which denoted the continued presence of the angel who had saved us from the late sweep of evil thought, seemed to grow in glorious brilliancy and

to spread abroad through the astral space, taking the shape of an immense circle that embraced in its circumference the whole horizon. From what before had been the darkest gloom of an ether filled with ugly figures, which no human brain could picture, sprung the most heavenly images; and my whole spirit was exalted with a celestial peace and joy.

“Let us follow these angels of light;” and I strove to move toward the nearest points of brilliancy, where I could also distinguish faces glowing with expressions of such compassion and love, I felt they must be beckoning me to join the throng.

“Impossible!” said Barton. “You and I have much to conquer before our spiritual selves can join that host. You have seen the army of Hell, using the expressive earthly term, and you now have the glorious opportunity of viewing the opposing force of purified Will,—a force inspired from the one eternal mind. Whatever the particular mischievous intent of that organized rush of demons, so lately encountered, it will be weakened, and less harmful in its effect upon the world’s mind, by the saving power of spiritual truth which, appearing to us in yonder circle of resplendent

light, will follow with purpose to save each soul on earth from the error spread by that other force of evil thought. We will make one more attempt to commune with the astral, who was just awakening from her sleep of death. I fear the magnetism of evil which so nearly conquered you may have drawn her undisciplined will into the foul vortex. No! her astral form lies prostrate just above her poor earthly body. This shows my intelligence, educated by much experience with souls just arrived from earth, that this poor denizen of a squalid district of gaunt poverty in life, possessed the protecting control of a sacrificing higher self. As that vast force of evil inclination swept by, it awoke no responsive thrill among the brain-atoms of this lowly corpse. The spiritual principle within will not be long detained by any earthly dreams."

"Shall we try to awaken her dream-shadow?" I asked.

"No," was Barton's reply. "It may be long in earthly time before the life-cells of that wasted brain shall move with sufficient force to animate her astral form. With no thoughts of evil, and no lingering desires for a life that has no attraction, she may remain in this stupor of death until her real self awakens in the upper spheres, to take a

proper balance of the spiritual gains of its last sense-pilgrimage. You notice how few shadowy shapes there are in this large graveyard of the people, compared with the number we encountered in the cemetery visited before. There are two main reasons for this disparity in numbers. First, the attractions of earthly life, do not so heavily hamper the flight of spirits, who in bodies of flesh tasted few comforts and fewer delights of intellect. Second, the decomposition of the bodily frame is delayed by no expensive, air-tight casket, nor by the use of costly tricks of the undertaker. Glance about you! Poor wasted figures laid in thin pine covers invite the quick action of the elements in return to mother earth of chemical constituents belonging to her. 'Blessed are the poor, for they shall inherit the kingdom of God.' Contrast this woman at our feet with the ghostly miser of Mt. Auburn. He lingers seventy years in astral form, fastened to earth by greed of gold. He may never realize true consciousness; whereas this daughter of sorrow — a Magdalen perhaps — will stay within mundane influences a mere brief few months. It may be that her true self is already in bliss, and that her animal soul is left alone with this astral clothing. How much we have to learn!

Join your sleeping body now. Next Sunday, according to your earthly calendar, I will call at your bedside at the usual hour. Ponder the moral warnings impressed by what we have seen to-night. Have no fear of evil, if you can hold the desire for spiritual good. Give one daily thought to your fettered friend, chained by old vicious habits to wander through the night; but the bonds of earthly love are loosening, and I know my freedom comes. Farewell!" And with these words still echoing I turned in my bed, to hear the hour of one strike on my bedroom timepiece. How much to see in so short a space of mind-life! But what a comfort to be able to plunge into the forgetfulness of an unconscious slumber, which I accomplished at once; nor was I aware of any existence, physical or astral, until the breakfast bell and a bright sunlight gave notice that there was earthly work waiting for my hand.

CHAPTER V

THE week had passed quickly enough; the shadows of Sunday evening were upon me, and the hour appointed by my friend Barton near at hand. Before proceeding with these records, the reader must be informed, that in putting these strange experiences on paper, I attempt no explanations from my own knowledge. I merely give the occurrences as they actually took place. These strange events were not in the least in accord with my waking beliefs on matters philosophic or religious. Indeed, in all my speculations upon matters touching the unknown—beyond the sphere of exact science—I was intensely sceptical: an agnostic at my best; a materialist, when in my pessimistic moods. Then why should these dreams, if dreams they be, present such suggestions? Certainly in my normal moments no theories of idealism or imagined realms of astral being had ever troubled my fancy. If these pictures were not formed from my own brain (and I

was sure this was not the case), where did they come from? My reading for years had been of the most practical kind. I have accepted the Darwinian theories of the origin of life and the progression of species without a question. I have denied as foolish nonsense all the testimony offered by weak visionaries regarding spiritual visitations, thought-transference, mind-reading, and even the proved facts of hypnotism. Yet here I am recording seriously events that, if not mere dreams, prove there are things that human philosophers are powerless to fathom. Satisfied, as a scientific materialist, that nothing could be dreamed by a mortal brain that was not already registered by the physical atoms of that brain, I was wofully puzzled in my attempts to explain how my sub-conscious self could present theories of life and death that had never passed through my waking thought. One fact must be mentioned, which would possibly explain the presence of my friend Barton in these astral experiences, and his prominence as my guide through the various horrors.

When the news of Barton's death reached me, some years ago, I was very deeply affected; for owing to some peculiar characteristics of the man,

I had become much interested in him, though he was younger than myself, and of very different tastes and habits. One Sunday evening, a few days after learning of his death, I was smoking a cigar at an open window, and listening to music played by a friend in a room adjoining the one in which I was sitting; when, suddenly, the vines draping the window were pushed aside, as if by the breeze, and I distinctly saw Barton, just deceased, peering in and apparently listening to the music. His face gave no expression of friendly recognition; it showed only intense absorption in the music. He stood thus for at least fifteen minutes and, aware that I was probably experiencing an optical illusion, I examined the effect of taking different views of the figure, but it remained in the same position of rapt interest until the music ceased. As I had not been in good physical condition that day, this vision had been regarded as simple hallucination; and I only mention it in this record as a possible explanation of the reproduction, so many years after, of an image imprinted on the brain by that previous striking experience. There were many other facts connected with these abnormal wanderings that my waking judgment could not reconcile with

common-sense. For instance; why should these visitations take the periodic shape? When my astral friend appoints the day and hour for his next appearance, and my unconscious self responds, what is the brain-impulse that coincides?

These speculative questionings had tormented my mind throughout the week, and now that bedtime and the hour appointed by Barton were close at hand, the full inquiry of calm decision was my sole thought. "To-night shall decide the whole matter," was my final resolution as, physically drowsy, I went to bed. "One test shall be required of Barton, if he comes to-night, — a test that shall quiet this doubt of a materialistic brain. If he can take me in thought to the bedside of a friend in London, and if he can impress the sleeping brain of that friend with my personality, so he shall obey my request to communicate this fact by letter, I shall be convinced on one point at least, and my materialistic explanations of these weird experiences will be proved unsound."

With this last determination all further thought was checked by the soothing touch of sleep. The expectation of normal thought may have brought its result, as in those familiar cases where a fixed determination to awake at a certain hour

acts as an unconscious sentinel to arouse the subject of such a resolve. Whatever the explanation, Barton appeared at my side at the appointed time, and, free from physical body, I was ready for further teachings.

Before beginning any thought-journey to distant points, I suggested to my friend that we should linger briefly at the bedside of my son (a youth of twenty years), who lay asleep in a room close by. With the wish came its fulfilment. If I had walked with earthly sense into the chamber so familiar to me, it could have seemed no more natural. But, in using my powers of astral vision, I perceived that we were not the only watchers of youthful dreams. Shadowy forms hovered closely about the bed; and it was with peculiar interest that I scrutinized the spiritual characteristics of these astral guardians. It was comfort and joy to read purity of purpose in the thought-atmosphere of the fitting dream-shadows; but this fatherly satisfaction was lessened as I became conscious of astral elements that seemed to disturb the general harmony. One dark figure appeared especially repulsive. As it would push closer and closer to my son's sleeping body, the bright forms would yield place, and I could see the peaceful expres-

sion of the boy's countenance change to one similar to the ugly leer of this evil visitor. I applied to Barton for help in driving the degraded being away.

“Have no fear,” was his response. “Remember on earthly planes Good has no existence without its contrast, Evil. These astral wanderers of sinful urging must be fought and conquered by the individual will of each human subject. With no trials of temptation where would appear the joys of spiritual victory? But look! a re-enforcement of better thoughts drives that dark imp away. He may return, and other astrals, more foul than he, may seek to influence the formative period of your son's character; but with such a force of spiritual harmony as has been attracted to defend, no lasting harm can be inflicted. Let us leave him to his young dreams. His real self must be strengthened by the visitation of such spirits as we have seen gathered around him to-night. The Karma earned by the true Ego using the earthly form of your son for its present incarnation shall surely take no retrogressive step.”

Here was an opportunity to clear some of the confusing opinions of my waking consciousness. This term, Karma, presented no definite meaning.

I had an idea that a certain school of mystic philosophy used this word as an affectation of the more common expression, Fate. Barton, in life, had been no mystic; indeed, absorbed in business pursuits, he had given the very slightest attention to any of the fads of so-called culture. Has he, during the waiting time of seven years of what after all is but half-existence, acquired a knowledge of higher truth, that was debarred to him when in possession of his bodily senses? This inquiry came as a passing flash of thought—answered before it had really taken shape. I place it in these records, merely that the reader shall judge for himself the mental facts of this strange experience.

Barton, who read these evidences of doubt as quickly as they were formulated in the mental atmosphere, expressed his surprise that one in astral form, freed from the false illusions of earthly sense, should have learned so little from what he had attempted to teach.

“You are eager for some astral incident that shall be corroborated by a connected fact of your physical life, though the reality of this higher phase of knowledge is accepted without question by your present consciousness. Know you not,

even yet, O doubting friend, that in leaving your body of flesh you are nearer, by many degrees, the boundaries of actuality, than when hampered by the clogging clothing of your earthly sense-conceptions. At my next call you shall have a convincing proof of certain facts obtained by your spiritual Ego, while your lower self is plunged in physical slumber. When the privilege is given by my higher guides, I hope to lead you into fields of wider knowledge; but to-night we will seek further instruction from the material graves of the dreaming dead."

We were by this time gliding with an easy, restful motion through the balmy air (as regarded from the physical sense) of a lovely summer's night. Barton had locked my arm through his own, which gave me so firm a sense of protection, that no slightest tremor of fear disturbed my spiritual comprehension. In this fifth night of shadowy travel, the distorted demons of devilish lust, sweeping towards their congenial victims, brought no fear to my soul, but only overwhelming sorrow. Not especially sympathetic in my social emotions while in physical consciousness, it gave me joy to find that my spiritual Ego was more unselfish than its servant, — the material, personal

manifestation of entity. Asking my companion whether he had any particular place selected for encountering the restless souls that might possess the characteristics of which we were in search, he replied: —

“The early colonists of New England, physically brave, and spiritually faithful to religious dogmas of a narrow faith, could not immediately give up their cherished beliefs, though the grim hand of death has ruthlessly removed the bandage of scholastic superstition from their spiritual vision. Our present flight is directed to a lonely spot at the base of a cone-shaped hill, which overlooks the broad meadows of the Connecticut River, and close to one of the quaintest of the old New England villages, where is situated an ancient burial-ground, enclosed by a tumbled wall of stones, the latter green with the moss of two centuries. In this outwardly peaceful retreat were laid, in the times of our sturdy forefathers, the earthly bodies of the Puritan colonists: saints and sinners, side by side, with occasionally the addition of the corpse of some Indian, who, by domestication, had earned the privilege of Christian interment. I give the title, saints, to those strait-laced formalists, who, never relaxing for one moment

the solemn visage, the sober speech, and the strict observance of the most cruel doctrines, closed their eyes in the last sleep with the firm faith in a heaven for themselves, and an everlasting burning hell for the sinners lying in death's slumbers close by. The judgment allotting so dire and hopeless a fate to their neighbors, and associates in the cold mould, was unrelentingly decided by the outward habits of those members of the early village communities who failed in their attendance at Sabbath preaching, evening prayer-meetings and chapel conferences. A joyous laugh, a merry greeting of friend, a forgetful slip from sanctimonious conversation; these, and less than these, errors of outward conduct, were enough to raise the eyebrows, and intensify the stern lines of mouth and chin, upon the lengthened faces of these colonial saints. It will be instructive for you to see the confusion and disappointment of an astral dweller, who departed from physical life with so self-satisfied an opinion of his own predestined salvation, and with so cruel an estimate of the moral weight of his less self-regarding brother. But we must be moved by no malicious curiosity in this desire for such an interview; for, if so unworthy a motive shall be gratified, the

spiritual reaction upon our own higher principles will be debasing."

As my friend communicated this caution, my present judgment faltered; but as he turned his serious countenance to mine, and our perceptions seemed to mingle in a manner which it is impossible to describe to the physical brain, my charity and love for all human beings, whether in, or out, of the flesh, quickened with a warmth never felt while in my sense-body. I was satisfied that my motives were pure, and that I might safely accompany my guide.

I must repeat that these communications between Barton and me, though giving to the reader an impression of lapse of time in their expression, were almost instantaneous; so it was within the space of a brief few moments, after leaving my son's chamber, that we, using our physical sense of sight, were apparently standing in an open, desolate tract of ground, with old Sugar Loaf Mountain rising behind us, and the beautiful Connecticut River flowing through its level banks at our front. A few straggling headstones of slate, with the old style of inscription, "Here lyeth ye body," barely decipherable, were to be seen, here and there, by

the light of the just-risen moon. But, using our astral sight, the beauties of landscape were blurred by the increased faculties of a higher sense, and the desolation of this secluded district was rendered more complete by the absence of the redeeming features of its natural beauties on the material side. The astral regions are never free from flitting shadows, and even here we could see various bodies of dark shapes that gloomily floated through the surrounding atmosphere; while, at short intervals, a glowing circle would appear, sometimes near us, and again far away, showing the presence of the true angels. The old burying-ground itself seemed empty. The graves, open to our perception, were as vacant as if they had never contained any occupants.

Two centuries of planetary time have been sufficient to free the spiritual souls of the orthodox saints, and even those of the poor misjudged sinners whose bodies were covered by this soil, was my thought; but at the same instant Barton called my attention to a corner of the field where stood a grand old elm in its solitary majesty, — king of American trees as it is. Beneath its spreading branches we perceived a circle of five phantom figures. Three of these were seated, and by their

dress¹ could be recognized as having belonged in life to the strictest Puritan order. There was no mistaking the cloak, the peaked hat and the wide collar, not to speak of further details of costume which we noticed later. Nor could we be deceived as to the personalities of the two standing figures. The tall, erect carriage, the plumed head-gear, the buckskin leggings—in short, the complete picturesque costume, marked them as departed warriors of the American Indian race. It was possible that these figures were the shades of Philip and Massasoit, those noble chiefs of two powerful tribes of savages that gave so much trouble to the first settlers of Massachusetts Bay.²

“We will not disturb this conference by too close an approach,” said Barton. “We will, however, take shelter near that broad slab, which is

¹ Readers must remember that the dead, in their dreams while in astral form, clothe themselves with illusionary garments formed from their own thoughts; though this is not always the case, for the *wicked* elementals, the demons, the vampires, and other debased dwellers in the intermediate mundane regions, appear in distorted and horrible nakedness. The higher spirits are clothed seemingly in such radiant vestments that no description is possible from any one who has been blessed with such glorious visions.

² This suspicion regarding the identity of at least one of these chiefs was well founded; as it is a common tradition that Sugar Loaf Mountain was a favorite retreat of Philip and his savage braves, and that many a council of war was held on its summit, where is still pointed out a natural throne among the rocks, which is called, to this day, “King Philip’s Seat.”

probably the head-stone of the grave where all that is left of the body of one of those Puritan worthies reposes. It must be that some kind of petrification has preserved the vitality of the respective brain-cells, in order that the astral bodies of these five personalities should be still animated with intelligence."

When we gained the position indicated by Barton, we could distinguish clearly every minutest detail of attitude, dress and facial expression of the five astral figures so hazily seen from our former point of observation.

In reporting this present interview I shall not attempt to give the exact language used by the different speakers; but I shall be content if even the feeblest reflection of the new light thrown upon certain phases of man's inner constitution shall aid the judgment of any reader.

The taller of the two Indian chieftains was speaking as we arrived. From the tone of his language, which was clothed in that poetical imagery so characteristic of his race, this majestic spirit of a once proud warrior had evidently been lamenting the downfall and dispersion of a mighty nation; but we were more interested when he turned the current of his bitterly sorrowful dis-

course into historical and mystical channels, seemingly for the purpose of answering the dogmatic assertions of the three old Puritans. We soon discovered that the latter were, in life, the minister and the two most influential deacons of a Deerfield congregation of seventeenth-century times; and we learned, moreover, that they were under the delusion that their present soul-existence was merely a form of punishment for some lapse in faith while in the body. With strong natural intellects, whose powers had been used in the one direction of theological study and dogmatic disputation, intellects perverted hopelessly by the gloomy pressure of theologic *pessimism*, these souls have clung with obstinate pertinacity to their own ideas of a Jewish God of vengeance, and the predestined salvation of the elect. They refuse to receive the teachings of truth which are obtainable by the earnest seekers in this astral life, and they are convinced, too, that their present trials are sent from the devil, and that their hour of deliverance will soon arrive.

This short interpolation is needed to explain the spiritual condition of the Puritan listeners to the words of the Indian chief. I will now try to give his ideas in a partial approach to his own language: —

“The religion of the ‘pale-faces,’ as my brother the brave Massasoit and I have seen it since you haughty English first pitched your wigwams on land stolen from our people, has not been given from the Great Spirit. You have spilled the innocent blood of a kindly, child-like nation, which would have welcomed your arrival with camp-fire circles enlarged, and hatchet and knife in their sheaths, if you had first turned the open palm toward us. Instead of this, you taught us the meaning of treachery. In the name of your god, you drove us from our hunting-fields and fishing-grounds. You brought fire-water to inflame our cruelest passions. You attempted to rob us of our faith in the Great Father who takes care of his forest children, and who provides the Happy Hunting-Grounds for those red-men who show the *secret mark*. You ridiculed the teachings of our wise medicine-men, who have held the holy keys of truth from the times when our ancestors were masters of a grand continent that now lies beneath the deep seas. Your chiefs and your wizened preachers told our squaws that we were devils.

“You told us lies about your god. In one opening of the mouth you say he is a loving father,

and before your tongue can slide to the other corner of your false cheek, you tell how he hunts the poor savage, who knows him not, to the hottest depths of hell. All this is what your woe-begotten leaders spoke to us when first they came amongst our corn-fields and happy lodges. We two warriors, forced to lift the hatchets that we would have been content to bury, have seen this ground filled with your dead; and we have seen for many moons, in times of long ago, spirits like yourselves wandering to and fro. Where are these shadows now? You use big words to deceive us in the faith that your mournful ghosts are waiting for the coming of your lord. *Our* guides tell us that when yon bodies are dust (the chief pointed as he spoke to three graves near by), and little bone now remains in those holes below, you will both be naught, like the majority of the earth-born travellers who started on this journey with you. But we came not to this tree, which we have seen grow from tiny shrub to a breadth of shade that would cover the council band of the mightest chief, to barter jibe for jibe. In a secret cave of our loved hill, whose head is lifted above the clouds of this valley, as is raised our inner faith of the Great Spirit far above the papoose folly of your beliefs, lie

the embalmed bodies of Massasoit and of Philip, but the real chieftains are before you.

“It is a destiny, decided by the spiritual genii of the Indian race, that we are to wait on the earthly plane until the last tribe of this race has ceased to roam the forest; perhaps this tribe will perish also in the same convulsion that must overwhelm the false life of the white nation.

“The hearts of your Indian brothers, O mistaken and misled Christians, are not cruel toward you three weary waiters, whose worst faults come from the past study of books, instead of obeying the inner voice of great nature, who talks alike to men of all colors. From our lodge among the rocks of yonder hill we have watched your restless resistance to the plain teachings of nature, and to the pleas of bright figures that seemed to come direct from the bosom of our mother moon. We have asked of each other, Why do those solemn pale-faces refuse to listen? Our answer has been: the sorcery of book-learning has bewitched the reason of our old enemies, and our revengeful hate toward you and your people has been turned to love.

“Throughout the long ages that have been notched on the tally-lance of the Commanding Chief of all tribes, one supreme mystical secret has been

confided to the medicine-men of our race, — a secret guarded with the mortal jealousy that the Great Spirit has bestowed as a leading physical characteristic upon a trusting but warlike people. This secret can be told to you, poor ghosts, who have waited so solemnly and so ignorantly for the fulfilment of a false prophecy. You teach that the first man of the pale-faces, named Adam, who broke the first treaty, and by that hasty act condemned the whole human race to never-ending remorse and everlasting punishment, was formed from clay by your Jehovah some six thousand years ago. We Indians know from the teachings of our medicine-men, that our copper-colored ancestors, three hundred *thousand* years ago, were established on this continent; not as roving savages in pursuit of game, with shelters of deerskin for the squaws, but as a mighty nation, with populous cities, majestic temples, comfortable homes, and with such equality of intellectual opportunity that slavery of mind or muscle was impossible. No printed history of such a nation exists; but our medicine-men, and the holy adepts of one branch of our original race, hold these secrets in sacred keeping. You, Abraham Smithson, blind leader of the *willing* blind, who lived as unconscious

hyocriptes in a faith more cruel than is the bloody scalping-knife of the prowling demons of a people driven to madness by oppression, have now the opportunity to seek the sources of truth, as my brother Massassoit and I have done.”¹

During this curious appeal of the Indian chieftain, prompted evidently by a sincere desire to aid, and by a profound pity for an ignorant bigotry which he could not understand, the three Puritan astrals had remained in their original positions.

In watching closely for some token of sympathetic response to a heartfelt address, I could perceive on the countenances of these hopelessly prejudiced souls no signs but those exhibited in the closer tightening of the lips and narrowing of the eyelids. Feeling sure that no love remained in the present consciousness of these three examples of the final result of doctrines that must encourage the lowest form of spiritual selfishness, I awaited, with the full sympathy of Barton, the reply of some one of the Puritan bigots.

¹ The style of rhetoric, which seemed to give the spirit of this Indian chief a touch of nineteenth-century polish, and his evident knowledge of occult truth regarding the origin of his race, was one of the strongest proofs, to my waking mind, that these astral visions were imparting important information, that might aid modern scientific research.

When the chief had finished, and, with a natural dignity, was about to stride away with his kingly companion, the self-conscious saint of the most mistaken form of Protestant superstition, the seated wraith, whom the Indian had named as Smithson, rose slowly to his feet. He cast one severe glance at the Indian, followed by a swift, but authoritative, look at his companions, who immediately took upright positions of solemn rigidity. In a deep tone of voice, but with the same nasal twang that had probably, in the old Deerfield meeting-house, done so much to comfort saints and disturb sinners, Abraham Smithson droned his reply:—

“Thou self-condemned sinner, who from thine own lips hast confessed thy lack of faith, not only at this intrusive visit, but at various and self-selected times, thy words savor not of Holy Writ; rather do they incline me to suspect that thou art an emissary of Satan, that proud and ever-busy fiend whom the Lord God Jehovah cast from the heavens. Verily, my Lord doth try my bones; yea, he doth test my sinews; but, thanks be to the God of Israel, my two fellow-pilgrims on the road to the promised land stand at my right hand and at my left. The devils of hell cannot prevail

against us. When we took on the whole armor of faith, we were protected from all arrows of doubt and disbelief. We have fought the good fight while in the body, and we shall continue the battle through the paths of hell we are now treading. We are more in life at this present time than when in physical form, for now we dare enjoy pleasures that were forbidden then by our religion. The judgment for our mortal sins has been given. Our creed did not forbid the partaking of what delights can be gained from the reflected sensations of others still in the flesh. My most pious and proven deacons, while working in the Lord's vineyard on earth, were sound in the doctrines. We three were strict in severe obedience to gospel laws when sorrowfully journeying through the vale of tears; and though we sometimes longed, with fleshly desires, to taste the sinful joys of life, we held our outward habits and conduct in tone with our ideals of the characteristics of the elect of God. But our debts of law are paid; so, until the gates of the Golden City are opened, we are tasting the cup of pleasure to its dregs, through the earthly personalities of weak-minded men, — sinners, who, God be praised, must suffer in everlasting hell."

Here, indeed, was a lesson! Could it be possible that this sight and hearing of my astral self were correct? What horrors of hypocrisy, what depths of depravity, concealed by the outward forms of canting creed, were here displayed to the open view of soul by soul! How many more, forgetting the plain teachings of Jesus, hope for salvation through outward observance of law, while the inner spirit longs for sensual indulgence!

My friend Barton had been almost unrestrainedly uneasy while the Puritan had been exposing his spiritual wickedness, and I think it was only the attitude of the two Indian chiefs that checked the immediate expression of his righteous wrath. Barton only whispered, "Thanks be to my past Karma, that my sins were manifested only on the physical plane, and that my real self abhors such discordant illusions as so plainly vibrate in the souls of those *devils*, for devils they are, and no spiritual entities are existent in the astral bodies of these Puritanical personalities. The chief is about to speak, listen!"

"Oh! what creeping creatures of the woods or plains can I call from their slimy, secret nests to crawl before my brother, the clean-hearted, pure-souled Massasoit, and myself, who in all my blood-

thirsty savagery never have imagined such foulness. Such shunned reptiles would lift their heads in pride, as they used an instinct bestowed by the Great Spirit, when they realized their superiority to such disguised vampires as yourselves. We came down from our hill, after near three thousand moons of quiet watch, to offer truth that might lead sincere but mistaken souls to the light. We turn to depart to our waiting lodge, wondering no longer that you three Christians are left as the sole shadow-inhabitants of a field that, long before the pale-faces trod our trails, was beloved by true-hearted braves, who never turned their backs to sin against the Good Chief from *fear*, but who chose the marked path leading to the happy hunting-grounds from the true love of what the Good Father taught our hearts, through the songs of his feathered messengers in the springtime; through the sighing of our breeze-bestirred pines in summer; and through his voice heard in the storm-clouds of winter."

As the noble chief uttered these words, that we felt sure came from a heart beating in unison with the eternal harmony, the three astral figures, whose inner promptings ought by just rights to have given them the outward forms of demons, rose to

their feet, as if moved by a common impulse, and with hands lifted in sanctimonious imprecation, and voices attuned to the prayer-meeting cadence, they called upon the God of all the prophets of Israel to defend his long-time worshippers.

As Barton, recognizing my wish to depart, seized my hand for the astral flight, I heard the voice of Abraham Smithson echoing these pious words: —

“Back to your infernal retreat, ye red-skinned devils. Our people are not your people; our faith is not your faith;” and, as his tones lost force in the distance, and as I reached my body, so warm in bed, I thought I heard in nasal, dreamy whisperings, “God will save his elect for unspeakable joy in the seventh heaven.”

CHAPTER VI

THE last lesson received from across the border of waking cognizance contained so mournful a picture of the spiritual effects of debased hypocrisy, and these teaching were connected so closely with the outward habits of our New England ancestors, that my inner soul was thrilled with a certain dread of what might be the character of further astral exposures; but when Barton arrived, punctual to his appointment, my courage for the truth, bitter as such truth might be, had returned. My spirit was ready to receive even the most ruthless destruction of past conceptions, so long as I could hold my present trust in the faithfulness of my old comrade. I may now record the fact that the final result of my dream-wanderings confirmed the wisdom of this confidence. Barton announced his astral presence in these words:—

“It is my intention to-night to give you the test you require, regarding the actuality of an astral existence. Also, we shall visit together the abode of a sage who can teach you the meaning of Karma. You have missed the significance of

astral embodiment when you rate it in thought as a 'half-existence.' Although the Ego cannot realize its true entity until it has escaped from all mundane influences, and has reached the realms of spiritual being, the ether of thought is vastly clearer in the astral state than when clouded by the gross attractions of physical sense. In the astral light each soul is conscious of its own imperfections; and, if not too much steeped in selfish love of material error, the instinct of spiritual desire will triumph. Remorse for the sins of the last pilgrimage on Earth must visit each astral soul, as Heaven knows it has tormented me; and this intermediate state between flesh and pure spirit is needed to give the free will of each individual its final decision. Thus in my own case, though I know my higher Ego is waiting and confident, the lower inclinations hold me to earth. But I feel my astral life will soon be finished, and that I can leave this shell of attenuated matter to a will-o-the-wisp existence, that shall last only so long as my earthly body has shape."

While Barton was communicating these ideas, we seemed to be moving through space above a vast body of water, and I realized the possession of a double comprehension of objects. I could

see, not only innumerable shapes of flying spirits of all kinds, some lovely in bright appearance, others dark and hideous; but I could distinguish the toss of ocean waves, even hear the roaring of mighty winds that filled the sails of storm-driven vessels ploughing their course on the sea beneath. It was a night of disturbed weather, as it would strike the earthly sense; but the beating of rain, the flashing of lightning, the din of peal after peal of thunder, passed unminded by these bands of ghostly travellers with which we were surrounded.

The journey we were taking seemed very brief, in any mental measurement of which I was cognizant; for suddenly we appeared to be in a large room, most comfortably furnished in a style which I at once perceived to be English. In an old-fashioned bed with curtained hangings lay my London correspondent, previously referred to.

“Impress his dreams with your intended request, and with the fact that you are at his bedside,” was Barton’s command.

It was with a deep sense of weird responsibility that I obeyed.

Placing my hand upon the brow of the sleeper, I concentrated my whole thought in the desire

that his bodily will should respond in waking moments, and that he should write me the next day any dream-effect produced by this visit.

This trial accomplished, Barton said, "Now to another part of this whirling globe. We go to interview an ancient of the ancients—a holy Seer who holds in wise grasp the keys of knowledge and power vouchsafed to few on earth. With ability to take on any form, physical, astral, or even spiritual, the result of ages of incarnation in every possible shape of matter, he lives to teach and to save. This adept is commissioned from above to act as one link in a chain of wisdom that connects the present with the remotest past. With one united thought we shall gain his dwelling. As the humblest pilgrims we will dare venture into the presence of a master who never refuses a sincere pupil."

"One moment," I begged; for I confess a confused sense of fear came upon me,—a feeling of profound unworthiness to enter such a presence as Barton pictured. "How dare you venture, you who in seven years' sojourn in astral being have not corrected the discords of earth-illusions? And with me, overwhelmed with daily sin, a fear prevents,—a fear that dire punishment will follow such uninvited intrusion."

“Feel no alarm! This Sage has been visited by numbers of persons in astral form who, like yourself, have had earthly bodies still in life. Many of these visitants were not aware, as you must be, that those glimpses of true knowledge were more than dreams. Rest assured that no harm shall come to your sleeping self. I go to this fount of wisdom to-night upon a long-postponed errand. Ask me no more, but come.”

All outward scene changed as he spoke. Instead of a room in London, we found ourselves apparently entering the low door of a hut formed of woven bamboo canes, and thatched with the broad leaves of the Asiatic palm.

I took one glance abroad before following Barton into this hut, and the grand view that met my sight was indescribable. I seemed to be stationed on the apex of all material formation. I could see range upon range of mountain peaks below me, and yet further below could be discerned shapes of hill and valley, all distinctly marked in an ether clear and transparent as crystal. Solitude reigned supreme at the height where was placed this hut. No sign of any kind of life could be perceived within the range of my extended vision. Upon entering, all was dark; but a voice sweet

and hospitable in tone bade us welcome, and at the same time a glow of light suffused the whole interior of what seemed an empty room. I could see the shadowy form of Barton, but no other shape of astral, of spirit, or of mortal was visible.

“Atoms of matter are but shapen exhibitions of force. The king of all force is Thought. A will in accord with the eternal mind of the universe can mould all material manifestations of thought as this will may desire.”

These were the words, clothed in the melodious tones of the former voice of welcome, that reached our hearing as we awaited the outward presence of our host.

“Let us assume the illusions of earth for this occasion.”

With these words the whole scene changed. The bamboo walls at the rear of the room disappeared, and a vista of surpassing loveliness opened before us. The main feature of the immediate scene was a wide avenue of immense trees, stretching some little distance ahead of the point where we were situated. At the end of this grand avenue loomed a magnificent structure, which it is beyond my waking remembrance to describe. The style of architecture was so entirely different

from any thing imagined in my wildest earthly fancies, that it will be useless to attempt any description.

This surpassing change had barely come to our comprehension, when we saw the figure of a man, in full earthly form of flesh, approaching rapidly. As he came nearer and nearer I realized a change in my own appearance and feeling. Absence of physical sense, and freedom from all clogs of matter, had characterized my personal condition as an astral; but now I was again in flesh, and dressed in clothes of every-day life. The climax of accumulated wonder was brought, as I saw Barton also rehabilitated with earthly body, and the same garments that had marked his individuality when in life. He was evidently very much agitated, and with his impulsive manner of old days exclaimed: "Oh, this is cruel! Why does he give me back a body that is of no more use to me, and to which the old pains of sense return?"

(Barton, in life, had suffered long with neuralgia of the heart, a disease that finally brought his death.)

"Have you ever been here before?" was my quick question.

“Never! The Sage has visited me many times; once in the form of an aged man, but usually in the ethereal shape of a heavenly spirit. He has taught me much, and it is by his desire I come here to-night, only why does he bring back the illusion of my old, discarded frame?”

No further time for mutual counsel was given; for the figure we had seen in the distance was now by our side, greeting us with the most cordial grasp of our hands and the heartiest, almost jovial, expressions of welcome. An English country gentleman, of the palmiest days of hospitality, receiving long-expected guests at his ancestral mansion, could have betrayed no more genuine pleasure than did our present host,—this master of the occult wisdom of the ages. I had expected to see a gray-bearded sage of solemn, austere mien; a venerable magian clothed in flowing robes of Oriental vesture; or perhaps a learned alchemist of the Dr. Faustus type. These assumptions of imagination were false; for the being now offering us the warm reception was in outward form the embodiment of the highest physical vigor and grace of bearing. His countenance expressed the most sympathetic tenderness and noble refinement, nevertheless there was no sign of myste-

rious power born of supernatural origin in his face or manner. He seemed the representation of a modern man of high culture, even so far as in the details of his dress. With a polite word of apology to me, he spoke a few words in a low tone to Barton, that seemed to relieve my friend very much; and then, with the same courtly manner that had marked our reception, he invited us to accompany him to the temple of hidden wisdom.

“I have used my power to place ourselves under the illusions of matter for a purpose that I shall now explain. First, I wished that this interview should take as natural a form as possible. In seeing each other in the shape and dress of the civilized men of this world’s cycle, we are in tone with the earth-thought that has moulded both your characters, and the teaching I shall impart will be more easily received than if deeper occult methods were adopted. Second, when we pass the portals of the structure we are about to enter, I wish that your powers of vision and hearing should be limited to mortal range alone. The entrance to that consecrated building is barred to all astral bodies who have not freed their higher principles from the attractions of earth. It is only the adepts in holy mysteries, and the spirits who have grad-

uated from all mundane trials, that are accorded the privilege you are about to enjoy. As mortals in the flesh, you will be limited to the narrow perceptions of men's five physical senses."

We had now reached the open doors of the building we had seen from the distance.¹

¹ I omit any attempted description of the strange structure of this building, as such a task is beyond the ability of a layman. I have given a verbal account to an architect friend, who was much interested, and who will use his professional skill in preparing a technical essay upon this undoubted relic of that wonderful Atlantean race. The drawing, already furnished, is a tolerably correct representation of the picture retained in my memory.

CHAPTER VII

AT the end of the last chapter, the Sage, Barton, and I were about entering the Castle. The Master paused at the threshold, and turning to us said, "Although my power has clothed you in these material bodies, and has thrown the mantle of sense-illusion around you, this solid building, composed of granite, marble, steel, and aluminium, which we now enter, is the grand result of human labor. For over two hundred thousand years has this last earthly effort of the remnants of a mighty race stood as it now appears to you. While your present forms are only atoms of matter brought and held in shape by the force of my will acting in harmony with the one eternal thought, this temple (also only an exhibition of force) has withstood the cataclysms, the geologic overturns, and terrific throes of planetary disturbance, that have torn this globe since the last stone of this edifice was laid in place."

This strange information was given in the most

matter-of-fact manner, as if we were visiting, for the first time, some old baronial castle, escorted by a polite resident of the neighborhood. We were standing in what apparently answered the purposes of a vestibule; but, in keeping with the magnificent proportions of the outside of this temple of the ages, this vestibule gave the impression of immensity of space. Although the walls were roughly faced, no jointures of the blocks of stone, which must have been huge in size, could be detected. On the side of this grand hall, opposite the outer entrance, were closed doors, of a size to match the general magnitude. "None but giants could have constructed this massive tabernacle," was my thought, as these doors swung open at the quiet touch of the Master.

We followed him into an apartment of great size, that seemed perfectly square in shape and of the severest simplicity of architectural design. It was lighted—as had also been the vestibule—with an enormous globe, bearing the semblance of incandescent electricity, placed in the centre of the far-away ceiling. Around the walls on every side of this hall were a series of ledges, like our modern galleries, protruding a certain width from the general surface. This surface was hidden

almost entirely by hanging framed mirrors of highly polished steel. If the reader will call to mind a modern gallery of art, he may gain some conception of this mysterious chamber. The floor was laid in tiles of different size and color, forming, by beautiful mosaic work, huge figures of strange animals, birds, and human beings. An easel, large enough to hold its burden, an immense steel mirror, stood at one end of the hall. Here and there throughout the room were placed massive oaken stools and huge arm-chairs of curious, antique carving, and scattered carelessly about were magnificent Cashmere rugs and cushions, all of Oriental design and coloring. The Master led the way to three chairs placed together in front of the easel, but at some little distance from it.

“Be seated, my pupils, — nay, my brothers. Had I not cast the glamour of earthly sense upon you before entering this sacred hall, the hidden wisdom of the ages would have been revealed to your higher consciousness without the use of spoken words. . . But the time of your awakening to knowledge is not yet. Long tests and tribulations are still before you both, ere the light of truth shall burn with unflickering blaze. For you,” turning to Barton, “the path to freedom looms shorter, nar-

rower, as you continue to subdue the grovelling impulses of earthly desire to be placed in earthly form again, as you now are through my means (cruel test as you at first thought it), has proved the upward growth of your spirit. Tell me, would you, if it were possible, return to earth, equipped as of yore, with the instruments of sense-gratification; or would you choose to continue the battle you have waged for seven years in regions midway between earth and heaven?"

"O Wise Master, I abhor the clogs of this gross, material body you have cast upon me. Dread and sorrowful as are my trials in shadow-land, I can discern the star of hope ahead, and I would not return to the illusions that this discarded earthly shell might once more produce. I am conscious of heights yet to climb, before my real self shall stand in the true light; but I am stronger and stronger for the fight, and care to take no retrogressive step. If you granted me leave to hold this body in earthly shape for a score of years, I should spurn the gift of such power."

"You choose the noble course."

Then, turning to me, the Master said: "The few ideas I shall impart to-night may aid to clear the clouds of materialistic error from your physical

brain. Enlightened with the glimpses of truth I shall show, you ought to gain such strength of intelligence and will that, when death calls, your spiritual self shall be freed at once from earth, to enter the realms of the higher evolution. Adept in supreme mysteries, master of occult wisdom, that I am, still my powers are limited ; nor dare I continue the spell I have cast about you too long. One hour of time, as measured by man, has passed since you left your sleeping body. I must restore you to that body ere another hour is marked on earth's dial. Vast as is my knowledge, compared with all the accumulated learning of mortal brains, it is still limited ; for it cannot grasp the perception of the one infinite being from whom all manifestations, spiritual and material, are derived. I am one of a band of spirits composed of graduates from the school of material experience, as given by manifold fleshly incarnations on this planet. We are selected by an eternal purpose, beyond even *our* comprehension, to hold the keys of divine wisdom, and to control the waves of knowledge, that from time to time sweep with force of thought through human minds, thereby surely, though slowly, raising the general level of progress accomplished by humanity. Seven race-manifesta-

tions of eternal mind must take shape on this world before the grand cycle of planetary existence is completed. Four races of beings have finished their evolutionary course on the planes of matter, — the last two in forms of flesh. Before the mists of a revolving ball of fire had cooled, and when the force of gravity held the world-atoms weakly together, thought had come to conscious life in shapes of attenuated matter. Thus was the first race born on earth. The second race-manifestation (coming after long ages, and after the cooling process of a spiritual breath had consolidated the outward shape of earth), was still ethereal in its constituents, though now did first appear the form of Adam — androgynous humanity. With the advent of the third race on a planet prepared for awakened intelligence, man came to a knowledge of himself as a dual personality, male and female. He walked the earth in physical strength, and developed the rudiments of a material civilization. He awakened to a consciousness of responsibility to a higher, hidden purpose. Giants in form, with strong, animal souls, the men of this third race conquered the material forces of nature: but, cruel of heart, no music of divine harmony was possible to them; the spiritual tones of an eternal life were not yet sounded.

“I am,” continued the Master, “giving you the briefest sketch of the development of life on this sphere. Each race, as it evolved from a previous life-manifestation, was connected with the parent stock by sub-branches, uniting the experiences gained in one cycle with those of the next. The fourth main race perished soon after the stones of this temple were laid. The grand continent that held the material accomplishment of a mighty nation was overwhelmed in the ruins of a geological overturn. The waters swallowed the accumulated energies of a wonderful people, but the seeds of future advance were retained in the grasp of a scattered remnant of this fourth race; and from those seeds has grown the present spreading tree of humanity, represented by the fifth race. As all the preceding manifestations of the eternal mind in matter have vanished from any mortal comprehension, so will this present development of life pass into higher stages. The boasted civilizations of the fifth race, with its numerous sub-branches, must perish, and two other manifestations of destiny have their material being, before the grand cycle of planet life is completed, and humanity shall live in the eternal.”

The Master paused as he reverently uttered the

last word. The wonderful magnetism of his voice held me spell-bound; nor was I in the least anxious about my return to earth, though I felt time was slipping rapidly away. I wanted very much to ask how this temple had survived in material form the destruction of its contemporaneous race. Our teacher, reading my thought, said: —

“The floods that destroyed the continent of Atlantis, the home of the fourth race, were accompanied by violent earthquakes. This temple, so huge and grand in your perception, was thrown, with the tract of land upon which it stands, among these mountains; where, hidden by the peaks, it has stood sheltered from mortal gaze or knowledge these many thousand years. Generations of adepts in seership, members of the wisdom band, have used this retreat as the sole place on earth where the true records of the races of earth can be read. Although invisible to your eyes, this hall is at this moment filled with a mighty conclave of spirits, gathered to consult with one another. The hanging mirrors of steel, magnetized with our occult power, reflect, at the command of any master or graduated spirit, all deeds or thoughts that transpire on the plane of this earth. For example, I will open your eyes to one vision of

the clear light as reflected on this mirror." He then walked to the easel near by, and turning the face of the mirror towards us, passed his hand lightly over it.

"Watch intently for what is pictured," was the quiet command.

Almost immediately we seemed to see a long stretch of double railroad tracks running through a quiet country district. We saw two stealthy figures approach, carrying a heavy log of timber between them. We saw these villains place this log across the rails in such a manner that the obstruction if not seen by the engine-driver in time to stop, would be sure to wreck his train. The purpose of these men accomplished, they disappeared, and immediately we could see the glare thrown by the head-light of a locomotive, and the onward rush of a long train of cars. Horror seized me, as I realized that a dreadful accident, with its accompanying slaughter of human life and infliction of physical suffering, was inevitable. If I had been on the spot, viewing this scene in my natural body, I could not have been more agitated with helpless dismay than while seeing this reflection in the mirror. Brief as were the moments that flashed this dread picture, I had

time to implore the saving help of the Master to avert a calamity that my consciousness realized was taking place on earth.

“Such power is not possessed by Master of my degree,” was the reply.

At the same instant the mirror repeated on its surface the direful disaster we had anticipated. The mysterious ruling of fate had brought one of those sudden lessons that no foresight of man can prevent. The description of the harrowing scene that followed shall not be transferred to paper. We could see the vain efforts of a brave engineer to stop his train; but no time had been given him. The final spectacle of sickening ruin was mercifully darkened to our sight by the smoke and steam arising from the shattered engine. As the ghastly phantasmagoria faded away, the Master addressed me in these words:—

“Doubt no longer the reality of spiritual existence and the power of thought over what you call matter. At a point thousands of miles distant (by reckoning of earth), at the town of L——, Ohio, has just occurred the material representation of the picture painted by thought on this mirror. As in physical body you read the latest edition of your morning newspaper, and see in startling headlines

“Dreadful Railroad Accident near L —, Ohio,” accept the dictates of your higher reason, and adapt the teachings of occult wisdom to the practical work of the years left to you on earth. Before dismissing you to the fleshly vehicle of that destined labor, I offer one seed of wisdom. May it germinate for your future consolation, and give you courage amid the temptations and trials of life. You are now serving your fifth incarnation in the human form, that marks the fifth race of earth. The material or spiritual happiness that has blessed your lot in this incarnation, is the effect of causes produced by your conduct in previous incarnations. Individual free will, as understood by the average human mind, has no reality ; but the real entity behind all these separate manifestations in gross matter, conscious of a personal life in the realms of spiritual existence, holds the control of will. The sixth principle of man is the constant guardian of each earthly incarnation of the lower principles. The good and bad actions performed in one pilgrimage shape the results for joy or sorrow that must be experienced by the material entity in the next succeeding. Thus, an earthly life of physical deprivation and hardship, — though all illusion, —

if it be bravely accepted, produces spiritual causes (controlled by the unconscious self), that appear as opposite effects; the fruits of victory, in the following life of physical ease and enjoyment. This continuous course of cause and effect, always held in the perception of the real Ego, is termed 'Karma.' Obey the promptings of your higher self, whether those promptings are in accord or not with the time-standards of the ruling morality of the world, and you will sow the true seeds—seeds, mayhap, of present sorrow, physical suffering; but you shall reap the harvest, not only in the realms of a spiritual recess of joyful contemplation, but also in the material conditions of your next incarnation. You," turning to Barton, "have no further control over the Karma ruling your destiny. You have left the physical plane, but have not yet become cognizant of your spiritual self. I have read the record of your last incarnation, and know how soon your present trials will be finished. When you reach a clearer light than the one still clouded by mundane thought, you can gather flowers of truth, forever blooming for those fitted to appreciate their fragrance. Now you must both return to your allotted tasks. I shall call you to my side again. Adieu!"

As this farewell was given, the form of flesh assumed by this being changed, and for one brief moment a spirit of majestic mien stood in the centre of a halo of brilliant light that seemed to absorb the whole scene; and all consciousness deserted me.

CHAPTER VIII

I AM by habit an early riser. No matter what the dissipations of pleasure, or engagements of business, that may delay the usual hour for bed (with me about 11 P.M.), it has never been my custom to play the sluggard in the morning. For years my first meal of the day has been finished before eight o'clock; but on the Monday morning following the night of such varied spiritual travel I broke my record, for the clock had marked the hour of nine before I could rouse myself to my humdrum life. Humdrum and commonplace enough did the usual round of daily duties seem in comparison with the exciting atmosphere of the mind-life of the previous night. Fleeting ghosts, swift journeyings through ethereal space, solid castles built by giant hands, wise adept in form of modern fashion, angels crowned with glorious light, — these are the realities. How can I descend to sale and bargain? how enter the fight for commodities that have

but an illusory existence? The mild reproof of my wife at such unwonted tardiness, as I entered the breakfast-room, brought my thoughts at once in tune with common-sense matters, though my recovered balance of sound judgment was threatened, when she read aloud from the morning paper just brought in, "Latest despatch from Associated press: Frightful railroad disaster near L —, Ohio; seventeen killed, thirty badly wounded."

I begged her not to give me the details: I wished a little time to recover from the shock of this quick fulfilment of the Master's promise. I quieted my nerves with the reflection, that the picture seen in my dream was one of those queer visions of an abnormal physical condition, similar to the well-known hypnotic impressions of Japanese crystal, or other bright surface. I recalled the experiments of French and German investigators of mesmeric phenomena, and their well-considered conclusions. I remembered an authentic account given by the English Psychological Society, of a woman who could assume clairvoyant powers at any time by staring intently at any small bright object. Although I had always heretofore held a very sceptical position in regard to the truth of

such extravagant stories, I was glad to conjure up any explanation, with even the weakest scientific basis, for this dream-prophecy of a railway horror that had evidently taken place at the very time indicated in my vision. The words of the adept came to me with distinct force as I sat at my breakfast-table: "You will find in the morning news the account of the disaster seen in this mirror."

When I had finished my meal, — which the reader can imagine was eaten with little relish, — I carefully read the press despatch. It was a very brief one, and stated that the cause of the accident was known, and that two desperate-looking tramps had been arrested, upon the suspicion of having placed the obstruction to wreck the train. This had been done with a view to plunder. I said nothing to my wife on the matter, though it was very difficult to conceal my agitation. At length, with an effort, I recovered my usual manner; and with a passing excuse of not feeling just up to the mark went to my city work. Exceptional rush of business occupied my thoughts so exclusively for the succeeding days that no time was given for speculation; though occasionally in the evening my mind would revert to the land of

shadows, and to that mysterious castle among the mountains. My waking judgment gave no positive decision, yet I was inclined more and more to believe that these spiritual visions were something else than mere dreams. I determined to resist any further calls from regions beyond the threshold of physical sense, until I could mentally digest the many subjects offered for serious thought. At the same time I wished to satisfy a natural curiosity about the impression given to my London friend, before entering upon further spiritual investigations. In the regular course of the foreign mails I could not receive a letter in a shorter time than nine or ten days from the night of my spirit-visitation. Allowing for the five hours difference of time between London and the starting-point of my thought-flight, my friend should have felt my presence at his bedside at about the hour of five o'clock in the morning. It was, therefore, my intention to exert my will in opposition to any sub-conscious spiritual influences until sufficient time had elapsed to test the London experiment. So, when the week had gone by, and another Sunday reminded me that I might expect a visit from Barton in the evening, I engrossed my whole mind with abstruse mathematical calculations, in

order that the vibrations of the atoms of my brain should repel any abnormal fancy. I felt convinced, also, that if these unnatural experiences contained any elements of reality, if they were anything more than exciting dreams, that with the power to read my thought possessed by Barton, he would not wish to drag an unwilling spirit away from its body. It was with confidence of an undisturbed night of restful sleep, therefore, that I sought my bed on this Sunday night. As I lay my drowsy head on the pillow, these words, in ghostly whisper, penetrated my consciousness : —

“Your present desire is recognized. One week from to-night, with wavering doubts removed, you will eagerly seek a continuation in the teachings vouchsafed to few mortals still in flesh.”

The next morning I awoke refreshed in body and mind ; for it gave me a renewal of strength to feel that an exertion of personal will had enabled me to prevent a return of dream-fantasies, which were threatening the periodic phase. It was a great consolation to feel that it lay within my own power to correct the nervous disturbances which produced such strange spiritual manifestations ; and that I was not a mere puppet in the hands of occult influences. One fact, however, I must

confess: my materialistic theories were refuted. Whatever the cause of my vision of the railway accident, no possible chance-coincidence of dream and actual occurrence, furnished a tenable explanation. I must concede a world beyond the confines of physical sense, if I acknowledged that my brain had taken cognizance of an event happening in far-away space. Yet this it had done, and at the very moment of its occurrence. What a revolution in all my preconceived notions of existence! Once accepting the spiritual basis, it was not difficult for one who had never been able to adopt the biblical account of creation, or the reasonings of theological dogmatists, to believe in more rational teachings regarding the origin and development of life on this planet. I had studied the German philosophies in a cursory manner at various periods of my life; and, though never especially attracted by metaphysical speculation, my mind had been somewhat imbued with the ideas presented by the different schools of thought represented by Spinoza, Hegel, Schelling and Kant. Although by no means a convert to the gloomy views of nature offered by Schopenhauer and Von Hartmann, their conceptions of a universal will, behind all manifestations in what is

called matter, had always impressed me. The fundamental doctrine of these latter philosophers, that the only essential reality in the universe is will; that what are termed appearances exist only in our subjective representations, and are merely forms under which a single original will shows itself; and that this eternal will is ever striving for self-consciousness — had always fascinated my attention. Von Hartmann, though an adherent of the development theory, in opposing the mechanical aspects of Darwinism, and in advocating a return to a purified Brahminical faith, in my opinion has given a wider aspect to the doctrines of human evolution. The esoteric teachings of the Master, in the castle of my dream, were strikingly in accord with the theories of the last-named philosophers. Could it be possible that the two arch-pessimists of the nineteenth century were inspired with partial glimpses of the truth? It was certainly a grand view of evolutionary development given by that sage of the many centuries — a noble view of man's origin and destiny was his teaching, that humanity belongs to a kingdom distinctly separate from that of the animal. If mankind, as represented by what the Master calls the fifth race, has attained such high

degree of enlightenment, what boundless hopes may be cherished for the future races of the earth? And if the doctrine of repeated incarnations for the individual be true, what hopes may be entertained for a perfected spiritual entity? The rule of cause and effect, applied to the actions of each personality in these earth-experiences, solves the old problem of free will as no church dogma of election and predestination could.

The sum of my conclusions, after much pondering at various times during the ten days immediately following that fifth night of adventure, was favorable to the belief in the reality of such experiences. No mere dream could have given such orderly sequence of events or such new ideas. Could my brain have originated the very impressive fancy of a castle, built by the giant hands of the Atlantean race, hidden from eye of man for twenty thousand years? Or, if this is possible, could my waking mind have retained the architectural details so clearly as to enable me to furnish a description for a professional drawing? Again, is it likely that, with my preconceived notions of an ancient sage, a dream should paint him young, vigorous, and in modern dress? My common-sense gave a negative answer to all these

questions. I had, therefore, finally quieted all doubt, and had resolved to use the spiritual means for obtaining larger knowledge to the greatest extent compatible to physical health; when, in my morning mail of the eleventh day, I found a foreign letter with the London postmark, directed in the well-known handwriting of my afore-mentioned friend.

The letter was dated from an old inn in the suburbs of modern London. My friend, travelling partly for pleasure, is much addicted to the practice of hunting out queer lodging-places in out-of-the-way localities. The quaint furniture of the bedroom seen in my dream is explained by this letter. One would expect the high-posted bed and hanging curtains in such an old-style tavern.

BULL & BUSH, HAMPSTEAD HEATH, LONDON, ENGLAND,
MAY 5, 1891.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND :—

As you are in my debt already on correspondence account, — though I forgive you most willingly, — I shall make this note very short. I am writing this at an early hour in the morning, in order to catch the next American mail; for I shall not rest easily in mind until I hear you are in your usual good health.

I went to bed last night about eleven o'clock, and, feeling unusually tired, fell at once into a deep sleep which ought to have lasted at least four hours longer — that is, until my accus-

tomed breakfast-time, about nine A.M. While in this sound sleep a most vivid dream disturbed my rest. I thought you came to my bedside, and, strange to say, our old friend Barton, of army days, was with you. (By the way did he not die of heart-trouble some years ago?) You placed your hand on my head in an affectionate way, begging me to write to you the first thing in the morning, to inform you of this visit. I awoke at once, and the dream had impressed me so intently that I imagined I saw you and Barton, in shadowy forms, glide away through the solid walls of my room.

You know I am not so sceptical on occult matters as you are: so this dream in my opinion contained some hidden significance. My strong hope is that, whatever its meaning, it bodes no harm to your bodily or mental health. I am staying for a few days at this old inn. It stands, with little change they say in outward appearance, or in the interior arrangements and furniture, from the old coaching days of Merrie England. Dick Turpin and his cut-throat gang are said to haunt the various rooms of this tavern. But such evil spirits would hardly take the shape of so steady a moralist as I know you to be.

Beseeching you to write at once and relieve my nervous fears, I am,

Yours ever faithfully,

JAMES E. WARREN.

Here was convincing proof of one fact at least — the fact that by transference of thought, a subjective image of myself had been imprinted upon the brain of my sleeping friend across the sea. It gave another confutation to any materialistic hypothesis.

I will not tire the reader with the close analysis employed by my critical judgment in striking a balance between conflicting opinions. I record these various musings simply to show the sincerity with which these strange experiences were examined.

CHAPTER IX

PUNCTUAL to his appointment, Barton called for me the next Sunday night. I was already in my psychic form, as before falling asleep I had impressed my mind with the intent of readiness for his visit; indeed, since the receipt of the letter and subsequent reasonings, I was most anxious to meet the Master again, and, if possible, acquire further knowledge. As I greeted Barton, I noticed several other spirits in the room; but, using the perception gained by these repeated astral tours, I plainly saw that these visitors were mundane spectres. None possessed the bright appearance of the higher spirits. I imagined I could see familiar faces among them, some of old acquaintances who had passed from earth; but I was not disposed to linger at this time, as my eager desire was to meet the august Master. As we were preparing to leave, Barton called my attention to a very diminutive figure that seemed to be perched on the back of a chair. It had eyes like an owl, a nose

and mouth like a parrot, with a thin, short body and spindly legs ; a perfect airy image of the traditional goblin. The expression of the little face (if face it can be called) was not in the least malicious, rather did it convey the idea of mischievous humor. As the imp caught my glance, it gave a comical little nod, with a peculiar gesture of its arms, as if begging my pardon for its presence in the room.

“ What sort of tiny devil is that ? ” I inquired.

“ He is a harmless elemental. He belongs to a countless order of little, soulless beings, who are generated from the wasted, foolish thoughts of mankind. They never attain a material form gross enough to be recognized by physical sight. They are short-lived, though for certain purposes the supply of these elementals in their many different shapes seems never to fail. The sidereal atmosphere near the earth is filled with these little creatures. The adepts use them for wise objects ; and it is by command over the elementals, that the sorcerers of earth, the Hindoo Fakirs, and also the practitioners of black magic, accomplish their feats. The physical manifestations of the spiritual mediums (so-called) are nearly all produced by the aid of these soulless beings. They work, as do all

the dwellers in the astral light, in the fourth dimension of space, outside of all the limitations of matter as understood by man. This elemental, who makes himself so much at home, has probably followed some other spirit into this chamber. These undeveloped little beings, especially those of the genus elf, like the present one, are very docile. They often attach themselves to spirits of nobler rank to serve them in many useful ways. If you, in your waking senses, hear strange noises about your house, ringing of bells and similar unaccountable manifestations, you may accuse the elementals. But stay! this little messenger shows by his gestures a desire to communicate something to us. Understanding the sign-language of this urchin race, I will ascertain what his errand may be."

After a moment's interview between Barton and the elf, the latter disappeared.

"He brings a message from the Master. Our teacher wishes you to visit him. He has arranged a line of thought-transport that will take you to the castle with lightning speed. Other work is given to me, so I shall be unable to accompany you. When ready for the flight, call the name of Hasta, and you will find yourself at the

bamboo lodge. Hold no timid thought, for no possible harm can come to you while under the protection of this powerful magician."

I must confide to the reader that this assurance from my friend was needed, for the courage that had supported me throughout these dream-wanderings threatened to wane as I found myself about to be bereft of Barton's companionship. But it was only a temporary cowardice. After my friend departed, bracing my will to the effort, I gave the signal. Scarcely had the name Hasta been mentally formed, when I found myself entering, for the second time, the mountain hut. The same voice of welcome, the same glow of light and once again in bodily shape I was walking up the avenue of giant trees. Since my last visit to this home of occultism, the query had often presented itself to my mind, whether the Master would in future interviews assume the same modern form as before; or whether he would take an outward shape more in keeping with his real character. This very natural speculation was answered by the sudden appearance of the same figure that had greeted us at the former visit. After his first cordial salutation, however, the face and form of the speaker changed; but this change was so gradual that my perception

could not mark the exact moment when the representation of the highest type of modern manhood seemed to merge into the face and figure of the grandest specimen of an ideal human being possible to earthly imagination. As we entered the vestibule of the castle, where the brilliant light from above fell upon this figure, I was moved by a sudden impulse to throw myself at his feet. The magnetism of this glorious presence seemed to compel my worship; yet the form was only that of man. As I was about to offer this expression of my inward sense of love and homage, the Master forbade.

“Not to man shalt thou bend thy knee! Thou art my brother! Such as I now appear to you shall be all men on earth when the sixth race takes its place in the evolutionary course of life-manifestation on this planet. I have assumed this shape to teach you how very far short of human possibilities lags the mortal (even he of purest type) of your fifth race. When you were last here I took the highest form of man, as produced by the best material civilization the world has yet seen. I now show what man shall be when the next cycle opens its round; when, having learned to live with his brother as brothers ought, man shall have received

the gift of wider physical senses. It is only to humanity, educated by experiences gained in repeated race-rounds, that the Eternal bestows the larger powers. There are glimpses of the greater faculties of sense given to exceptional beings of the fifth race; but the selfishness, the grasping cruelties of your present ill-adjusted social system, debar the general development of hidden forces that will manifest as soon as the human mind is prepared. I stand before you now as a perfect man; not with the giant animal form of the fourth race, in whom intellect and brute strength were developed at the expense of the heart; not with the neurotic tendencies of your diseased, exhausted fifth race,—a race limited to five physical senses,—but I meet you armed with all the faculties of a developed, human being; such an one as represents the average type of the coming humanity of the next grand cycle. Natural selection, as illustrated in the survival of the fittest in a universal evolution, will produce the seven-sensed lord of earth, of whom my present form is a semblance. All the forces of nature, now partially withheld from unworthy hands, will be under the complete control of the mighty coming race, the advanced inheritor of the accumulated experiences of all previous ages. The

comparatively few adepts in divine wisdom, educated by self-sacrifice in countless incarnations on this and other planets, have won already the powers that shall be the common heritage of the peoples of the sixth race. We will now enter the hall."

The massive doors swung open, and I found myself in the room described in the former chapter. Nothing seemed changed but the outward appearance of the Master, and of this appearance I can give the reader no adequate idea. In comparing the really supernatural beauty and intellectual grandeur of his head and countenance, the muscular grace of his powerful frame, clad in loose but well-fitting garments, with the highest type of manhood possible to modern conception, the Master seemed indeed a god. Yet he teaches that the men of the next earth-race shall be formed in this noble mould. Notwithstanding his powerful physique of vigorous manhood, the pervading characteristic of his personality seemed feminine; not only in the expression of his beautiful face, but in the soft grace of his every bodily movement. It was as if the loftiest ideal traits of perfect womanhood were blended with the noblest masculine qualities; a union of warm

sympathy and loving tenderness with intellectual dignity and muscular strength.

The Master, replying to my unexpressed thought, said, "The true spiritual entity, the ever-persistent, immortal Ego, copy in miniature of the one Eternal Being, from whom all outward forms emanate, is dual in its nature. Manifesting on material planes as man or as woman, the spiritual completeness of each personality is temporarily broken. Between the many incarnations voluntarily assumed, when the real self is freed from the lower principles, the male and female affinities reunite to constitute the perfect spirit. Sex is a mark of imperfect individuality. Neither man nor woman is a complete representation, physically or spiritually, of humanity. In sex there is a disruption of the original unity of spirit. The desire for union, which is so marked a characteristic of earth, illustrated in sexual love, is but a feeble reflection of that holy, unselfish spiritual aspiration for sex-reunion. But the full consciousness of such reunion is not given to earth-bound dwellers in the astral state. In me you see one who, having finished his round of incarnations, is possessed with the full powers of nature's dual elements."

We were by this time seated in the same part

of the room as in the former visit. The easel, with the wonderful mirror, stood near by. The assurance given by my teacher, that the men of the next earth-race would bear the same noble form which he now wore, filled my heart with hopeful faith in a bright future for the coming humanity, and it prompted me to ask, "Does your wisdom enable you to prophesy how soon, in calendar of earth, this sixth race will appear? Must ruin and destruction come upon the present race before mankind can enter the next grand period of development? Is every change from lower to higher forms, as illustrated by these succeeding races, accompanied by such geological cataclysms as marked the disappearance of the race whose remnants built this temple?"

The Master gave this reply: —

"The pages of the book of human destiny are clearly read by the adept in holy seership. The stern law of cause and effect never can be broken. The illusionary world of matter is the plane of causes that produce their effects in the real world of spirit. The discords brought by selfishness and cruelty on the part of spirits incarnated on earth disturb the harmony of the ethereal regions, even to planes of thought where highest spirits dwell.

The evil causes produced by one round of incarnations must be expiated, and their resulting effects destroyed by redeeming traits of self-sacrifice and goodness on the part of component human atoms of the next earth-life. This law holds good in regard to individual manifestations in matter, and also to race-manifestations. As I told you before, this law of cause and effect is called "Karma." Thus, as the spiritual entity, the single Ego must reap in each succeeding earthly life the results (good or bad) of seeds sown in the preceding flesh-manifestations; so must each race, in its round of existence, expiate the mistakes committed in the last grand cycle. The mystic brotherhood to which I belong is pledged to preserve the records of all past events, and by the correct reading of these events we are able to map the future. There are members of this brotherhood wiser than I, supreme masters, who had finished their round of incarnations in matter before this earth emerged from starmist. These high vicars of eternal purpose see the present, past, and future of all events on this planet, as if painted as picture on one vast canvas. But I have not yet attained to such knowledge. As compared with my wisdom, your ideas are but those of babbling babyhood; so in presence of

these higher brothers I bow my head in humility. With the aid of yonder mirrors (pointing as he spoke to the rows of polished steel lining all sides of the vast chamber), I have seen clearly how the sixth race will be born. The advent of this race will bring a fresh incarnation of selected spirits who, equipped with larger intellectual and moral powers, will raise the general level of humanity to heights of culture never before attained on earth. In our last interview I gave a general view of the world-periods as marked by successive race-manifestations. I did not attempt to describe the earlier spiritual races that dwelt on planes of earth before the energy of the unseen universe had guided the atoms of force into material form; before the marriage of chemical affinities had brought any outward shape to ideas existing in the mind of nature. As your comprehension cannot grasp the ethereal races of the first and second cycles, — races not yet delivered in forms of matter from the womb of mind, — so it will serve no purpose to show you an image of the human type of the third race. The figure that by my command would appear in reflection on the selected mirror of that distant gallery would ever after haunt you as a human monster; yet the third-race beings, double-sexed,

three-eyed giants, were the progenitors of that later race which developed such a grand material civilization on the continent of Lemuria. With the inhabitants of that continent began the course of evolutionary development that embraces in its broad scope the spiritual responsibilities of an immortal destiny. Upon the sinking of Lemuria, her offspring, Atlantis, gave a home for another mighty civilization which also perished in its turn. In order to apply these facts, in answer to your question regarding the birth of the sixth race, you must remember that each main race contains many sub-branches and off-shoots. The results accomplished by the fourth race and its branches — by the Lemurians and Atlanteans — were not lost. By the steady process of natural selection the purpose of the Almighty mind was accomplished. Although all material manifestations of the fourth race, with the one exception of this temple, have disappeared, the reality still exists in the spiritual realms; the gains of experience on planes of matter live in the thought-atmosphere, and the fifth race has reaped the fruits. We are approaching the end of one grand, evolutionary cycle. The new round, with the birth of the sixth race, will begin at a certain, not far distant date, — a date

marked on astronomical charts when a sidereal conjunction, now expected by an awakened science, shall take place. If the work of our band of holy brothers prospers, — and this labor is incessant, — no great destruction of human life, no such horrors of flood and earthquake as destroyed Atlantis, will be repeated. We who hold the grasp of real knowledge, see the germs of the new race already sown by the hand of a beneficent ruler. The next generation of the children of earth will contain the reincarnations of a higher order of spirits than has blessed your globe since it first took shape as a revolving planet. Already a few leaders of a later arriving band have begun the work. With the powers possessed by our brotherhood, it has not been difficult to see a marked change in the thought-atmosphere surrounding the advanced nations of this fifth race. This betokens the advent of a ripple of truth, which to the adept perception testifies to the future rise of a tide of fresh knowledge that shall sweep away the accumulated sands of error, and carry the newly born sixth race to higher ground than has ever been trod by men of our earth. Throughout all past ages one fatal thought has vitiated every attempt of man on this particular planet to establish a civilized state. On some

other planets, in this, and in greater systems of worlds, larger truth was earlier given. This destroying thought has been the wrong interpretation of sex. The male has assumed that he was the lord of life, whereas the opposite fact is nearer the truth; for, if there is any distinction, the female element of nature is the higher. Man by this false assumption has brought repeated ruin upon all his attempts to build a lasting civilization. You must bear in mind, however, that these failures on this earth have been within eternal purpose; for, in descending into matter, the universal spirit desires to manifest in every possible form. It is only by contrast that wisdom and morality (terms of one meaning) can obtain conscious existence. The masters of occult knowledge, skilled in the mysteries of the inner truths of nature, tried in the furnace of every possible experience of a mortal existence, are selected by the hand of an almighty ruler to guide the course of human evolution on this planet. Our work will not be finished until the seventh race in the last earth cycle is born. At that distant day this globe, as a manifestation of matter appreciable to any physical sense, will have disappeared. Illusion will have been absorbed in reality.

CHAPTER X

THE Master paused as he uttered the last word, and lifted his hand slightly, as if in unconscious emphasis to some passing thought. At the same moment the easel with its mirror, moved by invisible hands, placed itself immediately in front of the spot occupied by our chairs.

“I have called you to-night for an object that shall now be revealed,” continued the adept, as the easel rested in its new position.

“You have shown the true courage by your willingness to part company with Barton at my desire. There are few spirits still in physical body who would have dared call the name “Hasta” at bidding of an ugly elf. The absence of your astral comrade was needed for the lesson I shall now teach. By the use of few words let the mirror show why Barton has been held on mundane planes for seven years of man, while his purified spirit has been eager to seek its higher home. His hour of deliverance is close at hand.

Before the lunar servant of the earth shall have shown twice more its full face to the western globe, the patient, loving Barton will have won his spiritual freedom. United with his other half, he will attain the blissful rest of Devachan.¹ As the reflections appear, you will read their import."

As this was said, the face of the mirror shone with brilliant light, and I saw what appeared as the outside of a dingy brick building of many stories in height. The broken facings, the worn and tumbled-down aspect of the steps to the front entrance, the shattered window-panes stuffed with dirty rags, these various signs marked plainly enough the character of the structure. It was a tenement house of the lowest kind, such a one as can be found only in the most poverty-stricken

¹ This term expresses condition rather than locality. In the stages of spiritual evolution it is the realm of full consciousness, where the spirit (the sixth principle of man) gathers strength for further incarnations; reaping in the realms of pure thought, the harvest of deeds done while under the illusions of earthly sense. It is usually the case, that the male and female manifestations in flesh (if both are worthy) finish their trials on earth simultaneously, and reunite to form the perfect spirit at the same moment. The Master had explained the devachanic state before; but my mind, imbued with sense-conceptions of time and space, had not been able to grasp such knowledge. Before my dream-experiences were finished, however, I was able to see the truth in clearer light; but, as this record is not intended as a philosophic treatise, the narration shall not be interrupted.

districts of the largest cities. This representation faded quickly away, and another scene was presented. Although many words are needed to describe these views, they really came, one after another, with the speed of thought, nor did they seem like pictures; they rather conveyed to my consciousness the sense that I was on the spot as part of the reflected image. The mirror now gave a phantom tableau of miserable wretchedness. It was evidently a room in the same building shown in the preceding sketch. The room, small in size, contained a three-legged, rickety table, a chair and rusty little stove. On a miserable pallet on the floor in one corner of the room lay the dead and wasted body of a woman, apparently of middle age. The face of this poor woman, thin and worn as if by long physical suffering from want of food, was still lovely in its expression of refinement and patient resignation. The evidences of her last efforts at toil were seen in a half-finished garment neatly folded on the table, with needle still in the place where the last stitch was taken. Kneeling beside the pallet, with his head bowed upon the breast of this inanimate figure, was the shadowy form of a man. I at once perceived it was Barton, clothed in astral shape. As for one

moment he raised his face to our full view, I saw his look, which was one almost joyous in its change from the care-worn anxiety I had been used to see in all these interviews.

“One of the last threads holding your friend to earth is broken,” said the Master. “During all these years his love for the spirit enclosed in the frail body of that noble woman has held him chained to life. She, self-sacrificing soul, lost by her trust in a false friend the small fortune left by Barton for her support. He has seen, with no power to aid, her brave struggles against a poverty which has grown more and more grinding as the years have passed.”

“Why did he not impress me, or some other earthly friend, to relieve the physical wants of this loved one?” I ventured to ask.

“Such interference with an all-ruling design is not in power of mundane spirit. Even the wise adept dare not use the powers he possesses to change the results in an earthly life arising from causes produced in any preceding incarnation. The spirit of yonder woman in its last embodiment dwelt in the form of a lady of the highest earthly rank. She was a haughty duchess of the Court of Louis XVI. Though pure and unselfish

as compared with many women of her time, she held herself as made of finer material stuff than those beneath her in social position. She has paid the Karmic debt in the life just closed and by her patient resignation has won her release. She has conquered the inclinations of her lower principles and, as a pure spirit, she will pass at once to the realms beyond. The atoms of her material brain will produce no mundane dreams."

"Will she recognize Barton in the astral light?" I inquired.

"Her shadow, animated with its animal soul, may have a fleeting existence on the astral plane, but her real self will have gone to Spiritual Rest, there to await the deliverance of Barton. You must understand that the marriage in flesh of the earthly manifestations of this spiritual unity was a *true* union. The germinating principles of nature, emanating from the one supreme mind, urge these unions. How mistaken are man's ideas on this vital subject! How seldom is it that the true affinities, moulded in the holy thought of universal will, join each other on planes of matter! In vegetable and animal life the guiding power of hidden purpose leads to higher types continuously; and so it is with human kind. Ill-assorted as are

many of the so-called marriages of your present civilization, — indeed as are the majority of such unions, — they serve a wise purpose in training individual character, and also in blending physical traits of diverse nervous constitution. Never lose sight of the one supreme maxim: ‘Whatever is, is right.’”

The representation on the mirror had by this time faded completely away.

“I have two views more to show before I dismiss you to your body. One is a vision of the risen spirit of that toil-worn victim of your cruel industrial system. Cast your glance to the middle mirror of that highest ledge. Those gallery reflectors hold within their depths the records of every possible event in the future of the fifth race. It is only the adept who can call them forth. Look!”

At this moment the hall was suddenly darkened. The hush of dead silence, broken only by the Master’s voice, that had marked this chamber heretofore, was now disturbed by multitudinous whisperings, as if a mighty host of spirits was moving hither and thither through the hall. This affected me strangely, and brought to my memory the weird sensations of certain fevered, waking dreams of youth, — when in convalescent days of

recovery from a long illness, I had heard in the breezes of a summer day the same rhythmic mutterings. There quickly appeared a circle of brilliant light at the point to which the Master had called my attention. In the midst of this circle was the glorified image of a woman. The closest idea of this vision I can convey is that it was Raphael's Madonna di San Sisto, with the idealized countenance of the woman whom we had seen lying dead on the pallet in the last scene.

As I gazed in wonder at this heavenly image of beauty, the Master repeated in tones of the deepest reverence: "In the words of the greatest adept ever sent to this planet, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'"

There then burst forth such a chorus of song from the surrounding darkness as I am sure no mortal ears could bear. The intense effect of joy and peace that touched my inmost soul brought what must have been a swoon; for I knew nothing until the kind voice of this wonderful magician said: "One more view, and my lesson for to-night is ended."

The hall was once more in silence and in full light from the central globe.

"The easel mirror will now show the only re-

maining tie that binds our brother Barton to earth.”

Immediately I saw on the bright surface of the oval steel a prison cell. There was no mistaking the stone walls, the grated iron door, the bench and the cot, the bucket in the corner. On the cot sat a young man of not over twenty years of age. He was half undressed, and had evidently just roused himself from a restless sleep. The face was not the countenance of a criminal. It was more that of one who, with weak will, had yielded to some sudden temptation. It was handsome in feature, but showed vile marks of dissipation for one so young. Beside this boy were two shadowy forms, which I quickly recognized as those of Barton and the woman of the tenement room. Both seemed engaged in comforting the boy, and in consoling each other.

“This is well,” said the Master. “The wife and mother has delayed her spirit departure long enough to give one last comforting thought to husband and son; for this imprisoned culprit is the sole result of the earthly union of those sorely burdened spirits. This youth was one of those two figures you saw place the obstruction to wreck the train in that reflection of the railway horror.”

“Did Barton know this at that time?” was my instant question.

“No: I veiled the fact from his perception then, though, led always by his earthly love, he was constantly near his wife and son and soon discovered the truth. He has seen the tender solicitude of a mother’s heart, as this boy yielded more and more to devilish influences. He has seen her physical strength, exhausted by daily toil, give way under the added burden of mental anxiety and heartache. But she will soon understand, in the clear spiritual light of real life, why fate has required these earthly sorrows. This son of her last incarnation, judged by man’s standards, is apparently hopelessly depraved; yet this is not really the case. The dastardly deed for which he is now imprisoned was the act of a demon who had taken possession of his body while the animal soul of that body was drugged with the poison of alcohol. Weak as this young man has been throughout his short earthly life, his real self, the spiritual Ego, is essentially noble and will obtain at last the victory over the lower principles. I must tell you one fact that, in its application to this and other cases, will give you a clearer understanding of life’s purposes:—

“Human infants born to earth possess naught but animal souls until the age of two years. The spiritual soul, individualized spirit, does not manifest in any human being before that age. The incarnating Ego, conscious of its power to choose, then selects the particular child possessing the physical traits of bodily inheritance that are needed to give the experiences necessary for further spiritual development. In the cases of those unfortunate human beings called idiots, and also with a large class of manifestations in the flesh, embracing human personalities who are bereft of moral judgment, no principle above the fourth (the animal soul) exists. Such partially developed specimens of humanity are barely above the brute creation; and after the death of the physical body, with its accompanying astral form, any individual entities connected with such manifestations perish. To explain more clearly: By prolonged spiritual wickedness, the lower self, or personality, separates completely from the higher Ego, and is re-born soulless in lower and lower forms, until momentum is exhausted. In such cases the higher principles put forth another personality, and the separated ones are left to perish forever. The spiritual soul

selecting the son of Barton for a fresh incarnation saw a diseased nervous inheritance in that child, which would furnish a strong test of moral ability. The neurotic weakness present in the physical constitution of this young criminal is the material effect of causes produced by the progenitors of his family centuries ago. Conquering this tendency to evil in a personal manifestation of such deranged material atoms, deliberately allowing a predominating control of the lower principles until the age of twenty, the real Ego will show the power of spirit over matter, by an entire regeneration of his physical and moral nature. The lapse of spiritual control, which allowed the deed committed under the temporary insanity of the animal soul, was intentional, as the lower the descent into sense-illusion, the greater the victory won at last by the Higher Self. The shock of physical remorse brings to the inner sense-consciousness redeeming reaction; and in those cases where the spiritual self still exists, as in the present example, this reaction brings new outward forms, and spiritual harmony restores the tone of the material atoms on the plane of earth."

The Master then gave a long explanation of the impelling forces that with logical sequence

brought the railway calamity; but my waking remembrance does not retain the full teaching, with the clearness required for verbal transcription. In brief, that disaster, so shocking to human sense in its sudden destruction of life, according to this spiritual adept, was a mere passing event on a material plane, no more to be deplored than the ending of a single earthly life. The cowardly deed that brought the accident was the effect of criminal thought in the previous incarnations of personalities represented by the killed and wounded of that wrecked train. A Karmic debt of discordant thought in a distant past was paid. My teacher also opened to my comprehension another view of this and similar sudden tragedies. He showed how each wave of evil thought, manifesting in outer form of dire catastrophe, was accompanied by an opposite wave of warm, spiritual love, which, entering human hearts in the form of sympathy and compassion, gave fresh impetus to the holiest feelings of man. If no such violent means were used, the world's mind, as mortally constituted in this fifth race, would become selfishly callous. So, to spiritual perception, the apparent harm produced by the most heart-rending visitation, is more than counterbal-

anced by the lasting impress of unselfish benevolence upon human character.

I asked the Master whether the older villain of the two, who had wrecked the train, had any redeeming qualities of nature? I was anxious to know whether such a degraded being as he had appeared in the mirror (his had been the figure especially prominent) could possess a transcendental personality.

“I answer ‘No’ to both your inquiries,” replied the Sage. “That instrument of fate belongs to the category of soulless beings referred to before. His present body is not animated by the earthly incarnation of any spiritual self. He is simply a mundane devil. His inheritance, through generation after generation, is simply one of crime. You will not care to hear more. Let it serve you to know that such soulless manifestations have their use; and remember for your future guidance, that a human being by constant neglect of the teachings given by the unconscious Ego, by selfishness and cruelty of conduct, is slowly killing the spiritual entity, and that the physical manifestation of such discordant personality will drop at last from the tree of life, as drops the worm-eaten, rotten fruit from the orchard bough.

“I dismiss you now to your sleeping body. I intrust a commission of brotherly duty to your earthly self. You will receive two letters by morning’s mail. Obey the requests contained in them. When next I call you to this castle, you shall hear more of the new race, that, in the coming cycle of earth, will establish the true brotherhood of humanity, — reaching the goal at last of a spiritual ideal that has needed five previous race-manifestations to prepare. In three weeks of earthly time, your friend Barton will make his last visit to your bedside. His present incarnation, with its astral after-life, is nearly finished.”

As this was said, I felt the form of flesh, temporarily bestowed by this powerful being, melting away. For one brief moment, as the word farewell reached my ear, I seemed to possess my spiritual vision; then all consciousness of castle or Master departed, and, as if cramped by lying long in one position, my body turned in its bed. The dream was finished.

CHAPTER XI

STRANGE as it may seem to the reader who has followed this record up to the present point, I awoke early the next morning physically refreshed. Not an obstinate man by nature, the several proofs given had satisfied all doubts as to the reality of my spiritual experiences. Compelled to accept the testimony of my best intellectual judgment, the new theories of universal purpose guiding the evolutionary development of race and individual, as given by the Sage, impressed me as logical and, on the whole, as comforting. Unsettled as had been my faith for years regarding the immortality of the individual soul, there would come at certain times a fearful dread of the possibilities of an hereafter of righteous retribution. Unable to accept the doctrines of any theological creed, I could establish no reasonable basis of hope for any personal immortality. Judging any future life from the analogies of the present average individual existence, predominant in pain and sorrow, could any-

thing happier be expected beyond the portals of bodily death? These were the gloomy thoughts that would intrude at unwelcome moments; thoughts undoubtedly shared by numerous fellow-creatures who have escaped from the delusions of theological fancies. It was, therefore, a relief to rest on the authority of teachings that appealed to common-sense; to feel that the mistakes of one earthly life might be redeemed by individual effort in the next succeeding material manifestation, even though the intermediate mundane region between physical and spiritual consciousness seemed filled with horror. I cherished a hope that, with my new knowledge, when death came I might conquer, by force of spiritual aspiration, all tendencies of earth, and so enter at once the realms of reality. The idea of cremation, or some other quick disposal of the useless bodily frame, obtained a firmer mental lodgement than ever; though I determined to consult the Sage on this point.

At breakfast my wife, who was not at all pleased with these abnormal experiments, and who regarded them as mere dreams resulting from impaired physical health, greeted me with inquiring looks. I gave her a brief account of my last vision, without betraying my own confidence in its

significant character. Whatever my own doubts, I had never attempted to disturb her own firm faith in Christianity as the one sole redeeming revelation of God to man. Giving full belief to the teachings of the mystic Master, and judging the single individual life of a sincere Christian in the light of those teachings, I felt that such a life must be in spiritual accord with divine purpose; so I had no wish to cause one ripple on the even surface of that sea of happy belief.

Curious to know whether the letters prophesied by the Master would arrive, I made no delay this Monday morning, but went at once to my city office. Surely enough, in my business mail were two letters, that from outside appearance I opened at once. The first one, written in an unformed scrawl, contained the news of the death, in the house in which the writer lived, of a poor woman, who in her last moments had given my name as that of one who had been in old days the friend of her husband. This note was evidently written by some friendly, though ignorant, amanuensis, and was signed "Margaret Welsh, her mark," with the usual cross. The address given was "No. 7, Dunlap Alley, New York City."

I deciphered, with much difficulty, that the

lady (for that was the title given) had died early in the morning of the same day on which the letter was written — that day being the Sunday of my last dream. The writer begged me to come at once, before the city authorities gave the poor body a pauper's burial. I determined to go by an early train to New York; but to insure instant attention, a telegram with the proper instructions was sent to a reliable undertaker of that city. I then opened the second letter, which was from the warden of a municipal prison of a western town. This official gave a touching account of a young man who was confined under the charge of aiding a notorious criminal in placing the obstruction that had wrecked the train in the late dreadful accident at L——. The writer, who seemed above the average of such police guardians, described his youthful prisoner as being insane from remorse; that he had begged I should be informed; that in a dream he had been visited by his dead father, who had given my name as one who would aid him in this dreadful extremity. The official also gave me the further information that the boy's appearance did not in the least coincide with the usual characteristics of the vicious class; that, behind some outward marks of dissipa-

tion, he could plainly discern refined traits of an amiable, even a noble, disposition; and he hoped a chance for reform would be given this youth, for whom he had taken an unaccountable liking. He begged my help to save this young life.

Here, indeed, was work for mind and body, — work of most repugnant kind for a man of my tastes and fancies. I am most thankful to record, however, that not one thought of disregarding either appeal entered my brain. If my dreams had taught me nothing more, they at least had emphasized the fact of individual responsibility to the whole social body; that the personal atom only existed as one small portion of a larger organism. The Sage had declared one truth, which, with the help of my higher Ego, should be the guiding rule of all my future conduct — the truth, that in cheerful sacrifice of self for the good of others lay all the moral law. I could not explain why my heart seemed so suddenly opened; or why receiving this old truth in a new form from the mouth of a living adept in wisdom, should move me more than that precept given by Christ: “Do unto others as you would have others do unto you;” but such was the case. One short month ago I should not have felt bound to attend in person to

the duties imposed by those two letters. No word in either note contained any allusion to Barton, and without the incidents of the dream, I should never have connected the dead woman of that New York Alley, nor the boy in the prison-cell, with my old friend of army days. In fact, I had not been aware of the existence of any son. I had heard of Barton's marriage some time after the war; but as our paths in life had widely separated, and as we had never kept up any correspondence, my ignorance of the facts of his later life was not strange. Barton, my friend in London, James Warren, and I, had served in the same regiment of the regular army during the Civil War, at the end of which I parted with him never to meet again until, as I have mentioned in the early part of this record, he appeared, or seemed to appear, in shadowy form just after his death. Now, delighted to show by some act of personal discomfort a willingness to serve others, I made quick arrangements for travel. I sent word to my wife of my intended absence from home, asking that she should meet me at the depot with the necessary luggage for my journey. I had determined to take the boat-train leaving at six o'clock in the evening. Driving all other thoughts from my mind, I devoted the rest

of that day to necessary business labor. At the appointed time I found my wife in a cab at the R. R. station, with my valise and other articles for a comfortable journey. Her farewell word was an entreaty not to encourage, in my short absence from home, the psychic influence which produced the strange dreams.

Not having enjoyed during this long day my usual solace of pipe or cigar, I took my seat in a crowded smoking-car. The only vacant place was beside a man whose personal characteristics marked him as different from the average type of traveller; though this difference lay more in the expression of his face than in any outside appearance of dress or manner. As I approached his seat, he made room for me with most cordial welcome, as if he had been awaiting my arrival. Lighting my cigar, I settled myself for an hour's quiet musing before making the change to the boat at Fall River. My seat companion, drawing a handsomely embossed tobacco-case from his pocket, proceeded to roll a neat cigarette. I was struck with the beauty of his gracefully shapen hands, and with the practised ease of movement that so quickly brought the Turkish leaf and paper to the right form. On the forefinger of his left hand was an antique

seal ring of old Venetian gold. The stone of this ring seemed to be a sard, but of more brilliant color than any I had ever noticed in that variety of gem. Fascinated beyond my wish, for I am not given to idle curiosity on such matters, I tried to catch the design of the seal, but the quick movement of my companion's fingers prevented. Lighting his cigarette, the stranger turned to me with a pleasant smile, saying: "You were interested in my little work, were you not? Though not a confirmed user of the weed, there are times when no other physical pleasure can give the same satisfaction. This little tobacco-case has been my constant companion for many years, through all my restless journeyings over the earth; and my fingers have become deft in the trick of cigarette rolling."

"Please pardon my rude staring," said I. "It was not your skill alone that held my attention. I could not take my eyes from your beautiful ring of such strange design."

"Possibly the unaccustomed finger for such a ring awakened your attention. I can assure you no affectation leads me to choose that particular digit for so heavy an ornament. That ring has never been moved from its present resting-place since it was placed there thirty long years ago by

the wisest, the noblest friend, ever possessed by a single human being. Whenever tempted to leave the path of spiritual truth and purity, — and in years gone by I have been so tempted many times, — one glance at that stone, with the force of the memories contained in its translucent depths, has saved me.”

Saying this, my companion held his hand so that I could see the design cut on the stone. It startled me to see the same symbol in miniature on this intaglio that had been the prevailing figure in the mosaic flooring of the mysterious chamber of the Atlantean castle. My new acquaintance, noticing my look of surprised interest, took from his waistcoat pocket an oval magnifying glass of strong power, asking me to examine the seal by the aid of improved vision. As I did so, all sense of the gem as an exquisite work of art was lost in the puzzled mental inquiry as to the significance of this coincident symbol. Acquainted as I was with the many mystical emblems used by the innumerable secret societies; familiar with serpent circles, triangle, and the symbolic shaft; the figure of the mosaic in the hall of my dream, repeated on the seal of this ring, was entirely new to my comprehension. Eager to acquire any information that might throw

light upon my abnormal experiences, I asked the stranger whether this mystic symbol of his ring possessed any deep significance; explaining my curiosity by the fact of having seen the same figure once before under peculiar circumstances. Believing it wiser to be perfectly frank, I added: "On the tessellated pavement of a castle situated in dreamland, the emblem of your seal is the predominant character."

My new acquaintance said with a peculiar smile: "Dreamland is a wide country; and within its borders are to be found stores of knowledge hidden from the grasp of waking consciousness. .Fortunate indeed is that human being who can read aright the teachings given from beyond the threshold of physical sense. This meeting of ours is not by mere chance. I was informed by a psychic control, that I have learned to obey, to take this little journey. Its purpose is now revealed. I can aid you in the charitable task you have undertaken. You will accept my credentials without question."

With these words he handed me a card with this inscription: "Randolph Cecil, Darnley Hall, Somerset, England." In one corner of the card were engraved the occult insignia of the ring,

with the name *Hasta* in small letters just below it.

“After my experiences of the last two months I can be surprised at nothing,” was my answer, “though, as you will see from this (presenting my business card), the members of my profession are not given to accepting testimony on slight evidence.

“The youthful Christ confounded the Jewish lawyers with his inspired interpretation of the hidden prophecies,” was the quick response; “so you, well-grounded no doubt in the legal wisdom of your day, must yield, in your long-mistaken opinions on higher things, to the teachings of adepts who have conquered the limitations of physical law as understood by man. As we have now fulfilled the law of social convention by this formal exchange, let us commune as brothers. Address me in future simply as Cecil. We are now at the end of this part of our journey. I shall see you on the boat this evening. *Au revoir!*”

This was said as we left the car to make the change for the steamer, and in the throng of other passengers we were separated.

CHAPTER XII

As I was leaving the supper-table on the boat, a servant brought me an invitation from Mr. Cecil to come to his stateroom, where we could talk with more freedom than was possible in the crowded saloon. He had selected a double apartment, which was furnished with comfortable chairs and a centre-table. My host had changed his travelling clothes for a loose dressing-robe of silk, and soft slippers replaced his heavier shoes. He seemed to have just finished a light supper, as the tea-service still stood upon the table.

“I have earned the right, through a long life of hardship and physical suffering, to accept every possible comfort to be obtained from the conveniences of modern travel,” was his first remark, as he offered me a chair and a freshly rolled cigarette. “Every human being on this earth worthy of any consideration, as you have learned already from the teachings of our beloved brother and master, the Sage of the mountains, is a manifestation on

the planes of matter of a higher spiritual self. It is within the power of every individual, by long-continued subjection of his lower principles, by entire submission of physical sense to the inner promptings of the spirit, to hold the outward form of material body in entire unison with spiritual harmony. As the last analysis of matter shows only an exhibition of force, and as this force is simply one manifestation of universal mind, so, by a knowledge of the hidden laws of mind, the personal entity of earth, in union with the spiritual soul, has complete power over its own material atoms. But this power can only be acquired by a long, voluntary probation; a course of self-discipline that very few of the children of earth would submit themselves to bear. By the use of this power, acquired when I passed my fiftieth birthday, I have been enabled to reach in my present vigorous body the age of ninety-eight. Strange as it may seem to you, and to the ordinary men and women of every-day life, there are many students of occult knowledge, who have attained even double the age I have reached; and who, active in the common walks of life, and unsuspected by people about them, are busily engaged in permeating the world's mind with new truths. The gen-

eral awakening of interest in deep problems of psychology and sociology, during the last quarter of this present century, is the result of the quiet labors of members of the mystic circle. These initiates in occult mysteries, guided by the spiritual adepts who live and work in the upper realms of being, are preparing for the advent of the sixth race. A new physical sense is rapidly developing in the nervous constitution of man. This sense has been latent in human nature as a heritage from the earlier spiritual races. It was strongly developed in the fourth race. The Lemurians and Atlanteans possessed powers of perception in certain lines of thought far superior to the ordinary brain-developments of our present humanity. But, as Hasta has told you, the people constituting the fourth race proved themselves unworthy of such gifts. Cruelty of heart and selfish love of power, on the part of an advanced branch of that race, with the resulting miseries of the masses, brought its Karmic punishment—the destruction of a mighty material civilization. A vast knowledge of life in all its varied phases has taught me the possibilities of human nature; and I am convinced that, even on the planes of earth, love predominates in the hearts of men. During

my long existence in my present incarnation I have seen a gradual improvement in the average intellectual and moral qualities of humanity. In the course of universal evolution a new grand world-cycle approaches. The Anglo-Saxon peoples, the advanced branch of the fifth race, will, no doubt, form the nucleus of the next civilized round. The spiritual adepts, among whom is our master and friend, Hasta, in reading the future, tell of a time, near at hand, when a new civilization will be founded by a select amalgamated nation; a civilization established on the principles given by the purest spiritual sensitive ever sent to earth — by Jesus, the Nazarene. Our fifth race has followed in its course of development the same industrial paths pursued by the preceding manifestations, — chattel slavery, serfdom, and wage-slavery, — but no previous round of earth has been so blessed by moral light as is this present era. The heart of humanity, obdurate so long, is at last touched with true pity. The masters of divine wisdom declare that the age of wagedom is nearly past; that the happiest dream of all times is about to become reality; that bitter competition between individual men and women for subsistence and comforts will cease; and that, in one nation at

least, the gifts of nature will be shared equally by all. If these masters read the future correctly, that nation is the birthplace of the sixth race. I may live in my present body to see that glorious day; if not, we shall behold in our next incarnation a regenerated earth.

“I shall now be glad to answer any questions you may like to ask. I am sent to you by Hasta, to give all aid within my power.”

The reader can imagine with what eagerness I accepted this invitation; but, with so much to learn, where should I begin? My leading curiosity, however, was in regard to the history of this man, who, appearing no older than myself, fresh in complexion, with few gray hairs, claimed such extraordinary age. My companion, reading my desire, said, —

“It is only natural you should wish to know something of my personal career. I was born in 1794, a younger son of an old family, of which I am the sole representative. After the usual education of youth, I was commissioned, at the age of twenty, as an ensign in a regiment of English dragoons. I served under the Duke of Wellington in the early campaigns against Napoleon, and was severely wounded at the battle of Waterloo.

Upon recovery, I joined a foreign detachment for service in India. There I spent several years in the usual dissipations of army life. I was the wildest of a mad coterie of young fellows, who, far away from all restraints of home, broke the monotony of camp-life with every kind of folly. We would occasionally be called upon to suppress sporadic rebellions of natives in the different districts; and, in one fierce engagement amongst the hills of upper Hindostan, I was taken prisoner. Strange to say, contrary to the usual custom, my life was spared. A Brahmin of high caste, named Trimal Naig, for whom I had previously performed some slight service, took me under his protection. This chief belonged to the Rajpoot class and possessed great wealth and power. He sent me to his choultry where, during a long illness, I was carefully tended by a trained nurse and native physician. My convalescence was very slow; indeed, a year passed before sufficient strength for travel came to me. The troops had been withdrawn, and I was the only Englishman to be found in that part of the country. A learned pundit attached to the choultry devoted much time to my instruction in the Hindoo Scriptures and also taught me the rudiments of occult science. It

was at this time that the impulse was first given for the pursuit of knowledge; and I then resolved to devote my life to the search for truth.

When my health was restored, I sold my commission in the army and returned to England, where I pursued the necessary technical course of study for entrance to Trinity College, Cambridge. My interest in the Hindoo theology, aided by a veneration of knowledge of the Parsee religion and the esoteric doctrines of Buddhism, had awakened the desire to sound the depths of the Christian evidences. For twenty years I devoted myself to the severest course of intellectual training. I took high honors in the leading English, French and German universities and held, for some years, the position of lecturer in the higher philosophies at Heidelberg. I had, during all these passing years, corresponded with my regular Hindoo teacher, and, by his advice, I had joined an order of learned Rosicrucians. The leader of this secret society placed me in communication with a supreme master in occultism; and it was under the guidance of the latter that I pursued my mystic studies. Although I was not ready at this time to adopt the severe course of asceticism necessary to become a true initiate, I held my outward

life in strict accord with the dictates of my spiritual self. I was able to project my perception beyond the bounds of physical sense, and to read in the clear light events in the immediate future. Power was given me to remember the trials and failures of my previous incarnation, thus enabling me to redeem, by present self-sacrifice, the mistakes of past action. The death of my elder brother left me heir to a large fortune and the title of Lord Darnley. I was now at the age of forty-five and, for the sake of interests depending on the estate, I was obliged to give up several years to place affairs in the proper shape for a fair division of the income arising from the family property. Believing that the present economic system is based on cruel injustice and that it marks a low state of social development, I felt that, until the proper time arrives for the universal change, the single large proprietor of wealth is helpless. Using my best judgment, however, I gave orders to responsible agents to conduct my estate on the co-operative plan, allowing to every worker an equal share in the aggregate production. The hall itself, a magnificent structure of feudal times, was devoted to the accommodation of the sick, aged and feeble retainers of the estate. This plan

has worked admirably in a practice of over fifty years. My share of the income is no more than that of the humblest farm-laborer, but it has been ample for all my needs. Family matters settled, I left England for an extended tour of the world; not as the luxurious traveller of this present journey, but as a toiler in the ranks of the wealth-producers of the globe. With a desire to reach the heart of practical experience, I spent ten long years in almost every position requiring skill of hand and endurance of body. This self-abandonment of home and physical comfort would have appeared to most minds a useless quixotism; but all my actions were governed by wise purpose, and by a continuous direction from the upper realms. It is not by monkish retirement from the world, and the practice of mortification of the flesh, that true wisdom is gained, though such self-abnegations have their use.

Notwithstanding my incessant daily toil, I kept in close touch with my associates in the Rosicrucian brotherhood. I perfected myself in the abstruse science of astrology. I obtained control, by means of the magic circle and occult formulæ, of all grades of elemental spirits; and by the exercise of these gifts at different times among my

associates for the purpose of warning against vicious habits, I was regarded with superstitious awe. But, never using my powers for selfish relief or gain, I won respect and love from my companions in physical hardship. One night, after a long day's labor (I was at that period working in a Brazilian mine), I was visited in a dream by a spiritual adept, who told me that I had gained all the practical experiences needed; that the time had come when other duties called me. I will not describe my after-life, as this account is already too long. In brief, I was directed to return at once to India, where, among the mountains of Himalaya, I entered a mystic brotherhood, to complete by a seven years' course of training my thorough education as an earthly adept in hidden wisdom. My object in giving you this extended account of my life is to remove a mistaken opinion of your mind, — an opinion shared by the world in general, — that no thoroughly educated man can regard occult phenomena and the claims of magic as other than gross superstition. The so-called science of our day has followed the materialistic lines so exclusively that the paths of real knowledge have been missed. Teachers of broad general culture have been sorely needed to direct the

current of learned investigation into the right channels. As an honored member of a society of such teachers I have done my duty; and I shall continue to work on these lines until called to higher labor. I must add, that it was during my stay with the Mahatmas of the Himalayas that I first met the Hasta of your dream. He directs that mountain band of brothers and often appears amongst them in body of flesh. It was on my graduation from the novitiate probation that he placed this mystic ring upon my forefinger. This signet contains a mysterious magnetic power which holds me in constant communication with him. With clairvoyant sense I have become acquainted with your own relations with the Master. I have also been many times in the Atlantean castle.

I asked at this point whether he had possessed the spiritual sight while within that ancient temple.

“No,” was the reply. “The mysteries of that abode of the higher adepts are not revealed to any dwellers in the flesh.”

I then inquired whether he was still tempted to commit errors of thought or act, as I had understood him to say the ring had proved a safeguard from sin.

“So long as man remains under the illusions of physical sense, so long shall he be tempted with evil. Especially is this the case with human beings who have acquired abnormal powers by occult means. Armed with faculties above those of common mankind, there is a constant temptation to use such talents for personal gain, or even to use a secret judgment in correcting what seems an unjust ruling of fate regarding the affairs of others. Such interference is forbidden; and the adept who disobeys these laws becomes a black magician. There are many such sorcerers. He who once enters that path will find it difficult to return to higher leadings. I have seen in my own mystic career many brethren of the occult art fall from high purpose to join the black band of evil: so you may perceive from what dread consequences this ring has saved me.”

Anxious to know the opinion regarding a new society, of one well qualified by religious and secular learning to form correct judgments, I asked Cecil what he thought of Theosophy — meaning by this term a new cult which had adopted that designation.

“The pursuit of divine wisdom is certainly the noblest object that can engage the attention of

man," replied my learned companion. "Any society of men and women organized for that purpose, whatever its outward form, whether that form be Christian, Pagan or Mystic, must be a worthy body. This new sect, called the Theosophical Society, has been started by a truly wonderful woman, who was aided by a few of our occult brothers. Helena Petrovina Blavatsky, with all her outward faults of illusionary manifestation, was the most extraordinary woman of any time. In her previous incarnation her noble spirit made its impress on the most advanced thought of that era. Her last incarnation, previous to the one just finished, was in the person of the Grecian Aspasia. As founder of the Theosophical Society there was great danger that a personal worship of her followers might divert attention from the great truths she revealed to a blind adoration of her personal character; so, with her own consent, her lower, earthly personality was led to perform many deeds unworthy of her higher self. The society with its noble motto, 'The Universal Brotherhood of Humanity,' and the accompanying epigram, 'There is no religion higher than truth,' has a grand future. Resting on the basic doctrines of '*Re-incarnation and Karma*,' an eclectic theosophy,

embracing the everlasting moral truths of all the great world-religions, is to be the ruling faith of the coming humanity. But the order of theosophic brotherhood, as it exists to-day, is open to grave criticism. I have attended meetings of the society in Madras, London, New York and Boston, and I have been impressed with the narrow spirit shown by the majority of its members. The use of strange Hindoo words to express, in an involved, literary construction, well-known ideas and an affected display of occult knowledge, of which neither the essayist nor his hearers understood the true meaning, filled my mind with acute regret. Then, in all my intercourse with these people, — with a few exceptions, — I have noticed a tendency to sneer at the Christian religion ; and, while railing at church superstitions, to accept as genuine many fraudulent manifestations of spiritual power, — manifestations which I, as an experienced adept in magic, knew were deceptions. What is called the esoteric section of the theosophical society has so far been governed by elemental spirits, though at different times Madame Blavatsky was aided by brothers of high occult rank. Our beloved Hasta gave her great assistance in preparing her books. With the inner light bestowed upon you

by your astral experiences you may gain great help from reading those volumes. Another mistake of the theosophists has been the habit adopted in all their meetings, and in their general literature, of giving extravagant praise to all the Hindoo sacred poems and allegories, while neglecting the grand, imperishable works of the old Hebrew prophets. Granting due credit to the inspired teachings contained in the Bhagavad-Gita and other Sanscrit poems, the wise students of divine wisdom will not throw aside the even nobler writings of the Jewish prophets. 'A little learning is a dangerous thing.' This maxim is curiously illustrated up to the present time in the proceedings of the rank and file of this theosophic movement. But the society will be guided by the masters, and they will carry it successfully through its present phase of narrowness, and these masters will see that it becomes more and more liberal in its ends. The mystic brothers know the truth, that Christianity, with all its faults, with all the cruelties that have been committed in the name of Jesus, contains the highest moral teachings ever sent from the mind of the Eternal; and they know that Christ, the lowly carpenter of Nazareth,

offered in his own person the most perfect example of humanity ever given to man. The Theosophical Society, when it ceases to be a temporary fad, taken up by men and women of sensational mental habits, will become a powerful instrument for good. That day rapidly approaches. In the mean time the advocates of the new doctrines should remember that Abraham, Moses, the Egyptian teachers, the Druids, Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, came as messengers from the one Supreme Ruler to different branches of the fifth race. Each gave the divine teaching in the form best fitted for its reception by the character of the people to whom the revelation was sent. The thought-atmosphere surrounding a particular nation at a given time produces the personal incarnation needed to convey the fresh spiritual impulse. Mohammed, whose influence for good over vast numbers of the human race has been almost beyond calculation, would have come in vain to a people with different physical characteristics."

The hour was late, yet I had much to ask. I wished very much to know what views were held by my host regarding the gratification of physical desire. During the evening's conversation he had several times rolled fresh cigarettes for our use,

and he seemed to enjoy smoking them as much as I did myself. It struck me as strange that a man of such high moral tone should yield to this form of self-indulgence.

“I perceive what is in your mind,” said he, “and it is a natural feeling, but a little thought will teach you that one of the lowest forms of selfishness is that which prompts an individual to a persistent regard of his own person, an eternal watch lest he injure his physical health. Even he who guards his moral health with too selfish care, fearful of punishment, has missed the true path. In forgetfulness of self, in love of others, is found the only key to spiritual virtue. Life on this earth is given to the children of an immortal destiny for their enjoyment. The spiritual soul descending into the illusions of physical sense for an earthly incarnation, whether taking form of male or female, fulfils its destiny only by a perfect, proper use of every bodily faculty. It is not the thin-blooded ascetic who best obeys the eternal law. It is the vigorous, passionate manifestation of energetic thought, arrayed in full strength of matter, that answers the hidden call. Our master, Hasta, in assuming the form of man, shows the ideal type to which a human being should aspire.

All the gifts of nature are intended for the judicious use of man. Learn from my long experience to condemn the *abuse* of natural bounties, but accept with joy all the gratifications that a reasonable use of sense can bestow. Remember it is our own thought that gives quality and substance to everything around us. The wise man will pursue his career on earth with no avoidance of any natural product that nourishes or comforts his body, so long as such use harms no other human being. One warning proviso, however; never let appetite control your individual will. It is well, sometimes, to allow habit to spread its net, in order that the personality may show its will-power by conquering such habit. For eighty years, with the exception of my period of occult probation, I have used wine and tobacco; but, whenever a sign of physical craving for either form of stimulant came with any force, I asserted my will for an entire cessation, until the temptation passed.¹ A human being only shows his strength of victory by remaining con-

¹ This teaching of the mystic must be received with wise discrimination and thoughtful fear; for in later interviews he warned me of the dangers to the spiritual self of allowing the physical brain to be stimulated or soothed by any form of material drug. Among such drugs he enumerated coffee and tea as well as tobacco and alcohol.

stantly in the thickest of the fight. Every form of sensual temptation must be met and conquered by each spiritual Ego. The greater the experience in one incarnation, successfully met, the fewer in number will those incarnations be."

The speaker paused and I was about to ask him further questions, when he checked me, politely saying, that he would give me another interview the next day; that he intended to assist me in the object of my present journey.

"I wish before you go to your bed," said he, "to illustrate my occult power by one physical manifestation. This table upon which I place my hand, affecting our sense of touch with hardness, our sense of sight with a certain shape, is in reality only an exhibition of force. By an effort of my will, educated for such control by a knowledge of sense-illusion, I shall dissolve the material atoms of that table to their original spiritual counterparts. Let us clear the table of the other articles."

When this was done he bade me remain perfectly quiet, as there was some danger to a spectator of occult phenomena if he were not an initiate in such mysteries.

"For full protection I will enclose you in the mystic circle."

With these words he drew an imaginary line about me, using for this purpose the forefinger upon which he wore the signet ring. He then stood with folded arms and concentration of gaze for a few moments. I was during this interval watching the table intently. Suddenly a faint mist seemed to surround that solid piece of furniture and a loud, cracking noise reached my ears. The mist cleared and the table had entirely disappeared. Cecil stood immovable but his face had turned to ghastly paleness, and large drops of perspiration stood upon his forehead. His eyes, however, shone with astonishing brilliancy. I held my breath with anxious fear, lest by the least movement I might disturb the hidden force, to the injury of my friend. It was, perhaps, five minutes longer when the same mist seemed to gather, the same sharp vibration was heard, and the table again stood in its old position. My host immediately recovered his usual appearance and dismissed me to my room with a cordial good-night. He informed me that we should not meet in the morning, but that I should see him the next day when I visited the tenement house upon my errand of mercy.

CHAPTER XIII

I LAID my head upon the pillow that night with little hope of sleep. It had been a most exciting day and it seemed that my mental powers were being strained to the utmost limits of physical endurance. The question arose why I should be chosen for such new experiences. Was it not enough that my sub-conscious self should receive the spiritual teachings in the form of dreams? Why should my waking thoughts also be involved in such complications? I almost longed, with a deep sigh, for the days so short a time before, when my mind rested secure in the materialistic assurance that this life of mingled joy and pain was all. On the other hand, ought I not to be happy to learn the truth, especially to be taught by such a noble being as Hasta, the spiritual sage, and by this cultivated scholar, who has just proved his transcendent power? What new views of life have been shown? May I prove myself worthy! were my last waking thoughts.

Long past the midnight hour, as it must have been, before sleep came, it was evidently just before daybreak that I came once more to spiritual consciousness outside the body and saw Barton in astral form beside me. His face wore the same bright look as in the last mirror view. He was not the earth-bound soul of his first visitation. Indeed, as I perceived this change, my own inner spirit was gladdened.

He greeted me with tenderness, saying: "My mundane purgatory is near the end—how near I cannot tell, but I shall try to see you once more before I join my other self in the realms of spiritual rest. I visit you to-night to make one request. The earthly body of my poor self-sacrificing darling, my spiritual other half, lies waiting for disposal. Her spirit has left its earthly shell forever, though there are lower principles still imprisoned in that frame. A quick dispersion of the atoms of that useless body is desirable; so I ask that you adopt cremation as the means of that dispersion. You will meet your companion of yesterday at the house of Margaret Welsh. He will give you the necessary information. When you see my son, poor weak boy (whose real Ego has only just been apprehended

by his lower soul), do what you can to aid him; and, if he must suffer punishment of man for his insane act, tell him, for me, to bear it bravely. I shall visit him in the spirit many times. Although he is my son only in his physical inheritance, there are deeper ties of spiritual kinship. One comforting thought for you, dear friend: the experiences of this portion of your life, accepted with true wisdom, will save you many after-pains. Trust your new friend, Cecil, with your whole heart. Upon your return home from your present journey of love, I shall probably make my farewell visit to your bedside, if not, Hasta will explain. Farewell!"

Upon the arrival of the boat in New York, I went at once to a quiet lodging-place. I saw nothing of Mr. Cecil, nor did I attempt to find him. I engaged a cab, which took me first to the undertaker to whom I had sent the despatch. He informed me that all the necessary arrangements had been made and that I should find everything satisfactory. Driving then to the address given by Mrs. Welsh, I found the house, No. 17 Dunlap Alley, to be the exact reality of the tenement given in the picture of the mirror. Never having had occasion to visit the desolate districts of ex-

treme poverty, — degraded sections which disgrace by their existence in every large city the very name of civilization, — I was horror-stricken to think that fellow-men and women were obliged to live in such crowded dens of filth and squalor as marked this portion of New York. The unexpected appearance of any decent vehicle in such an alley brought swarms of dirty children about me as I alighted from the cab. I was met at the door by a stout Irish woman, who at once called the saints to bless me for attending to the last needs of her poor forsaken lodger. She took me up three flights of shaky stairs to the room already described, for it was the exact counterpart of the chamber seen in the picture. There, decently reposing in a neat coffin, was the body. I could not nerve myself to look at those features, last seen in the beatified vision of the castle. I did not wish to disturb that holy remembrance. Mrs. Welsh, who seemed a kind-hearted, honest woman, gave me a long account of the trials and physical hardships borne by her dead lodger during the year which Mrs. Barton had passed in her house. I will not harrow the feelings of the reader by a repetition of this account. It was the same old story of ill health, of the oppression

of a cruel employer, of starvation, of death. Mrs. Welsh knew something of the son, but she was evidently ignorant of his present situation. In her opinion it was bad news from that son that at last broke the heart of a mother whose health was enfeebled by overwork and deprivation. As she said this, a sudden feeling of aversion for the boy possessed me and I wondered how I could fulfil my promise to aid him; but more charitable thoughts came as I brought to mind the circumstances under which he had probably been trained in his tender forming-years, and I remembered the words of Hasta, that this son of Barton and the self-sacrificing woman, whose body lay before me, had, by an early life of sin, exhausted on the planes of earth the effects of spiritual discord in far-away ancestors. I also recalled the prophecy of the sage, that the spiritual self of the young man would redeem a character which, thus far in life, had been only subject to the lower soul. Although this explanation of youthful depravity was beyond my comprehension, I felt content to rest in the higher knowledge of the spiritual adept.

I learned from Margaret Welsh that she had been an old servant of the family when my friend Barton was living; but when marrying, and

coming to New York, she had lost all trace of her old mistress, until some six years previous to this present time, when Mrs. Barton, a widow with no means of support and a son fourteen years of age, came to her poor abode asking for assistance to obtain work for herself and her boy.

Mrs. Welsh, in her broad Irish brogue, and with many tears, gave me a clear account of the loss of her own husband, and of the speedy steps downward of herself and old mistress on the road to the direst want. She described the character of the boy: how he had been injured by the mistaken training of a fond mother and father in days of prosperity; how his education in books had been neglected; in short, the old, old story. Then this good woman, who was evidently still very fond of him, described how the lad, unable to find employment for unskilled hands, and unwilling to burden his mother any longer with his support, had drifted into the lowest associations of a great city, and finally of his departure, two years since, to the West.

I did not add to the poor soul's grief by giving her any word of the present unhappy condition of the youth, but informed her that his present situation was known, and that he had friends who

would take care of him. As Mrs. Welsh, a pious Roman Catholic, was anxious to give the body of her old mistress and friend the last services of the Church, I told her to make the proper arrangements at once, for the body would be removed to its last resting-place that afternoon.

As the woman left the room, my friend of the journey, Randolph Cecil, entered. He was dressed plainly and his appearance, without a close observation, was that of an ordinary gentleman of hearty middle age. To my surprise Mrs. Welsh seemed to know him, for she was profuse in her courtesies and words of humble welcome. I gave him a short account of the situation and of the woman's desire for the church service. Mr. Cecil approved of this and suggested leaving the whole matter in her hands. I therefore gave the proper directions and the necessary money, also mentioning the hour when the hearse would remove the body. As I bade Mrs. Welsh good-by, I assured her of my protection in the future; and as she will not appear further in these records I will mention now that my promise was fulfilled. I took an early chance to provide a good home for her in a pleasant country village, where I hope she will enjoy many years of comfort and happi-

ness, and where she may be visited at some future time by the reformed personality of that youth for whom she has cherished such unselfish love.

As I dismissed the cab on my arrival at this wretched place, Cecil proposed that we should walk to his lodging.

“But,” said I, “we must first arrange to obey the wishes of my friend Barton,” and I told him of the visit of the previous night, and of the request regarding cremation.

“That is all attended to,” said Cecil. “Among the many projects for aiding the practical course of civilized development, our band of occult adepts (I mean the band working on the plane of earth), are interested in educating human sentiment in favor of a more rational method of disposing of the dead. Examine the present mode of burial in the light of any knowledge, — material or spiritual; there is nothing to recommend it. From the materialist point of view why should the disintegrating powers of nature be delayed in their work of resolving to their original constituents atoms of force that have accomplished their work? The science of this age has learned this truth: that diseased germs have an invariable tendency to work upward in the soil; in conse-

quence of which fact, the bodies of the living are continuously threatened by material emanations from the remains of unfortunate human beings who have died of loathsome diseases. The very water used for quenching thirst, purified by the chemistry of the clouds, comes to the people of your large cities and towns poisoned by the dreadful drainage of your graveyards. The arguments in favor of cremation from the spiritualist standpoint are even stronger, as your own experiences in the astral regions of mundane planes have shown. The true spirit, anxious to flee from earth, is often bound by the influence of the lower principles, which persists as long as the material body has shape. Not that the really purified spirit is delayed in its escape, as you have seen in the case of this woman whose body we have just left. But in many instances, as with your friend Barton, the spiritual will cannot at once assert its independence of animal soul and physical principles. You have seen the attenuated material manifestations, produced by cellular movement of brain-atoms, lying sometimes dormant, at other times active. What horrors come forth from these dreams of the dead, only the initiate can tell. You need have no further anxiety, as I

have given the necessary orders. With the usual medical certificate, the officers of the cremation society will attend to the proper details, and within a very few days the ashes of his wife's earthly body will be scattered over the grave of your friend Barton.

CHAPTER XIV

IN the course of the conversation recorded in the last chapter, we had arrived at my friend's room, which was in an out-of-the-way street of lower New York. Although situated in a poor district, this house was very decent in appearance, and the large chamber occupied by Cecil was a model of cleanliness.

"This is my headquarters and it will remain as such for some time to come," said he, as we seated ourselves. "To explain a previous acquaintance with Mrs. Welsh, I must tell you a little of the work that now engages my attention. The labors of a selected company of educated missionaries in the cause of industrial revolution are now pushed in the direction of relief to what are called the wage-earning classes. Since the death of Karl Marx, the theoretic teacher of new economic doctrines, and of Ferdinand Lasalle, the energetic organizer, this company, under my general supervision, has been quietly but efficiently exerted for

the gradual abolishment of the system of industrial competition. Our work lies chiefly among the poor, for the purpose of relieving physical suffering when possible and by mental suggestion to substitute kinder feelings for the natural bitterness that imbues the minds of the oppressed toilers. The time has not come for a violent outbreak of righteous indignation, and we hope to delay, perhaps to entirely prevent, the use of physical force. My particular part of this holy work has been amongst the low and degraded of this city; hence the fact of the recognition by Mrs. Welsh, though she knows only the outward manifestation of plans far above her comprehension."

I asked if in these labors any occult means were employed.

"Certainly," was the affirmative reply. "The majority of members of this reform company is composed of graduates in the mystic sciences. Our chief implements are the powers we possess to impress the minds of worthy human instruments. You must have noticed the immense change in human sentiment on social questions within the last few years; so great a change as to affect even the old political parties in every civilized country of the world. This change has been brought to

pass by the hidden efforts of this one division in the mystic army. Our labors are also guided by the spiritual adepts. Hasta has command of this branch. All the writers in the reform literature of this present age, whether that literature take the shape of essay, novel or serious treatise, have been urged to their task by the hidden mental impress of some single member of our band."

Once more I interrupted to ask, why, then, were there so many writings allowed that encouraged the support of an individualistic system of industry.

"It is only by the clash of opposing views in the atmosphere of thought that the truth will be brought with force to the minds of men," was the answer that came quickly to the lips of Cecil.

"You are, of course, aware of the uselessness of any mechanical change in the outward forms of human society. Higher social and industrial relations between men can only come when the spirit of the nation is ready for the advance. All the failures of the past in attempted social improvements have come from mechanical haste on the part of the few in certain countries who lacked the patience to wait for the general awakening of the universal spirit.

"This room is the headquarters of the especial

branch of the mystic brotherhood that conducts the practical work of industrial reform. Conferences are held here at certain times, and we are in constant, confidential communication with the leaders of the Fabian Society in England; with the Social Democratic Federation of Great Britain, France and Germany; and with all the trade organizations of America. Although our occult powers are in general unsuspected, we have won such confidence by the wisdom of our counsels, that we can claim with certainty the power to control the movements of all the vast forces of organized labor throughout the world. We are now perfecting the final combinations that will enable the material wealth-producers of this earth to obtain long-delayed rights."

I said here, "With the knowledge of the hidden sciences possessed by yourself, and by your associates in this mystic band, it would seem easy to accomplish all your objects — at all events there seems no reason why your magical powers should not be used to relieve the pressure of such physical suffering and poverty as we see so close about us."

"Our limitations in this respect bring our severest pains," said Cecil. "Though we possess,

by means of long years of study, the keys of real knowledge, enabling us to unlock the hidden treasures of nature, we are not allowed to use our power to interfere with the rulings of a higher fate. Our hearts, touched with pity at the terrible scenes of apparently undeserved misery, ache with human sympathy; but, as I told you before, the use of such occult power constitutes black magic. I could tell you of many cases, however, where the mystic talents have been used to change conditions of the direst want to those of comfort, even to those of affluence, but the adept who dares to use his knowledge in such directions assumes great risks. One false step of this kind may plunge a wise magician into the depths of black sorcery. It was, therefore, with some hesitation that I gave you last night that simple exhibition of my power over the elements of force, for you need no such physical manifestations."

I thought the present a good opportunity to ascertain the opinion of this learned man regarding certain phenomena, which, under the name of hypnotism, are now attracting so much attention from scientific men. I was also curious to know whether my own theories regarding the undoubted cures of disease by the Christian Scientists, Men-

tal Healers and Faith Doctors were correct. It had been my conviction, that all such cures of nervous diseases, and some other physical disorders, were accomplished by an actual transference of thought; in short, by the hypnotic influence of a strong, healthy mind upon a weaker brain, assisted, no doubt, by the well-known mental traits of expectation and suggestion.

I will not take space to give the full reply to these questions. Cecil confirmed my own views in relation to the cures of disease by the many different schools of so-called mental healing. He said: "One part of a great truth has come to the understanding of these students; namely, the fact of the illusionary character of all manifestations in matter. But with this one partial grasp of truth is mixed much ignorance, and much error in its practical adaptation. In calling themselves '*Christian Scientists*,' the members of one sect have shown the grossest misapplication of terms; for evil sorcerers, by the use of concentration of will, can accomplish the same results in curing physical disease as are wrought by these mistaken men and women who work in the name of the great moral teacher. Ignorant, too, of the power they are using, these sincere people, with all

the undoubted good accomplished, commit great, unintentional harm; not only in weakening their own characters, but in destroying the mental individuality of the subjects treated. For instance, in the case of a young person constantly treated for physical or moral error by one who has the power, such young subject becomes a mere automaton in the hands of stronger personalities and, as he or she grows older, will be influenced by other minds for evil as well as for good, becoming a mere moral weathercock, swayed by every slightest thought from stronger brains."

I here remarked: "These mental healers of all the different schools, especially those calling themselves Christian Scientists, deny most positively the use of any personal will in curing themselves, or in acting upon others. Moreover, they assert that the power of healing is possessed indiscriminately by all who have studied their doctrines. It seems strange to me that these many people should have this hypnotic power and still be so self-deceived as to deny the fact."

"It is the denial of ignorant enthusiasts," replied Cecil. "We must not be severe, however, in our condemnation of a sincere but mistaken

faith. At this age of the world, when the time is approaching for vast changes, in preparation for the early advent of the sixth race, the thought-atmosphere of this planet is agitated, as never before, by old spiritual truths appearing in new forms. The human instruments for the conveyance of these truths to man are faulty, as has always been the case. Gross materialistic beliefs threatened a repetition of fatal errors that characterized the decline of the last branch of the fourth race; so a new wave of spiritual belief has been sent to the mind of humanity. Certain persons of both sexes, who were sensitive to hidden influences, have been chosen throughout all ages to teach man the spiritual realities. I do not now refer to the great moral leaders, but to mediums of much lower grade. Millions of human beings, who, having lost all faith in what is miscalled supernaturalism, would have remained in the hopeless slough of materialism, have been brought back to a spiritual faith by means of the abnormal powers of these selected sensitives. Spiritism, with the many faults committed in its name by vile imitators of genuine power, and at its best, with few exceptions, only a manifestation of mundane spirits and elementals,

has accomplished a grand work. But, to return to these schools of mental healing. Among the innumerable attempts to exercise the power, the failures far outnumber the successful cures, for the reason that it is only the genuine sensitive who can use the gift. Such a sensitive, if so inclined, would have been also a true medium for other manifestations. The priest or clergyman performing the prayer cure (and there are many such cures on reliable record), the sincere disciples of the mind or Christian Science cure, whenever successful (and many times they are), must be regarded as true spiritualist mediums — using the common term — and they are practising the hypnotic power. Nevertheless, Christian Science, like Spiritism, has been the means of happiness to very many human beings, and the good brought to man through such partial openings of truth has outweighed the evil. The time will soon come when the intelligent study of a new generation will throw correct light on all these phenomena, that at present are so little understood by ordinary humanity.”

In respect to the broader facts of mesmeric power, my friend continued: —

“The materialistic science of this century,

especially that of the last decade, has been obliged in self-defence to take notice of facts in the line of mental phenomena. The old truths of animal magnetism, given to the world by Friedrich Anton Mesmer, a true mystic philosopher, were denied by the wise men of the earlier part of this century, and his practical illustrations were received with undisguised contempt. At last, to these facts under the name of Hypnotism, or Braidism, bigoted ignorance has been forced to yield. When the various schools of positive philosophy and of medical practice acknowledge, as they very nearly have been obliged to do, that the mind of one individual can act upon the mind of another, without spoken words, and even from a distance in space, the door of certain knowledge is slowly opening to the tardy entrance of a body of men, misnamed Professional Scientists. It has often been the case in the history of the world, that the common people, unversed in technical knowledge, have arrived at the goal of truth in advance of the self-styled learned men.

“The powers of mind universally accepted at this time under the general term, Hypnotism, have been manifest to occult perception throughout the whole career of the fifth race. The witchcraft of

all ages has used the power. It was a leading factor in the religious ceremonies of the ancient Egyptians ; in the Eleusinian mysteries ; it guided aright the prophecies of the Delphic Oracle ; in truth, all the wondrous facts (denied by the scepticism of this age) were obtained mainly by the use of this mental force, now studied under its new title. Of course, there have been other aids from spirits, and from mundane elementals, to produce the effects needed by the adepts of every world-period, but the chief instrument on the plane of earthly life has been the ability of a trained mind to influence the thoughts and actions of others. It is a dangerous power in the hands of ignorant or vicious practitioners ; and its use for selfish ends, whether the power is understood or not by the one so using it, must be condemned as perverted magic in the case of the neophyte, and forbidden as black magic, when it is in the possession of the educated master of the science. One word more on this subject and I have finished.

“This hypnotic power of mind over mind was well understood by the people of the fourth race, and its indiscriminate use was one hastening cause of the destruction of the last branch of that race.”

Mr. Cecil paused at this point, and for some

moments remained as if in deep thought. His whole manner and tone of voice throughout this discourse were those of a modest, cultivated gentleman. There was not the slightest sign of dictation, as if he were an oracle of wisdom, but rather the reverse, as if he were ready to listen to any views I might hold that were opposed to his own opinions.

He continued in the same quiet way: "You must bear in mind, as you review in your own thought the subjects we have touched upon in our various conversations, that I am, with all my stores of hard-earned knowledge, but man. By long training of hidden talents, possessed equally by every child of earth who has a spiritual soul, I have educated my highest bodily, mental and spiritual faculties; still I am limited by *five* senses, with only a partial development of the *sixth*; so, though I have given my conscientious opinion on a few subjects, I may not have explained clearly the hidden truths of each topic. If you have further doubts, especially on the subject of sense-gratification and the hypnotic power, you should consult Hasta."

"How soon shall I have an opportunity of meeting the Sage once more?"

“As soon as you have returned from your visit to the imprisoned youth.”

“I am puzzled to know what to do with that son of Barton. I suppose he must stand his trial for that dastardly offence; and really it seems as if a long imprisonment would be the lightest sentence that a court of justice could inflict. Shall I attempt to clear him on the plea of youth and temporary insanity?”

“I am acquainted with the judge of that district, and with one of the leading physicians of the county in which the prison is situated. I have written letters to them, and they know you are to visit the young man. Without stretching my rightful use of power I shall aid this boy. So heinous a crime, threatening wholesale destruction of life, must be punished as a necessary example. There is some deep connection, which I am not at liberty to disclose, between Hasta, Barton, and this young life. You are needed as the earthly agent to carry out the wishes of Hasta. If any complications arise, you will be directed from the thought-atmosphere. I had intended to go with you on this journey, but I have received a psychic message from London, which requires my presence in this room to-night. You must take

the evening train on the New York Central. I have provided you with a pass, which will give you a free passage with comfortable accommodations *en route.*”

Saying this, Cecil gave me a folded paper, upon which was written a request to pass the bearer, and signed simply, Randolph Cecil.

Seeing that my host considered our interview ended, I rose to go, but could not resist one parting question. I had been more and more impressed the longer I was near to this extraordinary man, with his clear, fresh complexion, his erect bearing and hearty, whole-souled manner. His personal magnetism was irresistible. An intercourse of one short day had compelled such respect and love, that I was loath to part with him so soon. And this man is ninety-eight years of age!

“Asking your pardon once more,” said I, “will you tell me how you have preserved your physical vigor so far beyond the usual period? Is it by occult means that you have delayed the usual approach of exhausted vitality? If you possess the elixir of perpetual youth, if you have found by magic means the cordial so long sought by the alchemists of every age, I beg a share in the secret.”

My friend smiled, saying: "The only cordial in my keeping is the ever-renewing power of correct thought. I need not repeat the truth, that all forms of matter are manifestations of the one spirit; that in Eternal thought there can be no discords of sin or disease. Each individual manifestation, through cognizance of its spiritual self, can control the physical atoms of its body by its own will. If the personal mind holds a belief in health, youth and purity, the outward form will correspond. Sin and disease are discords in the orchestra of nature. Health of body, mind and soul are the true harmonies. Ask no other human being to use the hypnotic power—under whatever name the power is called—to cure you of physical disorders or pain. Place no false belief in drugs. Hold the thought of youth, health and moral beauty, and as your mind is, so shall be your body. The average human life of this fifth race, if the true laws of nature were obeyed, should extend to the age of one hundred years at least, but the erroneous idea of a shorter span of earthly life became impressed long ago on mortal mind; in consequence of which, the individual incarnations of spirit have been shortened in time, thus calling for a greater number of such

personal descents into flesh. In my own case, I had arrived at the age of fifty years before I discovered the truth. Since that time my mind has had complete control of body. No sense-illusions have brought me pain, or bodily sickness."

"But you are skilled in the deep wisdom of the ages. Do you mean that I, or the average human being, can remain in health and vigor by power of individual will?"

He answered: "Under certain restrictions, yes. Of course, there is a higher will that rules each single destiny, and we must all yield at last to the demands of that power; but, by a knowledge of the fact that mind can create its own material illusions, we may always mould the atoms of bodily force to our wish. The first requisite, however, is to recognize the existence of the spiritual soul, and to know that the personal Ego is not the servant of matter, but that it is the master of all the millions of life-cells constituting the earthly body. Hold yourself in accord with the deep revelations that will come to you from your awakened self-consciousness. Accept with faith the wisdom-teachings of Hasta, the spiritual Sage, and you need never grow physically old, but, when the spirit calls, you shall go to other realms

with joyful readiness. Fear not the mundane shadows. Horrible as are the shapes to be seen in astral regions, they are but the fleeting manifestations of an intermediate stage of half-being. You should regard these larger opportunities for spiritual knowledge as gifts from above. If you have faith in my words, you will have no fear of any injury to physical health by acceptance of powers, which, under present conditions, are rarely conferred."

As we parted at the door of his chamber, Cecil promised to communicate with me by letter, and also by certain psychic methods that were under his control.

CHAPTER XV

I AT once made preparations for my journey to the town where Barton's son was confined, and I took the train suggested by my friend. The pass signed by Mr. Cecil brought polite attention from the railway officials throughout the journey; and this fact gave confirmation to his words regarding the practical work of the occult band, for I decided that the influence producing this free pass came from the connection of Cecil with the different organizations of railroad employees.

In due time I arrived at L——. Going at once to the prison, I found the warden, my correspondent, whose name was John Inman, expecting my arrival. This man, as shown by his letter, was an official of more than ordinary intelligence, and, I may add, of more heart than is common with such police guardians. He had much to tell in favor of his young charge, who, he declared, was not at all like the ordinary criminal. In answer to my inquiries, he said that the boy had acknowl-

edged his true name to be Frank Barton; and he gave me the full particulars of the preliminary trial before the local court. He said that the evidence proved that Barton had been in a dazed condition from drink for days previous to the commission of the crime. Mr. Inman also told of the degraded character of the older villain, who had planned the robbery which should be committed by means of the railroad wreck.

After listening to many other particulars regarding the accident, and in relation to public sentiment about the chief criminal and the share of Barton's guilt in the affair, I was ready to visit the cell where the boy was confined, and to make an undisturbed personal acquaintance with a person who had given me such anxious thoughts.

Upon entering the dingy room my heart melted at the sight of the poor, worn countenance of this youth, upon whose real character so much light had been thrown by the teachings of Hasta. Since first accepting the commission to aid this son of my old friend, my mind had been troubled; for, argue as I would, the one fact of this boy's guilt, whether with conscious intent or not, had affected my mind with repugnance toward him. But at the end of an hour's interview with Frank

Barton, my feelings of aversion were changed to personal sympathy, and even to love. As he told me of his early life, how as a young boy he had been indulged in all his wishes; how upon the death of his father and the loss of his mother's little property, he had striven without success to obtain work; and at last how he had fallen into bad habits through sheer discouragement, and had gone from bad to worse on the well-known road, I felt that here was a true example of the fatalism of circumstance and environment. He had not heard of the death of his mother, though he told me he had suspected the sad fact from a dream, in which his mother and father had appeared at his bedside with words of love and encouragement.

In answer to my question whether he had ever received promptings toward a better life from an inner consciousness, he replied: "Never until this last, dreadful crime. I have always lived as a mere animal. I was fond of my mother, and of my father when he was living; but since forced to get my own hard living I seem never to have possessed any higher instincts than those of the beasts who prey upon each other in the forests and plains. At times when luck has favored me I have sent money to my mother; but, I tell you

truly, my life has been thoroughly bad. With no education except that gained from associations with men and women of degraded character, no career except that of crime has been opened to me, nor have I had any higher cravings. But I can assure you that my heart has never been cruel; nor could I in my own senses have been guilty of the deed for which I am confined."

He then gave me a remarkably clear account of certain visions which had come to him in the form of dreams, and which had opened his perceptions to nobler views of life. He declared that he had no wish to avoid the penalties of his crime, and he begged that I should make no attempt to lighten a deserved sentence, even if the law should claim his life. He looked back with loathing disgust at his former selfish course, and vowed that if he should be spared for further work in the world, his whole time should be given to the service of those classes of human beings whose needs he knew so well. I remembered the teachings of Hasta regarding this youth: that the spiritual Ego would not reveal itself to his consciousness until his twentieth year; and I felt that these visions were the revelations of his true self, and that the time had come when a personality, heretofore ruled by its animal soul,

should fulfil its true destiny. Another materialistic explanation of the sinful career of Frank Barton also came to my mind.

I had read in medical records of certain men and women in whom, from sickness or accident to the brain, there had been a duality of being. It occurred to me that this case might illustrate such a diseased condition; that the physical hardships of this boy's life since his father's death had given so severe a shock to his nervous constitution as to render him unaccountable for his actions. Accepting this theory, the shock of the railway horror, and his subsequent arrest, had brought back his true personality. This explanation, far-fetched as it may seem, gave me much comfort, though I plainly perceived that such views would have little acceptance with any court or jury.

For certain reasons which the reader will readily apprehend, I think it best to expunge from these records any further account of this case. Though I have used fictitious names of men and places so far as possible, I could not give a full account of further proceedings in this affair, without exposing facts that might affect living personages, and interfere with the future prospects of a young man, who promises to redeem terrible

mistakes of his past by a future life of self-sacrificing duty. It will suffice to say that I did all in my power to encourage Barton in his brave resolves. I provided him with the necessary books, that he might begin his education, and I engaged a young man, who, with the permission of the jail authorities, would visit him at certain periods to give him the necessary instruction. Then leaving his case in the hands of a most excellent lawyer, to whom Randolph Cecil had written, I departed for home, after a stay in L — of three days and nights.

I have intentionally omitted any mention of aid received from my friend Cecil during my stay in L —. His assistance, though great, was of so peculiar a character, that, for reasons given before, it will be best not to record it.

CHAPTER XVI

IT was with a sense of relief that I returned to my home and regular work after eight days of such unaccustomed travel and experience. I felt, however, that the time had been well spent, and I appreciated fully the fact of forming a friendship with so remarkable a man as Randolph Cecil.

During the return journey from the West, I had pondered deeply the many new views of puzzling questions that he had presented. It gave fresh confidence to my lately awakened spiritual perceptions, to hear from the lips of a man of such thorough culture and intellectual attainments a confirmation of theories which had come to me in the form of dreams. Without any regard to occultism,—and certainly Cecil had proved his powers in that line,—his teachings carried the full weight of great learning and practical experience. I determined to keep in as close connection with him as possible. While I was at L——, he had impressed my mind several times with certain

thoughts he had wished to convey. Never having been under the mesmeric control, — though several times the experiment had been tried, — I had always been confident that I was not an available subject for such influence; yet this mystic had carried his thought to my brain with the distinctness of spoken words, through a thousand miles of space.

There is a popular impression, and one which I had formerly shared, that it is a sign of mental inferiority to be an easy subject of mesmeric control. Cecil had taught differently, declaring that it was difficult to establish concurrent thought-vibrations with weak-minded persons. He held that each individual manifestation of the Universal Mind was intended to share the psychic power of the whole social organism. It was, therefore, a sign of strength, rather than weakness, to be able to receive mental impressions from the general thought-atmosphere.

As my absence had brought me an accumulation of business, my time was fully occupied in professional labor for several days after my return. In the afternoon of the first Sunday, as I was busy in my study, a message came from Mr. Cecil, asking if he might call at my house in the evening. I at

once returned the sincere reply, that my wife and I would be delighted to see him at our tea-table. I was anxious that my wife and son should have the opportunity of making the acquaintance of this learned man, though I had given them only a general account of my intercourse with him.

At the appointed time Mr. Cecil arrived. He charmed us all with his delightful manners, and his fund of varied anecdote. Not one word was said that so much as hinted at there being anything more in life than what was shown to us by our five physical senses. Our guest appeared simply a well-preserved man of the world, of about the age of fifty. I had thought it best to say as little as possible at home about the new subjects in which I was interested. My wife was happy in her faith; and in the case of my son I was afraid to unsettle his mind, busy in the regular courses of education, by metaphysical theories. When the time came, however, I intended to instruct his more mature intelligence in the knowledge of the spiritual truths.

Mr. Cecil agreed with me in these ideas. In the few moments of parting at the door, he asked if I had heard anything further from Hasta or the elder Barton. Upon my negative reply he said,

that I should probably not be visited by either of them for another week. He then asked if I would call at his room (giving the address) the next morning, as he wished to share with me one more valuable experience. This invitation was accepted with eagerness, for I was glad of every opportunity for further intercourse with so noble a friend and teacher.

The next day I was promptly on hand at the appointed place. Mr. Cecil seemed to choose his lodgings in the most out-of-the-way corners; for his present room, similar in character to his New York chamber, was situated in an old building in the north-end district of the city, not far from the celebrated old Copp's Hill Burying Ground, and within sight of the church-tower from which Paul Revere gave his historical signal.

Upon entering his room, Mr. Cecil turned the key in its lock, saying it was important for the business in hand that we should meet with no interruption. Offering me a chair, he said: "With your approval we will enter the deep sleep of hypnotism this morning. In that condition we shall voluntarily assume our sub-conscious personalities, and with real vision perceive how our graveyard friends pass the day like ours; and we

may also see how other mundane spirits and elementals employ their time. You know their life, in certain ways, is as real to them as our sense-pilgrimage is to us. You have seen something of astral life when the world has been hushed in sleep. If you have no fear, we can enter that region with full intent, but I warn you of the melancholy after-effects upon the mind. We should not shrink, however, from the light of truth, and we may take to heart, for our future guidance, the lessons taught by the fitting spectres."

I must own to the fact that this invitation of my friend was not attractive. I had seen enough of astral horrors in my involuntary experiences with Barton. Why should I deliberately plunge into such gloom? If it were to visit the Sage, to listen to his wise revelations, I would gladly venture; but of what use to harrow my heart by the sight of misery impossible to relieve?

Cecil, noticing my hesitation, said: "I see you are not disposed to accept this trial, nor shall I urge it upon you. I thought it might aid you in forming a full judgment on other spiritual facts to make one final visit to the plane where spirit has not entirely escaped from the trammels of matter."

While Cecil was talking, I had overcome my temporary repugnance, and I consented to make the experiment. I looked out of the window at the bright sunshine, and I could hear the rattle of busy traffic in the streets. It seemed strange to think that behind all the outward form there was another world, and that I could, by mere effort of will, visit it. It was only going from one illusion to another. Yes, I had the curiosity to lift once more the veil of sense.

I said aloud: "Give me the proper instruction. I am ready to cross the threshold in your company."

Cecil then drew his chair close beside me, and directed me to remain in as passive a condition of mind as possible; that he had the power to throw us both into the deep sleep.

We remained perfectly quiet for a short time, when, gradually, a drowsiness seemed to creep over my senses, and I felt I was losing consciousness; but, before closing my eyes, heavy with sleep, I saw that Cecil was dropping into the same somnolent condition. The next moment he called my name, saying "We are free. Let us use our awakened selves while we may. In the state of consciousness we have now entered we are outside

the limitations of sense. We must lay aside our preconceived ideas of molecular energy, chemical affinities, and the elements of nature as understood by man. In the regions of spirit space has no significance or, more correctly, the three dimensions of space, as recognized by mortal mind, no longer impede our thoughts or our movements. We are now cognizant of a *fourth* dimension. Length, breadth and thickness cease to limit the horizons of our perceptions."

We had left the building in which our bodies lay asleep, and were in the street, apparently walking as if still in forms of flesh. How can I convey to another mind the conditions under which we now perceived everything? We possessed two powers of vision. While retaining our physical impressions of matter, seeing houses, people, and all other objects, with eyes of sense, we realized that none of these forms of matter offered any obstruction to our sight or feeling. The air seemed filled with moving figures. At one moment we could see the outward forms of houses, passing men and women, and vehicles of every description; at the next we would see only a confused collection of shadowy forms, so intermingled with the living bodies as to create a perfect

dream-phantasmagoria. No material conformations seemed to obstruct the passage from one point to another of the many material shapes; nor did such dynamic associates of atoms of matter hinder our progress. Words are inadequate for the purpose of this relation. Although we possessed our full judgment, we appeared to be wandering in dream-land.

It was about eleven o'clock in the morning of a bright day in June. The streets were filled with a busy throng of men and women engaged in the usual occupations of life in a large city; but with the crowd of humanity could be seen even a larger body of spirits. We could see the faces of these spectres plainly, but their forms were draped in shadowy filaments. With the experience gained from my intercourse with Barton, I was able to distinguish the many different kinds of ghosts now visible. With a word or two from Cecil, who seemed perfectly familiar with this phase of consciousness, and using my former knowledge, I perceived that the attenuated figures filling the air about us were mostly those of persons lately deceased, and who were drawn back by individual choice to the familiar scenes of their earthly life. Others were assuredly elementals, and these were

easily distinguished by their elfish looks and mischievous behavior. Except for the sadness of the whole thing, one might have been amused by some of the pranks of these goblins in their attempts to confuse and annoy living individuals. I saw one staid old gentleman chasing his hat, which he supposed the wind had removed, but of which, in reality, an elemental had taken possession. Then horrible shapes were occasionally seen; ghoulish figures bent on vile errands, and, as such foul devils swept by, we could see the atmosphere of thought darken around us, and we could not fail to notice the effect upon the faces of the living men and women near by.

“Instigators of vilest sin and crime,” said Cecil. “Waiting their chance to influence some weak soul; but see! other higher spirits follow close, to act as the other pole to the moral magnet.”

This was the case; for, whenever we perceived a single horrible shape, or a body of such poisonous wraiths, we always saw, immediately following, a corresponding number of bright spirits. We were now in the Jewish portion of the city, and it was curious to notice how the spirits wandering to and fro in this district bore generally

the Hebrew characteristics of countenance. As we passed a pawnbroker's shop, one incident attracted our attention. The only living persons in this office were the proprietor and his customer; the latter, a rather flashily dressed young man, whose appearance marked him as being probably a clerk under small salary. He was offering a plain gold ring as a pledge for a loan. Standing beside this young man was the shadowy figure of a woman, who was evidently beseeching him not to part with the ring. Her influence was apparently convincing; for he hesitated, and finally ended the attempt at trade by returning the ring to his pocket and leaving the shop. This little occurrence taught its own lesson. We saw the spirit following this young man as he walked away, and we felt that, for the time at least, he was submitting to good guidance. The spirit was probably that of his mother, held to earth by her affection for a son surrounded by the constant temptations of city life. Many similar cases came under our observation as we lingered now and again in our walk — if that term can be used to describe our spiritual movements.

We passed the whole day in visiting the many centres of trade, and other places where people

congregate for business and for pleasure. At the city Stock Exchange, where such vast transactions in securities of value take place, and where symbols of wealth change hands with such rapidity, it was a pitiful sight to see the greedy, eager faces of spirits who, no longer able to take outward part in business dealings, seem to watch the prices of the different stocks and bonds with the closest attention. It seemed, at times, as if their hidden exertions affected the actions of the brokers; for we noticed that whenever there was unusual excitement among the anxious spectators there was a corresponding physical disturbance among the living traders. Occasionally we would see some particular broker surrounded by a little crowd of ghosts that appeared trying to influence him. Unaware, of course, of the cause of his mental disturbance, he would show plainly by his puzzled expression of face and manner that his judgment wavered.

“Poor, poor, greed-consumed souls! What chance have they for spiritual progress? With all the possibilities for advance to other realms, they are drawn back to what was their chief aim while in this earthly life.” These were the words of Cecil as we left this scene.

I asked whether he thought this present longing of the spirits whom he had just seen would depart as time went by; whether their higher selves might waken later.

“It is possible,” he replied, “that a large proportion of those astral forms hovering around that busy mart belong to bodies but lately dead, and that they are guided simply by their animal souls; in fact, this is undoubtedly the case with most of the shadowy wanderers we see about us. When I use the term ‘lately dead,’ however, I mean spirits whose bodies have parted with life within the last ten years. The physical brain-atoms, when sound at the time of death, often possess such force as to control for years the animal soul to the exclusion of higher spiritual leadings. But as time advances and the material atoms weaken, the sixth principle of man, if not already annihilated, asserts control, and the mundane attractions are conquered. Let us continue our investigations in the light of this knowledge. If this theory be true, it gives us some hope, for otherwise we shall be obliged to confess it is, indeed, a small proportion of humanity that finally reaches the higher planes of spiritual being.”

Curious to learn whether the grosser temptations of physical appetite had any control of these

“Dreams of the Dead,” we went to several of the large hotels and restaurants — places noted for their sumptuous tables and good cheer. Again it was a melancholy sight to see almost as many astral figures surrounding the dinner-tables and lunch-counters as there were living persons. Ghostly gormands gloating over pleasures of animal sense !

I asked Cecil what possible enjoyment could be derived from such illusionary feasting.

He replied : “ These tables spread with food are as real to these astral bodies as if they were still in the flesh. Every material object has its counterpart in the astral regions. An individual man or woman who has been gross and sensual in physical life cannot immediately rise above the predominating traits of physical character.”

This fact was proved wherever we went. All the great stores, so dear to shoppers of both sexes, crowded with living purchasers, were also filled with shadowy throngs. We visited the private offices of lawyers, doctors, journalists and other professional men, and we always found spirits present. In some cases there would be only one form ; in others we could perceive several airy shapes. As we paused in one office where a well-

known author was working at his desk, we saw a most beautiful spirit — one whose bright visage easily betrayed its high origin. This spirit seemed impressing the thoughts of the writer, offering an illustration of one method of inspiration. Acquainted with this literary man, I did not feel justified in using my present power to discover what he was writing under such spiritual inspiration.

In continuing our observations we omitted no phase of common, every-day life. We visited some of the lowest haunts, — bar-rooms, policy-shops, pool-selling chambers and regular card-gambling establishments, — and even in these degraded resorts we saw that the spirit-atmosphere was no worse than in many other places with respectable reputation. In fact, we noticed a darker gloom of evil greed and cruelty among the wealthy traders at the city Stock Exchange than amongst the lowly frequenters of policy-shops and pool-rooms.

Some of the horrible sights that came to us during this day are too shocking to be recorded. Then there were also many affecting incidents of loving tenderness. Several times we saw bright spirits comforting, with their hidden influence, toil-worn men and women, who appeared almost

ready to yield life in despair. It was our experience that many of the most beautiful of the highest order of spirits we saw were surrounding the personalities of the poor and lowly in social life. This fact gave us a comforting lesson regarding the hidden purposes of existence, and was in accord with my previous experiences with Barton.

As the day wore on toward evening, in the declining light we perceived a striking diminution in the number of ethereal wanderers, and the character of the spirits in the air about us changed very much for the worse. I asked Cecil the reason for this. He said, "There is a Hindoo term which expresses this mundane condition of souls better than any English word. This term is 'Kama Loka.' During this period, a spirit is held with its lower self on the mundane plane; and while the earthly body is still in existence, the astral form, with its animal soul, is dependent on that earthly body, and it can never stay long away from it. There is a certain magnetism generated in the brain-cells of a body whose hidden vitality has not entirely departed, that holds in subjection the lower principles of each individual. A period of entire rest or sleep is as necessary to these astral bodies as to human beings in the flesh.

The warmth of bright sunlight with the earth's atmosphere pulsating with what man calls electricity, gives the best condition for the ephemeral manifestations of the mundane denizens of Kama Loka. As night comes on, the darker souls, unpossessed by higher spiritual principles, come forth from the many burial-places of their earthly bodies, to revel while they may, through the agency of congenial living bodies, in degraded pleasures. As a general rule, the astral dwellers who still possess the spiritual soul avoid the gloom of night, though, as you have seen, there are many exceptions to this rule, as in the case of your friend Barton. This is one of the chief reasons why the temptations to sin and crime are stronger in the night hours than during the day.

“Shall we now go back to our bodies, or shall we visit the various cemeteries to see the return of the many astrals to their graves? We may also view the exodus of the darker souls.”

I declined any further experience, expressing a wish to return at once to my body.

“We will concentrate our joint wills to that end,” said Cecil.

The words were no sooner spoken than we seemed to rush through the air with such speed

as to lose all sight of material or ethereal objects ; and almost before a thought could be formed, I awoke in my chair of the morning, body and limbs cramped from long sitting in one position. Cecil was already unlocking the door. His first remark coincided with my own thoughts.

“You have seen how thin is the partition between the two worlds, when we have penetrated it so easily by a mere effort of will.”

“It has not been a cheerful sight and I wish you could assure me that it has been a mesmeric dream ; but former visitations to the astral regions prevent this comforting hypothesis. I cannot comprehend why there should be so many spirits held in this region you call Kama Loka. Are these souls not cognizant of higher realms ? ”

“The dwellers in the intermediate regions of life have their doubts and fears of other realms in a similar manner to the doubts and fears of beings in the flesh. As a large majority of civilized people would deny the existence of any such world as we have seen to-day, so, unhappily, to a large proportion of astral personalities no consciousness of the spiritual self ever comes. On the other hand, the true spirit, whose inclinations are pure, but who in earthly life could not withstand the

temptations of flesh, has the opportunity while in this intermediate region of following the higher impulses of real intent. As you have been told before by Hasta, the higher principles of many individuals leave the body immediately at death, to go to the realms of spiritual reality. There is no doubt that a large percentage of the shadowy shapes seen by us to-day were but astral shells, guided simply by the lower consciousness of the animal soul."

It was now seven o'clock in the evening, and as I had been without food since breakfast, the claims of appetite asserted themselves. I invited Cecil to accompany me home, but he declined, saying that a few other duties called for his attention. I had asked in a former interview his opinion of spiritual *séances*, given by so-called mediums, in which these sensitives claimed to show materialized bodies of the dead, and he had confirmed my own opinion that the majority of such exhibitions were the grossest fraud; still he had said it was possible to produce visible images of astral beings by the power of magic. A few mediums had that power, but when used for personal ends, for gain or self-glory, much evil reacted upon the character of that agent. Cecil had given me to understand

moreover, that no reliance could be placed on the communications received from such materialized ghosts; though in very rare cases the spirit shown was really what it claimed to be. He now said, "If you care to continue the investigations of the day, come to this room at nine o'clock this evening, and I will call a spirit that we can see with our waking eyes. It may be, however, but an astral shell, with no intelligence but that gained from the psychic influence of our own brains."

I accepted the invitation, as I had a great curiosity to see a spirit-form while in possession of all my physical faculties; but I will leave the materializing *séance* of Cecil for a new chapter.

CHAPTER XVII

AFTER taking supper with my family and the quiet enjoyment of my evening pipe, I felt in excellent condition to meet man, ghost or devil. As I walked through the crowded streets, on my way to Cecil's room, I thought of another throng of living beings, so close about us, and yet so completely hidden from human eyes. I wondered whether mankind would not be more kind of heart, more unselfish and loving, toward each other, if the veil could be lifted for all humanity, as it had been for me this day.

I found my friend awaiting me. He had been evidently employed in mystic labor, for the large table standing in the centre of the room was covered with astrological charts, compasses, rules and other implements of mechanical drawing. Among the latter were several queer-looking tools, the patterns of which were new to me. Several vials filled with bright-colored liquids stood on a stand near by. The room was brilliantly lighted by an

electric lamp, which, Cecil informed me, was his own invention.

“Where does the power come from?” said I.

He pointed to an oval box of queer design, that stood near the lamp and connected with the latter by a copper wire.

“The power that supplies the lamp is contained in that box. We students of occult science have outstripped the lagging pace of your dabblers in electric knowledge. We possess the power of drawing this form of molecular energy direct from the sun’s rays. I could store enough electric force in yonder trunk — pointing to an iron-bound box that stood in one corner of the room — to destroy the most solid building in town, or to sink the largest man-of-war now afloat. But we are not here to-night to discuss dynamics, or to speak of hidden powers that will be revealed to the general knowledge of man when he has shown that such gifts can be used with safety and for the good of the whole social body. You have come to witness an exhibition of mind-power. The mediums who pretend to ‘call the spirits from the vasty deep,’ are, as a rule, unsuccessful; and I imagine that when by chance an astral, or true spirit, materializes, it is as much a surprise to the

medium as to the dupes. The existence of the truth that such materializations are possible, gives unworthy agents a chance to deceive. The methods I shall use to-night are understood by all the Rosicrucians and graduates in occultism. I need no cabinet nor darkened room. The spirit I shall summon will stand within the circle."

As Cecil said this he took a piece of red chalk from the table and, with no use of compass or string, drew a perfect circle on the floor, at some little distance from where our chairs were placed. In keeping with the house he had chosen for his lodging the chamber was uncarpeted. He then placed an open dish of silver on a small tripod, which I had previously noticed standing on the table. He filled this dish with various liquids from the different vials. As he poured a few drops from the last tiny vessel, a blaze of blue flame arose, and then the color changed to red, and finally to yellow. This last hue seemed to fill the whole chamber with a haze of the same color. Cecil uttered a certain formula in unintelligible words and, as he finished, loud raps were heard in all parts of the room and the windows rattled.

"Keep perfectly quiet," said Cecil. "The only possible danger to you is at this period."

Indeed, I had felt several unpleasant touches of unseen fingers on my forehead and shoulders, though I had not winced at such demonstration. The knocking ceased, and I saw a diminutive figure kneeling on the floor in the middle of the circle. It was a similar form to the gnome I had seen in my own room when summoned by Hasta. Cecil again muttered a few mystic words and the elf vanished. As he disappeared, the flame in the dish died out, and the air of the chamber was once more clear.

Cecil said to me, "I have sent for the spirit of one of the victims of the railway horror. If my power is strong enough this spirit may be able to explain one part of the rulings of fate which brought the earthly personality of Frank Barton into the commission of that cruel deed."

Cecil then repeated the process with the dish on its tripod. This time the succession of colored flames ended in a deep purple glow. Intently watching the circle, I saw a phosphorescent paper of flame appear in its centre, which flame gradually grew in size, until the outlines of a man's form appeared. Very soon was seen the full shape of a man of middle age, clothed in the dress of ordinary modern life. This figure looked about

him in a dazed manner, but before he attempted to move, Cecil gently warned him not to step beyond the circle, as the force that held him in material form did not exist outside the red line.

The materialized spirit said, in a hollow, metallic tone of voice: "Am I dreaming, or is this another form of trial? I have discovered, since my violent departure from earth, that dreams come to the dead as well as to the living; but I seem now to be in my old earth-body, and all I see about me in this room appears at least tangible to sight. Will you grasp my hand, that I may once more feel the warmth of living flesh? I have supped so fully on the horrors of ghost-land, that I long to believe, for ever so short a time, that I am still a man."

He addressed this remark to Cecil, who at once arose from his chair and seized the hand of the spirit with both his own, giving him the cordial greeting that he would have bestowed upon a friend in the flesh, at the same time saying, "John Holman, when twenty years ago we met at that Alaskan trading-post, we formed a friendship that I felt could only be severed by death. I have never forgotten your unselfish care of the Indians placed under your charge, nor your generosity in aiding one whole tribe of those children

of the forest during the privations of that hard season. Do you not remember the traveller who came to your post worn with hardship and starvation, and how you shared with him your own scanty comforts? Then you certainly must recall our long conversations in the darkness of those winter nights, and the chart of personal destiny drawn by me in the ashes of your hospitable hearth. It should be no sorrow to either of us that my prophecy has come true. With your noble character, as I know it, your delay in astral life will be very brief. In fact, when I sent for you to-night, it was with great doubt that I should summon more than your empty shell — that your real self had gone to rest.”

As Cecil was talking, the face of our astral guest had expressed the varied emotions of surprise, joy and love. At last, plainly with great effort, he said slowly: “Randolph Cecil, my dearest friend and master, I am blessed, indeed, to see you once more. With my knowledge of your power over the hidden forces of nature, and applying the spiritual truths received from your lips, I am not surprised at my presence here in my old form of flesh. If I shorten my stay in Purgatory, and at last behold the light of the Highest, it will

be the result of the teachings you gave to me, twenty years ago, at that agency in Alaska. I have since that hard winter been in many lands, and I have been engaged in countless enterprises; but I have striven to guide my actions in accordance with the truth imbibed from your lips. I feel that my spiritual Ego still lives, and that he will soon lead me into higher ground, but my present existence is filled with horrors."

These words had come more and more slowly, and the voice was very weak. The force holding his outward form together was evidently weakening. As he ended, Cecil went to him and felt his pulse, then quickly pouring more fluid from the different vials, the glow of light in the room intensified in purple color. At the same time the figure of John Holman seemed to recover its fading strength.

Cecil said, "I can keep you here but little longer, my dear old friend; but, before you depart, I should like you to tell us about the manner of your death."

"I was killed at the railway disaster at L——. I was asleep at the time, and knew nothing whatever. When I awoke one week afterwards, it was to find myself a spirit. I will not describe the

horrors of that awakening. May you both be spared the trial, though I suppose it is the usual lot. While I have been in this astral state—you know, Randolph, how much you taught me about the different principles and conditions of humanity—I have had little desire to wander among the living. When I leave my poor, useless body at all, it is to visit the quiet grove near my old boyhood's home. Many spirits of the purest order have come to me there, and I have been blessed with numerous visions. I have been taught why my death came through the medium of that poor boy who now páys the penalty. Centuries ago, when I—that is, my real self—was incarnated in the personality of an English feudal baron, I committed a dreadful crime—dreadful even for those times. My victims were two peasants belonging to the fief. The cruel deed shall not be told, but it brought remorse and physical punishment to the perpetrator, and it was the sole wicked act of that far-away life. The Karmic effect of that deed of violence has been felt in many subsequent incarnations; and the final debt was paid, with little physical pain to myself, when the two victims of the original crime, reincarnated in the persons of a desperate, worthless villain, and a youth who

has a noble future before him, placed the block that wrecked the train in which I was calmly sleeping. I am growing very weak, and must soon return to my sickening home, but my last words entreat you to save the soul of Frank Barton, for it has been told to me that his real self is noble. The other degraded wretch has no soul to save, for he is merely a devilish automaton. I can say no more. I bid you farewell. We may meet in heaven."

Cecil placed his arms around the form for a last embrace, and the manifestation of John Holman quickly melted away, and we were once more alone.

"We have been very fortunate to-night, for it is seldom the case that we can bring back to earthly form a body possessing the higher principles. In using my powers of magic I break no natural law. Although the science of this age denies these facts, there never has been a time when there were not learned students who understood the hidden laws and could use this knowledge. The astrologers and alchemists of the middle ages of this fifth race were not foolish charlatans; though, in many cases, they added deceit to their genuine powers in influencing the ignorant people of their periods.

The authentic record of the life and doings of the great mystic, Jacob Böhme, offers convincing testimony regarding the truths of occult science. Dr. Theophrastus Paracelsus, weak instrument as he was in many ways, was a conscientious student of hidden wisdom. Cagliostro understood the power of mind over matter, though he became at last a black magician of the darkest hue. The list of names of eminent men of this century who were, and are to-day, members of the Rosicrucian brotherhood is very long. Balzac, Bulwer, and many other writers of renown, were strict adherents to the mystic doctrines. The time will soon come when the materialistic science of the present day will be forced to acknowledge there are deeper truths of life than can be discovered by physical methods. The ability to arrange and control the atoms of matter to our own will is one of the smallest gifts that the mystic student claims. I could teach you the formula for calling the elementals and other higher spirits to obey your commands; but your duty in life lies in other directions. I leave this part of the country to-morrow morning, but I shall communicate with you often. You will probably see your friend Barton once more, and Hasta will also call you before many nights.

As it was now past midnight I bade Cecil adieu and returned to my home. As I walked through the deserted, darkened streets, I could not resist the cold chills of nervous excitement, and I could well believe that madness might lurk for an ill-balanced brain on every side of such paths as I had entered. I felt thankful that my wife and son were ignorant of all such abnormal manifestations.

CHAPTER XVIII

BUSY in my daily routine of work during the fortnight following my last experiences with Cecil, nothing worthy of record took place. Occasionally in an idle moment, especially in the evening, my thoughts would revert to that hidden phase of life which lay beyond so narrow a border of consciousness. At times, in meeting certain people in the way of business, I would speculate in regard to the psychic influences from the spirit-atmosphere guiding their motives of conduct. In walking through the streets, the habit grew upon me of scanning the features and expression of passing individuals; always connecting in thought the living with the invisible host so close about us.

On the second Saturday after Cecil's departure, I received a note from him, in which he informed me of an interview with Hasta, and that I might expect a call from the Sage very soon. The next morning (Sunday) as I was writing to Cecil, I heard several distinct taps on the lower part of the desk

at which I was seated. Never having had any such manifestations while alone, I was satisfied that these rappings had some significance. Remembering the accounts of well-authenticated cases of independent writing, where, without conscious volition on the part of the agent holding the pen or pencil, there had come intelligent communication from spiritual sources, I seized a pencil and held it over a blank sheet of paper. Almost immediately my hand moved and the pencil traced these words: "My freedom from all mundane illusion has come. I have visited the Atlantean castle and seen with spiritual vision the marvels that were hidden from our earthly senses. I shall call at your bedside to-night, and, if possible, we can sit together once more at the feet of Hasta."

This, then, was the expected notice. While my heart shared the joy of Barton at his deliverance (I knew the message came from him), I could not resist the feelings of regret that we were about to part; for I feared that the final disappearance of Barton from planes of earth would also sever my connections with Hasta.

I finished my letter to Cecil, and, as it was a beautiful day, I prepared for the renewal of dream-experiences by a long walk to country woods and

fields. I had long before this period of my life given up any regular habit of church attendance; feeling that any needed spiritual tonic could be obtained more satisfactorily from other sources. But in the evening of the present day, at my wife's request, I consented to go with her to hear a popular preacher hold forth in one of the largest churches of the city. We found a fashionable congregation assembled to listen to one of those vigorous men, who, by force of personal magnetism, is able to attract a large following of people with whom religion is a mere sentimental emotion. As the hackneyed words of his sermon reached my ears, I could not refrain from comparing his veneering of knowledge regarding spiritual realities with the deep learning of Randolph Cecil. I asked myself why the great truths of original Christianity should be so perverted with theological dogma and evident cant. As I heard this self-satisfied parson (who I knew was drawing a very large salary, paid to him in the dross he professed to despise) read passages from St. Paul, the purest mystic of the Christian faith, and as I listened to his weak interpretations, I longed for the presence of Hasta, that he might explain the true meaning of these scriptural writings. As I sat in

the luxuriously cushioned pew, and looked about me, seeing this church filled with richly dressed people, — all persons of consequence in the social and business world, — I wondered what the spirit-atmosphere of this temple would show. Recognizing many of the same faces seen at the Stock Exchange, it was easy to imagine that a similar throng of sordid spirits to the one filling the air of that trading mart was now hovering about this fashionable gathering. “The path to everlasting life is not to be found by the light of such perverted doctrines and insincere worship as this,” was my thought as we passed into the open air and saw the star-lit heavens.

Upon reaching home I went at once to bed, resolved to obtain some hours of entire forgetfulness before the arrival of Barton. Impressing my inner intent to awaken at midnight, I fell into a sound sleep.

As the hour of twelve sounded, I found myself once more in astral body, with Barton beside me. His appearance had changed, for he was no longer the dull mundane soul of his former visits. He stood in the bright figure of a spirit of the highest order. After our first greeting, he said: “May a similar joy that now fills my whole being come to

you at some future time. My life on earth and in the astral regions is over. I go to the realms of rest, until called to a reincarnation in the next world-cycle. I am now under the guidance of Hasta whom we both love so well. For the last time we will visit the home of the self-sacrificing masters who work on the earthly plane. We will go together to the Atlantean castle."

With these words he placed his arms about me, and we seemed to float away; but with such swiftness did we glide, that I realized nothing, until I found myself in physical body standing in the outer vestibule of the temple. Barton also was in earthly form, and Hasta was giving us the usual cordial welcome. He had assumed the same noble figure as in my last visit.

He said, "For the last time we meet together in the semblance of living men of earth. I have already opened a few of the secrets of the Hall of Record. To-night we go to another part of this castle."

The Master then led the way to a door in the extreme corner of the vestibule, which opened at our approach, showing a short passage-way, ending in a broad flight of steps. Descending these, we found ourselves in a large hall, that seemed

to be situated immediately underneath the magnificent chamber in which Hasta had displayed the mirror-views. This present room was brilliantly illuminated by the same means as noticed before; that is, by a large globe of seeming incandescent electricity, placed in the centre of the ceiling. The apartment gave the impression of a vast workshop, or warehouse. The space on the wide extent of floor was filled, from one end of this hall to the other, with the strangest-looking machines and implements. There were galleries above, and alcoves at the side, crowded with what I afterwards learned were models of mechanical invention. Hasta led the way around this hall, explaining the purpose of each article, and pointing out the improvements of the various machines for doing certain work, all far superior to anything in the hands of man at the present age. Not possessing a knowledge of mechanics, I was not able to understand clearly all that the Master tried to explain; but I felt that the coming humanity, in full control of the innumerable machines and automata exhibited in this room, would be almost independent as regards manual labor. A model of an air-ship especially attracted my attention. The Master informed us that it

was an exact copy in miniature of the next great invention to be given to man.

He said, "I have brought you to this hall that you may see some of the material possibilities of a civilization which will soon be established by the last enlightened branch of the fifth race. When men have learned to live together as brothers; when the time arrives that improved machinery can be used for the benefit of the whole social body, and not for the selfish purpose of enriching the few at the expense of the many; then the thousands of machines and implements for lightening human labor — models of which are to be seen in this room — will be given to man. These are samples, shaped in outward forms of matter, of coming inventions which now exist in the universal thought-atmosphere. Many of these models represent mechanical devices which were in possession of the fourth race, but which have not been discovered by present humanity. Many of them are samples of instruments that require a powerful force, that cannot safely be given to the people of earth until kinder impulses shall have been engendered in human breasts through the means of more equitable social conditions. Hundreds of these models are already pictured in the

brains of inspired inventors, who are incarnated on earth at this present time, but who have not yet perfected the practical application of their thought. This room contains no model or machine which has reached the men of the present race. The moment the thought represented by any particular sample takes material shape on earth, the atoms constituting the forms in this room are re-absorbed into the general ether, and the illusion disappears.”¹

As he spoke, an object standing near by, which had attracted my attention before, as being a new application of the electric force, disappeared, and a different model stood in its place.

Hasta continued: “In a part of this hall is situated a collection of automata of different designs, the purpose of which I shall not explain. When these are revealed to man, as they will be when the sixth race is born to earth, the whole system of mechanical industry will be revolutionized.

¹ Three months after this visit to the Hall of Invention, the writer of these records was invited to see a new mechanical invention of great value. It was a machine that in its operation solved a problem that hitherto had defied the mathematical powers of inventive genius. As the wonderful instrument, driven by electric force, performed its work, this writer recognized, with the strangest, nerve-creeping sensation, that here in broad daylight was the same machine whose model was seen melting away at this point in the text.

The curse of Adam — and in that Jewish metaphor a great truth is given — will be removed, and humanity, as represented by the fifth race, will complete its destiny on this earth. All that you see here is adapted to the comprehension of the five senses which limit the men of earth. Everything in this chamber is a representation of psychic, spiritual force manifested in matter. Under universal law, vibrations of thought from the spiritual realms reach the astral regions; from thence, through sensitive human brains, this thought is applied to the material advancement of what is termed civilization. It is given to me, a spiritual worker on the earthly and astral planes, to feel and understand the vibrations that will soon manifest in an improved social organism.”

By this time we had made almost a complete circuit of the hall, avoiding only one corner, where were placed a large number of objects shaped in figures that resembled human beings, some of them of monstrous size. These were probably the automata referred to by Hasta, but which he had declined to describe. As we returned to the door, through which we had entered, the Master said:—

“For the short time remaining before we part, let us go beyond these walls to hold our last short communion.”

He then led the way up the broad stairs to the outer door, and from thence through the avenue of trees to the bamboo lodge. Passing through the well-remembered mysterious hut, we came out upon a large, flat rock. Here, in the bright moonlight, could be seen the same grand view that had so impressed my senses upon our first visit to this retreat. Owing to the immense height of this mountain peak, the air was in an extremely rarefied condition. This fact might partly explain the exaltation of spirit that possessed my whole being as we left the precincts of the castle grounds and came out of the lodge. The temperature of this mountain air must also have been very low, but no coldness affected my present body, which, of course, was owing to the influence of the Master. This rarefication of the atmosphere had not been noticeable within the castle, or within the limits of the castle ground. The thought came at once, that no such magnificent trees as we had seen constituting that broad avenue could live naturally at a height so far above the ordinary bounds of earthly vegetation. Hasta, reading my thoughts, said: "The power that saved the Atlantean temple from the general destruction, also preserved, by spiritual magnetism, the surrounding zone of cli-

mate. We are now outside the magnetized limits. We make our last farewell, not only in the physical shape of men of earth, but breathing the same air that supports life on this globe."

My friend Barton, during the whole of this interview, from the moment when we had found ourselves in physical body, had said no word. His thoughts had evidently been far away, though whenever I looked at him he returned my glance with a loving smile. At this point he came to my side, and, in his old affectionate way, placed his arm across my shoulder, saying, "My old friend, the time has come for us to part. I leave you now alone with our dear Master, but in the realms above I shall aid your other guardian spirits in watchful care of your real self. Obey the promptings of your unconscious Ego. I shall be with you often in holy thought, but I shall manifest myself no more in form. If you need practical aid call upon your friend, Randolph Cecil, whose powers, acquired by long years of self-abnegation, may place you at any time in communication with Hasta. Your kind companionship and your promise of protection to my boy shall bring you future peace. When your work on earth is finished, and you enter the dread astral region, I shall meet

you. Hold the pure, unselfish thought, and enjoy your present life to the utmost. Fear no future. Farewell!”

As this parting word was uttered, Hasta came to us, and embracing Barton, whispered a few words. Then, for one brief moment, we saw a bright spirit standing by our side, but the form of my old comrade had disappeared.

The countenance of Hasta, as the spirit vanished, shone with the same glorious light that I had seen once before in a former interview, and I was irresistibly moved with an impulse of adoration. I longed to follow the departing spirit; to have done forever with all the trials and temptations of the flesh. Hasta recalled my thoughts with these words:—

“The purpose of our several interviews is fulfilled. Although it is beyond your present knowledge to conceive the truth, you have aided your friend and brother in shortening his stay in the intermediate, mundane life. The soul, whom you have known under the earthly name of his last incarnation, joins at this moment his feminine principles—his other half. As full, perfected spirit, he will await, in freedom from all illusion in the blissful state of rest, the next call for further

experience in matter. He may not incarnate for a thousand years of planetary time; or he may be ready for another descent when the next world-cycle opens. He has finished this appointed phase of objective experience and has entered the subjective state. I dare not lift the veil that conceals from your present knowledge the full intent of our past connection. As your earthly years go by, you will learn why you were called. To many other human beings of this present, and of preceding ages, have been vouchsafed glimpses of astral and spiritual life similar to those that have come to you. The mission intrusted to your care regarding the youth that now suffers for the guilty deed of his lower soul has been wisely performed. As time goes on, you will be guided in your duty to the earthly son of Barton."

I shall not attempt to transcribe in the language of the Master the sublime teachings he gave to me during the last few moments of this parting interview. He spoke of the truths of an eternal existence, warning me of the dangers surrounding the illusions of earth. He opened to my comprehension the alternatives given to every soul born to earth; — the alternatives of utter extinction in the astral state, or of fully conscious immortality in the

spiritual regions. He disclaimed, however, any knowledge of the one Supreme Being in whom is contained the sum and substance of every living manifestation. This comprehension of the one over-ruling soul was given only to the very highest order of spirits. According to my understanding of his words, Hasta had declared that the "Universal Will" was continuously directed towards harmony on both spiritual and material planes — directed to a perfect unity; that this end would be reached on the earthly plane, through the evolutionary process, by the perfect adaptation of every physical form to its material environment. When that point was gained, all manifestation of the Eternal mind in matter, in that particular planetary system was ended, and there was perfect rest in the one last condition of homogeneity. Universal objectivity will become an all-comprehensive subjectivity. But this change from planetary activity to quietude would not take place until the last grand world-cycle — until upon each planet the seven races of humanity had run their several courses. In regard to individual, eternal immortality for those selected spirits who had risen superior to all the illusions of flesh in their repeated incarnations, and had survived the astral

extinction, Hasta confessed his ignorance, but suggested the following doctrine: "In the final, seventh spiritual state, when our solar system has resolved itself into its original objective star-mist, this one dream of the eternal will be finished. It might be then that all knowledge of individual existence was lost in the grander consciousness of the Universal Mind."

Such metaphysical theories were beyond my mental grasp, and I shall attempt no further record of this portion of the teaching.

Hasta encouraged my continued friendship with Cecil, telling me that I might safely follow his guidance. To my asking if it would be wise to take up occult studies on the plane of my present earthly life, or to pursue the mystic training under the direction of Cecil, Hasta gave a negative reply in these words: —

"Your duties lie in other directions. You can best serve the demands of your personal destiny by leading those depending upon your earthly exertions and care, into the right paths."

The farewell words spoken by the Master, and the closing scene that marked our final separation, will remain forever impressed upon my inmost soul, though my pen is able to convey but a weak

report to the reader. In a condition of spiritual ecstasy, I seemed to hear Hasta say, "You have seen enough truth to awaken your higher instincts to the glorious secrets of the only real existence. It will be your future task to train yourself, and those connected with you, to high and noble activities. Habituate yourself to the light that has opened to your perception. Hold your affections to the relations which are eternal, that when you reach the realms where now your old friend rests, you may have actions worthy of spiritual memory to recall. You have seen in the astral light the souls of those mortals who have drunk the debasing draft of selfish indulgence. Trouble not your heart with the new doctrines inculcated by your late experiences. Follow the dictates of your higher self. Faltering humanity needs no rule of life but the one precept given by all the inspired moral teachers, — 'Love thy neighbor as thyself.' Christ, the highest spiritual adept ever sent to earth, gave the only personal example needed for the perfect life."

As my dearly beloved teacher uttered these words, we saw from the vast heights of these mountain peaks the moon sink behind the lower hills, while the rising sun gave the first rosy tinge

to the blush of morn. With the whispered farewell blessing of this noble being, the spell that held me in my present physical body was removed, and I lost consciousness.

EPILOGUE

SIX months have elapsed since the last entry was written in the manuscript of what I call my *Dream Journal*. It is only at the urgent solicitation of a friend, who has shown the courage of his convictions by an open appearance as my sponsor, that I have consented to share the teachings received from "across the threshold" with readers who may be interested in the hidden phases of human existence.

I have thought it might aid those friends (for so I shall term them) who have read the book to its end, if a few closing words are added for the purpose of throwing a little more light on certain teachings received from Shadow Land. In the time that has passed since, in the early dawn of that August day, I bade farewell to the liberated spirit of my friend Barton, and received those last kind teachings from the noble Hasta, I have taken every opportunity, by personal interviews and by correspondence with students of the latest ethnic,

historic, and philosophic theories, to strengthen the new views of life obtained by means of the astral visions, and the result has been most satisfactory.

Let me at once, however, remove the expectation of any reader who is eager for more graveyard scenes or astral flittings. The psychic or spiritual faculties that brought to my physical consciousness such new — and I may add, such broadening — views of human existence during that soul-exciting period of Barton's visitations, seem to have deserted me. Whether the gates to that region, so near to, and yet so far from, the life of physical sense are permanently closed to my dream-self, gives me no anxiety, for the spiritual teachings have been continued in other and higher ways. Convinced, as no mere reader of such experiences can be without some similar personal privilege, that this world of sense-appearance is only a reflected image of one small portion of a spiritual reality, my old-time, and almost confirmed, doubt of the conscious individual life beyond the grave has gone forever. Longfellow's "Psalm of Life" has once more, as in youthful days of religious faith, become my favorite poem. Without wishing to intrude my own feelings on the deeper

questions of religious and practical morality, an impulse has urged my pen to record this effect of the lessons read in the astral light, with the hope that receiving the new and sometimes startling views of life's purposes, even at secondhand, may prompt the thoughts of other sceptics to similar investigations. I have the further hope that these views may perhaps lead some few accepters of dogmatic theology to take a broader estimate of eternal design than can be conscientiously held while standing on the basis of the Jewish cosmogony, with all the illogical conclusions that must follow from such premises.

I am not able to affirm that these experiences are reported exactly as they occurred. Let the doubting critic attempt to relate, or place on paper his next most striking dream, and such a sceptic will realize how widely from the line of perfect truth his waking memory will wander; and in order to make a connected narration how much his imagination must be called into service.

It would be a tedious task, the result of which would interest no one, to separate the positively true incidents from those somewhat exaggerated, or from the very few having no basis of fact.

There are many people of both sexes who have caught, by personal tests, much more of occult truth than has come to the present writer; and who will not doubt for one moment the sound and veracious foundation for all that was given to my physically unconscious self. Randolph Cecil, or an educated mystic represented by that name, is still busy, in his quiet but effective way, in body of healthful flesh on the earthly plane, and he bids fair to hold his outward form in full vigor on that plane for many more years.

To satisfy my mind regarding the real existence of the man whose materialized animal soul gave the name of John Holman, I had a strange chance to prove that a fur-trader, of the same mental and bodily traits as were represented in the astral form of the *séance* described in the text, had been, about twenty years ago, a noted personage in Alaska; an energetic fellow of stern outward habit, but of kind heart, dreaded by refractory helpers in the work of his wild post, but beloved by all who had penetrated beneath the outward roughness and reserve of his manner. But the facts learned through my army-correspondent would make a story in itself. The visit of the mystic to that far-away retreat is still remembered by the few

white men who have made a permanent settlement in a spot which at that time was rarely visited except by the most adventurous hunters.

I might add more information about the poor son of Barton, who so unexpectedly became my charge, but the objection mentioned in the journal still remains. The older criminal of the railway slaughter was found, a few mornings before the case came up for trial, lying dead in his cell — probably removed by an attack of apoplexy. Soulless as he was, his astral shell will last, it is hoped, but a brief period to swell the number of those revolting spectres seen by us in the intermediate regions.

The relation of the visit to the Puritan burial-lot, had I consulted my own wishes, would have been omitted; for it leaves a painful impression on the mind of one who is proud of his family descent from ancestors that, leaving comfortable homes and beloved neighborhood associations, braved the bitter hardships and the constant attacks of warlike foes, in order to worship God in what they considered sincerity and truth. In fact, however, no feeling of disappointment or sorrow should result from that shadowy interview; for of the hundreds of the dead laid away in that field devoted at least for a century and a half to sacred

purposes, only three souls innately depraved were left. "The Emancipation of Massachusetts," by Brooks Adams, gives a very correct account of the retarding influence of Puritan bigotry in the development of intellectual truth in the New England States; but the grand redeeming traits of character possessed by the first settlers can never be forgotten by this later generation, whose members are in danger, by the reactionary force of enlightened opinion, of throwing overboard all faith in a supreme ruling power. The lectures of John Fiske on "The Beginnings of New England," and "The Relations of Puritan Théocracy to Religious Liberty," give us a brighter view of that body of men from whom my guide found only three waiting souls still in purgatorial gloom. One reason for this present chapter is to remove any possible sting from the lesson imparted by that astral exposure of spiritual hypocrisy.

A brighter, and certainly more suggestive, teaching was given at that meeting by the ~~coincidence~~ (which I must believe was occultly arranged by the higher guides of Barton) of two spirits of such noted Indian chiefs coming forth with charitable intent at so opportune a time. Always intensely fascinated with the mystical side of the

American Indian's character, and believing that these children of the forest were the last remnants of a once mighty and civilized people, the words addressed by Chief Philip to the three shadowy members of a hated race, though spoken in what, at that time, I took for a realistic dream, gave a powerful impetus to my old curiosity. Late theories, some of them indorsed by that eminent authority, Max Müller, connect by convincing philological methods the American Indians with the oldest known race, antedating the Aryan. The latest reliable theory, which is almost, by the concurrent judgment of the leading anthropologists and philologists, an assured scientific fact, marks the Scythio-Gallic race as the early progenitors of the Aryas. Over one hundred Indian words used in the common speech of our savage brothers of the plains are almost identical with those of the ancient Gallic tongue, which latter is now proved older even than the Sanscrit. Of course, space in this present volume forbids more than a mere hint at these interesting disclosures of modern knowledge. This hint is given to show others not only how possibly true are "the doctrine of the seven races," "the account of the Atlanteans," and "the ethnic order of the higher evolution" as delivered by Hasta ;

but also to lend a greater probability to the correctness of the faith of that Indian spirit in the secrets given to him by his guides. It is well known by those who have lived long among the Indians that every tribe is possessed of secrets of deeply mystical character; that the medicine-men of the various tribes hold these secrets in sacred keeping, though sometimes the chief may belong to the same line of descent as the medicine-men themselves. These secrets are of very ancient origin and have been preserved by tradition and a hidden sign-language. In connection with the trusted keeping of tribal traditions, these medicine-men are adepts in magic (to give it the common term), and many are the wonderful, well-authenticated facts of their powers in this direction. The character of the physical manifestation of these occult powers is intimately connected with that marking the exhibitions of the Hindoo fakirs, who usually belong to the lower order of the Brahmin and Buddhist priesthood, and who have learned their secret art from the higher orders of Bickshus, who never stoop to expose in outward material ways their deep knowledge of hidden laws.

The friend to whom I am indebted for the intro-

duction to this book vouches for the truth of the following account: A medicine-man of a tribe of Sioux Indians in the woods of the north-west, some fifteen years ago, gave an exhibition of occult power before a small party of intelligent and sceptical army officers, who used the most watchful care to detect any possible legerdemain. This naked savage produced, by a process of strange incantation, repeated in his guttural dialect, weird phenomena that were absolutely unexplainable, unless we accept the theory of twenty strong men being under the complete and simultaneous hypnotic control of the wizard. One very striking display of occult power was the appearance, at the command of the red-skinned magician, of a long white tusk (similar to that of an elephant or wild boar) from a spot of unbroken turf situated at some little distance from the point where stood the medicine-man. I mention this last curious demonstration, on account of its close resemblance to the phenomenon of the "mango-tree" exhibited by the fakir in the courtyards of Calcutta. There were several other manifestations of a secret force under the control of the medicine-man, so exactly of the same nature as those shown in India, that the only explanation possible is, that the original source of

the hidden knowledge bestowing these extraordinary gifts is identical ; and we must look for this source to the far-away age when the common ancestors of the Aryan Hindoos and the American Indians were living together as one nation in some prehistoric land : and the latest geological theories point to the Western Hemisphere as the probable location of that ancient continent.

The discoveries of modern science in all branches of human knowledge should temper the self-conceit of the Anglo-Saxon peoples ; and aid, too, the work of widening the mental horizon of the devotees to religious superstition.

One final word : "Dreams of the Dead" may appear to many, to whom such advanced doctrines are new, as being an exposition of Pantheism. The author's own heart has been so warmed toward all his fellow-beings on earth, and his mental impressions so enlarged, by the fresh and inspiring doctrines presented by Hasta and Cecil, and by the teachings derived from the astral visions, that he finds himself unable to believe that they are opposed to Christianity as it came from the lips of its founder, — that is, to Christianity uncontaminated by dogma.

THE END.

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