

THE DOUBLE MAN

A Novel

BY
F. B. DOWD



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THE DOUBLE MAN

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THE DOUBLE MAN.

I.

INTRODUCTION.

MY acquaintance with the hero of the following story began in the following manner :

One hot summer day as I walked down B—Street after an absence of several months, I found myself at Mr. Morrison's flour store. Hearing the hum of voices from within, I carelessly entered. "Old Bob McIntosh" and perhaps a half dozen others, among them a man known as Don La Velle—all of the independent free school of thought—were seated around, talking upon religious subjects. "Bob" was an out-and-out atheist and had no good thoughts nor words for any form of superstition, as he termed all belief in God or a future state of existence. With two exceptions the others were agnostics or pretended freethinkers (with the free left out). The discussion—the subject of which I have forgotten—ran high, nor does it matter to this story. In the height of the debate Don joined in, and all listened

with marked attention, for he spoke of a future state of existence as one speaks of what he knows. One of the exceptions to whom I have alluded was a Mr. Albee. He was walking back and forth the whole length of the room with his hands behind his back. A thick-set man, about five feet eight inches in height, short, thick neck, very red in the face, heavy eyebrows, high, proud forehead, eyes of a grayish brown, plenty of brown hair, face smooth-shaved, body and limbs well proportioned, except that he was somewhat inclined to *embonpoint*—and about sixty-five years old. I had never met Mr. Albee previously, and Don was a stranger to all present except myself. In a short time after Don joined in the conversation the subject merged into the growth of religion, in which he claimed that it was only a contagion, which changes in type as civilization changes the character and habits of the race.

“Ideas,” said he, “are contagious; they grow and they die; they spread from one individual to another like the smallpox, which does not attack every one. There are some people proof against smallpox, so there are some who are proof against an idea, no matter how simple it may be. Methodism took its rise from John Wesley, but it is not generally known that the disease was inoculated into him by spirits. We little know the origin of anything. I am of the opinion that all diseases and plagues that visit this earth come from the spirit world.”

I had noticed that as Don spoke Mr. Albee walked more rapidly and at last stopped in front of Don, upon whom he gazed with an earnest, fierce look. His hands had unclasped from behind and were now shut as a pugilist ready for the fray. As Don enunciated the last word Mr. Albee fairly shouted, at the same time gesticulating with raised fists, as if he meditated violence upon the little man who calmly surveyed him from head to foot.

“You are a liar, sir! You and all the spirits are liars! The Devil owns you all! The Devil is your father, sir! You are one of those cursed Spiritualists, sir! Get out of my sight! And repent before it is too late! As sure as you live the Devil will get you, soul and body, and carry you to Hell if you don't repent! I call upon you! I warn you to repent!” etc.

Reader, to appreciate such a scene you must witness it. There was Albee, red as a beet in the face, with bloodshot eyes, shouting at the top of his voice, the crowd of loungers dumb with amazement. Apparently the only one undisturbed was little Don La Velle. He stood calmly looking at Albee till he seemed to have exhausted his vocabulary of denunciation, when, coolly stepping close to Albee, Don shook his finger at him, saying in a mild, distinct tone of voice, while looking him squarely in the eyes,

“Friend, the spirits you denounce so vehemently have once lived and suffered on this

earth as we do to-day ; they have been, many of them probably, your near and dear friends ; beware how you call them ill names lest you offend a power with which you can do nothing. *They may get hold of you some day, and when they do they will make you jingle to your heart's content.*"

"You are a liar, sir! The Devil is in you!" fairly yelled Mr. Albee. But Don coolly turned and walked out of the store.

Mr. Morrison occupied rooms over the store, with an only daughter, who was somewhat of an invalid, said to have consumption. Mr. Morrison was a member of Father Challen's church—Campbellite I think it was—and Mr. Albee also, as I learned shortly after the episode in the flour store.

Now Morrison's daughter was something of a medium, had visions, etc., and Mr. Morrison procured Planchette for her, but this was kept a profound secret—for fear of "Mother Grundy." Many were the beautiful messages from his long since deceased wife, written by Planchette under the transparent little hand of his dear daughter, who seemed to him more like an angel—so frail and delicate was she—than a mortal being.

"Deceive her own father? She with one foot already in the grave? Preposterous! Not to be thought of for a moment." So said Mr. Morrison to Mr. Albee one day shortly after the events spoken of—for be it known they were intimate

friends, as well as brethren in the same church. Furthermore there was a closer bond of sympathy between them than church fellowship; they were nearly the same age, and both were widowers. But Albee had buried three wives and had now been living a celibate life for fifteen years. I have no doubt of this latter fact, for Mr. Albee was a very devout man, very conscientious withal, and was horror-struck at the mere mention of being untrue to his wives, even though they were dead. No one ever whispered a word against his moral character. Strictly truthful and upright in business, he was a man who commanded respect, in spite of his hot temper and bigotry. He knew the Scriptures almost by rote, but could not argue thereon without boiling over with anger. So it happened one day when Mr. Morrison was more than ordinarily happy at having received messages from his wife that he could not doubt, that he showed several of them to Mr. Albee, under a pledge of secrecy of course. Curiosity as well, perhaps, as a vague hope that he also might get a word or two from his "dear departed" got the better of Albee's unreasoning bigotry, and he solicited an interview with the spirits.

With all his cant and sanctified manner I am inclined to think that, deep down in his heart, he had doubts as to the truth of theology, and more, perhaps, than all else, a very large doubt of his own regeneration. Possibly all this loud-

mouthed bluster about being born of God and anathematizing those who disagreed with him may have been used to strengthen his weakness, just as a coward generally swears the loudest when his heart is palpitating with fear. Given, a doubt in the mind, and one is like a drowning man, catching at anything. I don't think Mr. Albee would have attended the séance with Miss Morrison unless it was to be kept a secret. Oh, this sinning *in secret*! It shows that those who do so do not believe what they publicly pretend. But, friend, remember this: God will bring every secret as well as public act into judgment, and there is no escape, pray and preach as you will, as the sequel will show. We will let Mr. Albee tell his own story further on. It was but a few days thereafter that I happened to meet Albee; I should have passed him by without recognition, but he approached me with outstretched hand and a beaming smile, drew me to one side, and in a mysterious undertone told me of Miss Morrison and the Planchette, and that he was investigating, etc.; and that Planchette would write with his hand on it as well as it would for Miss Morrison, and that he had got communications from all of his wives, which he took from his pocket and showed me. I could not well do otherwise than encourage him, and I voluntarily gave him instructions as to habits—bathing, fasting, diet, etc.—referring him to the book of Daniel for authority. He left in high glee,

assuring me that he would faithfully follow instructions. So much for his belief in the Devil.

It might have been two or three weeks later when I called again at the flour store. Mr. Morrison asked me if I had seen Albee lately.

"No," I replied, "I haven't seen him in a long time. Why?"

"He is looking for you and that Mr. LA VELLE. I fear he is going crazy! I do wish you would look him up."

Just then Father Challen came in. He looked excited, shook hands, and then asked:

"How is this, Brother Morrison, you were not at church yesterday?"

"No," replied Mr. Morrison, "my daughter was not able to go, and I stayed with her."

"Ah, I see," said the parson; then turning to me he said, "Your Spiritualism makes people crazy, I see."

"Why, who is crazy now? Not you nor friend Morrison, I hope. And as for me, I suppose I always was that way, so that my case can't be laid to Spiritualism. Who is it, pray tell us?"

"Why, Mr. Albee is nearly, if not quite so," said the parson, looking piercingly at Mr. Morrison. "He got up in church at the close of services, and, amidst sobs and groans, said the devil had him in his clutches, and begged the prayers of the congregation, but gave no further explanation, except to say it is this cursed Spiritualism that is at the bottom of it. You, Mr. Morrison, are a

great friend of his, and possibly can give us some light upon it."

"This is certainly news to me," said Mr. Morrison. "I know nothing of all this, but I thought Albee looked quite strange when he called about an hour ago. I was busy at the time and had no time for conversation."

"Well, Parson," said I, now thoroughly aroused, "did you pray for him?"

"Certainly! And several offered up supplications to the throne of Grace in his behalf," answered the parson.

"Ah, indeed!" I rejoined, "and yet in spite of your *belief* in the promise of the Saviour that 'whatsoever ye shall ask in my name shall be granted unto you,' you go about reporting Albee insane. Evidently you do not believe in the efficacy of your prayers as you pretend."

"Sir!" exclaimed the aged parson, drawing himself up and looking sternly at me, as I thought, "I fear you little understand the value of prayers, or the way in which they are, and should be, offered. In our church we always pray *Thy will be done*."

"Certainly," I again rejoined; "that is your way of making the Scriptures of non-effect. Where, then, is the use of your prayers? God will do His will anyway, regardless of your advice. But I am ready to concede that if you and your congregation had really, from the heart, desired Mr. Albee's good, and in your hearts really be-

lieve in your prayers, the effect upon Mr. Albee would have been beneficial. I think he is merely hypnotized, but I must see him. It seems evident to me that you neither love Mr. Albee nor yet believe in your prayers. You mock the Father; you ask Him to do what you don't try yourself to do."

With this outburst of indignation I left them staring at my rudeness. Unable to find Mr. Albee, I took my way to La Velle's studio. I soon told him what I had heard. It did not seem to surprise him in the least; on the contrary, he coolly remarked,

"I expected it. You heard what I said to him in the flour store?"

"Yes."

"Well, at that time I saw lots of people around him that I had not noticed till he began to curse, then I saw three women close to him. Did not you see them?"

"No," said I; "there were no women in the store."

"Possibly not," said he, with a strange far-away look in his eyes. "They undoubtedly were spirits. They looked so much like earthly women that I thought they were such at the time; but after I had left the store they went along with me for half a block."

"Did you speak to them?" I asked.

"Yes, but they did not answer, and all of a sudden they disappeared."

"Well," said I, "we must find Albee and save him if possible."

“Don't be in such a hurry,” said Don; “no one can work against faith. When fruit is ripe it falls to the ground. That man must suffer; he cannot ripen spiritually till all the lust is burned out of him. All the love he has ever known is lust—a consuming fire. Let it burn!”

I thought he took it rather coolly, and went my way intending to do all I could, single-handed, for Mr. Albee. To this end I searched all the places of public resort, and not finding him, asked Mr. Morrison where he boarded.

He had a room in the third story of the Ackley House, but there I learned that he had left town, and no one knew when he would return. It might have been a week or so, when suddenly I met Albee face to face as he came out of an alley. But I have never seen such a change in anyone in so short a time as I saw in him, with sunkèn, pale cheeks, haggard, wild eyes, beard a week old; all his bluster and self-assurance seemed gone. He approached me timidly, and after salutations said: “I am in great trouble, Mr. Dowd, and as your instructions have assisted in bringing it on, I think it but fair that you should assist me out of it.”

“Certainly,” I replied. “All that I can do I will do cheerfully, but I must first know everything in regard to your condition; you understand me? Everything! What is the matter with you? You look sick.”

“I only wish I was sick!” he replied. “I should have hopes of getting well, but there is no medicine that will down the Devil! The Devil has got me! that’s what’s the matter!”

“Sh! Mr. Albee! you don’t want to make an exhibition.”

“I don’t care who hears it!” said he vehemently.

I saw he was getting excited, so, taking his arm, led him into the alley, saying, as we walked along:

“If you want my assistance you must be calm. Where were you going when we met?”

“Well, I had an idea of going to see old Father Ryan, the Catholic priest, to see if he couldn’t cast the Devil out of me; you know they pretend to do such things.”

“Now, Mr. Albee, to be candid with you, I think you are sick. Let us call into Dr. Parker’s office and consult him.”

“Ha! what do you say? All right, if you think best,” said he, “but I warn you I shall tell him nothing.”

“No? then I’ll do the talking.”

We soon reached the office. The doctor lay back in his easy-chair smoking a cigar. I took the doctor aside, and briefly explained the case so far as I knew. Upon our return to the room where Albee was waiting the doctor examined his tongue, felt his pulse, punched his stomach, etc., then commenced asking questions, to which Mr.

Albee replied : " There is nothing the matter with me, Doctor, only I have got a dose of Spiritism and the Devil has taken possession of me ! He won't let me eat nor sleep. If I eat by force he makes me vomit it all up ; if I fall asleep through exhaustion he awakens me by pinching and hugging me."

" Ha ! ha !" roared the doctor. " Hugging you ? the Devil hugging you ? What do you mean, sir ? In what form is he ?"

" Oh, Doctor, don't you see ? he comes in the form of a woman !" Mr. Albee's eyes grew bloodshot and wild as he uttered these words ; then rising from his chair, he said : " I see you do not understand. I am a widower, and haven't known a woman carnally for fifteen years till this spell of Spiritism was put upon me, and now they come in troops into my room and bed when the windows are barred and my door double-locked ! Ah, it is of no use ! I am not sick ! I am lost !" And with a groan he sank into a chair.

The Doctor looked at him piercingly a few moments, then turning to me said : " A clear case of hypnotism if I am any judge." Then to Albee : " What do you see in your room ?"

" Nothing, sir ! I *feel* them."

" Have you ever been hypnotized or mesmerized ?"

" No ! I don't believe in such nonsense as that ; that will do for weak women and children."

" Hum !" said the doctor—" a little blue mass

to-night ; in the morning I would like to see you again ; an interesting case, truly," as he turned to prepare the medicine.

"Doctor," I asked, "how can it be a case of hypnotism when he has never been in the state?"

He replied : "I am not so sure of that ; some people fall into the state apparently quite naturally without being conscious of it. I should like to know, Mr. Albee, if anyone ever *suggested* to you that the Devil, as you call it, would visit you?"

Albee started, looked at me and then at the Doctor, and faltered out :

"Well, yes ; some weeks ago, in a conversation at Mr. Morrison's flour store, a young man told me that the spirits might get hold of me some time, and if they did they would make me jingle to my heart's content. Those were his exact words. I remember them well. You perhaps know the young man, Mr. Dowd ; you were there at the time."

"Yes, I know him—Don La Velle, an artist. You were discussing Spiritualism, and called spirits devils," said I.

"That explains the whole thing," said the Doctor ; "and this man La Velle is the one to de-hypnotize him ; I can do it if he is willing to let me try, but this evening he is under too much mental excitement. Take this medicine to-night, friend Albee, and have a good night's rest, and in the morn"—

“I’ll do nothing of the kind, Doctor,” broke in Mr. Albee. “I am not sick, and as to having a night’s rest, it is impossible; they will be there!” As he said this his eyes had a crazy look, which passed away, however, in a moment, as, turning to the doctor, he added: “As to hypnotism, that is all bosh; there isn’t a man or woman on earth that could mesmerize me!”

With that he left the office, and I followed him. Together we went to La Velle’s studio, but a card tacked on the door told us that Don was gone to the country. As we parted for the night I urged him to tell me how he was affected, assuring him that I would do all in my power to assist him when I knew all the facts in the case. To this he shrugged his shoulders, and looked me straight in the eyes, saying:

“I don’t doubt you in the least, but it is a long story, and you wouldn’t believe one-half of it, and possibly go and do as the others are doing—report ‘Albee is crazy.’ But that man La Velle knows all about it, for he set them on to me. I’ll tell him the whole truth, and——” here he became vehement, paused as if choking down some emotion, then continued: “I am a poor man, Mr. Dowd; all I’ve got in this world is my horse and buggy, and three or four clocks (he was a clock peddler and tinker), and I will freely give them all to be rid of these Devils.” With this he walked rapidly away.

Several days thereafter Don returned, that is

to say, I found him at his studio, but I am of the opinion that he had not been absent at all ; it was a way he had of having privacy and escaping annoyances. I soon found Mr. Albee, for he was on the alert, and together we entered the studio. I plainly saw how shocked Don was at the change in Mr. Albee. The red-faced, passionate bully had given place to a pale, cadaverous, broken-spirited old man ; yet his eye was clear and brilliant as anyone's when not excited. He shook Don's hand and begged pardon for his rudeness at the flour store, and said :

“ Now, Mr. La Velle, I cannot help thinking you have set the Devil on me. Don't interrupt me, and I will explain all, and then if you can help me out of this trouble I will, as I told Mr. Dowd, give you all I have in this world.”

He paused, and Don said :

“ Indeed I am not guilty of anything of the kind. But if I can do you any good I shall certainly do so without any reward whatever ; but you must tell me exactly how you are affected.”

II.

INTRODUCTION CONTINUED.

MR. ALBEE'S STORY.

MR. ALBEE without further preface narrated the following :

“ A few days after our meeting in the flour store, Mr. Morrison invited me upstairs to see the wonderful performances of Planchette, and there I got what purported to be communications from my three dead wives. I had never, as I remember, told anyone in this city their names, and yet their names in full were signed to the communications. You can probably judge of my astonishment and the joy I felt in thus having all my unbelief and skepticism swept away by a sick girl, through such a simple thing as a block of wood and a pencil. All that I loved on earth has lain in the grave many years, and I little thought, when I entered that room, that the graves could give up their dead to speak words of cheer and hope to my declining years. After seeing her write I laid my hand upon the instrument, and, strange as it may appear, it wrote for me as well as it did for her. A happier man never

walked than I, as I went to my room that night. After reading a chapter in my Bible and offering up a prayer, full of praise and thanksgiving to the good God, I thought to myself, 'If Planchette could write, why, if I held the pencil in my hand, could not the spirits control my hand as well as Planchette?' So I held the pencil and waited results. I had not to wait long. A kind of numbness stole over my hand and I sensed a cool breath over it, while it seemed as if a bandage was tightened around my arm above the wrist. But I calmly waited; the pencil began to move, and, after a little practice, plain, legible writing, in my first wife's handwriting, was produced. The communications were many—for I sat there till long after midnight—all breathing unchanging affection and assurances that there is no death, but a beautiful life of love and joy in the hereafter. The next day I met you, Mr. Dowd, and you bade me persevere and gave me directions as to bathing, diet, fasting, etc. I followed your directions—ate no meat, drank nothing but cold water, bathed daily, discarded all rich foods, and fasted three days out of seven. Every night I held séances, which all my wives regularly attended, and I was as well satisfied that the spirits communicating were my wives as I was of anything that I did not absolutely know. About a week after I had begun dieting, my wife (the first one) Mary Ann, wrote on the slate: 'Dear John! I am going to satisfy you beyond all doubt

to-night—I am going to sleep with you, and prove that I am your loving wife—Mary Ann.’ Well, of course I did not imagine anything very remarkable in sleeping with invisible beings; supposed it might be a dream or something of the kind. Scarcely had I got into bed that night, than I *became aware that some person was lying by my side!* You may well be astonished, gentlemen—but I beg of you not to interrupt me!” (this he said because I made an effort to ask a question), “and I’ll make all things clear.”

I looked in Albee’s eyes; they were as clear and intelligent as any eyes I ever looked in. In spite of his request, I broke in by saying:

“Mr. Albee, we expect you to tell us nothing but the truth; it is facts we want, and not fancies!”

He replied: “As I live and hope to live hereafter, as I believe in God who hears me now, I state nothing but facts; I would be glad if they were but fancies. You cannot put yourselves in my place! It is impossible for you by any process of mind to conceive how I felt as I leaped from the bed, lit my lamp, and looked in the bed. Not a soul was there. Then I searched the room, though it was not much of a search, for it is a small bedroom, in the third story of the Ackley House, with one door opening into a narrow passage, and one window looking into the street, and they were both securely fastened. After satisfying myself that I was entirely alone, I sat

down to think and get my nerves quiet, for I was trembling like a leaf in the wind. Soon my hand began to jerk, and, taking the pencil, I got this communication: 'Dear John! My own sweet husband. Why were you frightened? I told you I would sleep with you to-night! The good Lord has permitted me to come to you to cheer you up; for you are a good man! Go to bed now, and don't fear!' signed Mary Ann. After a few moments I lay down in the bed with the lamp burning. All seemed right in the bed, and I extinguished the light; but scarcely had I done so when there was the person again by my side. I assure you I am no coward, but it was as much as I could do to lie still and try to subdue the wild beating of my heart. Gradually I got control of myself enough to whisper, 'Is this really my wife Mary Ann?' Almost immediately a little hand clasped mine, not a cold hand like that of a corpse, but a real, soft, warm hand, pulsating with life. Caressing the hand, which returned the caress with gentle pressure, I passed my hand along the arm to the shoulder, over her person to the neck, where I found a wart that she had when I married her. Gently she kissed me and caressingly lulled me to forgetfulness that I was in the arms of a ghost, and in that forgetfulness my age disappeared from my consciousness, and the passions of youth returned to me, which I indulged to the utmost. I closed not my eyes to sleep the long night through. As day was break-

ing I heard something like a sigh, she arose from the bed and I lost her. All that day I was lost in wild dreams of future bliss. Oh, if she had only spoken one word my cup of bliss had been full to the brim. But alas ! there is more to come. If that *one night with my first love* were all, I should cherish it in memory as a glimpse of paradise, never to be forgotten and never to be regretted ; but the next night, instead of one there came two, and both were my wives and insisted upon asserting their rights. That first night's experience had dispelled all my fears and I knew what to expect. There was no sleep that night. They faded away in the morning while clasped in my arms. After they were gone, exhausted nature asserted her rights and I slept nearly all day.

“ Now, gentlemen, you may be interested to know my feelings during these experiences. Well, after the first shock was over, I seemed to adapt myself to circumstances ; all timidity was gone, and I entered into the spirit of the debauch with as much zest as the women themselves. On the second night, when I found two in my bed, and also the third night, when the three wives were there, it is true I felt a little delicate ; but when I realized that the women had no modesty and no delicacy of feeling in the least, I soon fell into the same mood. I was so intoxicated, and the sensations were so exhilarating, that I was like a madman, and still I was as sane as ever ; but the

contact of their persons sent such thrills of pleasure through me that I lost all control of myself. It far exceeded anything I ever experienced. And even now, with all the horror of this thing in my mind, there is an undercurrent of pleasurable feelings of what is waiting for me to-night. It may seem impossible to you, but in their company, with their magnetic power (for I can term it nothing else), there seems no limit to my virility, and no diminution of pleasure. This thing has been going on over two weeks, and you see before you the wreck of what I was. These hollow cheeks, this crazy look that turns my friends aside, all attest the truth of what I have told you. You ask me why I haven't broken this thing up? I have tried. I sleep generally most of the day, and when I wake the horror of myself comes over me to such an extent that if it were not for the fear of an angry God I should commit suicide; all my early training, my religious professions, my horror of licentiousness, and the strictness of my celibacy for fifteen years, mock me. Then I fall upon my knees and ask God to deliver me from Satan and restore my innocence and purity. I read the book of Daniel and ask God to send some bright angel to me as he once sent to Daniel, and then the thought comes to me, 'You are not Daniel! you are lost!' for indeed I cannot but feel that such orgies as I indulge in, though it be with the spirits of my wives, cannot be otherwise than such as belong

to hell! And so I thought to go back to my former habits, eating and drinking as usual. The first thing that made me try this was the loss of confidence in the spirits; they began to tell me lies, and when I caught them at it, they simply laughed, 'Ha! ha! ha!'—for you know, I used to sit hours with pencil in hand for them to write. I soon found, however, that I could not return to my former diet. Every piece of meat I took in my mouth seemed like so much cotton, and in my desperation, if I swallowed it I was compelled immediately to vomit; so all I can eat is a little rice or some crackers and milk. It was at this time that I invoked the prayers of my church. But my brethren have reported all over that I am going insane. This provoked more laughter from the spirits. They promise fairly enough, in answer to my prayers, to go away and stay, but they come back to laugh and— Oh! if God loved me he would send some bright spirit to protect me. But these spirits say *they* are sent by the good Lord. I don't believe a word of it; if anyone has sent them it is the D——"

"Stop!" cried Don, "I won't have them called ill names, Mr. Albee, and if you desire my assistance you will certainly respect my wishes. I will do all I can for you, but you must understand this: there is nothing done on earth contrary to God's will. If, for some inscrutable purpose, He afflicts you, or, which is the same thing, permits others to do so, it is punishment for sins you have

committed. But we will not discuss the subject now. Come here to-morrow night and get your wives to come also. You had better not go to bed to-night, or, if you do, leave your lamp burning."

"Indeed, I have done so several times," cried Mr. Albee, "but as soon as I fall into a doze it goes out, and the wives are there. I have walked the floor several nights till so weak I could scarcely stand. I think they take the strength out of me whenever they like, for there is a feeling like suction, or as if I was being cupped, sometimes in my neck, hands, or face, and then I get weak."

Punctual to the time came Mr. Albee. I had secured two young girls (my own daughters) to sit in the circle with us. We sat around a center-table; two girls, Mr. Albee, Don, and I. On the table were pencil and paper. We sat for fifteen or twenty minutes without a sign; then Mr. Albee's hand began to jerk, and grasping the pencil wrote, "We are all here; what do you want of us?" Signed Mary Ann. Mr. Albee's breathing was labored, but he was fully conscious. The answers of the wives were written promptly and rapidly, while Don's questions were spoken in a low tone of voice.

DOX. We want you to leave your husband in peace.

SPIRITS. Why, we never quarrel with him! But we have permission to visit him, and we intend to stay, for all you can say or do.

DOX. Do you love your husband?

SPIRITS. Certainly ! we are married to him.

DON. Don't you see you are injuring his health ? Do you want to make him insane ?

SPIRITS. Oh, bosh ! he is as capable as any man ; no danger of his going insane about a little love ; have we not lived with him and died trying to satisfy his love, as he called it ? He never could be satisfied ; what did he care for our broken health ? And now we have come to satisfy him, and you want to drive us away !

DON. But he is satisfied ; he thinks you are devilish spirits.

SPIRITS. Oh ! he is a saint, is he ? Well, we are as good as he is ; at least we don't pretend to be what we are not. He wore us out while he had the power, and said it was love made him do it ; now we have the power ; "that which is good for the goose is good for the gander."

DON. Then it isn't altogether love for Mr. Albee that induced you to come ; I infer that you take pleasure in his misery.

SPIRITS. Now, look here, Mister ! We have found out that there is no Devil except man's lust, pride, avarice, and selfishness, and the Devil of married life is the husband's owning the wives. We don't owe Mr. Albee any ill-will ; it is in mercy we come, to free him from lust and a false idea of the Father. No man can have a good idea of God whose soul is on fire with lust ; have we not seen how he has longed for his wives all the past fifteen years ? It was only fear of

an angry God and a burning hell that kept him from brothels. Celibacy, indeed ! celibacy is of the soul, not of the body !

DON. Now, Sisters, I see you are reasonable. Let us compromise this matter. You don't want to ruin him, and I think his lesson has been severe enough. What say you to this plan : take turns in visiting him ?

The pencil stood still for a few moments. Don with an eagle's gaze was scanning the face of Mr. Albee, who was wholly absorbed in contemplating the paper, apparently an uninterested spectator. At this point one of my daughters began to nod, and I dismissed them.

At last the pencil moved again.

SPIRITS. We will agree to that for one week, provided he will continue communications.

DOX. Certainly, but I must notify you that this compact will be sent to the one who permits you to visit him, "to her who is nameless," and if it is broken by any one of you, I will take steps to send you all away entirely ; now good-night !"

This ended the first séance. One week from that time we held another, and after much discussion and objection got another concession, limiting the visits to once a week for each wife. At parting that night Don said to Mr. Albee :

"Lest they should break this compact, there will be *a man* in the bed with you on the nights wherein you are to be left alone ; fear not, you will be protected !"

Mr. Albee assured me afterward that such was the fact, and expressed the suspicion that it was Don himself. He said: "I woke up in the night and found a man lying by my side, with his arm thrown across me."

We held many séances; in the lapse of time, and with many arguments, we gradually undermined the influence they had over Mr. Albee, and they left him thoroughly rejuvenated, his complexion clear and bright, excitability toned down to zero. He loved his Bible, if possible, more than ever, and said: "I find Spiritualism on every page of it; passages that formerly were void of meaning are now as plain as the noon-day sun. I never attend church, for I am in church all the time. I see and hear spirits as I go about my business, and often hear the sweetest music imaginable. I am the happiest man that lives, as I am never alone; and I thank God for the three wives. I am healed of a skin disease, pronounced incurable, that has afflicted me for thirty years; my flesh is as smooth as an infant's."

This story of Mr. Albee and the three wives has been introduced in order to show the possibilities of our natures. Standing, as we do, upon the verge of another existence, of the nature of which we know so little, any little fact like this is of inestimable value. Nor is this an isolated case. A widow told my wife not many years

ago, that she had, at the time, a nocturnal visitor, who came into her room regardless of bolts and bars, to whose embraces she was obliged to submit, when she (as she said with eyes full of tears) would rather have died. Poor, helpless woman, apparently as sane as anyone! Scores of such hapless creatures consulted the late Dr. Newton, "the great healer," and he cast out "the devils." It seems to me as if there are two kinds of obsession :

1st, OBJECTIVE, as when the spirits are external, and merely manifest themselves by controlling the body.

2d, SUBJECTIVE, as where the sensitive *vacates* the body, as Ina did, and the obsessing spirit, entering in, takes full control, thus personating the sensitive or anyone they choose. It is this latter class we term insane.

Most of the fiendish rapes as well as other crimes committed are due to obsessing spirits. But who has pity for criminals ?

This may seem an unreasonable and unwarrantable assertion, but consider ! The seminal life of a man is composed of countless spirits, some of which are born into this world embodied spirits. What have they been before this incarnation ? *Where do they come from ?* Spirit is formless, floating around a nucleus, a spermatazoid, unconscious, yet possessing in its constituents all the crime and vileness of a former embodiment, the Karma of previous lives. Spirit gravitates

to these bodies, which it vitalizes. But it is not always *your own spirit which acts*. For instance : fill your stomach with alcohol, and you are not yourself ; instead of incorporating the spirit of alcohol into *your spirit* and using it as yours, *it* has taken your spirit in possession, and some other spirit aside from your own is using you ! In like manner, he who fills his mind with the wines of hell, by thinking ill of others, by lies, lewd thoughts, and vain imaginings, invites spirits from the dark abyss, who take possession of him to his ruin. It is kindly acts, generous, friendly thoughts, a forgiving, charitable, gentle nature, that invite bright, happy, angelic spirits, who become incorporated into our own, not to use us, but that they may be part and parcel of us, for our use, and for the good of all. These bodies are the houses in which we live. Guests sometimes call on us, whether invited or not, and we little know their nature till we have proved them.

This accidental call at Morrison's flour store led to an intimate friendship between Don La Velle and the writer—a friendship which knit two kindred souls into one, so far as this life, with its ups and downs, its varied experiences, will admit of. At his request I have penned the following narration, from incidents furnished mainly by himself. Of his truth and veracity I have no doubt. That some will doubt many of the statements made herein is expected, but the insufficiency of the communications received from the

other side the grave is too apparent to the deeply earnest inquirer to be a matter of question. Happy is he who pauses at the threshold, after becoming thoroughly satisfied that our departed friends live after death, and asks no questions as to *how* they live over there. Incredible as Don's statements may appear, they commend themselves to the thoughtful as much as, or even more than, the revelations of Gautama, Swedenborg, and A. J. Davis; for this difference is presented: Don was *not* a hypnotic subject, while the others, with the exception of Buddha, were subject to trances, and told what they saw and heard *while in the trance*: which certainly opens the way to the question, "Did they see literal, actual things, or were their visions the conjuring of a clever hypnotist, either in the form or out? The theories advanced may be objected to, but the same objection applies to those of Swedenborg. He was certainly a theorist, as demonstrated by his assertion that *the universe is in the form of a man*, which neither he nor any angel could possibly know except by hearsay. Again, how much his conversation with angels may have been colored by his peculiar mind in the transcribing is open to conjecture. Human nature presents a complex study, and it will not do to pass by any phase of it too lightly. The **DOUBLE MAN** commends itself to your best thought, and, thus contemplated, it will be of service to you.

F. B. DOWD.

CHAPTER I.

A MAGICIAN.

IN one of the rooms on the third floor of 29 Boylston St., Boston, one cold morning in March, near the close of the great war of Secession, sat a man looking over a pile of letters which the postman had just laid upon his table.

His dark complexion, curly hair, black eyes, flat nose, large mouth, and thick lips suggested African blood; while his broad, square forehead, wide-set eyes, with their piercing look, coupled with the fascinating smile that wreathed his amorous mouth at times, showed the finer blood of the Anglo-Saxon race. This man was P. B. Randolph, a man in whom the blood of different races boiled like the lava of a volcano. His nature was electrical, volcanic. A man of moods, there was for him no middle ground; he was either in Heaven or in Hell. Love to him was a passion; its indulgence, like everything else, was in the extreme, hence he was love-hungry and love-starved. Always longing, never satisfied, a prey to extreme imagination, lofty in ambition, but constantly humiliated on account of his

color, denied the position in society to which his genius entitled him, it is not strange that he became morbidly sensitive, envious, and full of hate. Naturally mediumistic and at times clairvoyant; superstitious, as all of the African race are; he was a fatalist, and imagined that he had existed on this earth previously, and that he was born of mixed blood as a punishment for crimes he had committed then. Soft and tender as a mother at times, his great heart would melt with tears, only to be burned and dried up a moment later by the fierce fires of anger at himself and creation. He was a medium of rare abilities, an intuitive reader of character, and a subject of obsession; he predicted his own death by his own hand, and came near fixing the exact time. Such was Dr. Randolph as I knew him. Born of poor and obscure parentage, reared in the slums of New York, a newsboy, a bootblack, a barber, a waiter at a restaurant, without education, he acquired the best. Without a chance in life he became one of the most learned men of his day. He had a magic tongue, could speak many languages, possessed a memory of ideas and words truly marvelous, and was a public speaker superior to most. Without friends or money he traveled over Europe, Asia, and America, gathering knowledge as a bee gathers honey.

But with all his genius and all his acquirements, he did not acquire that urbanity of temper, that magnanimity of nature, which every gentleman

must have to entitle him to recognition in society ; and instead of attributing this to the true cause he attributed it to his color. Socially, as in everything else, he was an extremist. A warm, self-sacrificing friend, a jovial, laughing comrade, a vindictive and unforgiving enemy, an egotist, ready to be insulted where no insult was intended, it is no wonder that he became addicted to the use of strong drink.

But I am not writing the biography of Dr. Randolph, but merely giving a glimpse of the man who made this story possible.

As he sorted the letters, he tossed such as contained neither money nor stamps into the waste-basket. After perusing such as he had selected he sat for a moment looking steadily at the wall, upon which was pasted a circular card with a black dot in the center of it. For only a moment he gazed, then shuddering and gasping a few long-drawn breaths, his head sank upon the desk. Only a moment he lay thus ; then rising upright, with his face turned upward and his eyes rolled back till the black orbs were hidden, a smile wreathing his swarthy features, he seemed to be another man. He was, indeed, for the moment transformed. His face seemed to lose its dusky hue ; a glad, joyous look illuminated it, as he stretched out his hand, like one who meets a dearly loved and long absent friend, and he murmured, "Mother." Then a vision came. This is what he saw : the room in which he sat had dis-

appeared ; in its place gigantic mountains pierced the clouds, vast forests clothed their rugged sides, and rank vegetation obscured the vista. Silvery streams of water leaped and laughed down the mountain-sides, over rocks and under logs, lost here, appearing there, hurrying onward and downwards—where to and wherefore ?

In the midst of this luxuriant waste stood a man looking upwards as if listening to the songs of birds that fluttered from limb to limb in the trees. He was a young man, of low stature, well built, strong of limb, broad-shouldered, deep-chested, with lofty forehead and an intellectual cast of countenance.

Then Randolph, going nearer, saw that the man was literally bound fast by a spider-web, gauzy network, or scarcely perceptible attenuated threads, attached to every hair of his head and every nerve of his body, and made fast to the ground, the trees, grass, weeds, and creeping things ; and yet the young man seemed unconscious of such bondage.

Anon Randolph became conscious of turning a grindstone, sharpening a huge knife ; and as the bright sparks flew from the blade they formed themselves in letters above the young man's head, spelling out the name "DON LA VELLE ! THE DOUBLE MAN !" Then a voice sounded low and sweet in Randolph's ear, "Cut him loose !" Automatically, Randolph's hand sought the waste-basket, and brought forth a letter re-

jected because it contained no stamps. This is the letter :

“ST. LOUIS, MO., *March 1, 1864.*

“MR. P. B. RANDOLPH,
“BOSTON, MASS.

“DEAR SIR:—Please excuse me for addressing you. My only excuse is my admiration of your matchless writings, and the fascination the Rosicrucian ideas therein contained have for me. I would like to become a member of that Mystic Order, if I may be considered worthy of a humble place therein. As you are the head of the Boston Club, I presume that you can advise me of the steps necessary to take, the qualifications, fees, etc. If so, please let me hear from you at an early date, and greatly oblige,

“Yours respectfully,

“DON LA VELLE.”

Randolph perused the letter, then springing from his chair danced around the room snapping his fingers and singing (like any plantation darkey) “Out of the wilderness! Out of the wilderness, ha! ha! Out of the wilderness, ha, ha, ha!” Of a sudden he paused in his antics, looked up at the ceiling, while a heavenly smile illuminated his dark countenance, and he gasped out in a scarce audible voice: “Great God! is it possible that the spell is broken—the curse lifted from off my wearied soul? Six thousand years have I waited for this one! and now at last comes ‘*the double man!*’ No! he is the eighth! We must wait for the ninth! Great God! how long, oh, how long?” His head sank upon his

bosom, a deathly pallor stole over his face. Beating upon his chest he staggered to his seat, as I have seen him stagger when personating the Wandering Jew upon the stage.

Only for a brief moment thus he sat, then reaching to a little cupboard he took therefrom a flask of brandy, and drank heavily. Having replaced the bottle he seized his pen and wrote the following letter to Don La Velle :

“DEAR SIR,—You will be accepted when you comply with the following rules: \$25 must accompany your application. Not that money can buy a membership; it takes brains and souls to open ‘*the door.*’ I know you; you have those two requisites, but little cash; still you must do your part towards sustaining the work. I said I know you! So I do, but you have forgotten our parting 6,000 years ago at the tomb of Osiris — ‘*him who sleeps on Phila.*’ I have not forgotten! Furthermore, if those things that happened so long ago in old Egypt have faded from your recollection, you have retrograded intellectually; how about your will? Have you ever tamed a virago of a wife by force of will? Have you ever subdued a wild beast of the jungle, so that he would lie down and sleep at your feet? You have been a king, and can be so again if you like, but that is no evidence of progression, rather the reverse. When a king, did you strut in gorgeous apparel that others made by hard work, in tears without bread? Were you puffed up by the plaudits of the people you governed with a standing army? When you were a king did you free the slaves and make the poor happy? or did you enslave the masses by taxation so that you could live in idleness, and parade in pomp and splendor?

“The spirit of earth is tainted with the blood of countless millions, all young men, who have been

hurried into untimely graves through the rapacity and greed of kings. Do you take pride in having been one of them or a supporter of them? I ask you these questions, for I fair would learn what marks your innumerable births have made upon your soul since we parted, so that I shall know where to place you in 'the Temple of the Rosy Cross.' I await your answer.

“ P. B. RANDOLPH.

“ \triangle | try.”

CHAPTER II.

DON LA VELLE AND THE FROG MAN.

IN an upper room of a three-story building was Don La Velle's studio. He was a painter of portraits, though of no marked ability in that line ; but being of an imaginative and poetic turn of mind he loved his art, and eked out a living by the strictest economy and close application to business. All the spare change he got he invested in books ; of these he had quite a collection, though it was remarkable that none of them treated of painting. They were of a scientific and philosophic nature, with here and there a work on Occultism, Hypnotism etc.

The studio was neat and tastily arranged, although there were no rich or luxurious hangings or furniture. A few chairs, an old well-worn lounge, a mirror, a washstand, and a few paintings, some hanging and others standing against the wall, were the only things in sight, except his easel, upon which was a painting apparently just begun of a young girl with long golden ringlets, merely "laid in." Such was the place where Don worked and lived. A curtain screened

one corner of the room where he slept, while in the other corner was a small room which he styled his laboratory. On a dark, foggy, and rainy morning the postman brought Don the letter from Dr. Randolph. The room was cheerless enough : the only light came through a skylight, now clouded with rain and fog. The stove was scarcely warm, for Don had very little coal, and he was pacing up and down the room with his overcoat on and his hands in his pockets to keep warm. A thoughtful, gloomy look sat upon his face as he walked with his eyes fixed upon the floor. Don was about twenty-four years of age, slender, with broad shoulders, short neck, round, deep chest, high, round forehead, straight brows, large eyes, blue-gray and wide apart ; height, scarce five feet six. In repose his countenance was calm, pleasant, but grave. When excited, his wide-open eyes showed forth an intensity of soul seldom met, and his countenance assumed all the intensity he felt, so much so as to be often forbidding and repellent. His nose was wide, nostrils expanded, mouth hidden under a thick moustache, chin small and pointed, covered with a fine brown beard. He gave one the impression at sight of a man top-heavy, whose face was mainly above his eyes. His broad, deep chest, and short, thick neck showed a strong animal nature, while his weak chin and high head showed correspondingly strong spiritual tendencies. Don was intellectual, through not in the ordinary sense of the word. He

was not a learned man, and his mind disdained to be bound by what others thought, wrote, or said. He was a dreamer both asleep and awake, and his ideas were strangely mingled with impressions received while in both states.

Don and I had been intimate friends for many years, and there were no secrets between us. I have been thus minute in describing him because of the strange events to be chronicled in this tale, as well as the many strange ideas enunciated herein. Sad and grave, he was known by but few, and was always a marked man, sometimes disliked by others without a cause. He often said that this was because he was not of this world.

On the morning that Don received Dr. Randolph's letter he was terribly disheartened. He read it slowly, then sank upon the lounge with a groan. "Twenty-five dollars," he muttered, "and I haven't twenty-five cents to buy coal to warm this room! I might make some money if I had a little warmth so I could handle the brush." And he looked lovingly at the picture of the young girl on the easel. As he approached it he got an idea. Pulling his hat down and buttoning his coat he started for the door. But at that moment there came a rap and Dr. Parker came in. An imperceptible shudder swept over Don as the doctor entered.

As Dr. Parker is one of the characters of this story, let me introduce him to the reader. A man of medium height, strong, well-built, a little

inclined to obesity ; broad shoulders, a large head, poised upon a short, thick neck that seemed to recede into his shoulders, for he had a habit of raising his naturally high shoulders, when speaking ; black hair and mustache, black, piercing eyes, deep set under black, beetling eyebrows that almost met ; a broad, heavy, low forehead, heavy base brain, but low. His manners were severe and courteous, though inclined to emphasize his own importance. His walk, the flourish of his cane, in fact every gesture, impressed you as of one self-poised, of a strong will, a popular and prosperous man. Such was Dr. Parker. After the usual salutation, he approached the easel and said :

“I see you have done a little on Ina’s picture. If you succeed in making a lifelike portrait of her it will go far to make your fortune, sir. I shall take her to Europe next year and if it is a success I will enter it in the Academy.”

“Thank you,” said Don. “I can hardly hope to do that young lady justice. But as it is I can do no work so long as this abominable weather holds.”

“Why, what is the matter ?” said the doctor, as his neck grew palpably shorter, and his shoulders higher.

“The matter,” said Don, “is simply this : it is too cold to work without a fire, and I have no money to procure coal ; painting brings no money till complete, and even then it depends upon

success. No, I must write for the papers till I get a stake or the weather moderates. So, you see, I may not be able to finish the portrait in time for your trip."

"Oh! is that all?" said the doctor; and taking out his pocket-book he placed a five-dollar bill by the picture, saying: "Take this as an earnest, to be returned if you fail."

"But," said Don, "wait a minute."

But the doctor was already out of the room, whistling and swinging his cane as he strode away.

Don looked at the money a long time and it cost him a struggle to take it. At last he picked it up, saying, "This, I suppose, is the price the doctor puts upon me. Well, I suppose every man has his price."

Don procured his coal, and on his way home, in the thick fog and sleet that were blowing, he came upon a thing that looked a little like a man, raking rags and papers from the gutter, in which he stood in the water half up to his knees.

The thing had feet, legs, and body somewhat like a man, but the legs came out of the body nearly at the middle, and there was only a little space between the legs and arms. His arms were long, and as he raked he reminded Don of a huge toad or frog just ready to leap.

As Don paused in front of him he looked up and showed a low, receding forehead, surmounted by bristling hair that stuck up, small, watery

eyes, a pug nose, protruding mouth, drawn to one side, and a receding chin that seemed to be a part of a long neck, flexible like a serpent's body. Don leaned against a lamp-post and watched him at work. Occasionally a dirty rag would be borne along by the rushing water, and quick as lightning the thing would snap it in, as a toad would a fly. Don wished to hear him speak, feeling assured that he would croak like any frog, so, taking the last quarter he had out of his pocket, he asked: "Are you hungry, old man?"

The head erected itself by a bend of the neck, without changing the position of the body in the least, and a hoarse, guttural response came out of the hideous mouth without the movement of a muscle: "Yes, sir."

"Take this, then," and Don tossed the quarter to him, which he snapped as he did the floating rags.

"Young man, you are wasting charity on such a thing as that. He is a nuisance. The authorities ought not to allow such a thing as that to pollute a fashionable thoroughfare like this, where ladies and gentlemen are wont to promenade. He ought to be in the workhouse."

Don turned and stood face to face with the Rev. Dr. Watson, pastor, at five thousand dollars a year, of the most fashionable church in the city.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said Don; "he is a poor harmless thing, and evidently he has not

been out of a frog pond very long, as he is not far removed from those fellows in De Soto's pond, whom you can hear, if you will listen, even now, chanting God's praise, and not unmusically either, to one whose soul is attuned to harmony. Besides, he is God's child, as well as you and I, and he said he was hungry."

The parson looked at Don in utter astonishment for a moment, then said:

"Sir, you are irreverent; frogs cannot be said to chant God's praise. I fear you do not attend church, and have too low an estimate of our holy religion."

"No," said Don, "I have too high an estimate of true religion to support or countenance hypocrisy in any form."

"Well said," replied the parson, "but really, sir, I cannot understand what you mean?"

"I mean," said Don, looking him straight in the face, "that you preach the observance of the Sabbath day, while at the same time you get a salary of five thousand dollars yearly for work done mainly on that day. That is what I call hypocrisy! Is that religion?"

"Young man, it is a waste of time to talk with you. I perceive you are in the gall of bitterness. Let me warn you to flee from the wrath to come ere it be too late; let me"—

"Oh!" said Don, with sudden earnestness, "I would rather flee from present wrath than from some future contingency that may never come!

Besides, I don't believe in *Divine* wrath, anyway." But the parson was moving off.

Meantime, when the parson spoke of the workhouse, the frog-man had gathered up his sack of rags and disappeared in the fog, going apparently on all fours. Don went his way, and his thoughts ran thus: "This fog is thick enough to cut with a knife, and yet it penetrates everywhere. It is a physical fact. There must be mental as well as material fog." And then his mind took a step further and asked, "Is there also a spiritual fog? and am I in that, as I think the parson must be?" These thoughts puzzled Don not a little. As he walked along, his mind involuntarily formulated this prayer: "O God! give me knowledge! Lead me into the clear light of truth!" Don was a truthful, straightforward young man. He loved truth and despised hypocrisy and double-dealing in all shapes. But with all this he had never thought of Truth in its spiritual aspect, and loved it in a merely selfish way, thanking God in his heart, as did the Pharisee in the Temple—"I thank thee, O God, that I am not as other men!" Don longed for power, and imagined that knowledge led thereto. He imagined that he wanted power for an unselfish purpose, when in point of fact he had never in his life loved anyone except himself. He did not know that truth hides itself in love, and that the knowledge leading thereto is an experience of the heart and not of the brain.

CHAPTER III.

THE MAN WITH THE SLOUCH HAT AND CLOAK.

It was late in the day when Don reached his studio. He was busy starting a fire when the door opened and a man in a slouch hat, pulled down over his face, and wrapped in an ample cloak, walked unbidden into the room. He took a step or two, then bowed, saying,

"I beg pardon for intruding, young man. I wish to examine some of your work, and noticing the door ajar, I thoughtlessly came in without knocking."

"It is no intrusion, sir," said Don; "I beg of you not to think of it. My studio is free to visitors at all hours in the day. I have a few finished pictures; take a look at them," waving his hand toward the wall, where a few samples hung, and at the same time shoving aside a screen used to modify the light while he painted.

The stranger, however, did not inspect the wall pictures, but sat down in front of the easel, close beside the screen. Don noticed that he kept his face turned away and the hat still slouched low over his eyes. He sat silently scanning the picture

on the easel, drumming with his fingers on the chair for a few moments, and then said :

“I saw you on the street, in the fog, talking to a minister and looking at a ragpicker. The fog is a strange thing,” he said, as if speaking to himself, and never looking at Don. “It is prolific. It is full of sounds and strange beings. Did you never feel, as you walked in the semi-darkness, as though some one was beside you, and you turned to see who it was ?”

“Why, yes,” said Don, “many times ; but I don’t know that that is very strange ; it comes from peculiar nervous sensibility, I suppose.”

“Not altogether,” replied the stranger ; “some people attract strange things, while others repel them. As I said, the fog is prolific ; it is full of the denizens of other states of being, who take advantage of such peculiar conditions of the atmosphere, when the electrical rays of the sun do not disturb it, to visit and become partly or wholly visible to such as they are attracted to. Undoubtedly sensitiveness has much to do with the perception or cognition of these things, but nevertheless the fact remains that there are people, not remarkably sensitive, who are surrounded by devilish influences, especially at night, which continually lead them into trouble ; while others are constantly guarded and protected in danger. Do you think you were talking to an ordinary man—the ragpicker ?”

“Why, what do you mean ?” said Don, now

thoroughly interested. "Of course he was rather extraordinary-looking, I admit, but he was gotten up like all the rest of us, for indeed there are no two of us exactly alike. You seem to convey the idea that the ragpicker was composed of more subtile elements than we are, and that he belongs to another state of being."

"Aye, truly," interrupted the stranger, "to another *condition* of the *same* state of being. All life is the same, no matter in what form it may appear to us ; and it is the same when formless and invisible. Young man, form is dependent upon life ! Life is not dependent upon anything. All forms depend upon vibrations for their perpetuity ; the slower the vibrations, the less change in the form. The more life in a form, the greater and more rapid the vibrations. That ragpicker, ugly and uncouth as he appeared to you, contained more life than ten ordinary men ; but no matter for that, his external form will disappear from sight whenever it comes in contact with electrical vibrations exceeding its own, just as a lump of sugar dissolves in water, or a piece of gold dissolves in a current of electricity. But the real man, the inner form, remains after the dissolution of the outer form, although invisible to us."

"But why invisible?" asked Dowd. "I am satisfied that spirits exist, but they are without form, and do not exist on earth ; they"—

"How do you know?" interrupted the stranger;

“is it because your poor eyes cannot see beyond the surface of things? Know this, young man: anything that does not reflect light cannot be seen. Now a spirit-form vibrates so rapidly that no light can be reflected from it; consequently it is invisible to eyesight. Those things that appear to us as spirits are merely forms, got up for some purpose, extracted from surrounding elements, such as this fog, for instance.”

“Do you mean to say, then,” said Don, with wide-open eyes staring at the stranger, whose gaze was fixed upon the skylight—“do you mean to say, then, that the ragpicker was one of these forms?”

“Yes.”

“Has he once lived and died?” asked Don, “and was he a ragpicker then as now?”

Meantime, the evening sun was slowly drawing the fog; the rain had ceased, and the skylight grew a shade clearer, upon which the stranger gazed intently. He fidgeted in his chair, seemed to grow nervous, and spoke rapidly, as if in a hurry:

“I see you do not understand. That man may never have been born of a woman, possibly may have no conscious existence at all; he may have been merely called into existence for an hour, a mere thing, a machine, acted upon by an intelligence beyond our comprehension, for some purpose hidden in the fogs of the future. God only knows. He will dissolve the moment the sun strikes him.

The frog and toad element predominated in his make-up. Did you not notice that he stood not erect like a man, and that his face always looked downwards? And he did not walk, but hopped; and did not his voice croak like——” He stopped short, rose from his chair, with an effort stammering out, “I f-fe-ar th-at I’ve sta-i-d too long,” and tottered rather than walked from the room.

Don, gazing with a troubled look after his retreating form, noticed that the door seemed to open of its own accord, or was already open, though Don was certain that it had been closed. But in vain he listened for his footsteps on the stairs. Stupidly he stood for a moment, realizing that the skylight was ablaze with the sun’s rays, then rushed to the head of the stairs. No one was in sight. On the street no man in a cloak and slouch hat was visible. Don slowly returned to his studio, puzzled, and thinking of the strange conversation and actions of the stranger. He thought the man very interesting, but certainly not overpolite. Don was not to say superstitious, still he believed in more things than most men; but he could hardly accept the idea which the stranger had advanced about the ragpicker. He thought, “Oh! he is evidently some crank or lunatic come here to stuff me full of nonsense. But it is a little strange how he caught on to my reflections about the fog, for even if he heard the conversation with the minister, I don’t remember

to have *said* anything about fog, although I *thought* about it afterwards."

Thus thinking, Don seated himself and went to work with a will upon the picture. Time fled till the shadows of night began to obscure the light. Laying aside his paints and brushes he moved the screen a little to one side, and there by the side of it lay a small package wrapped up carelessly in a piece of newspaper. Don, a good deal surprised, picked it up, examined it carefully, and finding no marks thereon, unrolled it. A roll of bank-notes, amounting to the exact sum of twenty-five dollars in tens and fives, disclosed itself to the astonishment of Don.

"The poor fellow has lost his money," said Don to himself; "I'll keep it for him." But weeks passed away, still no stranger called for the money. At last Don thought it was a gift from the fog. He was half inclined to think—provided what the stranger said about the rag-picker being a product of the fog was true—that the money was fog-money also; he even went so far as to expose it to sunlight, but seeing it did not vanish, he at last sent it to P. B. Randolph for initiation into the Rosicrucian Club. In remitting the money Don wrote as follows:

"DR. RANDOLPH.—Esteemed friend,—I take pleasure in complying with the rule, and send herewith twenty-five dollars for initiation—or more properly as a part payment for instructions in the mysteries of being, of which I feel myself most wofully ignorant. In reply

to your questions, permit me to say I have no recollection of any previous existence, and as I am not a married man, have never had any experience in taming a shrew of a wife. If you will pardon the suggestion, I am of the opinion that there are more shrews *made* in married life by husbands than are *tamed* by them. As to taming wild beasts, I know nothing whatever of such things, with the exception of the wild-beast nature I find within myself. This is an immense menagerie that with the help of the *Ros Cruz* I am in hopes of taming.

“Yours very respectfully,
“DON LA VELLE.”

In return Randolph became a regular correspondent, and, better still, sent him many costly, old, and rare books, as well as a magic mirror, with instructions for its use. It is not my purpose to follow Don on the long road of his initiation. Suffice it to say, that from the visit of the stranger Don became altogether a different man. His mind settled into a calm that no circumstance seemed to ruffle. He acquired perfect confidence, not only in himself, but in Providence. He looked upon himself as an instrument to be carefully guarded both physically and mentally; and he fully realized in course of time, that, in that rest of spirit—that trust—he was a power among men. Business became brisk. Men who never deigned to notice him before recognized him with courteous salutations when they met, and strangers came to the studio to examine and purchase his bits of landscape and heads of celebrities, copied from all sources. To him the future existed as

if it were not ; he feared nothing, for death and life were the same. It will be seen then that Don had become quite a philosopher. This was due to the books he read, supplemented by a systematic course of diet and meditation. The latter became automatic in time—questioning himself as it were, then waiting for some suggestion in answer. Sometimes the answer came objectively, as when some person dropped in and in conversation the question would be answered satisfactorily ; but more often the answer was subjectively given. This was indeed a great pleasure to him. He called it “a mind stretching process.” Thus in his progress his mind expanded till he lost in a great measure his exclusiveness, and became more and more universal ; he found all nature responsive to his desires, till it seemed to him as if his thoughts reached everywhere. He called them his “drummers.” But it took long years of patient study and discipline ere he reached this sublime condition. Buddhism he studied with activity ; the ideas of transmigration and reincarnation seemed to furnish the best solution of the problem of existence, and he set himself to work diligently to practice the rules laid down for the attainment of powers promised to the faithful acolyte—the attainment of ‘Nirvana.’ Accordingly he looked upon sexual passion as the great means of the succession of existence, the cause of transmigration, of disease and death. So he set himself to the task of destroying its potency, of tearing

up, root and branch, all sexual desires in the mind, and all physical tendencies in that direction. We shall see with what success. Don looked upon love from a universal standpoint so far as it was possible for him to do so, but since he had never loved anything on earth except himself, it will be readily seen that love to him was a mere platonic sort of friendship. Pity, mingled with a sort of contempt for "the blind worms of the dust," born for an hour—to die and be reborn the next, in abject blindness and ignorance, thus to revolve throughout the vast untold and unknown cycles of time—was about all the feeling he had for mankind. He imagined that this feeling was akin and leading to love.

It was about this time, when absorbed in his studies—mirror-gazing, meditations, etc.—that I first met him at Mr. Morrison's flour store.

CHAPTER IV.

INA GRAY.

IN a snug little cottage in the outskirts of the city dwelt Mrs. Gray, a widow, and her only child Ina, a girl of about eight years of age. Mrs. Gray had been in feeble health for some time, and, growing worse, called in Dr. Parker at the suggestion of almost the only friend she had, a certain Mr. McIntosh, a Scotchman, a bachelor of middle age. From this time Dr. Parker became a constant visitor to Mrs. Gray, ostensibly as her medical attendant; but rumor credited him and McIntosh, who were bosom friends, both bachelors, as being "a little too thick" with the pretty but delicate widow. But as Mrs. Gray attended to her own business and was not given to gossip, I doubt if she ever knew how she stood with "Mother Grundy." Suffice it to say that she seemed to thrive under the doctor's treatment, and things went smoothly for two years, when she became suddenly ill. The doctor came at once, but all his skill availed nothing. When satisfied that she could not recover she sent for McIntosh, and there, in the

presence of death, confided her little daughter to the joint care and guardianship of Dr. Parker and Mr. McIntosh. A notary was called in, guardianship papers were legally drawn up, and her feeble hand tremblingly signed her name. Then, in presence of the attorney, she placed the little girl between the two, with a hand in a hand of each, and made them promise to be a father to her. After the funeral, the guardians took the child to their boarding-house, an aristocratic house called "The Newcomb." As soon as her grief had somewhat worn off, she was duly installed in a private school, and her education looked after with due care. After she had been a year at school, however, her teacher assured Mr. McIntosh that beauty was all the qualification his ward possessed. She could play and romp with the best, but learn she could not. What she learned one day was gone the next; in fact it seemed that she never could be educated.

McIntosh was worried; he consulted Dr. Parker. McIntosh was really a good fatherly man, enjoying a competence, though not wealthy; while the doctor, a much younger man, was making a reputation and wealth for himself in a lucrative practice with an elder brother. Of course he had not the fatherly feeling for the girl that McIntosh did; that could not be expected, even if he had possessed the same moral principles, which he did not, as the sequel will

show. It takes age to ripen and soften human hearts.

The guardians consulted together, examined the girl to their own satisfaction, and at last the doctor said :

“I have an idea, and if we can carry it out, we can overcome this difficulty. Ina certainly has the make-up of a fine lady if she could only get an education. Now the medical journals are full of the recent discoveries in hypnotism. In France and Germany it has been introduced into the hospitals ; the most violent phases of insanity are cured by the use of it ; it has been found that imbecility and dullness of intellect may be overcome in a very short time, dormant faculty aroused, and those too active put to sleep and rendered inoperative. In this way the most vicious habits are cured ; it has been tried upon stupid children in the public schools with remarkable success. Why not try it on Ina ? I am going to Chicago next week ; I understand Professor Ingleman is lecturing there upon the subject, and if you agree, I will take her along and have her hypnotized. What do you say ?”

“If you are quite sure that it will not injure the girl I certainly can have no objection,” replied McIntosh. “We obligated ourselves to care for her as if she were our own. You know better than I. I leave her entirely in your hands.”

Professor Ingleman pronounced Ina “a splen-

did subject." "A few trials," said he, "and she will be as plastic as putty."

They remained in Chicago two weeks, and every evening Ina was put into the mesmeric sleep, but only for a few minutes at a time. Meantime Dr. Parker took lessons in the *modus operandi*. He was an apt scholar, and before the professor left had become an adept in the art. The professor's parting words were :

"Be careful of your ward ; don't hypnotize her more than twice a week, and waken her every time if you don't want her to love you ; this will be often enough to infuse some of your intellectual powers into her mind, and you will see a bright scholar in a short time. Be careful though and don't go too far. After two or three months discontinue the treatment."

Upon his return home the doctor followed out the instructions of Prof. Ingleman to the letter, with one exception ; he neglected to awaken Ina by reverse passes after putting her to sleep, but left her to awaken spontaneously, which prolonged the sleep usually several hours. The doctor probably intended no harm to his ward by this, but desired to test the science and prove his powers to their fullest extent. He did not mean to displace her will, but to gain her trust and perfect confidence. He succeeded admirably in this as well as in quickening all the faculties of her mind ; moreover, he infused so much of his spirit into the girl that she soon lost her childish

ways, became thoughtful and studious and old before her time, leading her classes at the school, to the astonishment of all who knew her.

Thus a year passed away and took with it the better of her guardians. McIntosh died. The doctor's business occupied much of his time, and, feeling that it would be best for his ward, he decided to place her in a ladies' seminary. Accordingly she was taken to Louisville, Ky. The past year had been a remarkable year for the doctor as well as for his ward. He had practised hypnotism upon her till he was master of the science, and had reduced her so completely to his will that he could send her to sleep at any time, whether present with him or otherwise. While she was in the sleep he could command her to do any act at some future time, and although she had no recollection of it upon awakening she would surely do as directed at the appointed time, not knowing in the least why she did so, and that, too, to all appearances in her normal condition.

Spirit is the aroma, sublimated essence, vapor, so to speak, of matter. The spirit of a rose is its aroma ; of alcohol, or ammonia, that subtile substance that escapes upon exposure, that intoxicates and makes a devil or a fool of whoever drinks it. We are, to put it roughly, only bottles of spirit made animate by its intoxicating qualities ; the great laboratory of spirit, where it is generated or through which it enters from the Infinite Spirit surrounding, is the sexual nature, from which it

rises as in ebullition, and escapes through the eyes or in speech, gesture, and act. The spirit is individual, *i.e.*, it is as unlike other spirits as one man is unlike all others: it contains in its component elements his character, thoughts, feelings, desires, motives, etc. It changes with his words, impulses, passions, and the like. One may distill a subtle poison within by thoughts, desires, etc., which exhale from the person, both consciously and unconsciously when violently stirred by excitement or passion, and which, entering into a receptive or weaker spirit, corrupt or taint that other, producing disease, crime, and even death. Alas for the world! too much poison is distilled.

Dr. Parker was physically a healthy man; hence as a physician he succeeded more by the force of a healthy spirit which he had learned how to use than by the use of drugs. His mere presence was a tonic, his conversation pleasant, his manner fascinating, his smile winning, his touch electrical. He was a materialist, an agnostic, believing in nothing but self. Notwithstanding, he was popular with church people, especially with the ladies. As a politician he had rare abilities, and at every Democratic caucus, where "log-rolling" and "wire-pulling" were necessary, there was Dr. Parker.

Notwithstanding all this Dr. Parker was a man of little principle where ladies were concerned. He was a libertine, a fast man, a rake, but always secured the affection of his victim. It was his

boast that few women could resist him. Amativeness showed in his bull-like neck, his languid yet piercing eyes, the projection of his chin, the poise of his body, the fat, full palm and taper fingers, his deep chest and abdomen, and his soft musical voice.

But let us give due credit to Dr. Parker. He was a gentleman, and not a bad man at heart. Like most men of his class, he looked upon woman as inferior to man, made and placed here simply for man's use and pleasure, as he was taught when a boy as regards the animal creation, and as held by nearly all Bible readers to-day.

CHAPTER V.

THE LABORATORY.

INA remained at school several years. Shortly after her return Dr. Parker called at Don's studio and made arrangements to have Don paint a portrait of his ward. Don had never seen her, and he little thought, as he bargained to do this thing for a stipulated sum of "filthy lucre," what a task he had undertaken, nor the influence this commonplace transaction would exert upon his after life.

The girl was as beautiful as the imagination can well conceive. Auburn hair, with a golden light on it, hung in thick clustering ringlets upon her shoulders, which were as fair as human flesh can well be. She grew tall for her age, with well-developed form, graceful, willowy in motion, with a neck round, full, and well-proportioned to her height. She had a forehead high and broad, but flat, an oval face overlooked by eyes of azure-blue, set wide apart, shaded by long lashes, with eyebrows arched high above her eyes, conveying the idea of innocent wonder at the panorama of life. But her mouth was too large to correspond with the beauty of her upper

face. It was a voluptuous, sensuous mouth, with coral-red lips, and her chin was too small for stability and firmness of character. She developed a bust that was the envy of all her lady friends. Such was Ina when a full-grown woman of about seventeen years of age.

Punctual to the hour agreed upon she appeared at the studio. Don had painted many portraits for lovely ladies, consequently he was not at all timid in their presence. He posed them with as much composure as if they were statues; but there was something about this young lady that slightly disconcerted him. Here was a presence to which he was a stranger. She smiled sweetly as she stated the object of her visit, showing her teeth white as ivory between rich ruby lips, while her eyes sparkled mischievously :

“Dr. Parker was suddenly called out,” said she, “consequently could not accompany me. He assured me, however, that it would make no difference to you, and so far as I am concerned, I am of the opinion that I shall look just as well as if he were looking at me. Allow me to dispense with formalities and introduce myself—Miss Ina Gray, sir, at your service ! come to have herself painted ;” and she laughed joyously, a laugh full, rich, musical as the warbling of a bird, a laugh whose tones were never stilled in the consciousness of poor Don to his dying day.

Don often said : “Let me hear a person laugh and I can almost tell what stuff he is made of.

There is a laugh that suggests the innocence and guilelessness of an angel ; the birds as they sing suggest this kind of laughter. Then again there is a laugh that suggests the bellowing of an animal or a frog's music. There is a laugh that comes from the soul, and one that has no depth or soul in it. Beware of suppressed laughter, and shun the person who never laughs."

As I said, Don never forgot that laugh, which rang out loud, clear, and sonorous from the rich lips of Ina. She *did* not try to smother it with a handkerchief either. It filled the studio with a melody altogether unknown there. It was a spirit that poured itself out then and there, and Don caught the refrain and laughed also, as he placed her in the posing chair. This mutual laughter, so spontaneous, so free and unrestrained, broke down all conventional barriers between two simple, unsophisticated natures, and each felt that they were not strangers but that they knew each other and had again met after a long separation. It was no easy matter to pose this girl to his satisfaction ; and even when posed satisfactorily the expression of her countenance was so variable that only with great difficulty and after many trials and failures Don at last succeeded in getting a tolerable "free-and-easy" drawing of her.

"Now," said Don, "we will adjourn till tomorrow. If it is pleasant weather please come again at the same hour."

He opened the door and bowed her out, feeling, as the door closed, as if something had gone out of himself. He sat down and mused long and silently, with his eyes fixed upon the drawing. Suddenly rousing himself he seized the brush and with a free hand "laid in" the picture, then standing back looked at it a moment. Dissatisfied with his work he rubbed the colors off and tried again. Many times he repeated this operation, but each effort failed to please his eye. At last he threw down the brush and drew a curtain across the face of the sketch.

"Oh! if I could only paint her as she is," he sighed, "soul and all! What a soul speaks out of her matchless eyes! But, oh dear! I shall never be able to make the colors speak as she speaks to me."

The next day was foggy and the day of the stranger's visit, and several days passed without the appearance of Miss Iua. Don placed the picture against the wall and resumed work on a landscape. Meantime he received the books and other things from Dr. Randolph, and resumed his sittings (which had been suspended of late) nightly in his cabinet. These sittings sometimes consumed a good portion of his time, for the simple reason that he had at last been able to induce a magnetic sleep nearly approaching trance, consequently was mainly unconscious. The corner of the room was partitioned off and styled by Don his laboratory. Let us enter it, kind reader,

for Don is absent now on a stroll upon the bluffs overlooking the "Father of waters," where he loved to wander and meditate in company with the birds, which sang so sweetly in the lofty trees that grew there, and, at a little later date, in company with another sort of bird, as we shall see. Well, I have the key, so here we are in Don's laboratory. I can't see why he styles it a laboratory, for there is nothing in it but a chair whose four posts rest in four glass tumblers; in front sets a low footstool with a top of plate-glass. Immediately in front of this is a tripod upon which hangs a concave mirror, with a red curtain hiding its black face; behind and a little to one side, hanging from the ceiling, is a small ruby lantern. On a shelf his books are arranged. The room is painted a dull yellow color, floor, ceiling, and walls. But here comes Don. Let us listen to his explanation of these things, for we are favored visitors and he is willing to gratify our curiosity.

"It is necessary," said Don, "in the outset, to understand certain principles in all occult science. The object being to produce magnetic sleep without an operator, it is necessary to limit the radiation of spirit from the body as much as possible. With an operator, the spirit of the hypnotizer mingles with the spirit of the subject, thus producing a more rapid combustion or fermentation, intoxication or exaltation, leaving a debilitating effect afterwards, and, like all drunkenness, opening the way to obsession when produced

too often. Unfortunately in our present ignorance of the science and the susceptibility of subjects we do not know how far it is safe to carry experiments. On the contrary, in self-induced magnetic sleep there is no mingling of spirits of a mundane class. If there is any of a higher class, it makes the spirit brighter and purer than it is of itself ; hence it is the road to health and power.

“ Now in sleep we get all the life and power we call our own. This must be self-evident to you. We waste life in our waking hours, but drink it in and store it up in sleep. Young infants sleep three-fourths of the time ; see how they grow ! The sick get well readily if they can sleep.

“ We know little or nothing of sleep. Some think that a dreamless, unconscious sleep is the only natural one. This may be so with some people, and they are the ones who scoff at dreams. I learned when quite young the value of dreams.

“ I remember once, it was during the first school I taught, I had many scholars, and was kept very busy during school-hours, so much so that I could give little time to working out mathematical problems, and was in the habit of taking the examples home and working them out there for advanced scholars, for I had several who were trying their best to get ahead of me. I had no key to the arithmetic, and not being the best scholar in the world I felt anxious to keep in advance of the class, among whom was a young lady who had taught several terms, and was

attending my school for the purpose of perfecting herself in mathematics, wherein she was deficient. One day she brought me an example in percentage which she could not do, and which, although it looked simple enough, I failed to solve. On taking it home at night and working on it very many times, always getting a wrong result, bedtime came and found me totally at a loss what to do. It would not do to admit that I could not solve it ; there was no one to whom I could apply for help ; I dared not pronounce the book wrong. I retired totally defeated. I am of such a nature that no trouble, grief, or anxiety prevents me from sleeping, and in this instance I fell asleep with that unsolved problem heavy on my mind. I dreamed of it. I saw the slate with the whole work on it, my mistake plainly visible. I was so glad that I immediately awoke. The slate with the work upon it still remained in my vision. Wondering at it I slept again till morning, then worked the problem out as I saw it in my dream, and it was correct.

“ From this and many other experiences, I have learned that there are several kinds or degrees of sleep, and that in the right kind of sleep the mind is clearer and more acute than when awake. There is a condition between sleeping and waking which I term magnetic, wherein there are sights, sounds, and sensations that we mortals who do not stop there to explore know nothing of ; it is there that any and all mysteries may be solved. But we pass through so quickly, the sensations

are so pleasant, that we recollect nothing of it in that deeper sleep so resembling death. It is then we are young again ; we feel again a mother's warm kiss ; the breath of angels fans our cheeks, and we hear the soft rustling of their wings as they hush us to repose. It is in this state that the dying catch a glimpse of heaven and of the faces of the dear ones gone before. I pity the dull materialistic nature that has not learned to pause here upon the threshold of God's infinite temple, and ask for the bread that comes down from His bounteous table. Questions asked here meet with a ready response, but he who questions must prepare himself to receive the answer, or it will escape him, as a troubled dream escapes without meaning, without taking hold of the soul. In order to prepare myself I have arranged these things as you see—not that such things are absolutely essential ; they merely assist. The theory is simple enough to one of comprehension. The spirit of earth—for the world is a living thing—is crushed, broken up, and forced back into the earth upon that portion of it that is illuminated by the sun's rays, and at the same time it pours out with greater force upon the other side, where the sun's rays have ceased for the time to impinge. As evidence of this truth, fires burn with greater intensity, their flames flash higher at night than in daytime, for they are forced out by the outrush of the earth's spirit, as well as fed by it ; for all spirit is fire.

“Hence spirit, being fire, burns brighter and freer at night than in daytime ; but it being natural to sleep when darkness broods like a spirit over the earth, the mind, being bound to physical conditions, goes to sleep mainly as the body does, hence in that lethargic state is not aware of the luminous garments the soul puts on when the body sleeps. Mind is the great reservoir of light, the fountain of truth ; but spirit, before being united to light or truth, *is black*. When these two are united an individual being, an organization, is the result. For, indeed, light falling upon a black surface is refracted, broken up, and the colors of matter appear.

“There is no pure and unadulterated truth on this earth. Evil, ignorance, and error are black, but truth being clear light, they mingle in an organized form, and we have truth of all shades of color ; each individual sees it in the light he has. To purify light, then, is our highest work ; to this end I sit in this isolated chair, to insulate the body from the coarser elements of the earth spirit ; but this is a small thing compared to the insulation of the spirit, which is a mental process. I see you are weary ; I will not now speak further upon this subject.”

Thus dismissed, gentle reader, we take our leave ; but the next time we find Don in a talkative mood we will question him about that magic mirror and its uses, etc.

CHAPTER VI.

INA AND DON.

AFTER quite a lapse of time Ina reappeared at the studio, as she said with a laugh, "to resume being painted." Don felt that this was not very complimentary to his genius, and as it corresponded somewhat with his own doubt of his power, it added not a little to his weakness. But this feeling soon wore off in her presence, and they were as free in their intercourse as if they were old acquaintances. But talk and laugh as they would and did, Don made little progress with the painting. He had worked on it till everything—drapery, hair, ornaments, etc.—was as perfect as he could wish; but her eyes bothered him. It might be that Ina, knowing her power to change her expression, practiced her little coquetries upon him by purposely throwing a look into her face that was foreign to the one Don was trying with his whole soul to portray in the lifeless thing before him. Be that as it may, it was a fact that every effort (and they were many) failed, to the great amusement of Ina, who would laugh till tears came in her eyes, insisting,

"Oh, that is lovely, Don! don't rub it out!

I declare to goodness I can never get as good an expression again." Then she would pout, and put on her hat, declaring "I never will sit any more!" and leave without saying good-bye till she was halfway down the stairs, then calling out, "Oh, Don! did you say I am to come again to-morrow? Yes? well, good-bye till then!" And away she would trip singing as light-hearted as a bird. Such things could not go on forever without producing results.

Don was a man who had no idea of marriage; in fact, though full of passion, he had long since resolved to live a celibate—"to make a eunuch of himself for the kingdom of heaven's sake." Not that he intended to mutilate his person; that (as he understood Buddhism) was not necessary; on the contrary, he often said: "He who seeks Nirvana must be a whole man, with all his faculties in perfect natural order, but he must overcome all his passions, natural desires, and instincts of the flesh by force of will."

This man who had never loved knew nothing of love save (what most men think) that it is a mere animal instinct such as the brute has, but which, suppressed and overcome by force of will, and the thoughts centered upon heavenly or spiritual things, becomes celestial in its nature. As if thought has anything to do with love! He had yet to learn that love is a gift of God, and that the only way it could enter his soul was through a woman. Gradually and unconsciously

Ina's spirit infused itself into his, as the aroma of a flower impregnates a room. Ina had no thought of this. Innocent and pure, fresh from her Maker's hand, charged to overflowing with the aroma of heaven, she could not help filling his studio and himself with that which she could not suppress any more than a flower can suppress its perfume. Moreover, Don's meditations, desires, and thoughts, together with the sittings in his cabinet, had prepared the way for this, for it had made him in a great measure vacant of animal desires and receptive of the woman spirit; for, indeed, thought has much to do with earthly loves, passions, and desires. Thought inflames the blood, and cools it as well; but Don felt no heat of passion, for there was none in the pure woman spirit of Ina, and his own had been cooled.

The first intimation he had of an influence foreign to himself was during one of his trials to paint her portrait. It became necessary for him to arrange her hair, which became slightly out of place during one of her mischievous spells of mirth, and as he touched a lock of her hair he felt a thrill, strangely pleasant, pass up his arm. He sat down and essayed to resume his work, but somehow the hand refused to do its duty. Perplexed, annoyed, Don threw down the brush, saying,

"Ina, I am strangely nervous this morning; suppose we go for a walk on the bluff. I can show

you one of the loveliest nooks down by a creek you ever set eyes on."

"All right," said Ina, "I am '*yours very truly* ;'" and she went skipping and singing out of the room.

Once arrived on the bluff Don suggested that Ina must be tired, and proposed for her to rest awhile, saying,

"It is quite a long way yet to the little nook I want to show you ; sit here and rest."

"Indeed, I am not at all wearied," said she. "I love to walk ; I feel as if I could fly !"

So they walked on into the shadows of great trees whose branches interlocked over their heads ; and somehow, I hardly know how it happened, for Don never fully explained it to me, their hands got clasped together as they walked side by side. Silently thus they tripped along, oblivious to the warbling of little birds that hopped from branch to branch ; unmindful that the trees bowed their heads and waved their limbs as in benediction, and the winds whispered a blessing, as the blue sky peeped, many-eyed, laughingly through openings among the leaves. They heard not the voices that make silence companionable, that whisper—nay, shout and hurrah—in waving grass, falling leaves, and swaying tree-tops ; but they *felt* magic fingers discoursing sweet music upon their heart-strings ; for are not our hearts so many harps, more or less in tune or out of it ? Whose are the fingers that sweep

across those strings one or more times in our brief life, calling out such sweet delicious melodies never to be forgotten—no, never !

Whence comes this spirit stirring up things in us that we knew not of before ? It sets us on fire as if a torch were being applied to things combustible. It changes us from one state of being to another, as if it were a birth ; the atoms of the body dance with a new joy, a new life. We are dumb in its presence ; the tongue, that unruly member, has lost its cunning. Even thought is held in abeyance, and this cold calculating intellect sees nothing, *knows* nothing, save this tremulous upheaving, as an earthquake shakes the earth. Whence cometh this spirit, transforming, regenerating ? “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and ye hear the sound thereof, but whence it cometh and whither it goeth ye cannot tell. So it is with every one that is born of the spirit ”
—Love !

Don heard nothing with his natural ears, but he felt the surging of a mighty ocean whose waves were engulfing him, a roaring and rushing within as if a tornado were sweeping away all that he had ever constructed on earth in which to dwell in safety as in a castle. His theories of celibacy were as the leaves of a forest blown by a fierce wind ; his will, so all-potent, was broken as a column struck by lightning ; the clothing of Buddhism, philosophy, egotism, individuality, etc., in which he had taken so much

pride, stripped from him in one brief moment, leaving him naked as Adam in the garden. He had not knowledge enough to realize, as yet, that he *was* naked. He had no excuses to make ; he needed no "fig-leaves" to cover his nakedness with yet, for the light had not come ; it was still coming, and he walked by the side of Ina as if he walked in the air. He held her little hand in his, but he had long since ceased to feel that he had a hand ; like one in a dream, time, distance, and objects were swallowed up in the burning vortex of his soul, through which the forked lightnings flashed and played. He seemed a wreck to himself as he seated Ina on an old log that lay rotting upon the bank of a rivulet which ran laughing by. In his imagination, his mind, which he had looked upon as some stupendous edifice, semi-crowned, reaching to the stars, lay torn to shreds, in a cloud wreck around which the fires blazed and sputtered, as if it was something incombustible ; sparks issued from it, fitful flames leaped out, flickered, went back, came again, with blue and red tongues, licking at the thing that resisted the spirit. "Our God is a consuming fire." "God is Love."

Don was filled with love, but he did not know it. How many of us are conscious that God dwells within us ? Conscious love is one thing, unconscious love is quite another. Don had practiced self-magnetization so much that he was familiar with the sensations, as one becomes familiar

with an oft-traveled road. The sensations he experienced now were similar but altogether different. It is difficult to describe the difference, except to say that one is coarse, the other fine, as electricity is coarse coming from a battery, fine when coming from a magnet; coarse when it extends only to the muscular and nervous system, fine when it penetrates to the inner man, intoxicating or making him drunk, and at last rendering him unconscious. Sensations may be said to be coarse when forced, lacking harmony; fine when by the very nature of things they spring forward to meet the exciting cause; then cause and effect become one.

As Don sat there by the side of Ina it seemed to him as if he was being inflated; something continuing to pass from her to himself. This something seemed to him to have life; it warmed, thrilled, exhilarated him. It moved in him, surging back and forth from one extremity to the other—a constant, conscious circulation, producing an ecstasy, buoyant, airy, as if he was evaporating, becoming vapor that floats. Now, how was it with Ina? Let us listen to their conversation, for Don, by a supreme effort of will, has roused himself enough to speak.

“Ina,” said he, “this is the happiest hour I have ever known! If it could last always I should be willing to die now. Oh, Ina! Ina! I love you! My soul has gone to you! I give myself away to you! I want no more of myself. I have talked

and laughed of love to my shame, as if it was a something to be mastered, put under foot ; but now I see it is God—the creative genius of the world. I am nothing without love, and love cannot come to me except I come to thee. Take me, Ina ! I ask nothing. I want no ownership in thee—I want no wife. It is a desecration of the sacred name of love.”

Ina sat as if spellbound, with wide-open, staring eyes, parted lips, tremulous with emotion, while Don poured out his passionate plea with hands stretched towards her—for Ina had moved a little from him when he began speaking, and faced him with her eyes fixed upon his. She felt that Don's soul was speaking to hers ; that there was no premeditation, no thought, but a soul gushing from him to her. At last she found speech, and with the words her hands sought his, and she fell forward into his arms, saying,

“ Oh, Don ! your words are but an echo of my own feelings for you. To dwell in thee and thou in me is the fulfillment of all my desires. Heaven can have no greater bliss than this ; ” and their lips met with one long, lingering kiss. Then looking thoughtfully in Ina's face as he held her a little from him, he said :

“ Indeed, this we feel must be the ecstasy of God in every unfallen soul in which He dwells. Oh ! creative power, the heavens cannot contain thee ! Earth and hell are full of thee. Souls black with crime are animated by thee ! The

blessings of love are heaven ; the curses of love are the hells."

"But I cannot see," said Ina, "how love can curse, or be a curse ; surely not such love as I feel !"

"Metaphysical questions," said Don. "Let us not discuss the subject now ; suffice it to say that all diseases are the curses of love in some form or other, mainly self-love or of gold—idols we make."

"Ah, Don, are you making an idol of me ?"

"No, no !" cried Don, "*I give myself to you* ; if you make an idol of me a curse will surely follow. Mind, I don't want *you*—I give *myself* to you."

"Oh, I understand, Don ; but I give *myself* to you. What will you do with the gift ?—make an idol of it ?"

"No, indeed, Ina ; a gift of the soul cannot be recalled. I have given myself away, hence I am no longer self. The same is true of you, so self is left outside while our souls coalesce, *and we two are one* wherein self has no part. There can be no worship here, because there is no higher love, no other God, but this. How can I be selfish when you have taken the place of self ? Tell me, Ina, has self any part in your love for me ?"

"Nay, Don, I do not love ; it loves itself ; I mean that I have no desire, no volition, no will whatever ; the fire burns and I am warm. I look in your eyes and gaze into immensity. There are unfathomable depths there, without limit or bounds. Self makes boundaries or obstacles, but

I am searching your soul in vain for any, for you have left your soul, as one leaves his dwelling, leaving no commands, no limits to your welcome of me."

Ina suddenly paused, drew a deep breath, then whispered :

"Come, Don! There are beautiful meadows all covered with flowers; there are brooks, mountains, and dales, studded with gardens, with vines and trees laden with fruit. Come, Don! I cannot go alone—never more shall I be alone! Come, Don! it is not far— Ah! I see some one, bright and shining as an angel, beckoning us to come."

"Wait!" said Don, who was fast losing his self-control under the girl's influence, "wait, Ina, I cannot come just yet."

But the spell was broken; the sound of his voice roused him from the trance into which he was fast sinking; the landscapes and beauties she had tried to picture, and which he had begun to see dimly, disappeared as if by magic, and left him to realize the fact that Ina lay upon his bosom like a lifeless corpse. Cold, rigid, pallid as the dead, with eyes wide open, with a meaningless stare fixed upon space, lay the beautiful maiden he so fondly loved. But Don knew that this was only a trance into which he had partially been several times when essaying self-magnetization, and in which he was well versed theoretically. Moreover, he knew by the pulsating thrills surging through his form that he was

near the same condition himself ; so, although a little startled at first, his good sense reassured him in a few moments, when he took measures to restore her animation. Her first exclamation was :

“ Oh, Don, why did you call me back so soon ? ”

“ Why, Ina, I did not call you. I never spoke a word. ”

“ Oh, I know that, but your thoughts were like thunderbolts. They broke up a sweet conversation I was having with that angelic person I spoke of. But let us go, Don ; the sun is getting low, and I will tell you what he said as we walk homeward. Oh, I am so happy ! This is the happiest day in my life. It is impossible for you to conceive anything half so beautiful as I saw, Don. I have been magnetized many times by the doctor, but never could see or do anything except he willed it. But the angel said that henceforth I should be independent. He said that your soul having united with mine, the vistas of infinitude are open to us, but that it is necessary for me to take the lead. The next trial we make you will be able to go with me, Don. And oh ! such grandeur ! The angel said that the kingdom of love is unbarred to us. We have passed by the *sacred bulls* termed cherubim in the Scriptures and the flaming swords that turn every way to guard the path to the tree of life ; for he said we had *no unsatisfied desires of the flesh*, no culmination of bliss to anticipate in the future ; content with the eternal now, we are full of God. ”

CHAPTER VII.

DIABOLISM.

SHORTLY after Ina's return from school, Dr. Parker, out of curiosity to test his hypnotic power over her, with her consent, succeeded in putting her into the deepest sleep he had ever known. In fact it was so deathlike and so prolonged that the doctor, notwithstanding his *sang-froid* and self-poise, was not a little disturbed. He failed to take into consideration that she had changed from a girl of shallow and superficial nature to a full-grown woman, merely pausing now for full development. He did not realize that the practice of hypnotism stirs up passions, both in the operator and in the subject, that are, to say the least, dangerous to the young; full of moral poison, of pollution, and of destruction of all will-power in the subject. Or if the doctor knew all this, it did not deter him from pursuing his unhallowed experiments from time to time, till he had such complete mastery over her that she could read his thoughts whenever desired to do so, and would obey any command he gave her while in the sleep, no matter at what time it was to be executed or the nature of it. I think if he had commanded her to commit a

murder she would have done so, all unconscious of committing a crime, for when the time came for her to obey she seemed perfectly in her normal state. For some inscrutable reason he would command her when asleep *not* to remember anything that occurred while in that state. Hence when awake her magnetic sleeps were mental blanks to her. Possibly the doctor intended to develop clairvoyance in her, so that she might assist him in his practice, diagnosing disease and prescribing remedies. Be that as it may, I am willing to give him the benefit of the doubt, but I cannot think for a moment that he ever intended to marry her. A little prior to her acquaintance with La Velle, while she was in a hypnotic sleep the doctor said :

“Ina, I want you to write a letter to me ; will you do so ?”

“Certainly, dear Guardy ; why should I not ?”

“Well, next Sunday noon, as soon as you return from church, close your room, let no one see you, then write as *I think now*. Are you ready ?”

“Yes, sir ; but please think slowly.”

Ina sat with eyes rolled back till nothing showed but the whites of them, her face raised as if looking at the ceiling, while the doctor, in front of her, gesticulated with his forefinger to emphasize each thought.

“Have you got it, Ina ?” he asked, his satur-

nine countenance contrasting horribly with the gentle expression of hers.

"Yes," she sighed rather than spoke.

"Then see that you forget all this when you awake. Sleep one hour longer. Good-night."

Upon her return from church the following Sunday, Ina had scarce laid aside her hat ere she seemed puzzled, as if she had lost something, stood looking around in a dazed sort of way, then, as if a sudden thought had struck her, went to the table upon which lay books and writing material, rapidly wrote a letter, which she enclosed in an envelope, directed it to Dr. Parker, and dropped it into the letter-box in the door of his room. Returning to her own room, she took up a book and began to read, all unconscious that she had, but a moment before, blighted her own bright life as well as that of others connected by the chain of fate that links many together.

The doctor came in after a while, and noticing the pen, ink, and paper, said :

"Ina, have you been writing a love-letter?" pointing to the writing material.

Ina looked up with a smile, saying :

"Now, Guardy ! don't be silly ; you know I have no lovers. I think I intended to write to one of my schoolmates, but when I got ready I forgot all about it and began to read."

The doctor said no more, but went to his room, where he found her letter written verbatim as

he had in thought dictated it several days before. He placed the letter in his safe, while a fiendish smile illuminated his swarthy features. He thought to himself, "What a beautiful, voluptuous creature she is! I don't want to marry, and I won't marry *any one*; but women are such fools that they think there is no marriage except a priest or magistrate mutters a certain formula over the pair. I can possess her, however, if I will, but I would rather possess her fairly. Pshaw! what is courtship but hypnotism? I'll sound her on marriage first, though, and see how she stands affected towards me."

With this idea in his mind he embraced the first opportunity he had to say to her :

"Ina, you are nearly eighteen now, are you not?"

"Yes, Guardy," she said, looking curiously in his face; "why do you ask? You know more about it than I do."

"Certainly, my dear, but I was thinking that girls of your age and development usually begin to think about marriage about that time, and I—don't feel embarrassed, Ina—as your guardian, I feel as if we ought to be perfectly frank with each"—

"Oh, Guardy, I would tell you anything and everything if there was anything to tell, but I am so content and happy here that the thought of changing has never once entered my mind. Besides, I don't know a single soul that wants

me—do you?" she asked with a startled look. "Have you in your goodness of heart been canvassing for me? If so, and I am becoming a burden on your hands, please, Doctor, be candid and say so. With the splendid education I have I can easily make——"

"Stop, Ina dear; you can never be a burden to me. I must admit, though, that I fear to lose you. I am terribly jealous of that painter of late, who——"

"Ha! ha!" laughed Ina. "Why, he is nearly as old as you; besides, he doesn't believe in marriage at all."

"Then you confess, you sly rogue, that you have conversed together upon the subject."

Ina's cheek began to burn with shame and humiliation at the intimation of slyness, as she looked boldly in his face with sparkling eyes, and answered with a little warmth:

"I hope I am free, and, if so, excusable for conversing with any gentleman of Mr. La Velle's delicacy, refinement, and intellectual powers, upon *any* subject, no matter how delicate. Besides, I was not aware that the subject of marriage is so very delicate after all. Look at the papers!" she exclaimed, with growing animation. "They speak of marriage as they do of other business, and the divorce trials are furnishing a nice morsel of fun and scandal. Are young women to be debarred the privilege of posting themselves upon

this momentous question through fear of ridicule?"

"Oh, Ina, you take me up too quickly. You don't understand me. Of course I don't object to your conversing with anyone you like upon that or any other topic, only it struck me as a little odd that you and I had never conversed upon the subject, when I should have been the very one to enlighten you thereon."

"It certainly is your own fault, Doctor, but I suppose you are too busy with the practice of your profession to think of the silly questions upon which a girl of eighteen naturally desires knowledge. As to Mr. La Velle, while he is painting, his hand works while his mind dreams of impossible things. He says that if there is a true principle in the union of two, that union is of the soul, and is consummated in heaven, and cannot be consummated on earth; whereas wedlock as practiced on earth is a counterfeit thereof, invented by the Devil to get rid of the surplus population of his fiery dominions, for nearly all the children born of them are souls fresh from hell. What do you think of that? Cranky, isn't he?"

"Well, I should say so," said the doctor, moodily; "but I never thought of it in that light, for I neither believe in souls, heaven, nor in hell—nor in marriage, for that matter, except as a convenience. But I'll tell you what I am thinking, Ina. If I should ever marry any woman,

that woman will be you. I can't bear the thought of losing you." He paused, looked at his watch, and did not notice the astonishment of Ina. She was literally speechless with amazement. The doctor arose, saying :

"Let us not speak of it any more to-day ; think of it, my dear girl. I hardly need enumerate the advantages of such a union. You have known me all your life. I am still a young man, and can give you an assured position in society. Think of it ! I must"—

"Wait a moment," said she, taking a step to detain him. "You must not go with any such idea as that in your dear head. I love you as a father, and you can never be anything else to me."

"Ina, is your heart still free ?"

"Most assuredly," she answered, "but that makes no difference ; I cannot think of you in any other relation than as a father. Pray let us end the matter."

"Why, my dear, you are too hasty ; what do you know of love ? In nearly all my experience among married women the truth has been forcibly brought home to me that love comes after marriage ; it is a mere sexual relation." And then he was gone, leaving the girl almost petrified. For a moment only ; then falling into a chair she wept as she had never wept before.

After the violence of her weeping had somewhat abated she knelt by the sofa and prayed : "Father, forgive him, he knows not what he does !

Oh, mother! if thou canst hear, come to me quickly! Oh, save me from a fate worse than death! Oh, why should my heart be so torn with anguish? Am I to suffer for sins committed before I was born?" Then she thought of Don and what he had said about children coming from the pit, and with the thought of him came the first impulse toward him, a tranquilizing, calming, drawing, trustful influence, not to say an attraction, but a consciousness of a haven of wisdom there. Oh, if she only might avail herself of it!

Oh, Wisdom! thou holdest in thy strong arms the tender hearts of all women. Woman, the mother, is an embodiment of love; but man, with his strength and projective nature, charmed by mysteries and their solution, the *vir* that he carries in his blood fired by beauty of form and grace of motion, left to his own devices, without the cooling and subduing influences of woman's love, is lost in brutal passion, and becomes her ravisher instead of her guide.

The doctor went his way, humming a little tune as he twirled his cane, thinking; and I imagine his thoughts were somewhat in this fashion: "What fools women are! with them love is everything. A mere fancy! the allurements of the imagination, it outweighs in the balance wealth, position, honor and a good name. How many have I known who for a kiss and 'Oh, I love you!' have sacrificed virtue, a fair name,

and become outcasts in society, just simply because they were fools enough to believe I told the truth when I said *I love you* ! Bah ! I don't believe in love at all. It is merely the burning of sexual fire. Strong men admire women because they are weak, for in the nature of things opposites attract each other ; but her very weakness—sexual—is the lodestone that outweighs her beauty ; for beauty is a sign weakness hangs out of the shop-window. Men do not admire strong-minded women. When beauty fades in a woman, and experience gives her wisdom to control herself, and power, through the cooling of passions, to resist the demands of her husband, I should like to know what kind of love remains. I believe it is all in the way one thinks. Association produces all we know of love ; it is a selfish passion, like the rest of man's make-up."

The doctor was shrewd ; he perceived that he had made a bad impression upon his ward, and for several days he avoided an interview ; then when they met he set himself to work to undo what he had done. With consummate skill he satisfied her that he was not serious in the declarations he had made ; that he was only sounding her depth of character and strength of mind ; that he was pleased that his ward had imbibed such sterling principles, and had the strength of mind to carry them out in her everyday life—had a way and a will of her own, based in a study of her own tastes and impressions. Such candid admissions as these, though border-

ing close upon flattery—and where is the woman averse to compliments?—served to reassure Ina and re-establish the doctor in the same standing as formerly.

Time went on, till at last he suggested to her that he desired her to become a clairvoyant so as to assist him in his constantly growing practice. To this she was not averse, and they commenced regular sittings to practice psychometry on herbs, roots, drugs, letters, pictures, persons, or, in fact, any and all things available, whenever the doctor had the leisure. Meantime the visits to La Velle's studio had not been very regular. Still they were occasionally continued, but on her part without much interest in the painting; rather more, I judge, for the recreation and the pleasure she took in their rambles and his quaint conversation.

Upon the doctor's return from a trip to see a patient in the country one day, he saw at a distance Ina and Don walking together in a beautiful grove of wide-spreading oaks that grew on the bluff overlooking the city and river. They did not see him, for they were absorbed in conversation. He slackened the speed of his horse. His face grew black. "That is the way the wind lies," he muttered, as he watched them. Then it was that the devil entered his soul.

Suggestions are unfathomable. We owe all that we are, or have, to suggestions. Whence do they come? In the hypnotic sleep the doctor

could suggest to Ina an act or line of conduct, and although in her normal state she had no knowledge of such suggestion, yet she obediently carried it out to the least particular. Furthermore, such suggestion might be made orally, or in a whisper, or even in thought, if such thought was intensified and emphasized by his strong will. Of course no one could claim that Ina should be held responsible for acts committed while under this influence, but where shall we draw the line between the normal and the hypnotic state? A suggestion made to her when in the latter state, to be carried into execution at some future time, say in one week, one month, one year, or even ten years, is as sure of execution at the appointed time as she is to live, and at the time of such execution she is to all appearance as much in her normal state as ever she was, and as natural as anyone who has never been hypnotized.

Who can draw the line between insanity and sanity? A suggestion is a potent factor in our existence, and what makes the question more complicated is the fact that suggestions do not depend wholly upon some person or persons to make them. They come spontaneously, whether we desire them or not. The babbling of a brook, the warbling of birds, the fragrant flowers, the bright sunshine or the angry clouds, the deep, silent forest or the boundless prairie, the lofty mountain or the darksome abyss—all these and countless more, impossible to conceive or to enumerate, are

full of suggestions to the sensitive soul, suggesting different things to different minds. Furthermore, these suggestions are in harmony with the bent of the mind receiving them. For instance, different persons viewing the ocean, or a conflagration, or any other scene are differently affected. In one poetic feelings are stirred, in another the sublime, in another fear, with its multitudes of horrible objects and possibilities. Moses, from the burning bush, received a suggestion to liberate his people from Egyptian bondage, but no one knows how his heart had yearned, all the forty years of his servitude, to do this same thing. I say suggestions coming from the unknown are always in harmony with our inmost desires or prayers. Moses suggests to Pharaoh that he should let Israel go. But the suggestions of the Lord to him are of another kind—*don't do it*. "I will harden Pharaoh's heart," certainly means a suggestion for him not to comply with Moses's request. And yet Pharaoh was punished for obeying the suggestions springing from his "hardened heart." Who is responsible? Judas at the "last supper" received a suggestion and forthwith carried it out by betraying the sweet-natured, glorious Friend of mankind—the Saviour. Wherever the story is known Judas is execrated as a horrible wretch, and the memory of him is an unhealing ulcer in the heart; no statues nor paintings adorn the churches commemorative of him as well as Jesus; while churches are all

dedicated to the memory and worship of Him betrayed; His living monument, unmade by hands, grows up in every true heart. No one thanks God for Judas, and yet he was as necessary to the plan of salvation as the One crucified. In order to be saved one must be a sinner, yet no one thanks God for sin. Without a devil there could be no Church and no salvation. Without hell there could be nothing to be saved *from*, and no heaven to go to. Isaiah, in giving voice to God, says: "I make the light, and I make the darkness; *I create good, and I create evil; I, the Lord, do all these things.*" And in plenty of places in the Old Testament God is made to say, "For this same purpose have I raised thee up." And Joseph, trying to comfort his brethren, who had sold him when a boy into slavery, whose crime had now come home to them in all its horror, said: "Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good." How do we know but what evil in God's sight is the same as good? It is vain to say that the suggestions to do wrong spring from hardness of heart. Why are some hearts hard and others soft? If God suggests to one, He does to all, for He is no "respector of persons;" and that some get one thought, while another gets a different one, is simply because they are cast in a different mould. Who is the potter and who is responsible, the vessel or its maker? Perhaps a murderer is as necessary in God's infinite government as the one slain, or as a priest. Who knows?

I have been led into these reflections because I said the devil entered into Dr. Parker, as he sat in his buggy, with a cloud upon his brow, lowering at Don and Ina. To one poetically inclined it was a beautiful picture. The river lay below, with patches of sunlight gleaming here and there upon its surface ; while overhead the broken clouds were fringed with orange and blue, with deep dark caverns in their fleecy folds in the distance. The trees with dark green foliage in the foreground stood at a respectful distance from each other, through whose trunks the doctor could get glimpses of the river and the opposite shore. In the midst, with their backs toward him, stood Don and Ina evidently very much engaged. Just opposite, a steamer was making its way laboriously against the strong current, vomiting great columns of black smoke from her chimneys, and frothing at the mouth, as if she was a living thing. The steam—white spirit of water—escaped from the pipes with a puff, snort, or shout of freedom, as Don was speaking, while the black spirit of the wood and coal ascended in graceful curves to mingle together in one grand baptism of the declining sun's golden rays.

“God is a painter,” exclaimed Don, with up-raised hands, holding his hat aloft. “Oh for the matchless power to produce such colors as those! And there are faces in the clouds, Ina ; do you not see them ?”

“No, Don, you are too fanciful.”

“Yes, Ina, plain to be seen! Just above that crimson streak where the blue merges into the scarlet.”

In a tree near the buggy a flock of blackbirds were chanting their evening hymn. The setting sun made long, dark shades of the trees reaching away toward Don and Ina as if they were arms reaching out to embrace them, but the golden sun-rays outstripped them, and enveloped the pair in a halo of radiance. Ina's pale pink dress and auburn hair blazed like burnished gold, and there was a halo about her such as we imagine surrounds immortal beings. But the doctor saw nothing of this. The scene before him suggested nothing but a voluptuously formed woman, matchless in symmetry and grace, whom he yearned to appropriate all to himself.

He saw nothing but the surface; there was no perception of the gorgeous woman soul, the immortal, undying being, who inhabited that form and whose tastes, aspirations, and longings for the perfect and beautiful could not permit her to dwell on this earth in a deformed or ugly-shaped body. Seeing such would have made him prostrate himself at her feet in abject worship without one thought of possession. Whence came the suggestions—one kind to Dr. Parker, another kind to Don? Don, in gazing at Ina, wanted to paint her as he saw her, and could never do it. Why? Because he saw beauty there that no one else could see; he saw beyond the surface, and all un-

consciously saw his ideal woman. And the suggestions that came to him were so far beyond his powers of realization that he became disgusted—dissatisfied with himself and his work. Was Don hypnotized by an idea? Such is the road of progress; such is the way of the Lord. Suggestions are the teachers of the world.

But the doctor gazed at the form which he desired to possess for his own use without a thought of her happiness or future welfare other than the comforts of her body.

To hold her in his arms and know that she was his was all he wished, not realizing that, were she not bound by love, she would escape his embrace, as a ray of light escapes the grasp of the hand. Was the doctor hypnotized also? Suggestions came, urging him to possess her by all means in his power and to delay not, lest she get beyond his power. For he knew full well that at a certain stage of development the hypnotic subject becomes independent of the operator. This he did not intend to be for some time at least. There is a power in thought which molds and fashions us whether we are willing or not. If God be a being separate and apart from the things He makes, and if He makes things as we do, or as a potter makes vessels (as St. Paul has it), then the things He makes are subjects of His will, made as He intends them, do as they are made to do, and exist so long as He intends them to. God being, in our conception, Infinite, *i. e.* with-

out bounds, without beginning or end, the source of all power, in fact *is* all power. We are driven to the conclusion that His will moves the worlds in space and all beings that inhabit those worlds, the same as a hypnotizer controls his subject. I say, if the above premises are correct, we are forced to the conclusion that God's will is done in all things, and, humiliating as it may be, we are merely hypnotic subjects. If this be so, if God rules, who is responsible? Reader, if you are not hypnotized by your early training, by the teachings of the past, by every religious system that ever was, examine and see if you are awake; show the world that you are free. Dr. Parker did not believe in a personal God; hence he had no idea that he was hypnotized. He held that he was free to do as he liked, so far as he had the power; beyond that he did not question. In fact he did not believe in any God at all. Neither did Don believe in a *personal* God, but he believed in an Infinite Spirit pervading all things. He felt that this was not a matter of belief at all—he knew. He realized that he imbibed this spirit in breathing, eating, drinking, and more than all other ways, thinking. He saw God in every object, because he recognized Him in himself; he claimed nothing for himself he did not freely grant to others. Realizing that God was in all his surroundings, he could not do a wrong to anyone, because he would wrong God Himself by so doing.

These ideas controlled him, hence he was hypnotized by them, but he was awake enough to know it. The doctor, however, did not know that he was in a deep sleep, in which darkness he himself was demoniac, a spirit of lust and of wrath. Don kept his heart soft and tender by constantly pitying the follies and miseries of mankind, while the heart of the doctor grew hard and callous by the practice of his profession and the habit of shutting out all pity from his consciousness. This is an easy thing for one to do who considers himself better than others. A priest, who "thanks God that he is not like other men," is doing the same thing and laying up wrath in himself. Not "wrath to come," but the seeds of a terrible condition which grows in the soul, filling it with darkness and misery. Not that God does it, any more than He does all things. Whatever man does, God does, for He is the life of all. *God is man, and man is God.* Jesus taught the same thing, evidently, for he termed himself "the Son of man" oftener than any other name. In this light, man is responsible and accountable to himself, for God is within, inasmuch as his highest conceptions of justice, of right and wrong, are his accusers and his judges. If man is not the architect of himself, morally and spiritually, then all nature lies. All nature says "Provide for yourself!" He who neglects to so provide must suffer, and the same law applies morally as well as physically. But remember, no man is inde-

pendent. We are all linked together by the same God who maketh us brethren, "every man his brother's keeper;" not the *judge* of each other, for each one has a judge in himself. "Judge not, lest ye be judged, for with the same judgment wherewith ye judge another, shall ye be judged." Why? Because we are all one, being animated by the same God; we are alike and should "thank God that we are like other men." He who condemns another condemns himself. We will not condemn Dr. Parker, then, for God within him is a righteous God, and will judge him rightly and punish him according to his deeds, as He does all of us who know the right and do it not.

That evening the doctor was all smiles and affability. Ina had seldom seen him in so agreeable a mood. As usual, he magnetized her and submitted several things for her to psychometrize, a letter, a photograph, and some samples of medicine. At last, standing in front of her, he said: "Now, Ina! I am going to will you to do a certain thing. I shall not speak it. You must read my thought. Are you ready?" In a few moments she reached out and took his hand, placed it on her stomach and whispered, "Yes." In a few moments she added, "Now I have it." "And you will do so," said the doctor; "and you are not to remember this command till the time comes. Now, good-night!" So saying he left Ina asleep in her chair. We can judge what the com-

mand was when we know what happened. On the third night from that time Ina retired to bed as usual, and slept sweetly and soundly till midnight, then she awoke apparently in her normal state, and without lighting a lamp found her way in her night-clothes to the doctor's room. He was waiting for her. We close the door as she enters.

Oh, Ina ! Ina ! never, never will you be the same. Alas ! how many of your sisters are hypnotized as fatally as thou wast, and fully as unconsciously seek their own ruin. The unspoken wish, the fatal desire, of a libertine is poison to the virgin atmosphere of the feminine soul. Who are libertines ? "*Every man at some time in his life.*" "Whoso looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery already in his heart," said Jesus. God is in the heart, and judges the heart, for all acts spring therefrom. Spiritual is far more potent than physical action, for here is where the poison of crime is distilled. All lustful men and women (and who is free from it ?) send out from themselves the spirit of lust ; and though they may abstain from the physical action themselves it is sure to find empty souls in which to take root and grow into acts that fill the by-ways and brothels with the horrors of licentiousness. Every man who desires a murderer hanged hath murder in his own heart, which, flowing out, contaminates the atmosphere with violence ; which finds a resting-place in the whiskey shops,

and in the empty heads of weak will, and crime is the result. Oh, Ina ! you are not the only hypnotic subject. Popular ideas destroy freedom of will. "Mother Grundy" is a bad mother ! Even being in the church fails to make her good. She is a Christian with Christ left out. All who fear her are hypnotized. They are like those Jesus prayed for when dying on the cross, saying, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." Certainly such a prayer as that, uttered in such circumstances and by such lips, carries with it through all time, and to the highest and lowest spheres of being, its all-potent answer ; and yet millions of professed Christians are so psychologized with ideas long since dead, which ought to be buried with him who gave them utterance, that they cannot forgive the Jews to this day for what their forefathers did to one of their own kin. Is not the world psychologized by the dead ? Who knows what influence was brought to bear on Dr. Parker ? Oh ! where was the pitying God or the mother's love for the hapless maid that fatal night ?

But do not imagine it was for only one night. How long the nocturnal visits to the doctor's room were continued is unknown. Months passed, and Ina, still unconscious of her doings in connection with the doctor, continued her visits to the studio, her rambles with Don. The last one is narrated in a previous chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DOUBLE.

THE night following the day in which Don had declared his love to Ina was a night of vast import to him. He retired to his closet, there to meditate, to commune with himself and his Maker upon that which to him was the beginning of a new life. He seated himself before his magic mirror. The ruby lantern cast a weird, dull-red glow upon its black surface and upon the sitter, leaving all else in the room in obscurity. Don began a review of himself by asking: "Have I done well in this thing?" Scarcely had he formulated this query in his mind, when from the door, which fastened with an old-time thumb-latch, came the click, click, of the latch as it rose and fell, sharp, distinct and not to be mistaken. Don sprang from his seat, expecting some one to come in, but an ominous silence reigned. He listened for some movement outside; the obstinate door remained closed and not a sound disturbed the silence. Don knew he had double-locked the outer door, but nevertheless he expected to meet some one, when, with lamp in hand, he

cautiously opened the door and peered rapidly around. Not a living soul was there, and the outer door was securely barred. Now, he was no medium, but was trying by these sittings to develop those latent powers inherent in every one, call them senses if you like, which enable one to see and converse with beings of another condition or another state of being, whether embodied or disembodied ; but he was not expecting any such thing as a material manifestation. Judge then of his surprise. He could not account for the lifting of that latch upon any hypothesis other than by some intelligence invisible to him.

After recovering somewhat from his nervous agitation, he seated himself again, and recurred to the subject uppermost in his mind. Again he queried, "Have I done well in loving and being loved? Have I done well in abandoning my cherished determination to live a celibate life?" Immediately the answer came back in an audible whisper, "Yes, my son! you are now a double man!" This answer seemed to come from the pit of his stomach. It is almost impossible to describe the surprise, the startled amazement, of Don as he leaped from the chair, upsetting the tripod and mirror, while cold chills flashed from head to feet and back again, seeming to lift every hair of his head erect. He lit his lamp quickly and looked around the room. All was as usual ; he began to feel a little ashamed of his fright, reasoning that his imagination had played him a trick, and was

adjusting the tripod and mirror, when a low smothered laugh, "Ha! ha!" came distinctly from his stomach, accompanied by a peculiar sensation there that could not be mistaken—a throbbing, great heat; while his brain and nerves felt as if a hundred galvanic batteries had been turned loose upon him. He reeled, clutched at the chair, and fell in a heap upon the floor, in a fit. Yes, if you choose to call it that. All was silent for a moment, then Don, rising, calmly surveyed the room. There were the chair, tripod, mirror, ruby lantern, books on the shelves, and his lamp lit on a little table by the door. He remembered lighting the lamp, thought he would better extinguish it, and for this purpose took a step in that direction, when he stumbled against something, and looking down, saw himself lying as one dead, all huddled up in a heap on the floor. He felt weak, but his agitation and fright had disappeared, and in place of them were such exquisite sensations of ecstatic pleasure that he thought to himself as he dropped into a chair and gazed at the body lying there, "If this be death, 'tis better than life; if it be only a trance, it is well that men know nothing of it." Thus looking at his lifeless form on the floor, gradually all the events of the day and evening came clearly to his mind. A feeling of solicitude for the comfort of that thing lying so still and deathlike on the floor at his feet prompted him to try to lift it into an easier position. He found that his hands passed

through it. Although he felt it he could not move it, for his hands seemed to clutch at nothing; still there was a sensation of contact. In this dilemma the whisper came again quite distinctly, approaching an audible voice: "Blow out your light and try again."

Don moved towards the lamp and tried to extinguish it with a breath, but the lamp burned steadily. "Hold your breath, and will to blow!" said the voice. Don did so, and the blaze grew shorter and shorter till it went out. By this time he had become familiar with the voice; it failed to disturb him in the least; it seemed as if it were himself speaking.

"Now," said the voice, as Don was about to try to lift the form into an easier position, feeling much stronger, and a more natural tangibility in his hands—"now, don't touch your body, but simply *will to move your limbs* as you desire them to be in the form before you, being careful not to move at all while so willing; there is a certain sympathy existing between you as you now are and the form you still own that is dead before you, and it will obey your will so long as that sympathy exists."

"Ah! is this death then?" asked Don.

"The same thing," said the voice, "only not so extreme." Then he remembered having read of the fakirs of India being buried while in such a condition, and remaining so buried until a crop of grain could be grown and harvested on the grave,

and upon being dug up coming to life again. As if the voice knew his thoughts there came this response: "Certainly, this trance is the same thing, only produced in a different manner. You can take possession of your body when the sun rises again, but with practice you can gradually prolong the trance. The success in so doing is by learning how to *preserve the sympathy*, and confining it to the body. Love is spirit, and sympathy is the grosser, material part of spirit. You know very little of love. As you learn more of it you will come into the knowledge of how to *separate sympathy from love*, thus leaving the body fully or partly charged with the grosser or more material spirit, while you can soar away upon the pure ethereal part as you will, upon 'angels' wings.'"

Meantime Don was experimenting with the body before him; that is to say, he willed and moved in accordance therewith, but the corpse-like figure remained motionless. Then he changed his tactics—held his breath, willing with all his power to move his head in a certain position, while he remained still. Gradually the head began to tremble, the eyes to twitch, the lips to compress, and in a few moments the head, as if of its own volition, assumed the position desired. Continuing his efforts Don soon had the body in an easy position, like one taking his rest. Then he sighed as he looked at the form. "Now I feel easier." "Yes," said the voice, "sympathy

is the all of forms ; it is the binding force of matter, the soul of order, as order is the first law of nature. Attraction, chemical affinity, as scientists term it, is nothing but sympathy ; but love is the soul of sympathy. You will know how in time to animate that body nearly the same as this one, and you two walk together as two men—exactly alike or as different individuals as you shall will. Now go !”

Then Don saw a strange thing : the ruby light disappeared and in its place there came a pale bluish light. The door opened of itself as the voice uttered the word “Go !” and the light streamed in one long column to the outer door. As if without volition, for he certainly had no object, he floated rather than walked along the column of light, through the door which opened as if by magic, out upon the landing, down the stairs into the street. Here he became conscious that the ecstatic sensations were becoming less and less, and as they weakened the light began to pale. He began to feel wearied, and thought he had best return to his room. He turned and fell unconscious in the street.

The sun was high in the heavens when Don awoke to find himself lying on the floor in his closet, with the ruby lamp casting a weird radiance around the little room. He rubbed his eyes, looked around in a dazed manner, and muttered, “Was it a dream or not ?”

CHAPTER IX.

F A T E .

WHILE Mr. Albee, the three wives, Don, and myself were all more or less involved in the mysteries of life, fate was busy with our other characters. Ina no longer visited the studio. Her unfinished picture stood with face to the wall. The doctor essayed his best to establish himself upon a footing of cordiality with his ward, but from the time of the love-episode by the little brook with Don she was a changed being. Her laugh and her songs no longer rang out like the warbling of a bird. An absent, far-away look took the place of the merry twinkle in her eyes, sparkling with mirth characteristic of her. She became restless, uneasy, as if she had lost something, she knew not what. She talked with the doctor, but not with the open frankness of yore. She looked questioningly at him, and with a shrinking which he could not help noticing, and he asked :

“ Are you not well, Ina ? ”

“ Oh, yes, Doctor,” said she ; “ why do you ask ? I am as well as common.”

“Oh, I noticed a certain languor about you,” said he, “that generally presages fever. You have not been mesmerized lately, and I think you had best go to sleep this evening and throw off this nervous prostration.”

“No, no!” cried Ina, rising in excitement from her chair, and looking at him with a wild look.

The doctor had noticed that she no longer called him “Guardy” as formerly. He decided to act promptly and decidedly. So, taking her by the hand, he gently seated her upon the sofa by his side, when she burst into a torrent of weeping. The doctor waited till the violence of her sobs was quite subdued, when he said :

“Ina, this conduct is altogether incomprehensible. Please explain what it all means. I am your guardian, and have the right of a father to know.”

“Sir!” she cried, looking at him with burning eyes and flaming cheeks, “you lost the place in my heart as father when you proposed to marry me. True, you said afterwards that it was all a jest, which I was fool enough to believe, till another has entered into my life and awakened me to the horrible things that are done while I am in a hypnotic trance.” Then she buried her face in her hands and wept bitterly.

He waited a moment, barely able to control himself in his surprise at her vehemence, and more by her allusion to another.

“Stop, Ina! what other individual has dared

to step into your life—as between you and me ? I swear no man sh”——

The girl sprang to her feet crying out :

“Oh, Doctor, don’t swear. I love him so much ! My whole soul is his ; he has not stepped into any place you occupy ; my whole heart is his, and ”——

“Who is it ?” hissed the doctor between his teeth, seizing her by the hand.

“Oh, you hurt my hand, Doctor ! let go ; it is Don La Velle !” Then she sank trembling and weeping upon the sofa again.

The doctor walked rapidly up and down the room a few moments, when, pausing in front of her, he said :

“Ina, did you have the audacity, after what has happened between us, to pledge your love to him ?” She looked at him with a puzzled expression. “Speak !” said he, “did you ?”

“What can you mean,” stammered Ina, “by ‘what has passed between us’ ? Do you mean in the hyp”——

“No ! I mean this : after pledging your love to me, did you have the impudence to pretend to love him ?” The doctor was cool now, his resolve was taken. With eyes of a basilisk he fixed his gaze upon her unflinchingly. There was no pity, no mercy in that look. Despair quiets the nerves, for it deadens the sensibilities. Ina saw in that look, as one sees in a mirror, her fate. Arising, she said quietly :

“I am not aware that I ever pledged my love to you, sir ! On the contrary, I told you plainly when you proposed the thing to me that it was impossible.”

“I admit all that,” said he ; “but a few days thereafter you wrote me a letter that I have locked up in my safe, pledging your undying love to me.”

“Hold on, Doctor !” wailed the stricken girl, whose face was the color of ashes ; “if you have such a letter it was extorted from me by one of your infernal hypnotic spells. Oh, give me back the letter and let me leave your sight forever !”

“No, no !” said he, “not so fast. You must not see Don La Velle any more. You can marry me if you like any day, or you may never do so, just as you like, but this business with La Velle must go no farther.” He paused as if waiting for a response, and it came in a moment in a different manner than he expected. She said, looking coolly at him :

“Sir, you are assuming too much. I am quite old enough to do as I like with my own person. I shall henceforth go where I like and do as I choose. Good-morning, sir !” She strode toward the door as she spoke, but he stepped before her, saying :

“Not so fast, Ina ! be reasonable. I don’t want you to go away. All I want is for you to promise not to see La Velle for say six months ; by that time we shall better know the character and

stability of the man. If at the end of that time he and you desire it and I find him constant, I may"—

"No, sir," interrupted Ina, "I will make no promises. Besides, I don't believe I ever wrote such a confession to you or to anyone; let me see it."

The doctor strode from the room; returning shortly he produced the following letter, which he read to her, not permitting her to touch the paper, however, but holding it so she could see the handwriting. She heard the words he read, she saw the writing, and recognized it as her own, like one in a dream. Her brain seemed on fire, the room whirled about her, and with a low moan she sank on the floor in a swoon.

The doctor lifted her to the sofa, and while he is restoring her to animation let us read the letter.

"DEAR DR. PARKER:

"I dearly love you. Yes, better than any man living, with my whole heart, and cannot live without you. I will marry you whenever you like.

"Your own loving
"INA."

The swoon soon passed away, and she sat up looking around in a dazed manner. Soon, however, the whole horrible truth stole into her mind; but instead of becoming frantic she was quiet with a hopeless despair, and looked calmly at him, while he, with persuasive, soothing accents tried

to reason with her upon the folly of opposing his will.

“I ask nothing unreasonable,” said he. “Six months’ absence will cure you of this infatuation, I am sure ; but if it does not I will withdraw all claim to your hand”—— He paused ; she shook her head. “Then,” said he, “if you persist in this unreasonable obstinacy, I will see La Velle and show him this letter, and if I mistake not it will certainly cure *him*. Meantime, I give you time to consider, and for safety, I leave you a prisoner in this room. At present you are not quite yourself, and I don’t want you running about this city alone. Good-morning, my dear.” And he was gone ; but Ina heard the key turn in the door as he passed out.

Time passed on. The doctor brought her food to the room daily, but she ate very little and never replied to his salutations or questions, but sat staring into space like one demented. During these few weeks Don was in horrible torments. Mr. Albee was cured of his hallucinations, if one chooses to call them such, but Don could not set himself to work at anything. “Ina ! Ina !” was his constant mental cry. He applied at The Newcomb, but was told that the doctor’s rooms were closed. He called at the office, and in answer to his queries was told that Ina was out of town, and the doctor rudely asked what business it was to him where she was. He turned away, with a heart torn and distracted by conflicting emotions,

fears for her safety, not the least doubt of her love and truth, but with conjectures as to what machinations were at work to alienate her from him, or possibly destroy her life. He did not like the look in the doctor's eyes, nor did he believe for a moment that she had left the city. He knew she would write to him if she were free. He had no means wherewith to employ a detective; besides he felt that he had no grounds nor personal rights in the matter. So he could do nothing but wander in the woods where they had often wandered together, vainly looking for some trace she might have left of her passing; or sitting whole days on the old log by the murmuring little brook, watching, waiting, longing for her coming. He realized that she had power under certain conditions to leave her body, as he had partly developed in himself, and he imagined that if possible she would come to the old trysting-place, the place most sacred on earth, where they had exchanged souls.

But nothing came of it. True, he saw her occasionally in his dreams, with hair dishevelled and eyes wild and red with weeping, and at such times he would spring from his couch with an ejaculation of fear and anguish. But he seldom got any sleep.

Worn almost to a skeleton, wild and haggard, he wandered alone like a spectre of his former self, up and down the bluffs overlooking the river. Ofttimes he sought his cabinet and asked

questions of his mirror, but nothing came upon the dull black disk save a few clouds or streaks of light. For indeed, grief and despair furnish a poor frame of mind in which to invoke the mystic powers. The mind then cannot focalize itself; its rays are scattered, shattered, or broken up. There can be no clear sky visible through dense clouds. And as to the voice of his second self, not even a whisper broke in upon his disturbed soul. There was no calmness, no tranquillity within, and as a consequence his questions or prayers reached only the tornado that was laying waste the landscape of his manhood. Furthermore, his morbid thoughts and feelings took out of nature all the beauties that he formerly beheld with rapture. It had the same effect upon him as poverty has upon mankind, it bred desperation. It may be, and this is my opinion, that Ina's spirit was so interwoven with his, there was such close connection between them, that the tornado came from her to him.

It was not long after the stormy interview with the doctor when Ina began to feel the premonitions of motherhood. Imagine, if you can, the utter horror of the thoughts of a young and innocent girl, upon finding herself in such a condition, through no volition of her own, and not sanctified by love, by a man whom she only respected, through the machinations of a fiendish science. That is bad enough in marriage, God knows, but here infinitely worse. Murderers and

criminals of all kinds are hatched in the incubators of lust, and yet this exceeded lust.

Language is powerless to convey a tithe of what this girl endured for long days and nights, waiting and watching the growing symptoms, so as to be doubly sure. Grief had long since spent itself. Dry eyes, with a look of madness in them, hollow, pallid cheeks, dishevelled hair, carelessness of dress and appearance, all indicated the total wreck of the once lovely girl. That she did not become a raving maniac at this critical time in her life is a matter of surprise to me.

But let us consider the idea that the spirit which sought reincarnation through her was a former mistress of Dr. Parker, who had consequently loved him while living, died loving him, her whole being saturated with that love. The spirit while condensing *in utero* must have softened and in a great measure toned down the high-strung, lofty spirit of the girl, so that the worst form of insanity did not appear.

We know so little of insanity that it is worth while to consider in a respectful manner the belief of nine-tenths of the human family, quite well supported in the Scriptures, viz: the doctrine of pre-existence and of reincarnation. In the time of Jesus the insane were believed to be possessed of devils.

That the doctrine of reincarnation was currently believed in is evident from the question Jesus put to his disciples, "Who do men say that I am?"

The answer given, "Some say you are Elias, and some say John the Baptist risen from the dead," shows the prevalence of this belief among the Jews, recognized as truth by Jesus himself by his silence upon the subject.

I think there is too much stress put upon heredity. The form, with its blood, flesh, and bones, is not the personality at all ; it is merely the manifestation of a personality or spirit. Man is a spirit, whether embodied or not. Whence come the babies ? Are we not surrounded by an army of intelligences seeking reincarnation ? Whence come the bacteria and animalcula that infest the human form ?

Whence come the ideas that intoxicate and make mad the human brain, and even animals ? and the diseases that afflict mankind ? What is hydrophobia but a disease of the spirit ? All poisons are spirit, imprisoned, concentrated, embodied in different forms, such as liquid, solid, or in the tooth of a snake or rabid dog. And is it not equally apparent that there are poisonous spirits embodied in human form, termed devils, evil spirits, or lunatics ? What matters the name ? The crimes that are committed prove this hypothesis.

The increase of crime shows the nearness of the spirit world to this, shows the facility with which they, the evil ones, can enter these bodies of ours to obsess, change our natures, dethrone reason and decency, to defy all laws, to become in fact *insane*.

Who can say that such spirits are not born as babies? Having lived on this earth before, and having acquired peculiarities of disposition and character, entering into the prospective mother they influence her more or less during gestation.

Facts are abundant in support of this hypothesis. I have known a man who was born drunk, and reeled like a drunken man all his life, begotten by a drunken father. Another having the form, features, and expression of a toad; a voice cracked and croaking, an immense head, sharp wit; but with legs, arms, and body like that reptile. He could not stand upright like a man, but had hands and feet like claws, with motions of the hands as rapid as a toad's tongue when he catches insects. It does not solve the mystery to say that his mother was frightened by a toad at a critical time in gestation. Why was the toad attracted to her path at that particular time? "Chance," you say; but *there is no chance*. Law rules all things. There is a spiritual law underlying all these things, little thought of.

The lower orders of animate life are all crowding for admission into the human plane, and the laws of attraction or sympathy and antipathy rule. We are controlled mainly by our likes and dislikes. Opposites attract each other.

The dislike of the woman for the reptile species attracted that very thing to her sphere. Things of a kind do congregate together, but the attraction is beyond the things themselves. If the

woman had had *no dislike* for the reptile race, but instead had schooled herself to look upon them in kindness and pity, as objects of God's love and providence, she had looked calmly at the toad as he crossed her path, without a shudder or shock of any kind. Love banishes all evil ; it closes the door of the spirit so that evil cannot enter. That was why Jesus said, " Resist not evil." In wisdom, evil is in our consciousness ; it does not exist otherwise. To eliminate this consciousness of evil from ourselves is to destroy all pain, repugance, hate, fear, pride, envy, in fact all passions and all admiration of objects. A superhuman task ; still we may approximate that condition, wherein the sea of our spirits lies hushed and calm, as the sea of Galilee obeyed the divine command : " Peace, be still !"

The contempt and repugnance that Dr. Parker felt, and that every libertine feels, for the chastity of the female sex ; the disgust he felt for what he conceived to be a *pretense* of virtue, called into his sphere the spirits of abandoned women, who, despising virtuous women with the same contempt that had been meted out to them upon earth for their lack of virtue, are actuated only by a spirit of revenge upon their own sex. What wonder, then, that his blood was charged with the fires of lust, the very life of devils, and the hotbed of all crime and evil ? In this disgust of virtue there is nothing more satisfactory to a libertine than the seduction of the cold, haughty

devotees of chastity. Thus the spirit of the doctor's old mistress, dwelling in his sphere, could not help charging his spirit with all her characteristics, and instigating him to the ruin of the cold, chaste, virgin Ina. Not that he desired her ruin, as he did not look at such things in that light; but rather as conforming to nature's demands, a fulfillment of her objects and laws.

For months before Ina awoke from the hypnotic spell cast upon her by the doctor, she could not resist going to his room at certain hours of the night. The spirit of his former mistress had fairly taken up its abode in her. She was obsessed, not by an idea, but by a devil. During pregnancy no woman can be wholly herself. The work of creation is a spiritual work. In the dark laboratories of woman's body takes place the union of an immortal soul with a material form; the union of what has been with that which is to be; the changing of one personality into that of another.

The spirit about to change its conditions permeates the mind and body of the prospective mother, and changes her in many ways. I have seen a woman chained and manacled, a howling maniac, while in that condition, who at other times was as sane as anyone. Many are caused to be thieves, drunkards, prostitutes, etc., during that period; and some awful crimes have been committed by pregnant women who at other

times were exemplary in all their conduct. They are not wholly themselves. How can they be, when they are gradually being taken possession of by a force often foreign to themselves?—a spirit that, in order to produce a superior being, must perfectly amalgamate with the mother. Nay, more, it must be a harmonious union of father, mother, and spirit, *three in one*. The spirit being reincarnated may be superior to both parents, in which case the amalgamation is altogether imperfect; hence the imperfections among men. In case the spirit be inferior morally (often the case), the mother's moral tone will be lowered, and she will have morbid feelings, strange fancies, longings, vicious thoughts and acts. If she is a strong-minded woman she controls by suppressing the *external expression* thereof, which, however, finds expression in the unborn by birthmarks, eccentricities, deformities of body, inordinate thirst for stimulants, mental aberration, moral depravity, etc., etc., to the end of the chapter. But the poor mothers are not to blame; the trouble originates mainly with the men. Souls come through the father, and the man of low instincts, and passions—hate, fear, revenge, etc.—calls into his sphere the same class of spirits. They pass through him, and the mother receives them *in utero*, where the spirit that accompanies the soul, as an aura surrounds a flower, gradually concentrates or deposits itself in a form.

Now Ina was no exception to this rule. Having

been hypnotized she was thoroughly prepared for obsession. But after Don's declaration of his love, the obsessing spirit was driven out of her mind, although it retained its hold on her body, thus indirectly influencing her mind, and suggesting suicide. The suggestion to visit the doctor's room was so strong that it took all her will-power to restrain herself. When fully satisfied of her condition and the power he had over her, she resolved upon suicide.

Dr. Parker had often tried to draw her into conversation, thinking to arouse her spirit: for he was an able physician, and knew that such apathy indicated mental aberration if prolonged. Of course he did not know the condition she was in, for he did not think pregnancy possible in the hypnotic state. But to all his overtures and advances she turned a deaf ear. At last, as time brought more vividly to her consciousness the awful condition she was in, she formed a desperate resolve. So one day when the doctor called he was surprised at the change in costume, countenance, and manner of his ward. She met him with a smile and outstretched hand, craved pardon for her naughtiness, and acceded to his conditions. The doctor scanned her face closely to detect if possible any acting or pretense on her part. Failing to perceive any such thing in her looks or manner, he granted her the liberty she wished, and proposed to begin with an excursion on the steamer

Atlas, which was going on the morrow to Memphis and return, expressly for the pleasure of a few score of the élite of the city.

"There will be plenty of music and dancing," he told her, "the best of fare, and no end of sight-seeing and fun."

"Oh, I am so glad!" cried Ina, clapping her hands and dancing around, apparently in great glee.

As he left the room he thought, "Now I must see La Velle and make all sure there, and then all will work satisfactorily."

Thus muttering, he sought the studio. Don, for once, was at home, and received his visitor with a quiet, cool, self-possessed manner, for the first sight told him that the enigma was near solution.

After the usual salutations the doctor said :

"I have come this morning, Mr. La Velle, at the solicitation of my ward, to pay you the stipulated price of her portrait and remove it to her room."

Don was fairly electrified by this demand. All the instinctive aversion for the man that he had always felt surged with redoubled force to his mind and fairly choked his utterance. It was, however, only momentary. Fixing his piercing gray eyes searchingly upon the doctor, he said, slowly, as if weighing each word :

"Sir, I am surprised at you ; there was no stipulated price for that picture unless I made a

success of it. I have not completed it, and don't think I ever shall."

"As to that," replied the doctor, "I was the one to be pleased; if I am satisfied, even if it is incomplete, you certainly are not the one to complain; here is your money." And he counted out fifty dollars, saying, "This is the amount agreed upon, I believe; as for myself, it is a matter of total indifference, only Ina wants the picture."

"You may put up your money," said Don; "the picture is not for sale at any price whatever; but if Miss Ina wants it, let her call for it; in case she should do so, I might put a few finishing touches on it," he added, in a lower tone of voice, as if speaking to himself.

The doctor arose from his seat, saying: "As to Miss Ina's ever visiting this studio again, that is totally out of the question; and as you are obstinate, not to say pig-headed, I will let you know, sir, that I am to be considered in this transaction. Look at that, sir" (holding Ina's letter before him), "and know that I am not only her guardian but her affianced husband."

Don gazed at the letter with eyes protruding and hands clinched. The doctor, coolly folding it, added, "I hope this will end the matter between you. You see, I know all; Ina has told me of your presumption, and laughed at the little joke she played off on you. And now, to end the mat-

ter and relieve your necessities, take the money, and give me the picture."

"Not for worlds!" said Don, suddenly pausing as if struck dumb, gazing steadily at the door.

The doctor, seeing him looking so intently that way, turned instinctively towards the door. But he saw nothing, while Don saw Ina standing just inside the door dressed exactly as she had been the last time he saw her. With an exclamation of surprise and joy, he rushed towards her, but ere he reached the door she placed her finger on her lip and vanished. The doctor might well be puzzled by this strange conduct, and asked:

"What troubles you, Mr. La Velle?"

"Nothing," replied Don, wiping great drops of sweat from his brow, and seating himself, conscious of terrible though pleasant vibrations thrilling his entire frame. Looking at the doctor a moment later, and perceiving a look upon his face very difficult to define—a mixture of pity, commiseration, contempt, and curiosity—he said:

"Excuse me, doctor, I have not been well for some time, and if you have no further business with me I will bid you good-morning."

"Good-morning," muttered the doctor, shrugging his shoulders; and drawing his neck down, he strode from the room, the thump, thump, of his cane jarring discordantly among the vibrations in Don's system.

CHAPTER X.

A SPECTRE.

SCARCELY had the echoes of the doctor's steps and the thump of his cane upon the stairs died away, when Ina again appeared, nearer to him. The vibrations grew stronger and stronger as she, approaching, beckoned him to follow her. Indeed, he would have sprung into her arms the instant she appeared, but the strength had all gone out of him. There was no fear about it, although he realized it was a spectre. He believed in ghosts, but this was one from a *living* person; why then should he fear? She signed to him to come; he tried to arise, but fell back more exhausted than ever. She came close, and, stooping, laid her hand gently on his forehead. A shock such as he had never felt before passed through him, and all was dark. But he had not lost consciousness. On the contrary, at the shock he started to his feet, but blind. It seemed to him as if his eyes were closed. Opening them, he saw Ina smiling at him. They embraced each other, and she said "Come," and moved towards the door. Don turned instinctively and saw himself lying like a dead man upon the sofa. But he cared nothing;

whether dead or alive, what mattered? He was with Ina, and he followed her from the room.

Reaching the street, she placed her hand on his arm. Oh! what sweet ecstasy of feeling vibrated through and through him, as they walked, her step keeping exact time with his. The sidewalks were wet with a drizzling rain, and many pedestrians with umbrellas turned to look at them as they passed, for some recognized the doctor's ward, while more recognized the artist, surprised at their unprotected condition in the rain. They soon arrived at the Newcomb House, which the doctor had entered a few minutes before them. At the foot of the stairs (for the Newcomb is on the second floor) they were almost run over by the porter, who, hatless and in his shirt-sleeves, ran at headlong speed down the street. They mounted the stairs, and reached the door of Ina's room. Many ladies, boarders, and servants had crowded into the room and obstructed the doorway, so that Don had some little difficulty in obtaining entrance, and in doing so Ina became separated from him, and failed to enter the room.

There was some confusion, and they were all asking at once, "What is the matter?" Don forced his way to the foot of the bed, and saw Ina lying there dead, while the doctor was endeavoring with all his skill to resuscitate her. In a very short time two other physicians arrived, one the doctor's brother, the other Dr. Shaw.

“What is it?” they asked at the same moment.

“Prussic acid,” answered the doctor; “there is the bottle,” pointing to one on the stand at the head of the bed. “I think she is quite dead; but let us try the stomach pump.”

“Here it is!” said Dr. Shaw. They forced it down her throat and began to work it. It was of no use, however, and they soon desisted.

“She is dead beyond a doubt! Send for the coroner,” said Dr. Parker, suddenly turning to the crowd. As he did so his eyes fell on Don La Velle.

“You here, you scoundrel! behold your work! How dare you intrude here? Leave the room this mo——” Just at that moment a wild, piercing shriek came from the hall, and everybody rushed out to see what new trouble had come. A lady had fainted, but it was only a momentary faint, induced probably by the shriek. As soon as she could speak she fairly shouted:

“Oh, doctor! Ina isn’t dead at all! I saw her plainly before I fainted, looking as natural as life! That one there is some other woman! I saw her here! Where is she?” The doctor and all began to search, but no Ina could be found except the one who lay with livid lips, through which froth was slowly oozing, pinched and hollow cheeks, eyes wide open, with a look of horror and agony, gazing upward unflinchingly, as if protesting to high heaven her innocence of any crime.

Her features were distorted, as if mortal agony still racked the beautiful form. Don disappeared in the crowd.

I had just returned that day from a short trip down the river, and naturally called on Don on my way home. Finding the door open, I entered and found him lying on the sofa apparently asleep. I waited a few minutes expecting he would awake, but seeing no sign of animation, I tried to arouse him. He was as limp as a rag. There was no respiration, no heaving of the chest, and I could scarce discover the faintest flutter of his heart. So I sat down to await results. I did not have to wait long, till I heard footsteps ascending the stairs, and to my astonishment and utter confusion, Don walked into the room, and with a glad smile grasped my hand in his. I looked at the body on the sofa, to be certain that it was Don, then I looked at the other one, and I detected a shade of difference. The face of the new-comer was flushed a little, the cheeks were fuller, the flesh was softer, finer, and semi-transparent, yet it was the same old Don in either case. He never noticed the form on the sofa, but drawing a chair near me began to talk, and after a few commonplace remarks told me that Dr. Parker's ward had committed suicide while the doctor was visiting him. He told it with the utmost indifference, as one relates something long past. Knowing the relation that existed between Don and Ina, I was surprised at so little feeling being

manifested in the recital, and so expressed myself. To which he replied :

“My friend, you little know the nature of spiritual love if you imagine that grief can have any place or part therein.” Then, turning to the body on the sofa, added : “When I am in that body I shall weep and wail for my love departed, because then I am in the bonds of sympathy, and connected to the whole universe of woe that not merely surrounds me, but is interwoven into every fibre of my being. My love is then of a mundane, or limited nature, because it lacks that which makes it free. Spiritual love is composed of love, will, and wisdom ; while mundane love is composed of lust, self, and ignorance, or sympathy, selfishness, and intelligence. Now ‘Love lieth at the foundation,’ for out of it grows the spiritual or immortal man, and the first-born of love is will ; in other words, the counterpart or masculine of love is will, and from the perfect development or union of these two is born wisdom. There can be no wisdom unless the will begets it in love, and a man’s wisdom is always exactly according to his love capacity. Having thus briefly alluded to the true philosophy of being, I will explain the spiritual condition I am now in. When out of that body I am free *according to my will*. I can see, for matter has no existence for me, save as I will to come *en rapport* with it ; and there are no obstructions, no barriers, no limits, no time, nor space to spirit. You see me

in this body, simply because *I will it to be*. I can dissolve it in a moment, and re-form it the next, because by wisdom are the laws (or *modes of action*) of matter comprehended (surrounded, enclosed, included) and *moved by the will*. According to such action is *love transformed*, or transmuted into forms. I cannot take on any form I choose to at present, because I have not investigated far enough, and any body I may make at present will take the same form; for the same laws prevail that govern a scar made upon your person forty or more years ago and still remaining in your flesh, although the flesh is entirely renewed every seven years. Mundane love is limited to one or a few things. While in that body I love Ina; when out of it, the form signifies nothing; her spirit—her love—flows into mine, and *we are one*, and from this union comes wisdom, the creative power called God.

“Do you not perceive that I, the masculine principle, correspond to will, while Ina, the feminine, corresponds to love? When we became one the spiritual body was begotten, in which we dwell together, being enabled thereby to enter into the kingdom of God, Infinite Wisdom; for indeed wisdom doth not enter into us, *we enter into wisdom*.”

I was fairly fascinated by the ideas uttered, by his gestures and glowing words, the radiance of his countenance, which seemed to me to grow brighter; his eyes, shining like stars, carried

conviction to my very soul, and I was inclined to shout "Truly God doth dwell in this temple, the human body." I could not withdraw my eyes from him. Turning to the form on the sofa he stretched out his hands over it and cried: "Awake! arise, O sleeper!" A thin, transparent mist of a bluish-white appearance issued from his hands and descended upon the head of the sleeper; a respiration, a trembling, a few spasmodic starts, and Don number one sat up and looked curiously at number two. Then his countenance changed; a look of agony distorted his features; burying his face in his hands he wept, and between his sobs moaned: "Oh, Ina! Ina! my beautiful love! my soul! why hast thou done this violence to thyself and me? By this act thou hast severed thyself from me throughout vast æons of time."

Don number two looked at him a moment, while the internal agony convulsed him, but I saw no look of misery on that radiant countenance. On the contrary he smiled, saying, "'Those who love most suffer most;' thus it must ever be! there is no birth without agony!" Then stretching out his hand toward number one, he said:

"My son! what knowest thou of spirit? Dost not thou know that love and mercy are one? Judge not, lest ye be judged by the selfsame judgment, for when you judge others you pass sentence upon yourself. Why weepest thou, O mortal? Knowest thou not that there is nothing

done on earth except it be done in mercy ? Thou speakest as the priests do, who know nothing of God except what they read in a book made by other men thousands of years ago. The wrath of God ! Stories told to allure and frighten the ignorant. My son, look up ! the heavens smile always ; storms are transient, but the smile of heaven is eternal. Thy tears rebuke God. Have done with them ! Spirit doth not suffer, neither can it weep. Wisdom seeth all things, knoweth all things, even the end from the beginning, if such ever was or ever can be. Immortality cannot suffer.”

Don number one ceased weeping, and looking earnestly at number two, said :

“Thou callest me son ! why callest thou me son ? Are we not one and the same ?”

“Aye !” answered number two, “I am the voice thou didst hear sounding within thee. I am what I am ! Thou thinkest I came from thee. So I did. Is it not written : ‘These bodies are the temples of the living God. Before thou wast I am’ ? Hence I called thee my son. By my will and love thou art ; seest thou not ?”

“I perceive,” said number one, passing his hand over his face, “as said the Man of love and sorrow in the olden time, ‘I and my father are one.’ Blessed be the name of father !” So saying they clasped each other in an embrace—but lo ! when I expected them to separate, one of them had disappeared.

He seized my hand, and silently we gazed in each other's eyes. The look of anguish had disappeared, a smile wreathed his lips, and his eyes shone with a heavenly luster I had never before seen.

"Did you see and hear us?" he asked.

"I surely did," I replied.

"Then it is no dream, no trance experience! Do you know that Ina is dead?"

"I just heard it from you; but, Don, there is no death to the true man."

CHAPTER XI.

THE INQUEST AND BURIAL.

WHEN the doctor had left Ina that morning he thought he had conquered her, and went his way to have an understanding with Don. She watched him from her window till he passed around the corner. Then she left the hotel, and at the nearest drug-store procured for the doctor (she told the clerk) a bottle of prussic acid. Hastening to her room she speedily dropped a letter to the doctor in his box, and another in the box at the street corner, addressed to Don La Velle. Then hastening to her room she locked the door and fell on her knees, murmuring: "O Father! have pity on Thy distracted child! If what I do be a sin in Thy sight, Thou wilt make this poison inert, and leave me on this earth a little longer to suffer for the sins of others! If, however, it be Thy will that I leave this body, do not, I pray Thee, take me to Thyself, but leave me with Don, and give me power to be an instrument of Thy vengeance upon the man who made life on earth a curse to me. Amen!" Then quickly rising she swallowed the contents of the bottle. She did not suffer long; her spirit was almost free already;

her mind was intensely set upon going, and she had been so many times hypnotized that her spirit readily separated from the body. She stood beside it, seeing without emotion the rending asunder of the atoms composing it, gaining strength as dissolution freed the atoms of the sympathy we term animal life. She watched the body till it ceased struggling, when a great yearning came over her to see Don. As she approached and laid her hand upon the door-knob, the door opened to her, greatly to her surprise, for she knew it to be locked. She fairly flew along the street *unperceived* by those she passed, and as we have seen entered the studio and interrupted their conversation by becoming visible to Don but not to the doctor; for the moment she entered that room she took on the material emanations from those two men, by reason of which her spirit body became grosser, the vibrations less. Don saw her because the vibrations in himself corresponded with hers, while the doctor's vibrations were as slow as those of ordinary men, which are scarcely felt at all, producing spiritual blindness.

When she laid her hand upon Don's forehead, and number two appeared, there was a union of love and will, and control of elements became possible, so that by a mere wish material forms took the place of the ethereal, and by reason of this grossness they walked, and were visible to all.

The doctor, finding her door locked, and no

response being made to his demands for admission, threw his broad shoulder with such force against the door that it burst open, disclosing a sight that he little dreamed of.

She lay quite still, and the doctor thought her probably in a fainting fit, but seeing the bottle labeled prussic acid, he comprehended the situation in a moment and opened his medicine-case, but there was no antidote therein. Then shout upon shout rang out for help, which speedily came, filling the room with the servants and boarders. Some ran for other physicians, while others ran for the police. We have seen the result.

All that remained was for the coroner to do his duty, which he speedily entered upon by taking possession of the room and its contents, and establishing a policeman as guard. Let us pass briefly over the details of the inquest. The doctor was the principal witness, save the bottle of poison and the clerk who sold it to her. No one suspected in the least that Dr. Parker had any hand in this sad affair, and although her form suggested the cause for her death by her own hand, it was only briefly alluded to. One man of the jury did suggest an autopsy, but the coroner replied that her appearance, coupled with the testimony of the examining physician, was sufficient to satisfy any reasonable man as to her condition and the cause that led her to take her own life. So a verdict of "suicide" was rendered, but the causes which led to it were only whis-

pered about. On the same day Dr. Parker was busy interviewing the different clergymen to engage one to conduct funeral services for his ward. He met no success. They all refused on the plea that a suicide was already past mercy, and that it were blasphemy to even ask God to pardon her.

He called upon Father Jerome, an old Catholic priest, almost ready for the grave, and found him at the home of an old man, who, it was supposed, was at his dying hour. The old man was sitting in an arm-chair for a photographer to take his picture (a thing he had never done before), while the priest, in a long black robe, was reading in some unknown tongue out of a book. The doctor waited; the artist adjusted his instrument; the priest ceased reading; and the wife and son begged the old man to compose his features to look as well as possible. I think the poor wretch tried his best, but I never saw a more horrible face pictured in all my life. I will add in passing that this old man was rich and a miser, and when the photo was presented to the family, with the bill for payment, they showed it to the old man—for he did not die at that time as expected—and he was so angry at the horrible face, declaring it was a baboon, and made such a vigorous protest—more particularly at the charges—about the waste of his money, that he actually got well in spite of the doctor, the priest, and his own family.

But to return to my story. After the old man

had distorted his features in various ways to suit the suggestions of his family, and the click of the camera told them it was done, the artist, packing up his tools, said :

“ Father Jerome, I believe you claim to be a representative of Christ, do you not ? ”

“ Certainly, my son, ” said the priest.

“ Well, if so, why don't you lay your hands on that sick man and heal him, as the Master did ? You know He said, ‘ Greater works than these shall ye do. ’ ”

“ Tut, tut ! my son, the age of miracles is past ; but I can send his soul to heaven or to hell, just as I choose ; isn't that greater work than healing the sick ? Isn't the soul greater than the body ? ” Of course that settled it.

To the request of Dr. Parker that the priest should officiate at the burial of his ward, he lifted up his holy hands in horror.

“ It is contrary to our holy religion, Doctor, to ask God to pardon such a sinner ! She is a lost soul. I should be mocking God to ask it ! No, no ! my son, there is no hope for such. ”

So poor Ina, sinned against, but not sinning, judged without a hearing by men calling themselves godly, was buried without a prayer being offered over her grave. I think it just as well. What matter a few words addressed to our Father in behalf of the dead ? God doeth His will in the heavens ; why limit His power ? The earth is a small affair compared to the universe. Think

you He cares more for one than another? It is not mercy poor Ina needs at His hands, it is simply justice. We shall see if God is just, ere we are done with this tale. "Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord; I will repay," say the Scriptures; but who knows He ever said it? It is simply the idea of some barbarian who saw God's wrath or vengeance in the workings of natural laws, long, long ago. Did it never strike you, kind reader, that our ideas of justice are most brutal? Justice upon the wrongdoer never made anything right yet; no! nor never will. A wrong done is *increased* by vengeance being taken upon the wrongdoer. Our ideas of justice are vindictive, being copies from the code of Moses, "An eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, life for life;" they cannot be otherwise than vindictive or vengeful. Oh, how long shall we worship the past? The dead sit in the chair of the judge, who is the veriest corpse of past ages! who draws all his pabulum of justice from a pile of books full of communications from the long since dead. Spirits of the past control courts as well as priests. These bow down and cry holy! holy! to ancient, worn-out theories of justice and theology, out of which the soul of the race is slowly being born. A new being, with new ideas, is bursting loose from its grave-clothes, as Jesus did in the sepulcher, leaving them behind!

"Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of heaven? It is like unto a little leaven, which a

woman took and put in three measures of meal," yet a little while and "the whole mass was leavened." The kingdom of heaven is composed of ideas, which, descending like a grain of mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, take root in congenial soil—a mind fertile and new—and grow apace. "Men do not put new wine into old bottles." Why? Because the bottles of the ancients were made of the skins of animals, and the fermentation of new wine therein would burst the bottles asunder. Old theology may properly be compared to the old bottles of the ancients, made of the skins of animals. New ideas, ideas of progress, are not in harmony therewith; they are too expansive. They are destructive to primitive or barbaric conditions, called conservative. Old bottles have given place to new; old ideas are surely giving place to modern thought; the new wine of the kingdom of Christ is rapidly fermenting.

"Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of Love." So said the Christ, and lo! it cometh, stealthily, as a thief cometh at night. And who shall abide His coming? Not the old bottles! Not the old institutions of religion and law, that judge wrongfully without knowing, and damn the sinner by rote out of an old book, out of old bottles made of the skins of beasts. Away with a clergy who refuse to minister to the heartsore and afflicted! Away

with your pretense of holiness ! All we want is the warm and tender heart of humanity—the child heart, free from guile, and free from judgments of the erring—hearts full of pity and compassion.

A splendid procession of carriages followed the hearse that bore the remains of Ina to the grave ; for the doctor had money, which means, he had friends and influence. He seemed a stricken man ; standing by the grave, the hollow thud of the clods of earth as they resounded upon the coffin struck ominously upon his consciousness, and he seemed startled when a voice from one near him said in low and solemn tones : “ It is the way of all the earth ; God’s will be done ! ” He looked at the speaker and recognized Mr. Albee, and being seized by a sudden rage, said, his voice grating harshly with suppressed emotion :

“ I don’t think God, even supposing there is any, has had anything to do with it. If He has, He is a demon. If He knew of it and was powerless to prevent it, he is not God at all. If He has power to prevent such things, and does it not, He is not worthy of worship ! Don’t talk to me, old man, of God ! ” And then he turned as if to walk away.

Meantime the shovels had ceased to work, and the multitude were listening in silence that was oppressive. Then spoke up “ old man Albee,” saying :

“ You are irreverent, sir ! I will speak of God’s

justice ; perchance you may feel it some day if not now. God in mercy doth not take away our loved ones when they die ; they remain for a season to comfort our bereaved hearts : and even so in His justice He leaves those we hate, or who hate us, to mete out His justice upon the wrongdoer. I never saw your ward that I know of, but there stands by your side a tall, well-formed maiden, whose hair is the color of a golden sunset. She says her name is Ina Grey, your ward, and that she is not going away from you ; and a look of malignant hate flashes from her bright-blue eyes as she looks at you. She carries in her arms something that I cannot describe—ah ! she says it is your baby, but I c”——

He never finished that sentence, for a blow from the doctor felled him to the ground, and the doctor, taking the arm of a friend, walked away.

He returned to his office, where he spent the the night, alternately drinking heavily of brandy, and trying to sleep on his sofa. But little sleep he got that night. Something had disturbed him. The words of that crack-brained spiritualist kept running in his mind. It was not the publicity of it that made him cringe, for he, with his standing in society, his money, need not fear anything on that score. In point of fact he was a stranger to fear ; and, moreover, he had set the public on another scent by covertly hinting to the examining physician, after the inquest was over, that Ina had a lover of whom he did not approve.

Thus he felt assured (and rightly so) of the public sympathy instead of censure. But still an intangible something made him restless and wakeful. Glass after glass of the choicest brandy failed that night to bring repose. It had no effect upon him. In the morning he got into his buggy and drove many miles into the country, thinking that a drive amid country scenes would have a salutary effect upon him. As he came back, the thought of the room where Ina had died made him shudder, and seeing a neat little cottage for rent, by the roadside, in a thinly-settled part of the suburbs, he engaged it upon the spot. Returning to the hotel he hired a man to pack up his belongings, and he moved everything that very evening. A few things he carried to his buggy, and in doing so his eyes fell on the letter-box. Possibly there might be a letter, he thought, and so there was, one in Ina's handwriting.

CHAPTER XII.

AT THE TOMB.

SEATED upon a low tombstone, during the burial of Ina Grey, was Don La Velle. He mingled not with the crowd, nor did he seem to take note of what was going on.

Alone, at some distance from the scene, he sat with bowed head and clasped hands. Thus he sat long after the crowd had dispersed, motionless as a statue, till the sun had gone down in his golden bath, and night spread her pall over the fair face of the sleeping earth, as a mother covers her innocent child's face to shut out the light while it sleeps. As the stars began to look out of the limitless vault of heaven, he roused himself and peered into the night, exclaiming, as he raised his clasped hands above his head, "O sun! O earth! O darkness! mysteries of being! tell—oh, tell me why I exist!" But no response came, save the warbling of a nightingale in a tree hard by. The stars grew brighter and brighter, while slowly in the northeast a bright comet streamed across the dark vault, leaving a long tail of light behind. This diverted his thoughts from himself, and a feeling of wonder and awe stole over him

as he realized that that comet had been a hundred years absent, journeying, flying with inconceivable rapidity through space, visiting unnumbered worlds in its flight, tarrying at none; wheeling through space, unspent and untiring throughout unnumbered ages, a swift messenger of the Gods—and for what?

“What message dost thou bring?” Don suddenly exclaimed; “what elements dost thou bring to our sun? or what elements dost thou gather up from the growing and wasting worlds thou passest by in thy swift flight? Dost thou take something away? And at the same time dost thou leave the elixir of immortal youth with our sun in exchange? Thou wheelest around the sun as if thou dost love him and long for an embrace. Who taught thee the way in trackless space? Art thou intelligent? then tell us what thou findest in the abyss thou hidst in so long! One hundred years since thou left us! And dost thou not need rest? Ah! I hear thee; thou hast a voice! Thou sayest, I am a teacher of the inhabitants of countless worlds who are constantly gazing at me. I am an object-lesson. I teach the value of motion, and the interchange of spirit. I take and I give. I love all, and all love me. I am immortal! I am not derived from any other power, comet, sun, star, or world. I am, they are; we exist and are immortal by motion and mingling of essences. I am immortal by feeling. I sense the pulsation of every world in my orbit,

and they feel me. Oh, senseless man, that feels nothing and knows nothing! There is no life, there is no God, but Love. Perfect motion is perfect life. The straddling motions of mankind are far from perfection. No wonder that death is inherent in mankind, and in all things of an angular form. All perfect forms are spherical. The human brain approaches thereto; the eye, which lighteth up the dark caverns of the soul and dispeleth the night of the mind, is a type of a perfect form. I do not deal in death. I bring no wars nor pestilence, as ignorance imagines; but by my love I draw human faces upward, to gaze and learn of immortal, undying energy, life, and love."

Thus listening, Don imagined that *he heard* all this; I say, imagined, but what do we know really of the imagination, its scope, depth, and powers? It is the mother of progress, art, science, literature, and culture of every kind, name, or nature. Nor is it any objection to this truth if it is a potent factor in disease and diabolism; for it is a creator in whatever direction its energies are directed. If one hears a voice that is inaudible to others, or sees sights that others cannot see, is it logical to conclude that such are *not real*, because, forsooth, the majority are deaf or blind to such sights or sound? No, the truly real is hidden from the gaze of physical eyes, and the melodies of Beethoven and Mozart had to be translated, transformed, ere this dull world could be charmed into higher feeling and a higher life. But who can

say what the original must have lost in the translation? To ears more tuneful than ours, the melodies we imagine perfect are the merest discord. Compare our music with that of the African and the North American Indian. No, the unreal is in our knowledge; the real is in the imagination, hidden by a curtain more or less opaque, that sometimes, in the rapt contemplation of objects or the study of mysterious problems, rolls back a little or lifts a corner and lets in the light as we can bear it.

So Don, sitting thus, with eyes turned upward, gazing at the comet, entered unconsciously the hypnotic state (the true road out of finite limitations) and heard the voice of the stars and of Infinitude, which are silent only in the presence of doubt and unbelief. Then, drawn as by a magnet, he approached the newly-made grave, seeing nothing, but hearing much. It seemed to him that he was surrounded by a crowd, all jabbering at the same time, some addressing him and others speaking to each other, and the burden of the talk was fierce denunciation of Dr. Parker.

"He is one of us," said a harsh, coarse voice close by his ear.

"He shall suffer!" squeaked another.

"We have him!" shouted a chorus of voices.

"Scatter the dust of a new-made grave at midnight, where his feet will touch it in the morning, if you want to see fun," piped one in shrill tones.

“I am in his mind !” croaked a female voice.

“I am in his stomach !”

“And I in his blood !” chimed in another.

“I am in his drinks !”

“I am his worm that dieth not !”

“And I the fire that is not quenched !”

Such were the exclamations Don caught in the general gabble, for such a pandemonium he had never dreamed possible—hissing, groaning, spattering, gnashing of teeth, shrieking, swearing, praying, singing, shuffling of feet. And yet, strange as it may seem, Don was calm and unmoved. Indeed, he seemed to be part and parcel of this tumultuous gathering ; and when allusion was made to the scattering of dirt from a new-made grave, he thought of the words of the Master, “When ye depart out of that city or house, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city,” and he wondered what the dust had to do with it. As the thought flashed through his mind, the word “magic” was hoarsely whispered in his ear ; and a prolonged cry of the multitude, that dust off one’s feet being a curse, how much more the dust of a grave, and that the grave of a broken heart, a heart literally turned to a living curse? All these words and ideas found an echo in Don’s soul, psychologized as he then was, and stooping down he clutched both hands full of the soft earth and fled from the scene.

When the morning came there was dust in the doorway of Dr. Parker's office and in his buggy.

Long years afterwards, in alluding to this circumstance, Don said : " Well do I remember the cry that followed me as I fled in the darkness from that cemetery—' *Throw dust in his eyes ! throw dust in his mind ! throw dust in his soul !*' "

I am of the opinion that if dust be a medium for conveying a curse, this world is pretty well cursed, for there is plenty of dust, and all men are dust-throwers.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CURSE OF INA.

THE doctor opened the letter after he was seated in his buggy, and read the following words :

“Dr. Parker! Devil! Demon! Destroyer of my life! I shall be dead when you read this; but do not deceive yourself by appearances. God forgive me! but I cannot find forgiveness in my heart for you! No, I feel that God through my lips curses you, and has graciously permitted me to be the instrument of His justice. Go where you will, I shall be there, to wither and blight all your joys.

“I curse you! God curses you! In your soul there shall be no rest! In the night, in the day, sleep shall bring no repose. Your food shall not nourish you, for cursed be your stomach, your bowels, your liver, and doubly, aye trebly, cursed that heart of yours. Naught but poison shall its throbs force through your veins! Rest assured I will be by you at all times, to see that this curse shall work as effectually upon you as your hypnotic spells worked upon poor heartbroken Ina. Dog thou art, and dog shalt thou remain.

“INA.

“P.S.—The spirit of your baby, which is, or was, that of an old mistress of yours, will be the poison I shall use in your blood.

“INA.”

I leave the reader to conjecture the feelings of the doctor after reading this letter. That he loved Ina as men of his class love, which is as the brute loves, is unquestionably true. There was no parental, no fraternal love; for this love equalizes mankind. There certainly was no such love for her as a man, no matter how low in the scale of being he may be, feels for the woman who captivates his heart. But he had plenty of pride, and if he really intended to marry her it was to gratify his pride of possession for passion's sake.

There was evidently a vein of superstition in his nature, as there generally is in cowards, and this curse, coming immediately after the talk of Mr. Albee at the grave, one corroborating the other, must have been rather startling to him, to say the least. He sat in his buggy like one dreaming.

"A strange coincidence," he murmured, as he drove off. But he could not shake off the gloom that hung over him. Coincidences are about all the logic such men have in explanation of remarkable or mysterious events. He could not understand that future events cast a shadow upon us, often long before they happen. He went his rounds among his patients as usual, but there was a listlessness and absent-mindedness in his manner altogether foreign to him. He had lost his vivacity, his ready wit, his hearty good-nature, and merry laughter. His patients and

friends noticed it, ascribing it to the deep grief they imagined he felt for the tragic death of his ward; but they were far away from the true cause. The doctor could not get the words of that curse out of his mind for a moment; they seemed to burn in his brain. They were words of fire; they scorched, they withered, they hissed as live coals upon raw flesh. He sought the comrades of other days at the club, drank, told vulgar stories, and laughed the loudest of any; but there was a constant reminder of Ina in every jest, and every oath he uttered.

“I wonder if I am hypnotized,” he thought; and then for the first time he remembered that the lady who fainted in the hall had asserted that she saw Ina, while her corpse was still warm, as natural as life. Then a morbid longing came over him to see this woman, and learn from her if she still held to the same thing. Acting upon the thought, he sought and obtained an interview with the lady, whose name I have forgotten.

“Certainly! I saw her as plainly as I see you this moment,” she said in answer to his query if she really *believed* she saw her; “it is no belief at all, sir! What one knows, what one sees, is not belief sir! you must certainly see the difference. Doctor, I am as cer—” then suddenly happening to cast her eyes toward the door, she shrieked and fell to the floor. When restored to consciousness the lady reasserted her statement. “Doctor,

I saw her again, just the same as at first, only this time she was carrying a little bundle in her arms." The doctor waited to hear no more, but visibly agitated left the house, saying to himself: "I am not afraid to die, but I am a little afraid that death is not the end."

That night the doctor was carried home from his club dead drunk. From this time his descent was rapid. He was conscious that he was on the road to ruin, and tried to turn his mind into other channels, but the undercurrent of all occupations, conversation, wild mirth with jovial companions, was the curse of Ina. The wan, dead face, with froth oozing from livid lips, took form in his mind, as does an object often seen in memory. This mental image grew as weeds grow, for the soil in his mind was rich in noxious elements, out of which malarial poisons take their rise. Every patient he saw, nay, every female form, made him shudderingly conscious of his poor ward, and of the part he had acted in the woful tragedy. He abandoned his practice and shut himself up in his rooms, seldom going out save at night, and even then only to go to his club and spend most of the night drinking. At first the brandy he drank induced a certain recklessness, an indifference or callousness, that was a relief to him. But after a time the intoxicating influence of the liquor lost its power to deaden, and produced the opposite effect upon his mind and nervous sensibilities. Drunk,

even to physical helplessness, his mind became preternaturally active, and his faculties luminous.

It was at such time that he first saw Ina. He was half sitting, half reclining in an easy-chair, laughing boisterously at some witty narrative which was being told and comically acted by the wit of the club, when suddenly turning his head, he saw her standing near him, with something wrapped in white in her arms. Paralyzed for a moment, then with a wild shriek he sprang from the chair and fell prostrate upon the floor. The influence of alcoholic spirits is similar to the influence of disembodied spirits. In either case the vibrations of the brain and nerves are increased, and in most cases of prolonged drunkenness, objects that are ordinarily invisible become visible. In all cases, the objects seen are in the sphere (spirit) of the individual. "Snakes in the boots," called delirium tremens, is no uncommon thing; and habitual inebriates, old men of long experience, have assured me that when drunk they see all manner of things—toads, snakes, lizards, dead people, even the devil himself—and hold conversation with them.

The wild gyrations of the dervishes, the powwows of our North American Indians, and the dances of the voodoos are all for the sole purpose of throwing the blood to the head, thus inducing a species of intoxication, or, in other words, of increasing the vibrations of the brain to

such an extent as to produce catalepsy, trance, clear-seeing, prophetic visions, etc.

In the case of Dr. Parker the brandy was not alone in producing clairvoyance ; the loud laughter supercharged his large brain with blood and carbonic acid gas, till the room seemed to whirl like a top, and the thin veil that screens us off from the invisible world gave way to the excessive vibrations, and he saw—what? Things that were *already* there, looking at him. The drink and the violent laughter had only increased his consciousness by opening his eyes, or rather by removing the film from them, for sight is the great avenue to the soul. The vibrations of the brain are to the brain what thought is to the mind, a stimulant, a combustion, a lamp lit in a dark place. Resuscitated after a time, he glared around, like some frightened animal searching for the source of danger, at the anxious and sympathetic faces. At last his gaze became riveted in one direction. Intensely he gazed, then shut his eyes, passed his hand over his forehead, looked again, with eyes starting almost from their sockets, and sprang to his feet, shouting :

“Take her away! There she is! Take her away! It is she, my dead and buried Ina! Oh! she said she would haunt me!—and now there she is. Oh, don’t you see her glaring at me like a fiend?”

In vain they assured him that there was no woman in the room. He looked at them with

a puzzled expression on his face, then looking again in the same direction, sprang backward, knocking one down who stood behind him, and shrieked at the top of his voice :

“Don't think to fool me with such lies! Keep her off! don't let her touch me! She wants to drag me down to hell to keep her company! Keep her off!”

Meantime, strong men had seized him as he rushed backward, with hands outstretched, hair disheveled, and bloodless, livid face. Over went tables and chairs in the mad struggle to escape. Decanters and tumblers crashed upon the floor, and still he struggled and cried out, “Take her away!” Overcome at length through utter exhaustion, muttering incoherently, frothing at the mouth like a mad dog, he sank to the floor in another fit. In this condition he was conveyed to his lodgings. Expert physicians exhausted their skill to counteract this awful malady. But what do they know of insanity? The morning found him in a strait-jacket, with strong guards, although he protested that he was as sane as any of them. Refusing to take medicine, he assured them that his mind alone was affected by an hallucination which he hoped would disappear in a little time. The physicians thought so too, but they insisted upon “helping nature” by filling his stomach with drugs.

CHAPTER XIV.

INA TO DON.—THE STRANGER AGAIN.

IN the morning of the day of Ina's burial, the postman handed Don the following letter :

“DEAR DON: When you read this I shall be what people call dead, and that by my own hand. But don't you believe for one moment that I cease to exist; I shall be near you, and you shall see me at times. Do not grieve for me, dear Don! I love you too devotedly to stay on earth and bring into existence a child against my will and contrary to my love. I could not bear to bring a reproach upon our love, dear Don! And my helplessness in this matter could be nothing else. There is more power in death than in life, and I go that I may obtain power to haunt Dr. Parker to the grave, and to a just punishment for the outrage he has committed upon my person. It was done in hypnotic sleep, I know not when, but some months before we declared our love; but I was totally unconscious of it till your love forced me from him. After I became conscious of contamination I could not visit you again, lest I might soil your pure spirit by bringing it into contact with mine, already tainted by the spirit of the doctor and his accursed progeny. If tears could wipe out wrong, it is all wiped out, for I have wept barrels of them. But I have no tears now. They will not flow; they are all turned to fire that is consuming my very vitals. One night after I became certain of my condition, when kept a prisoner by the doctor, I lay weeping on my couch; I must have wept myself into a

trance, for I heard a chorus of voices, male and female, chanting in low, measured sadness the following words :

“ My soul with love is aching,
And my heart's great woe is breaking,
Like the waves on a rock-bound coast
In starless night where winter's ghost
Looks on and weeps.

“ Life's stormy ocean is heaving,
And on the sands the waste is leaving
The wrecks and fanes of dear-bought love,
Whose pleasures gone look from above
And mock my woe.

“ Like a lone tree I am shaking,
And the wind my boughs are breaking
On a desert wild, where storm and sleet
Are weaving my winding-sheet
In the drifting sands.

“ My heart with pain is beating,
For the love of life, so falsely cheating,
Hath blighted hope and joy forever,
And left a night whose stars may never
Shine in the void.

“ My life's dark caverns are waking
With the echoes of a warm heart breaking,
Which sounds like a mournful dirge
Sung by winds and green salt surge,
In old ocean's caverns.

“ The angry waves are knocking
Against my frail bark rocking,
And the pitiless rocks on the coast are nearing,
While I am feebly my lone way steering
To realms unknown.

“ The words were wailed out upon the silence in long doleful rhythm, and as they died away in the distance

the sound was like the faint vibration of many harp-strings played upon by a soft breeze. Oh, how I longed to hold those weird sounds always in my ears!

"They harmonized so perfectly with my feelings that they seemed to have a voice, whispering soft and low, 'My soul with love is aching!' Alas! Don, my own love thou hast. I have none for myself. An empty heart knows only its pain; your dear image is enshrined there, but there is no light. Your love might save me if I would or could accept the sacrifice. This I cannot do. Go your way, dear love, till I rid the earth of this fiend. Then I will return to thee. Perchance the smouldering embers of our love may be fanned into a flame at some time in God's infinite goodness.

"I was so distracted before I heard that angelic choir that I could think of nothing save my lost condition, but these heavenly strains seemed to fill my whole being with the ecstasy of despair. They buoyed me up. I floated, and another was with me. A man, dark of look, whose eyes seemed like coals of fire, suddenly stood before me; a man with a dark cloak wrapped around his form, and a slouch hat drawn down almost over his eyes, as if to modify his fierce look. As I caught his eye, he bowed low before me, saying:

"Fear not, my child. The Father loveth all the works of His hands. For this same purpose hath He, who knoweth the end from the beginning, called you into being: to humble in the dust the proud and haughty scoffers; to teach those who will not think of heavenly things the utter worthlessness of human effort when not inspired by love of the human soul divine. The doctor loves science; he seized upon hypnotism because it gave him power over others. Hypnotism, guided and controlled by love, is the royal road to happiness, health, and heaven. But the doctor did not know this. He loves science, not man. He who loveth humanity loveth God, but the doctor believes in neither God nor man. It is to teach such that object-lessons are in the world. God is not a God of vengeance.

In mercy He instructs us for our good. Every experience in life is a lesson and a teacher. In mercy He removes wrongdoers out of this world. That is why death is in the land. The wrongs done to thee are ripe. Thy cries have ascended into heaven, and have disturbed the repose of the angels. The whole world is sighing and groaning in a hypnotic sleep induced by the worship of gold. This worship is upheld and fostered by priests, aristocrats, lords, dukes, bishops, kings, popes, lawyers, teachers, and doctors of every class and kind. The eyes of the people are so tightly closed in this sleep that the day of judgment will scarce open them. The woes of earth will have stirred up the vengeance of the Lord, and the wrath of Love is about to be poured out upon the earth as it has been poured out upon you, my poor maiden! Weep not, but listen. The only forgiveness for sin must come from the person wronged. Hand to hand, the wronged and the wrongdoer must go down the vistas of eternity till forgiveness breaks the chain that binds them together. At present you cannot forgive the doctor for this vital wrong he has done you. "Vengeance is mine," saith the Lord, "I will repay," is merely the declaration of that spark of Deity enthroned in the human heart. Humanity calls for vengeance, but the Infinite calmly surveys the turmoil of human passions, and metes out first justice for the correction of faults, then mercy for the harmony of the whole. You must witness and be an instrument of the punishment of the doctor till you are filled with pity for him. Then and only then can the great God forgive him.

"No! no! never!" I cried. "A thousand eternities will fail to awaken any pity in my dead heart for that monster! Where is my murdered love? Don't talk to me of pity and forgiveness! I hate, and I'll have vengeance!"

"Certainly, daughter," said he; "that is why I am here—to point the way for you. You speak of eternity as if you knew all about it. Let me tell you, these hearts of flesh are not like hearts made spiritual by

luminosity of mind and deeper penetration into the mysteries of Providence. But I will say no more of this. In order more effectually to wreak vengeance upon the doctor, you must destroy the life of your body. It is of no value to you any more; in fact, it is a burden to you. Then again, there is more power in death than in life, for the dead are invisible to the living, and can work upon them in many unsuspected ways. Those who die violent deaths remain longest on earth. All haunted houses attest this fact, and demonstrate the power of spirits over themselves, to appear and disappear, and over ponderable matter also. Then I'll tell you a secret. The unborn babe gestating under your heart is the spirit of a young girl whom the doctor seduced in his early manhood, and left to die of a broken heart. She loved him, and the attraction did not, and never does, cease at death. In the lapse of time earthbound spirits lose consciousness, and in its waning, the personal form slowly evaporates, disappears even from the cognizance of other spirits. When thus dissipated they become a mere vapor, an aroma, retaining, however, all the peculiar traits and characteristics of the life they have lived. In this condition they hover around those to whom they are attracted, to be breathed in with the atmosphere, to fire the blood with passion, and be reincarnated, born again on earth, to appear as another individual. You are thus surrounded by the spirit of a former mistress of the doctor, which is slowly entering into your blood, feeding the infant you loathe: Spirit condensing in this manner is forming another body. You see, then, that here is another chain which holds you fast to the doctor, a chain that cannot easily be broken. Destroy your body, and you hold this spirit in subjection, preventing its reincarnation; you use it, united to your own, as a force to project, to poison, to influence both body and mind of him you hate. Go then! procure prussic acid, and take it! Rest assured I will be with you!

“He was gone, and I lay for long hours thinking of

his words. I don't think I have forgotten one of them, and I give them to you as I heard them. My resolve is taken; the poison is before me. Grieve not for me, love! I go that I may live for you! I will yet be as pure in spirit as in motive; for I am impure merely from the inoculation of Dr. Parker's spirit. When I am done with him the poison will have all returned to him. I assure you, my love, that I have no hesitancy, no fear, in taking this step. To me death is sweeter than life, even though it were annihilation, which I know it is not. I go that I may be free. I will see you often, and I pray God that I may be visible to you. Good-bye! your own

“INA GRAY.”

To undertake to describe the sensations of La Velle during these few days would be a vain task. To say the least, he had “sounded the depths”—but not of human anguish. Indeed, he had passed beyond that. Anguish takes its rise from blighted affections, and the laying waste of cherished plans, the destruction of our hopes. Hence it must spring from selfishness. In his love for Ina he had lost self. He had expected nothing, made no plans involving future possession, built no hopes of *future* pleasure. Content with the present, feeling the pulsations of her love thrill his entire being, he thanked God, and asked no more. From the moment when he became satisfied of her death, a load was lifted from his soul, and heaven seemed to take possession of that uncertainty which had been killing him.

The voice whispered to him again: “It is folly to grieve over that which *is*. Every tear shed over

lost treasures is a rebuke to that kind Providence who giveth and who taketh His *own*. The more spiritual one is, the fewer treasures will he have on earth, and the less he will grieve, like a child, over broken toys. Be calm, be patient, and wait." So Don read the letter over and over again, with a smile on his face and a puzzled thought in his mind: "The stranger again! the man with the slouch hat and cloak! Is he an evil spirit or is he good?" As he mused, suddenly the tolling of a church bell told him it was the day of Ina's burial.

CHAPTER XV.

INSANITY.

TIME wore on, but the doctor grew no better. All that science could do was of no avail. Stimulants and sedatives were of no use, for in the course of time his stomach retained nothing but water. Food, undigested, was thrown out, sometimes even while partaking of it. His condition was pitiable in the extreme. Confined in a strait-jacket, with feet lashed to the bedposts, he writhed and raved at times, and then would fall into a lethargic state, seemingly unconscious of surroundings, lowly muttering to himself, suddenly to be followed by wild shrieks of "Take her away! take her away!" accompanied by the most violent efforts to free himself, during which, notwithstanding his bonds, two or three strong men were required to hold him on the bed. The wildest profanity broke from his frothing lips the while, anon followed by piteous pleadings for freedom to roam in the green woods, to escape from his dread tormentors. For he often saw many others besides Ina. He said they came with chains and instruments of torture, often throwing dust on him, which burned as fire. As if in

corroboration of the fact, his person was covered with blotches and pimples altogether unlike any disease known to the profession. A bath of water, either warm or cold, only aggravated and increased his torment. He scarcely resembled the man of a few months ago. Wild-eyed, haggard, and unkempt, bones almost protruding from the skin, his neck elongated like a turtle's, his mouth exuding froth mingled with curses, pleadings, and vain attempts at prayer—such was Dr. Parker under the influence of Ina's curse, or an *hypnotic spell*, alternately raving like some caged wild beast, or listlessly gazing with a meaningless stare, helpless, idiotic.

One morning Mr. Albee called on Don and requested him to go and call on Dr. Parker with him. Don refused pointblank, saying: "His works have found him out! I don't want to meet the devils he has invoked by his conduct. Let God's justice be done!"

"Ah," said Mr. Albee, "the Master cast out devils, and it is the duty and high prerogative of every professed Christian to do the same. But they say he is insane! I don't think he is possessed by devils at all; let us go and see."

"No," said Don. "I will not go. Besides, you have no way of knowing except by his acts."

"There you mistake," said Mr. Albee; "if there are devils, then I can see them."

"Well, Mr. Albee, if you really wish to visit him, why not get the Catholic priest, Father

O'Brien, to go with you? He knows how to exorcise evil spirits."

Mr. Albee, acting upon this suggestion, persuaded Father O'Brien to accompany him. They found the doctor in one of his lucid intervals. He fixed his eyes upon the aged priest, and almost instantly his features were distorted beyond recognition; his eyes fairly blazed with hatred.

"Why do you come here? reprobate! pretender of holiness!" he almost shrieked. "Away with you! you refused to offer up a prayer for poor misguided Ina, or to ask God to rest her soul in peace! It is you who have left her soul on earth to torment me! Away with you!" And he made a spring as if to seize the priest, forgetting that he was bound. His feet being fast to the bedposts, prevented his getting far, but his body twisted itself fairly off the bed. He was caught by his attendants and placed back in position, where he was held for a few moments, gnashing his teeth and roaring like a demon. As soon as he was released he sprang upright in the bed, where his body was suspended horizontally, albeit his hands were lashed down by the strait-jacket. Just then the physician entered, and perceiving the condition of things, proceeded to administer a powerful opiate—a difficult task, for his teeth were set like a vice, his lips livid and frothy. It was found impossible to force the medicine down his throat, and hypodermic injection was resorted to. With a gasp his mouth

opened, and he groaned, "Oh, God! they are throwing dust into my blood! Oh, Ina! you are terribly avenged!" and sank down helpless as a child.

Meantime Father O'Brien was on his knees, holding a crucifix in one hand, fumbling his beads with the other, muttering an unintelligible jargon in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew, which possibly God might understand, but which no one present could. Mr. Albee was walking with rapid strides up and down the room, muttering, "Gibberish! gibberish!" He paused in front of the physician, as soon as quiet was restored, and asked:

"Sir, what manner of disease is this?"

"Insanity, sir! A commission will examine him to-morrow, and I hope he will be removed to the insane asylum, where he ought to have been some time ago."

"Please tell me, doctor, what is insanity?"

"It is a disease of the mind."

"Ah! What causes it?"

"I frankly admit that I am unable to answer that question. There are so many producing causes that a specific cause for any particular case, involving so many symptoms, is difficult to ascertain."

"Are not the causes threefold; i. e. physical, natural, and spiritual?"

"Undoubtedly the two first-named may be the prime causes of insanity, but I know nothing of spiritual causes."

Here Father O'Brien, having finished counting his beads and Latin incantation, crossed himself and joined in the conversation by saying :

“You say you know nothing of spiritual causes ! Is not the case of Nebuchadnezzar to the point ?—eating grass with the beasts of the field ! If such should happen nowadays would he not be declared insane by you professional men ? And the cause of it—‘ a voice fell from heaven saying.’ And yet you say you know nothing of spiritual causes !”

“Oh, so far as the Bible is concerned I *believe* it, but in the practice of medicine we look to facts for our knowledge of causes, and not to hearsay or belief. I am satisfied that most of the causes of mental aberration may be traced to physical disturbance, or the violation of laws appertaining to the physical system.”

“You certainly ignore the sayings of the New Testament there,” said Mr. Albee, “for exactly such cases as this before us are there said to be the works of devils, and one considerable part of the Saviour’s work was the casting out of devils. And you, Father O’Brien, as the representative of the Saviour, are commissioned and commanded to raise the dead and cast out devils in His name.”

The holy father crossed himself and began to tell his beads, while Mr. Albee continued : “And lest you have any doubt about it being the work of devils, let me describe what I see here with this man. But before doing so, let me cite to you the

case of Mr. Phelps, who, as you will remember, doctor, was bitten by a rabid dog last year, and died of a disease you name hydrophobia. Well, doctor, I watched that case from the beginning to the end, and the same thing is going on here. What I saw in that case I see in this. You recognize that some diseases are contagious, do you not, doctor?"

"Most certainly I do."

"Allow me, then, to say, contagion is simply the growth or expansion of spirit. Smallpox is only a physical disease, but it is contagious because the spirit of it is so subtile, easy of propagation, and of rapid growth. In other words, so easy of division, subdivision, and expansion. It is like some weeds, whose seeds are wafted far and wide by the winds, taking root wherever they strike in congenial soil. It is the spirit in the seed that causes development, and the spirit causes all growth by division, expansion. In the case of Mr. Phelps I had a great desire to see the growth of the poison, and falling into trance with eyes wide open and all my mental faculties in normal condition, I saw his body transparent, observed the combustion in the blood caused by the introduction of air in breathing, and noted the changes in his blood as the poison developed itself, until the dog spirit became so strong that the human spirit was crowded out, all unconscious, while the consciousness became that of the dog, so that he whined, growled, barked, and bit like

a dog. Now that virus was inoculated into him by the bite of a dog, but the disease was a disease of the spirit, for the active principle of all things is spirit, and when spirit meets spirit by inoculation or otherwise, the grosser drives out the finer by combining with that like itself. Now an abrasion or wound of the mind may be effected by a word, a shock, or excitement of any kind. Evil spirits, taking advantage of such circumstances, infuse their poison into the abrasion of the mind and grow gradually therein, poisoning first thought, imagination, and feeling; gradually changing every action of blood, till at last the rabid spirit enters, usurping all the functions of the body, destroying or paralyzing memory, dethroning reason, and taking conscious possession of the temple of God, wherein man dwells through reason, justice, and love. That there are monstrous spirits in existence is demonstrated by the fact of their being embodied in reptiles, monsters of the deep, venomous worms and insects, deadly in influence, and antagonistic to man in every sense of the word. The boundary between different grades of spirits is not sharply defined and fixed, but one blends into another so gradually that the transition is not perceptible. It is only by strong contrast that distinctions are established. A poisonous substratum of spirit, termed evil, ignorance, vice, etc., underlies that grade of spirit which we term human, and the spray of its tempest-tossed waves often are caught up with

the ascending vapors of this ocean of evil, and drawn into a vortex of what we term good. There ferment diseases as poisonous and fatal as hydrophobia. Whence come wars, pestilence, and famine? Whence come revolutions that destroy peaceful homes, beautiful cities, and opulent governments? I answer, by an abrasion of the public mind, of the so-called lower strata of spirit. By agitation, excitement, wrongs, poverty, this ocean of evil—upon the bosom of which civilization floats like a scum—is agitated, torn, rent, storm-tossed. Its exhalations are inoculated into the human spirit, and we have all these phases of insanity in the public mass, as we have it in this poor form before us. There is public as well as private insanity, more properly obsession. And this substratum, upon which all worlds are cushioned, personifies itself in all things repugnant to true humanity. These personalities are either long-lived or ephemeral, depending upon the public will. Such are soulless corporations, irresponsible governments, dogmatic priestcraft, and all things that antagonize freedom of choice and act. These things, being the creations of man's will, are totally void of sympathy and conscience—soulless. They are obsessing powers, devils, entering into the minds of mankind by education to usurp all clear sight and reason, perverting all love. The banking system, a creature of the law, has obsessed the public mind to that extent that God is dethroned in the human

heart, and gold has taken His place. They continue to instill the poison into the body politic, through the wound made by greed. This is indeed the hydrophobic age."

After a pause Mr. Albee continued :

"The same thing is as true of an individual, a company, a class, as of the mass or aggregate. One's desires may be—in fact, are—personified according to the laws of the will, and such personality, charged with the virus of insanity, projected upon an individual will, may produce the same or a similar effect as the bite of a rabid dog, only in such case the bite is in the mind instead of in the flesh. The mind must first be bitten. It is done by agitation, excitement, grief, religious enthusiasm, or anything that disturbs its equanimity. In the case before us Ina committed suicide with vengeance in her heart. Dr. Parker was aware of her animosity, and the pangs of a guilty conscience lacerated his guilty soul. The will of Ina has projected here a demon, who stands over him now. I see him—a head bristling with serpents ; and such a head ! If you could see it as I see it you could understand what I now try to explain to you. His body is a compound of the reptile and the mammal. The lower part is that of a lizard with scales and monstrous claws. Its body is that of a turtle elongated, and covered with spots like a leopard. The neck and face are like a man's with four eyes, a nose like a hog's, with hair bristling with serpents which

spit venom into that poor mortal lying like one dead before you. The four eyes emit rays, red, yellow, blue, and dead black. He sits upon the breast of your patient, doctor, and his hands, like an eagle's claws, are fixed in his flesh. Can you not cast him out?" cried Mr. Albee, turning frantically to Father O'Brien.

Mr. Albee was a sight worth beholding at that moment. His eyes were upturned, and a look of such intense horror was in his face that nothing but dogmatic intolerance and agnostic self-sufficiency could have been unimpressed with the truth of what he described.

Even as it was, it took some moments for the holy father to shake off the spell, mutter a prayer, and cross himself before replying, "Ah, my son! the age of miracles has passed; let us pray!" and suiting the action to the word he fell upon his knees and actually prayed in English, without counting his beads.

But the physician, although impressed by the fervor and evident honesty of the speaker, felt Dr. Parker's pulse, and would have looked at his tongue if it had been possible, muttering to himself:

"It may all be true, but I don't know; I'll stick to science after all. Diseases are physical, or at least spring from physical causes."

But Mr. Albee was too much carried away by what he saw and the ideas he had enunciated, and being a devout Christian withal he approached

the bed, saying, as he laid his hands upon the form before him : " Peace, be still ! In the name of——"

But he never finished that sentence, for a shock as of lightning felled him to the floor.

In the morning the commission in lunacy found Dr. Parker dead.

CHAPTER XVI.

A MONSTER'S BIRTH IN SPIRIT.

WHEN Mr. Albee left on his visit to Dr. Parker, Don locked his door and entered his cabinet. Many changes had been made in its arrangement since the reader and I entered it. On the floor, enclosing the tripod, was a huge circle painted in the three primary colors, red, yellow, and blue, and in regular spaces were painted the twelve signs of the Zodiac, as in a horoscope. The ruby light is exchanged for one of a dull yellow, and there are many magic mirrors now, instead of one. They are of all colors, black, white, yellow, red, blue, and compound tints, some made of baked clay, of glass, of paper, cloth, gold leaf, etc. This day, however, Don arranged before him a small box, closed on the four sides, with a light within shining through a small round hole one-sixteenth of an inch in diameter, shaded by a piece of orange paper. Ever since Ina's burial Don had been uneasy in his mind; the old sadness and unrest returned with redoubled force. His sleep is troubled and unrefreshing. His dreams are of monsters, who seem to clutch at him in a friendly way, apparently deriving strength and

satisfaction from contact with him. Try as he will, he cannot banish the consciousness from his mind, that somehow, in some unaccountable manner, Ina's cause was his own.

Lying awake nights, he felt strange influences, like something cupping different parts of his person, a drawing, sucking sensation, which left him each day weaker and weaker, accompanied by a frantic desire to commit suicide. All the time he sensed weird, goblin-like influences—a rustling, a whispering, stealthy steps, pushings, and caresses that greatly disturbed him.

In vain he walked upon the bluffs, gazing at the scenes that Ina had loved, or sat musing upon the old log for hours, hoping to get a glimpse of her dear face. All in vain; no Ina came. Even the inner voice ceased its counsel, and the peaceful ecstatic feeling he loved so well, which came over him at Ina's presence, and presaged the presence of his second self, came no more.

In vain he sat for hours, asking questions of his mirror. Failing to get answers, he busied himself making new ones, imagining that they lost their potency by use or that different colors were necessary to conform to his own changing conditions. It was all in vain. At last the thought struck him to make and use "the star mirror," considered the most potent of all. To this end he constructed the box referred to.

This morning he is feeling uncommonly bitter toward Dr. Parker. Mr. Albee's request that he

should accompany him on his visit seemed to kindle hell fires within him. He could see nothing in Dr. Parker but an embodiment of all that is infernal. No excuses for his acts impressed his mind. "He is the cause of all my misery," sighed Don; "I'll destroy every vestige of him," said he, grinding his teeth. And suiting the action to the word, he looked around the studio for something to remind him of the doctor, but saw nothing save Ina's portrait turned face to the wall. Seizing upon it, with eyes like a basilisk, he thought to smash it over a chair; but his eyes caught hers, as he had painted them in her innocence and purity, with all the girlish mischief and trust looking at him, transformed now into something magical, heavenly. No wonder the hard look left his own face as he gazed at hers! No wonder he staggered as he set the frame against the wall, and gazed spellbound at the transformation! No wonder he was softened till the tears rolled down his cheeks!

The paroxysm of weeping soon passed away, and taking the picture reverently in his hands, he carefully hung it in his cabinet behind "the star mirror," so as to face himself when gazing. Then he wrote these words on his slate, which he hung underneath the picture: "Oh, thou infinite spirit! Thou who art all that is!—Thou who art the prayer, and the answer thereof!—show me, this hour, the workings of a curse! Let me see

its potency, its effects, and the means of its operation! Oh, give me an object-lesson! Thou that art now and evermore!" and closing the door he sat on the tripod gazing into the fiery eye that looked out of the box at him. He essayed to get his mind into the meditative channel in which heretofore he had found calmness, tranquillity, "Samadhi," but his mind would not concentrate. There was no focus to his thoughts upon anything but Dr. Parker, and these were agitating rather than tranquilizing. His feelings grew more and more bitter. He essayed to call up thoughts of love, and tried to see Ina's face as he had seen it in the picture. Vain task! The face came, but it was distorted with a demoniac look of vengeance; thoughts of love mingled so with thoughts of wrong done to his love that there could be no calmness.

At sight of her face, gradually there stole into his consciousness sounds of whisperings, which, growing louder and louder, became an indistinct murmur of voices, incoherent, unintelligible. Then he became conscious of feeling cold, as if a cold wave of air was striking on his back. A feeling of horror crept into his mind as something cold and slimy crept up from his feet. On it came, without form, but tangible, creeping: now it is on his stomach, now on his chest. He tries to cry out, but his voice is unheard; he tries to leap from the tripod, but is powerless to move; while slowly—oh, *so slowly!*—*the thing* approaches

his throat. He feels the blood pressing behind his eyes, his head is full, the *thing* has clasped his throat, and he loses consciousness with the thought in his mind, "This is death." But not for long was he dead.

Suddenly he awoke, sensing an awfully disagreeable stench. "Where am I?" he gasped as he opened his eyes in dense darkness; but no answer came. Gradually his eyes adjusted themselves to his surroundings, and he saw dimly, in a foggy atmosphere, a large room, the entire floor of an old building on the banks of the river, formerly used as a tobacco factory, but long since unoccupied, which he had visited many times. He saw, I say, dimly, an immense crowd of people. The stench was almost unbearable, but he became used to that, and began to take an interest in what was being done there. Gradually he became aware that the building was filled with a crowd, and the light grew stronger in the center of that motley crowd. Making his way, by much pushing, through the throng, whose touch as he passed left a cold, slimy sensation, nearer to the light, he found that it arose from a smouldering fire which naked men and women were fanning and feeding with some objects which he could not discern. Upon a raised platform, overlooking the strange performance, sat Don's old-time friend—"the stranger"—*he with the slouched hat and dark cloak*; while by his side, to Don's inexpressible grief and horror, stood the object of his love,

the beautiful Ina, no longer sparkling with mirth and joyous good nature, but with set features, intense look, and glare as of some wild beast. Her hair, tangled in masses, fell on her shoulders, writhing and twisting together in huge clusters, only to unfold and curl again, ceaselessly, like a nest of serpents. All around was a sea of heads, of all tribes and nationalities on the face of the globe, and of tribes and nationalities long since extinct. The ancients were there in quaint costumes or none at all, and representatives of every sect and religion that have ever existed.

As Don gazed upon this strange gathering the old tobacco factory seemed to enlarge itself. It became immense, till at last it had no limits at all that he could perceive. The whole expanse was filled by this heterogeneous mass of gibbering, malicious, unforgiving, revengeful beings. They marched with banners; they shouted and they sang; they gathered in knots and crowds as if listening to some one speaking. Some were naked, while most of them were clad in various costumes. A continual roar of voices, like the wind among trees, confused and mingled voices and dialects, merged into unintelligibility, till Don despaired of learning anything touching the object of this meeting, and turned his eyes upon the center, where the fire burned more and more brightly, as it was fed by the naked men and women. Pushing his way nearer he became aware that there was a continual passing from

the multitude, of objects which were cast into the fire. Looking closely, he saw that they cast in living reptiles, lizards, tarantulas, centipedes, toads, and all deadly things, each nation or tribe contributing those things which they considered most deadly, loathsome, and offensive. It was a spiritual concentration of evil.

As the strangeness of the scene familiarized itself to the mind of Don, his perceptions cleared, his intuitions began to teach him, and he awoke to the startling fact that he was a spirit among spirits, and was attending a conclave of the dead, representing all ages, climes, races, tribes, nationalities, and sects. He became correspondingly intent, trying to ascertain the object of this meeting. Suddenly he of the cloak raised a wand. The multitude became silent in a moment, and in a loud voice he said :

“The material of the altar is complete ; now for the sacrifice ! Let nothing be offered except such things as are an abomination to the Lord.”

“Heretics are such,” shouted a Catholic Bishop.

“The authors of the inquisition are an abomination to the Lord !” shouted the ghost of Martin Luther.

“Allah be praised !” cried a Mahomedan, “cast in all dogs of Christians !”

Shout upon shout arose until the whole heavens echoed and roared with mutual denunciations. Sect cursed sect, nation cursed nation, individuals cursed each other, till it was found there was no

unison, and the meeting would break up in a row. Again the wand commanded silence. Already each creed or sect was massing its hosts and displaying its banners, getting ready to seize upon all others as an abomination, fit only for the sacrifice.

“Hush!” said the commander; “the universal sentiment of mankind is the voice of the Lord! There is one thing universally execrated among men. It is a liar!”

“Bring him forth! Who is he?” queried a little man with a lantern in his hand. “Catholics! Protestants! Heathen! All of you! I have been vainly searching, night and day, with this lantern, for an honest man these hundreds of years! Cast all in! they are only fit food for the gods, and I doubt very much if it prove a palatable dish. If liars are an abomination to the Lord, and He wants such for a sacrifice, ye need not search for one; take any, or all.”

Then stepped forth a Buddhist Rahab and said: “If the universal sentiment of mankind is the voice of the Lord, there can be no Lord, because there is no universal sentiment. The sentiment of one age is not that of another, nor is the sentiment of one nation that of another. The same thing is true of sects, classes, and individuals. If there is any Lord, who shall speak for Him? who shall declare what sentiments are an abomination to Him?”

“I declare the counsel of God,” cried a man,

clad in long robes of black, holding a crucifix aloft, with a mitre on his head, "I declare!"

"Down with the priest, the abomination of the Lord! A hypocrite! a blasphemer! a pretender of holiness!" roared the crowd as with one voice.

A great tumult followed, of rushing, struggling, knocking down, tumbling in heaps, with shouts and yells, groans and curses, mingled with prayers; while Don, fearing for his own safety, began to look around for a place of exit.

In the midst of this pandemonium up went the wand again, and all was hushed in a moment. Then spake he of the cloak:

"We have not met to philosophize nor to abuse each other, but to carry out the will of that universal Providence we all worship. And we all agree that He wishes vengeance taken upon the wicked. We know this, for every human heart feels glad when justice is done to the wrongdoer, and the heart echoes the voice of the Lord. Now we are called upon to be God's instrument of vengeance in this particular case. The universal sentiment, alike of savage and of civilized man (if, indeed, there are any truly civilized), is that rape is the most execrable crime which can be committed. And now we are to punish a crime that exceeds it as the expanse of heaven exceeds the small earth. Dr. Parker has committed a crime unknown in the annals of crime. His devilish ingenuity hath extracted

the devil's power of control over mortals from the secret laboratories of hell, and, lacking even the pity of the damned, hath essayed to perpetuate this crime by calling from the darkest crypts of the abyss a spirit of whom the *devil himself is ashamed*, and infusing it into this pure virgin of heaven while in an hypnotic sleep, making it possible for this loathsome spirit to be born again among men, again to have a hold on heaven by reason of this virgin through the love of the expectant mother. But this has been partly thwarted by Ina's taking a bold leap from earth to your midst, asking for the help of God to punish this wretch, by taking from him all that hath been given to him—his spirit, his intelligence, his will, his very soul, if such be possible. The curse of Ina is even now destroying the life of his body, but it will take the united curses of the vast concourse of the spirit world to totally eradicate his spirit from the universe, and thus put an end to the growth of this prostitution of the powers of heaven, *this hypnotic crime*. The monster that Ina's curse has invoked is ephemeral, i. e., it depends wholly for its power upon her will; but the female heart is full of pity, and in the lapse of the ages, at sight of his sufferings, she is liable to forgive him the wrong he has done. Then this monster of her volition will die; Dr. Parker will be born again among men, with his soul still reeking with the filth of unexpiated crime, again to multiply himself and perpetuate crime, till

there shall be no good left! The altar of sacrifice is complete! Bring forth thy unwelcome, undesired, unloved, unborn baby, thou daughter of heaven! sweet sinless Ina! It is a fit sacrifice, not to appease the wrath of God, but to inflame it—an abomination, a stench in the nostrils of the Lord! Poor little lifeless lump of clay," he exclaimed, stretching out his open hands over it and looking up to heaven, "we realize that thou art only a nucleus of attraction around which that monstrous spirit hovers! We send thee back to him who called thee from the abyss! we send thee back through this vortex of fire, tintured with the anathema of all lovers of order, love, and decency, praying, dear Father, that this curse may live till thy vengeance be satisfied!"

He bowed his head, and taking the little bundle from Ina's arms, stepped from the platform and cast it into the flames. A spluttering, a hissing, and the flames lowered themselves till darkness obscured the scene, when a voice again rang out like a trumpet: "Let the priesthood of the fire organize." In the course of a few minutes the flames again burst forth, disclosing a strange, weird spectacle. A circle of twenty-one, men and women, totally naked, of many nations, climes, and times, had formed around the fire, and holding each other by the hands, were marching slowly around to the left, chanting, in doleful, long-drawn strains, some not unmusical, the wild

barbaric words. The flames shot higher, the circle quickened its movements, the drums beat, and another circle formed outside the first one, which revolved to the right. Faster and faster they whirled, till, letting go of hands, each one of the inner circle struck into a dance, whirling, leaping, and bounding like a top, to the left; while the outer circle did the same to *the right* — a wheel within a wheel, revolving in different directions. Drums beat outside, and the multitude sang, shouted, roared, and danced, all in perfect time, though in such apparent disorder and confusion. A perfect pandemonium; and yet a certain harmony breathed through all, intoxicating, alluring, till Don, catching the general feeling, felt like joining in the mad revelry. Faster and faster revolved the circles. Wilder became the shouts and cries, while the gestures, contortions of bodies, the violent swaying of heads from shoulder to shoulder, the frantic leaping increased as the flames rose higher and higher. Froth oozed from gasping mouths; tongues lolled out blood-red. A translucent yellowish mist seemed gradually to envelop the dancers and move in circles with them. Don noticed that this yellow mist issued from the bodies of the dancers, and was attracted to the fire. This mist increased in density, till the dancers were half obscured. They seemed then, to Don, like demons dancing in a flame.

At last, one by one, those of the inner circle

dropped down and lay like the dead, while those in motion passed over them as if there were no obstacles in the way. At last the inner circle all lay prone upon the ground. In some unaccountable manner they had, unperceived by Don, arranged themselves with their heads pointing towards the fire ; but the outer circle increased the rapidity of its motions. Then there began an agitation in the fire. It swelled up as a bubble, and bursting at the top, black smoke issued therefrom like a volcano. But it was heavy, and rolling down over the flames, was reabsorbed at the base, accompanied by a hoarse roar like the waves of the ocean as they break upon the shore. Gradually the fire decreased in size and brilliancy, till it was like twilight, in which semi-obscurity the burning pile seemed to open in the midst, as if cleft from the top, showing some dark object struggling amidst the flickering flames. It grows stronger ; it assumes shape ; it lashes the fire as a sea-monster does the ocean ; fire-sparks fly from it in streams. It crawls out and goes, like a serpent, thrice around the fire, slowly turning an indescribable face towards the people as it goes. Crawling, serpent-like, it had no legs, a body like an alligator, with scales of a dark color on one side and orange on the other ; its body ended abruptly, the caudal extremity terminating like that of a crawfish, while a head, somewhat human-like, projected, without the appearance of a neck, from the

other end. The eyes, small and fierce, stood wide apart, projecting as if choked out. A huge snout took the place of a nose, with wide, distended nostrils ; and the mouth opened, blood-red, lipless, from ear to ear, without chin or lower jaw. Raising itself on its tail, it shook itself out straight like a column full ten feet high, without a sign of a limb. Then the skin opened, like flaps covering pockets, and limbs projected therefrom, not unlike a man's in shape, but terminating in huge claws or talons. Stretching out its arms, it disclosed wings like those of a bat, extending from its hips to its hands. Snorting like a porpoise, it strolled around the fire a few times, then walked deliberately through it, lashing it with its tail, and stamping it till the fire died out and left a soft phosphorescent glow illuminating the room like pale moonlight. Every vestige of the fire had disappeared, but the inner circle lay there still, while the outer circle, having long since ceased moving, stood clasping each other's hands, like an impassable barrier.

The monster, as if in great wrath, with its tail lashed the earth, which it dug up with its claws, vomiting fire and smoke at the little circle. It bellowed in an awful voice, but all in vain. Its rage came back upon it : the fire from its mouth, the smoke from its nostrils, recoiled from contact with the circle. Even the lightning-like sweep of its claws and tail could

not touch one of the sleepers who surrounded it. They were like a wall of adamant.

All at once a trumpet sounded, and a voice proclaimed :

“Dr. Parker is dead ! he comes ! prepare for the judgment !”

A dead silence prevailed. Even the monster stood in rapt attention. A dark speck appeared in the circle, surrounded by a small halo of silvery white.

“It is his soul !” announced the trumpet. “Now behold how it clothes itself with a form !”

Gradually the white vapor increased in size and arranged itself in form, darkening and becoming more dense as the outline became visible. Shortly a human form was seen stretched upon a couch, in a strait-jacket, with feet lashed to the bedposts. It was Dr. Parker just as he was at his death.

Then arose the master of ceremonies—*he of the cloak*—and said, stretching forth the wand :

“There, lying all unconscious before you, Apollyon, is your charge. You will take from him all that the great God hath given him, for he hath only abused the gifts, turning them into false channels. For the sake of knowledge he hath destroyed the happiness of others. To build up a fortune for himself he hath robbed the poor. Believing not in God, nor in the indestructibility

of human life, he hath taken upon himself to stand in the place of God Almighty in *controlling* that freedom of the will and of choice and action vouchsafed to every mortal on earth, by means of which only is heaven attainable. Thus hath he set himself at variance with the purposes of God in order to aggrandize himself or to experience a momentary pleasure. Of all the gifts Providence hath bestowed upon him there is none left worth saving. He hath not improved upon his intelligence by using it for the benefit of others, for self hath been the underlying motive of every act. Had he improved upon his ten talents he would have discovered a soul in himself and others, and thus have found out God. Love is immortal, if he had any of it; but there is nothing left of him but brute instinct. In annihilation he believed; let the individuality known as Dr. Parker cease to be! It will take long ages of slow disintegration before he will get down to the base from whence he came! Dog he was, let him be dog again! As for you, Apollyon, you are as eternal as *human hatred of evil*. So long as one human heart harbors hate for the wrongdoer shalt thou exist, for thou art the concentrated wrath of all time, a product of man's anger; void of pity, conscience, and soul. Hate, animated by a modicum of moral sentiment, monster of the infernal regions of man's incomprehensible soul, away!"

While this address had been going on Dr.

Parker had regained consciousness. He did not know he was dead. He seemed surprised at the strange faces crowded around, and raising himself, asked for the doctor, whereupon Apollyon stepped from the crowd with his hideous mouth wide open, looking as if his head were half cut in two. At the same time that his eye fell upon Apollyon, Ina came from the crowd, whereupon he yelled,

“Take her away! she is dead! Why does she torment me so? take her away! Oh, doctor, loose these bonds! I am as well as anyone! give me my freedom!”

Ina immediately set him free. Leaping like a tiger from the couch, he struck like a madman to the right and left, getting away from Ina as fast as he could. But Apollyon with a fearful roar seized him by the neck, and holding him up, shook him till he was as limp as a rag, then dropped him on the ground, saying in an unearthly voice,

“Now, dog, salute your mistress!”

The doctor raised himself upon all-fours and went whining to Ina, fawning around her like a dog licking her feet. She, stooping, clasped a chain about his neck and placed the end thereof in the hand of Apollyon.

“Now God have mercy, when we have none: Go!” cried a loud voice.

A roar! a crash! as if all the thunderbolts of heaven had been let loose. The old tobacco fac-

tory groaned, shook, trembled, reeled like a drunken man. A flash of lurid lightning illumined the place for a moment, during which Don saw the building falling upon him and the flying crowd. Then he knew no more.

CHAPTER XVII.

DOUBLE AGAIN.

PASSING down the street early the next morning, on turning a corner I came "pat" upon Don La Velle.

"Why, Don, where away so early?" I asked, as we clasped hands.

"I might retort in kind, if I were at all curious about your doings," he replied; "but if you wish to know, I've only been down to view the ruins of the old tobacco factory. It has blown down, though perhaps you don't know"—

"Oh, but how did *you* know, my friend? Perhaps I am upon the same errand. You seem to insinuate that you have superior means of gaining information."

"Not superior to yours, if you had been there as I was," he replied, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"You there! How did it happen that you were out such a night? Look at the ruins along the river, the old fish market blown all to pieces, the wharf-boat high up on the bank, trees uprooted, and the steeple of St. Margarete lying in the

street ! It was a fearful night ! How did you happen to be out, Don ?”

“Oh, come, and I’ll show you,” said Don ; and laying his hand on my arm he turned me around, and strode along at a rapid rate. He usually walked leisurely, but now he seemed in a hurry. We said nothing ; in fact, he gave me no time to talk ; it was as much as I wanted to do to keep pace with him.

We soon arrived at the studio, and up the stairs Don went, two or three at a stride, while I came slowly panting after. Arrived at the landing, he began fumbling in his pocket for the key. “Confound the fellow,” he muttered, “he has locked me out !” As I was opening my lips to ask what he meant, the door flew open and Don was in the room holding it open for me to enter, with a broad grin on his face. However much I was astonished, he seemed not to notice it, but immediately threw open the blinds and let in the first rays of the rising sun. They streamed across the floor, like a bloody streak, towards the half-opened door of the cabinet, to which Don walked, muttering to himself, “I thought I shut the door when I came out.” Judge of my astonishment, when, pushing the door wide open, he disclosed another Don sitting motionless on the tripod, staring with unconscious eyes at the yellow light in the star mirror, while a stray beam of the sunlight kissed his pallid cheek with a lurid luster.

I was in a manner prepared for such a manifestation, having witnessed it before, but being of a skeptical turn of mind, had half reasoned it away by calling it an optical illusion ; so when I saw the two together again, I thought to myself, "Another optical illusion." How prone we are to "catch at straws," like a drowning man ! How we do love to explain away the supernatural ! What flimsy excuses or explanations satisfy this wonderful egoism which, while surrounded by the most wonderful mysteries that we are always trying to solve, and realizing that we ourselves are the greatest mystery of all, is yet so easily content with some trumped-up explanation merely showing our ignorance. We seem prouder of our own ignorance, and the explanations of mysteries springing therefrom, than we are at the discovery of any new law in nature. Egotism admits of nothing new. To keep everything down to the old level is very pleasing.

So I had tried to still the voice which told me that here was the revelation of a great truth, by quoting what some so-called scientist has called "optical illusions." In my thought I had denied the truth of God by doubting the truth of my eyes, the principal means, the windows, through which He reveals His manifestations to us. But here he was again—"The Double Man"—before me—one conscious, the other looking like a dead man. "Which is the real man ?" I queried, "and

have I been walking and talking with a spirit and not known it !”

But Don did not leave me long with my questions. Laying his hand upon the sleeping one, he gently shook him, saying, “Awake, sleeper ! it is sunrise.”

The sleeper trembled, gave a little start, gasped, closed his eyes, opened them again, got clumsily down from the stool, stretched himself, yawned, staggered to the box mirror, and extinguished the light, seemingly oblivious of our presence. Turning, he first perceived me, and stretching out his hand, exclaimed :

“You here so soon ? I have had a fear——” Then perceiving the other, he sprang into his outstretched arms, exclaiming, “Oh, my father ! how glad I am to see you again !” then holding him at arm’s length gazed lovingly in his face, the while questioning, “Why have you been gone so long, when I needed you so much !”

“Ah, my son, your own fault ! How little you understand your own nature and the subtle laws of spirit ! How could I come when you had shut the door of your own soul ? This dark experience with Ina since her death has totally unfitted you to hear me or receive my influence. Please do not interrupt me. Allow me to explain the law. Love, *per se*, is divine ; it is God. Under the influence of your love for Ina was I called forth. It was not your mirror-gazing, as you supposed, that separated your spiritual body from the

material; it was the pure love of your soul for the soul of Ina that did the work. Well, now, if soul-love is God, a selfish love is the devil. Ina's love for you was *diverted from soul to matter*, or passion, through the great wrong Dr. Parker had done her. This wrong absorbed her mind till she could think of nothing else but herself and him. All the love she had for you *returned to herself*, and there fermented, or from the sweetest thing in heaven or on earth became the sourest and bitterest. In this putrefaction, this turning of love wrong side out, love fell into bitterest hate. She died with a curse on her lips, and as she or anyone else dies, so they remain. Her curse will resound throughout the halls of Eternity, and echo down the vistas of time, till forgiveness rejuvenates her soul. This is your work. You cannot rest—no peace can come to you—till you are free from the contamination of her curse; and this cannot be till she forgives the doctor, and ceases to curse. Would you learn how her curse came to affect you? Listen! When her love fell into such bitter hate it gradually withdrew its potency, its sweetness, from you, and as her spirit had become closely blended or amalgamated with yours some portion of your spirit went with hers. Because of your sympathy with her you began to think of your great loss. Thus self was stirred with indignation and you felt like cursing also. It was thus that you sought the grave of Ina and bowed down in a selfish grief, in the

very midst of a "black magic" circle of devils who were called together to wreak vengeance upon poor, ignorant, misguided Dr. Parker. You caught the spirit there, and gathered, from her new-made grave, dust, every atom of which was animated by the malignancy of her spirit. Thus you cast her curse upon the doctor, to his ruin as well as your own. True, the dust was only a symbol, but everything is symbolic. These bodies are mainly dust, symbols of that primal curse after the fall we are told of in the Scriptures. Your prayer written on that slate has been answered, but it is well for you that I was here. The marks on your throat show what malignant spirit was necessarily called up from the abyss to enable you to descend where curses are embodied."

As he spoke I looked at Don's throat, and there, plainly to be seen were the livid marks of the hand that had clasped his neck.

"It now remains," resumed the speaker, "for me to point out the course for you to pursue in order to undo, as far as possible, the evil that has been wrought. Bear in mind that love is God, and love is the only Saviour. Dr. Parker is too far lost for *even the memory* of love to be arrested in time to prevent his being reincarnated as a dog; but Ina may yet be saved through you. Her memory yet retains your image, and her soul the smouldering embers of the love she felt for you. It is for you, then, to become her angel to lead her up to the land of

love and peace. In order to do this, every particle of envy, anger, pride, selfishness, peevishness, and fault-finding must be eliminated from your mind and spirit. In place of these must come an absolute trust, repose, and confidence in Divine Providence, love, and wisdom, till you can cry out from your very soul, 'Father, forgive them, they know not what they do.' You must learn to feel pity for poor Parker—nay, more, you must love him and desire to do him good. Till you attain that condition, do not look for me.

"You need change of place and all surroundings. When that is effected, fasting, diet, prayer, meditation, and daily bathing will fit you for your work. Ere the sun rises again go from here to the far West, to Yellowstone Park in the Rocky Mountains. There, on one of the highest mountains, in a secluded place, near to one of the many springs that boil up from mother earth, you will find 'The Grotto,' in which at present the Wanderer resides. He will teach you."

He ceased speaking, and they clasped each other in an embrace, from which only one emerged—the one with the livid mark on his throat.

The next morning, ere the sun arose, I walked with Don beyond the city limits, where I bade him good-bye and godspeed, after having extracted a pledge to write me fully of all his doings and experiences. I watched him, with his satchel thrown over his shoulder, slowly ascending a little hill, till there was nothing between him

and the dark clouds which lay in the west, upon which the rising sun shone, making a kind of crimson and golden halo around what looked merely like a black mark. Thus he passed out of my sight, but not out of my life, for although I have never seen him since, he sent me long years afterwards the sequel to Ina's curse.

PART II.

THE SEQUEL.

CHAPTER I.

EXPERIENCES OF THE DOUBLE.—THE TRUNK.

LONG years have passed since Don and I parted, years of trials and grief to me ; still I heard nothing of him. Driven at last, through force of circumstances, as we are all driven in this life, I found myself a wanderer in Texas. In the memorable year 1894 the following manuscripts came to me in this manner. One day, in passing the express office in H—, I found an auction sale of unclaimed freight, such as trunks, boxes, portmanteaus, etc., going on. The auctioneer shouted as I passed : “ This trunk was shipped by Don La Velle from some way-station in Montana, two years ago, to one Charles Maru of this place. It has not been claimed, and no trace can be found of the shipper or of the consignee. Our charges on this trunk are three dollars. Who wants it ? I’m bid fifty cents ! Going at fifty cents ! Do I hear no more ? ” Meantime I had pushed my

way through the crowd and examined the trunk, and I bid seventy-five cents. A small black-eyed woman, whose eyebrows met above a prominent nose, bid promptly one dollar. Of course I retired from the contest, for I had bid all the money I had. The trunk was struck off to the woman, who called a drayman to remove it.

I followed, and when an opportunity presented, said to the woman: "Madam, the owner of that trunk was a dear friend of mine many years ago; but I have lost all trace of him—never heard his name called for many years till this day. I wanted the trunk only as a memento of him. I bid seventy-five cents, and it is fortunate for you that I had no more, or you would have paid dear for it. I'll give you all the money I have to know its contents."

Looking me in the eyes for a moment, she replied, "Sir, you are a stranger to me, but you have a kindly look, and I will frankly say to you that I purchased that trunk for its own sake, and not for its contents; come with me and you shall see its contents."

A locksmith was procured when we arrived at her residence. The opened trunk showed mainly a pile of manuscripts in Don La Velle's well-remembered handwriting. As they were of no value to the lady, she readily parted with them for the seventy-five cents I offered. From these papers I collate and elaborate the following tale.

It began as follows:

“MR. CHARLES MARU,

“Dear brother,—As I am about to quit this earth permanently I send the accompanying papers to you. They were written for a dear friend of the long-ago, of whom I can get no trace since 1875. That friend was F. B. Dowd. I trust that you will transfer them to him if you ever have the power to do so. I remain as ever yours, in a love transcending all ordinary love,

“DON LA VELLE.”

A SEQUEL TO INA'S CURSE.

A few reflections may not be out of place ere I begin my narrative. I was always hungry. I always, as a boy, was fond of asking questions, and very easily made to believe what was represented as truth. I read much, but I thought more. Preachers said one thing, but Science said another. The Bible said one thing about creation, while Geology said another. One creed said the world is only six thousand years old, while others say its age is altogether unknown. The great majority say that man exists after death, but some say no. Some believe that God rules, which is, when followed to legitimate conclusions, only fatalism. For if God rules one thing, He rules all, and if so, what is man, and why do nature's laws hold him responsible for his acts? If God rules, He alone is responsible; for He orders and ordains. In this contradiction of ideas and beliefs my youth was passed, with the cry of my soul ever uppermost in my mind, “What is truth?” They said I had a soul to save, and with it a spirit.

I knew of the spirit, for I saw different spirits manifested by different individuals ; but the soul I knew not of. Belief is a necessity of man's existence, for all progress is due thereto. But to ascertain *what to believe* was the question. To say I believe in a future life is logical, but to say I do not believe in it because I do not know is certainly illogical, for we believe in *uncertain things*, while that which we know is a certainty. Belief is the advance guard of knowledge. The spirit ever beckons the soul to explore the vast wilderness of the Unknown. I became an explorer of man. I need hardly say how I arrived at conclusions, but will dogmatically assert that man is threefold in his being— Δ —Soul, *first—primal* ; Spirit, second ; Body, third. This third part, the first and last thing to appear on this earth, is of the least consequence in the search into the unknown. I found that mind is a growth, like a mushroom, out of the rich soil of the primal element—*the soul*. I have learned that the body is its servant, which it subdues and destroys at pleasure. Even its sensations are suspended or enhanced at pleasure. To explore the spirit, then, to learn its laws, its modes of action, became my absorbing occupation. Condensed spirit is the body. From vapor it comes, to vapor it returns. That substantial thing *beyond* vapor, I longed to find. That God beyond heat, the source of fire, the source of thought, the reservoir of consciousness, I set myself the task of finding. By a sys-

tematic course of bodily treatment, which it is not my purpose to explain here, of mental training (as an acrobat or pugilist trains his muscles), I ascertained that a spiritual body may be found in these bodies of ours, which, when fully formed, may be detached from the physical form, projected, and thus one may be double : first, in his own imagination ; secondly, perceived or felt in his own consciousness ; thirdly, an objective being exactly like this body.

Jesus said : " God is a spirit."

If so, and I have a spirit, I am part and parcel of this boundless, infinite spirit, and by exploring the spiritual of myself I may come upon that point wherein God unites with me. Jesus said again to the unbelieving Jews : " The kingdom of heaven is within you ;" and these bodies have been called " the temples of the living God ;" if so God dwells therein. To feel, then, the pulsations of God in our hearts is to know that the birth of a new man, the spiritual man, is at hand. If God dwelleth in me I shall know no fear at leaving my body, for as I enter spirit I am drawing nearer to the great Spirit who is the life of all things. Shall I not be more alive in spirit than in this body ? Fortified by this philosophy, and having had experiences satisfactory to me that under favorable conditions my spiritual self would evolve himself from me, I set out on my journey to the Rocky Mountains, as I was commanded to do by the spirit, after witnessing that

fearful scene in the old tobacco-factory. How I journeyed, and the events of the long journey, it is not necessary to recall. Suffice it to say that when memory, with the fond image of Ina uppermost, swayed my mind, I was sorrowful and oppressed, and traveled alone suffering with aching limbs and bruised feet. The journey at such times seemed interminable; but when I *forgot* myself and Ina, in contemplation of my father (as my spiritual self styled himself), I was conscious of nothing but his presence, and the long distances disappeared as if by magic. After such an experience I felt renewed in every muscle, my body stronger, my mind clearer, my soul buoyant, content, happy, trustful, crying out in every thought, "Thy will be done, O Father, not mine."

Time seemed "to fly on angels' wings," and although I had little money I did not want for anything on the journey. But I could not remain long in this condition; the presence of others, the noise of trains, of thunder, and of people passing jarred upon my nerves so as to prevent this exaltation; and at such times I had to journey alone. It was thus I learned the full value of silence. "Silence is strength" is the RX motto.

Thus led by the spirit, I at length arrived at the most inaccessible part of the Sierra Nevada. I went blindly as I was led by the hand at times or directed by a voice issuing from the pit of

my stomach. It was night, but I paused not in my journey. On one side a gigantic mountain towered above, on the other lay low timber-clad hills, while close by my side ran a murmuring brook, whose banks were lined with bushes. I was traveling eastward, and the full moon was slowly rising over low hills in front of me. Thus walking, looking at the moon's silvery light and the long shadows she cast before her from tree, shrub, and rock, all at once I became aware of the approach of a man walking apparently right out of the moon towards me. The illusion was so perfect that I was startled at first, and a cold chill passed rapidly over me. He came slowly nearer, and I saw that his hair fell low on his shoulders; his head was bare, and a wreath of some kind of green encircled a broad, high brow. Over one shoulder was thrown something like a cloak, on the other he carried a shepherd's hook. His feet were dressed in wooden sandals lashed with straps over the instep. I observed all these details in a moment of time.

With a glad smile he approached and held out both hands to me, whereupon I rushed into his arms. Tenderly he clasped me to his bosom. Thrill after thrill of soft, delicious sensations ravished my being. No tongue nor pen can describe the ecstasy which I experienced at that sublime moment of my existence. I thought I knew what ecstasy was, for I had experienced many phases of it, and imagined I had sounded the

depths and powers of the nervous system in this respect ; but I realized in that one supreme moment of my life the utter folly of thinking that we poor mortals actually know anything of the sublime heights of heavenly bliss. It was only for a moment that he held me thus, when he melted away as completely as if he had never been there, leaving me alone with the ecstasy ravishing my being, as a proof and reminder of his brief presence. I was not entranced, but I dropped to the ground, and lay there throbbing with pleasure, till the moon was high in the heavens. At last I became conscious of hearing faintly strains of most delicious music. I listened intently, agreeably surprised, for I supposed that not a living soul except myself existed near that wild, almost inaccessible region.

I could not locate the direction whence the music came, for each shrub, bush, tree, and rock seemed to exhale the low, sweet, saddening strains of melody. At length the music grew stronger ; it concentrated. I arose and approached its source. Seated upon a high rock overlooking the valley, was an aged man playing upon a huge harp. His head was bare, and his high, broad brow was deeply plowed with wrinkles. His hair hung in white, fleecy waves on his shoulders, mingling with a massive white beard that lay low on his bosom. I approached ; his eyes were raised toward the moon, as if in deep contemplation, while his long white fingers swept the chords

of the harp, softly, lazily. All at once he dropped the harp and saluted me without lowering his eyes a moment, saying, "Well done, my son! I have waited for thee six thousand years! At last we meet! Oh, how many have tried, and proved '*too late*'! Follow me!" And taking up his harp, he walked rapidly into the dense forest, I following. We soon arrived at an overhanging rock, which jutted out from the mountains. In front of this rock was a deep abyss, leaving barely room for a man to walk. A small orifice under the rock admitted us to a rough cavern, the floor of which was covered with forest leaves. In a niche was a bed of leaves, with a blanket spread over them. The furniture consisted of a low stool, a rickety, rough table, upon which were some tin dishes and a small lamp already lighted. The old man seated himself upon the stool, and motioned me to be seated upon a piece of rock that lay by the side of the wall. Then he looked squarely in my eyes. The lamp was a small one emitting an imperfect light, and he sat with his back towards it, thus throwing his face in the shade; but in spite of the semi-obscurity his face was as visible to me as if it had been fully illuminated. His eyes, large and full-orbed, shone like stars. I could not meet his searching gaze; I shrank into myself, trembling like a leaf. My breath came in gasps, my heart beat violently, and I was about to fall, when he broke the spell by speaking.

“My son, I know the object of your visit, but I should like to hear it from your own lips. Speak fully!”

“Kind sir,” I replied, gathering my senses together as best I could, which was easier since he had withdrawn his gaze from me, “I seek to acquire the power of leaving this imperfect form at will, of being absent any length of time, and of resuming it again at my pleasure.”

“Why do you wish this power? you already have enough for use in this world.”

“Yes, sir, I am aware of that, but I wish to be of more use to the world than to merely vegetate and employ my powers for the aggrandizement of myself at the expense of others. The old beaten road traveled by mankind I know full well, but I want to know how to die as well as to live, and then to live again as if I had not died. In other words, I wish to be a disembodied man for a season, so that I may explore the spirit-world, and learn the condition of mankind after death.”

“Ah, my son, you little know what you ask! Know you not that in my Father's house are many mansions? Know you not that the spirit realms are infinite? The stars are worlds peopled with intelligent beings, some like men in form, others bearing very little resemblance. Upon some of these worlds the average life is far shorter than ours; upon others death and decay are hardly known. Do you not know that all

worlds are spiritual worlds in one sense, and physical in another?"

"I hear you say so," I replied; "but I want to *know for myself*. I wish to visit all conditions, to"——

"But, my dear sir, to what end? However gratifying such knowledge might be to you, of what *use* would it be to others? You would reveal it to others, is your thought, but a revelation is not knowledge; it could only incite belief, and there is full enough of that on earth now."

"I admit all that, but could not I establish a better belief if I knew as an actual fact?"

"No, my son, you could merely establish another sect, which would increase opposition and war. Belief is exactly according to the spiritual unfoldment of the soul, and this is in exact proportion to the love. Men believe as they *love* to, not as they *think*. Man thinks exactly as he is, but his belief is a little better or a little worse than he is. And for this reason only are your wishes reasonable. The varieties of belief, the multiplicity of sects, the clash of ideas, are the beacons on the road of progress. Wars are the legitimate offspring of this clashing of ideas and interests. That which you ask for can be of no other use than to disturb the stagnant mental waters of a few. The great majority must *grow downward*, through suffering and sorrow, ere they will learn to think. Popes, cardinals, and priests

fan the fires of superstition, and the people run mad with the idea of the 'divine right of kings' and the divine *right of servitude*, shout and murder each other for an illusion, an idea having no foundation save in the ignorance of mank'nd. I will assist you to explore the spirit-worlds. Find God if you can, and see if He is a demon or otherwise."

Having wrought himself up to this point, with eyes blazing he pointed his finger at me, saying "Go!"

I fell on the floor, but, regaining consciousness in a moment, I looked without emotion upon the old man sitting there, and myself lying upon the floor with wide-open eyes. But I could not tarry. A force of which I had no previous knowledge impelled me from the grotto. I sped away, not of my own volition, with no idea of destination or object. I walked, but my feet sensed no contact of substance. I flew over mountains and valleys unwearied and unspent. I sensed no passing objects and met no obstacles. Singularly calm and tranquil, without care or anxiety of any kind, without even *curiosity*, I sped away like the wind. I paused not to analyze my sensations, but was vaguely conscious of a peace and rest truly marvelous. The very breath I drew was exhilarating to intoxication. Of the lapse of time I took no note, for my senses seemed lulled to sleep. I knew the moon was far in the west, and that I was traveling towards the crimson east,

where the sun would shortly show himself. After a while I found myself unconsciously exercising volition. I saw that by the slightest effort of will I could rise from the earth and float in the air. A desire came over me to rise to the surface of the atmosphere if possible, but of this *possibility* I made no note at the time, for indeed I had ceased to remember that the impossible existed. I reasoned not; I forgot that gravitation existed, and absorbed in the idea of rising, I soared upward. A certain portion of atmosphere must have moved with me, for I felt no rushing of air, no obstruction or friction in my passage. It was a voyage in the unknown, without chart or compass, and without incident. I had expected the cold to increase with the altitude, but I sensed no change, and in thinking of it now I conclude that my sense of feeling was suspended, for I sensed nothing till, to my surprise, I found I was no inhaling the air at all. I was conscious of an ecstatic condition beyond my powers to describe. I had ascended to such a height that when I first looked downward the earth was scarcely discernible. I paused to contemplate it. The great ball lay there with its mountains scarcely visible, the ocean glistening like a mirror in the rays of the morning sun. To the west was a dark cloud totally obscuring that portion of the earth. It was the night fleeing from the sun, while that portion of it directly illuminated by the sun sparkled and glowed like a diamond in lamplight.

Clouds, vapory and dim of outline, floated lazily far below. Ascending still farther, the earth disappeared. Above, the light paled, and the sun became dull and leaden, while between me and the earth was an immense lamp, as it were. The atmosphere charged by the rays of the sun, the atoms bursting by the electric force thus liberating the ether, were all of a glow. It was a sort of combustion or conflagration causing the great ball of atmosphere surrounding the earth to glow like a huge lamp.

As I ascended, even this light disappeared, and the sun was no longer visible. The sense of gravity, what little I had of it, was entirely dissipated. I had no way of knowing whether my head was up or my feet, whether I was vertical or horizontal. The sense of motion also was lost. The only way I could judge of motion was by the changes taking place within myself. The opaque darkness became oppressive. It was like a wall pressing upon me from all sides, or I was in it as a fish in water, without the feeling of being at home. Then there came the thought of Ina, and love surged up in my soul, as one cries out without a sound.

A voice low and sweet issued in whispers from the darkness. "My son," it said, "this is the abode of the dead. You are not dead, and there is no place here for you; return to earth and prepare yourself." In a moment I found myself

gasping for breath in the grotto, with the old man bending over me.

“Why did you return so soon?” asked he.

“Because I could go no further; I came to the place of the dead, and some one said I had no place there till I was dead. Must I die ere I can explore the abodes of the dead? It was my Astral which carried me that far. Can I acquire the power to go further?”

“It is *possible* to do so, but whether you can do it is doubtful. So long as you are merely a double man you cannot. So long as a vestige of your corruptible form remains on earth you are bound, tied down to it. No spirit can be complete till every atom of the physical body is incorporated in it. A dead body holds the spirit waiting in the Astral realms for it to join, and the slow decomposition holds the spirit earth-bound for very many years. The practice of burying the dead is one great cause of reincarnation, for every worm generated in a corpse takes that much life from the waiting spirit, thus rendering it weak and incomplete. It must of necessity return, for no incomplete spirit can escape this earth. You, having developed the Astral body, may go further and develop the spiritual body, which will transform this flesh into spirit, so that there will be nothing left to call you back to earth when you choose to leave. Cremation is far preferable to burial, for the spirits of the cremated become speedily as per-

fect in form as they were while living on earth. You can enter the apparitional state if you choose to devote several years to preparation."

"What do you mean by the apparitional state?" I asked.

"I mean that the inhabitants of certain worlds have the power of appearance and disappearance at will, and some of them have the power of assuming any form they choose. They have power to visit any world, place, or condition, and can adapt themselves to the peculiarities of any person or thing. If they choose they are proof against fire and all pain and disease. They do not die, but disappear, leaving no trace of themselves."

"Sir," I replied, "you astonish me! Do you think it is one of these beings who has spoken to me from the pit of my stomach, and appeared as the double of myself?"

"Yes, and no. It is one of them, and at the same time yourself; for indeed you have your choice to be mortal or immortal."

"Alas, sir, I have no choice. I wish to know all—to be *all or nothing*."

"My son, you are a bold man! Do you not fear the devil?"

"Nay, good sir, there can be no devil where God is; and He fills all. There is no place, form, nor condition where He is not. It is He who makes me bold to explore His Infinite realms and to question His wisdom and goodness to His face. If it be true that He is good, He cannot

object to being searched out. If He is evil I am His superior, and will expose Him."

"Well said, my son. You shall have your wish, and all the good angels shall assist you. Three years from now you will be free."

He then bound me by a solemn promise not to reveal his methods of training to any but those who were capable of attaining the same.

CHAPTER II.

MY SECOND JOURNEY.

THE three years of experience at the grotto I pass over in silence, not, however, that it is void of interest to many, but because few would be benefited by its narration. I reached a condition at that time altogether incredible, for history furnishes no parallel to it except the story of Philip's disappearance after the baptism of the eunuch (see Acts viii. 39, 40), and the story of Apollonius of Tyana, in which modern Christians *pretend* to believe the story of Philip; but they would treat my statement with contempt. While I do not do these things like a mountebank for the amusement of the rabble, I give in the following pages that which is far better, viz., food for thought, an eye-opener for the soul of him who hath mental eyes.

By innumerable experiments I found that I was no longer attracted to the grotto. My Astral form ceased to appear to me, and the old man assured me I was ready to begin my exploration of the spirit worlds. To describe myself as a spirit, having personality, form, and all the attributes of an organic being, and yet without tangi-

bility ; no form that remains a fixture, but a form of *motion*, variable as the wind that blows "where it listeth," only the sound of which may be heard, "but whence it cometh and whither it goeth ye know not ;" so it is with everyone "that is born of the spirit." A body born of the spirit is not subject to laws of matter. This physical form is partially subject to the will, but the will is limited in its powers by laws that are seemingly immutable. We move the members of the body by an effort of the will, but this motion is limited. Not so a spiritual body, or one *born of a spirit and not of a woman*. Now the spirit constitutes the man. To the spirit belongs all that we call man, as well as all the peculiarities of individuals. It is the peculiarities that constitute the *individual*. To destroy the peculiarities is to destroy the individual, but to leave the *salient powers* of spirit intact.

To be born of the spirit, then, the mind must be purged of all its passions, prejudices, likes, dislikes, etc. ; in fact, of all that fits the individual to stay on earth. Remember, the mind is not a permanency. It is a thing void of sensation, created by the soul to enable it to come *en rapport* with this stage of being ; hence the dismembering it of its potencies is only to free the soul from the meshes of mundane laws. Pride, revenge, envy, covetousness, and all selfishness are of the mind. But we do not *love with the mind*. The salient powers of spirit are those which enable it to leap,

to project, to expand, to penetrate, like a flame. What need hath it, then, for hands, feet, or locomotion? None at all! But form is inherent in it, for love is the nucleus of all forms. *God is Love*, the spirit, the soul of all forms. Spirit has no form, but to it belongs motion, and motion supposes something to move—hence a form; and this form is composed of the grosser parts of spirit. At death a body forms from the spirit of the individual, but it is formed by the *Karma* of the present life and former lives. The man born of Karma and a woman embodies all the peculiarities of former lives. Not so, however, of him who is born of Love, of God, of Spirit, for in him the limitations of sense and of mundane laws do not exist. They are forgotten in the light of another mind, wherein intuition takes the place of slow deduction and the looking backward of memory. A man born of love cannot sin, for there are no laws binding any act; *he is free!* To suspend the laws of affinity in the atoms composing my body was the most arduous task I had, but once done it afterward became an easy matter.

It might be interesting to follow the process step by step to the attainment of the powers I finally attained, the intense and prolonged concentration of mind and energies of will, etc., but I pass over these, merely remarking that my progress was rapid after I could not only feel forgiveness for Dr. Parker, but love him as I loved all other beings in existence except Ina. The

love for myself as an individual I had ceased to consider, and this, with the love of others, was secondary, while my love for her was primal, with my "whole soul, might, and strength." Again I reiterate, the laws of sympathy and antipathy were not for me, for I disliked nothing in existence; nor can I say that I loved Ina as an individual, but as a spirit which pervaded my soul.

Many times I visited the dark sphere which divides the corporeal from the spiritual life, merely to test my powers ere I essayed to pass further. Spherical in form, surrounded by a white light brighter than the sun, the darkness of the sphere was so intense as to appear solid, like a black wall enclosing me as in a tomb. I had resolved, when last in human form, on finding Ina. No other idea or object engaged my attention. It engrossed my entire being. To this end I set out alone, not knowing whither to direct my search. Before I was aware of any destination I found myself, in human form, sitting on Dr. Parker's grave. Over three years had passed since the burial of the doctor, but it was as if a lifetime had passed over me. With what difference of feeling I contemplated his acts! With pity for his ignorance I began meditation, but soon became human. The old feeling of repugnance and horror surged in my veins as on that day of hate and despair when I gathered handfuls of dust from Ina's grave. This, however, passed rapidly away, to give place to the emotions I had been

cultivating since then. Directly, I was in the spirit again. Night fell softly over the graves, the trees, the flowers, and the grass, amidst which the monuments and mementos of the dead stood up in strong contrast to the mysterious night that like a pall rested there. A yellowish mist like an endless ribbon extended upward from the doctor's grave, and immediately I knew that in that ribbon were the last exhalations of his decaying body, the last of his spirit, going to join him wherever he might be. I followed its luminous track ; I was no longer alone ; it was a companion.

On through the wastes we sped, past worlds blazing with light, anon passing others dark and dismal, rolling solitary and alone. We paused not till at last, to my surprise, we suddenly came upon one rolling directly in front, so dark and dense that I could only enter its atmosphere a short distance. I had not heretofore visited any of the starry worlds of space, consequently knew nothing of the methods of reaching them. Here was a repulsion which I could not overcome. I longed for a guide such as Swedenborg had, but no guide came. I must defer my visit. Undoubtedly, being a novice, I had begun at the wrong end. I must learn the alphabet of spirit life. I was returning to earth, when I passed near the moon. To my spiritual eyes she was blazing with light almost dazzling. As I entered her atmosphere I observed slight changes in myself. Ah ! I am adapting myself to the spirit

of the moon ! It is a pleasant sensation. I am condensing, I am attracted to her surface, I am changing, I am assuming another form ; I begin to melt and perceive objects, but they do not perceive me. I am on a mountain ; strange animals—birds, reptiles, etc.—pass by without noticing me in the least. Going down the mountain, I perceive, low in the valley, a city. As I approach it I see strange-looking beings. They certainly must be human, for they stand quite upright, with short legs and arms, long necks, small heads, round, yellow faces, low, broad brows, eyes round, protruding, and far apart, hair hanging long over the shoulders. They had large, obese bodies, which waddled along with much effort, their strides being not more than a foot at the utmost. Swinging their short arms, they reminded me of the fins of a fish ; and they swayed their heads on their long necks grotesquely.

I mingled with them, but they perceived me not. I shouted, but they paid no attention. I assumed my shape of a fiery globe in their midst, whereupon the vast crowd fell down simultaneously on their faces as if dead.

I dwell not upon my investigations on the moon. I had learned already that there is in my spirit an automatic power of adapting itself to any spirit which is in harmony or in sympathy therewith. It is now left for me to learn to adapt myself to things or spirits antagonistic. I must learn how to *compel* my spirit to enter that

which is repellent to it. In other words, how can the pure enter, and become for a brief period, the impure? How does God become things that are not God? He is doing this all the time, temporarily, it is true; nevertheless it is a patent fact. I realized that it is the all-powerful will that conquers spirit and molds matter. Again I returned to earth, and standing by Ina's grave took a handful of the dust therefrom, which I held to my forehead. Like a flash of light I was wafted to that dark world to which I had traced Dr. Parker. I entered its atmosphere or spirit a little way, then paused to investigate myself. Looking intently into my spirit to ascertain if possible what was the retarding element, I saw a dark speck form far, far towards the limit of the lurid light that enveloped me. "This is 'the mote' in my eye," I thought; but how to pluck it out puzzled me. As I contemplated, it grew apace; it was a vortex; it revolved and scintillated like a bloody star.

Continuing to gaze at it, I saw a human form organize itself in the midst. That form was Ina. This must be "the mote" in my eye, the retarding element in my spirit, the thing that limits me, the thing that keeps me from God; Ina's spirit dwelling in my own. O Love, thou art God! And this love of Ina is God humanized! To sink myself to its level was to learn the influence of a curse. I must *become her* for a time, in order that the mote should be no longer a mote

in my spiritual eye. I rushed into her arms; our spirits blended, but, alas! the brightness of my own had become dull, of a greenish red or somber tint, still flashing far and near in tongues of all colors. We passed, or, more properly, I passed (for the duality of being had disappeared in this oneness) rapidly through the atmosphere of the strange world and reached *terra firma*, but no sun, moon, nor stars illuminated it. I passed through cities and towns thickly inhabited, but there were no lights save the light emitted by each person; for, indeed, they were as much persons as they had been before death, with only this difference: the magnetic or spiritual sphere of each emitted a light peculiar to the person's mind, character, disposition. There were those who emitted scarcely any light, but from whom issued a noxious stench. These always attached themselves to such as showed some kind of light. Temples were there in which great crowds listened with rapt attention to one whose light shone a little brighter than theirs, for they were all attracted to the light. They were satellites, which, having no light of their own, lived in a borrowed light. The ministers who spoke to them, and whose light they admired, shone with a golden luster. I saw that this luster was also borrowed, for each and every person who undertook to instruct the people had on the table before him a great book, covered with gold, which shone like blood. When they

opened and read therefrom, the burden of its light was the blood of the sacrifice, or the blood of the Lamb. The temples shone with the luster of old gold, and the walls were profusely decorated with many-colored images of angels, dragons, saints, gods, etc., each emitting, like the people, lights various and peculiar. It was a grand and gorgeous scene. What with the music, the oratory, the parades, the artistic groupings, the intermingling and blending of lights, the fantastic contrast of costumes, softened and mellowed in that golden light that sat like a halo upon each object, scintillating, flashing, smoldering in corners, or absorbed by those darker ones, it was truly an enchanting and fascinating scene. An immense elevator ascended and descended constantly in the center, loaded to its utmost capacity with people of both sexes. Joining the crowd I was quickly ushered into an immense amphitheater in the rotunda of the temple. Language fails me to describe what I saw. Here, as below, there was no light save that which emanated from those who occupied the room. But here all shone with the uniform luster of gold, except such as came and went on the elevator. These were of all shades of color, softened with that universal tinge of gold. Not a sound broke the profound silence. Men sat or stood by vast tables, and moved little balls of gold from place to place, as chessmen are moved on a board. They all looked up at the ceiling, which was a vast mirror. I

noticed that it contained an immense map of the whole world, in which all nations, races, and governments were reflected in motion. Nothing seemed to stand still. Even the public sentiments of the people of earth were indicated by the changing colors in the mirror. Piles of gold lay on the tables. And anon slight changes were made in it, as those who watched the mirror saw changes take place on the earth. Puzzled beyond description I turned to one who was observing me critically, and asked for an explanation of the strange scene.

“This,” said he, “is the chessboard of hell. Here, those who essayed to govern mankind while on earth are allowed to practice for a season that which they loved on earth. Look at their faces as the game shifts; see the look on the face of king Louis XVI of France. See the anxiety on the face of Nicholas of Russia. See them shift the balls of gold from piece to piece. This gold is a magic talisman. It exerts a potent influence upon all who love it, whether on earth or elsewhere. Those dark-robed persons constantly coming and going are messengers to earth, charged with the accomplishment of certain objects, from that of destroying an individual or government, to the building up of a nation, sect, or even an individual. Verily, they think they are gods. Over there are bulls and bears of Wall Street and of London. There is the commercial board. They see all that is taking place on earth, as you

can see in that mirror ; it is terribly exciting and agitating. They get no rest, no change, no relaxation of the terrible tension of mind, till, exhausted, they lose their wits and try to commit suicide. Of course here is no such thing as suicide here, but they think there is, and when they try it they are removed to other spaces. That man over there, with a scowl on his face, is ——, and that old haggard-looking man by his side is ——. They were selected by those kings, who lived at the time the American republic was born, to destroy the republic. To this end they made robbers of those men, and not merely of those, but of hundreds of others, bankers, syndicates, trusts, monopolists—robbers all—for the sole purpose of establishing in America an aristocracy, the hotbed wherein kings fasten their roots. If there is any difference between a highwayman and these gentry, it is largely in favor of the highwayman, who certainly is no coward nor hypocrite. The one robs according to laws which *he has helped to make*, by taking advantage of the weakness of others less gifted ; while the highwayman overpowers others through their physical weakness. This one scatters wealth, the other piles it up in volcanic mountains, to eventually vomit pent-up frenzy to the destruction of all freedom. Here they follow the bent of their minds to the utmost limit, without rest or relaxation, in one eternal day. This is heaven to them, but it is not

natural ; eventually it becomes very monotonous, and the mind breaks down in the fearful tension. They become insane, and being removed, others take their places. The older Rothschilds have long since passed through this financial mill of the gods, been sifted, bolted, and rolled till they are not to be found any more. Do not imagine, however, that they are all-powerful. No ! they cannot have it all their own way. Here are the same difficulties to overcome as upon earth. They try to control the affairs of earth, but there are powers above them who thwart their best-laid schemes. They call it chance, and ascribe it to earth or circumstances. They are very religious, though, and sometimes go below to worship ; but as time does not exist here, they are at a loss to know when the Sabbath comes ; hence their devotions are very irregular. But there are greater powers than these. Come."

I followed him up a winding stair to the dome of the temple. In this vast amphitheater, whose dimensions I could scarce determine through the innumerable objects that obstructed the view, the light was more brilliant than below, through the sparkling of diamonds and other precious stones which adorned the walls, desks, chairs ; hung from the lofty ceiling in gigantic stalactites ; or bedecked vast curtains that hung in festoons here and there without system or design, suggestive of chance ; sparkling, glowing, in all conceivable colors, they seemed to flame and scintillate in the

far-away distance. I was bewildered with the beauty and glory that surrounded me. A multitude of priests, monks, bishops, cardinals, and popes sat on gorgeous thrones or reclined on sofas or chairs, scattered in haphazard manner throughout the room. In a niche, raised high up and seemingly sunk into a wall of jewels, stood two winged cherubs (bulls of ancient Egypt) facing each other. They were made of gold, but they were so covered with gems as to appear altogether like something else. Thin gauze-like wings were spread high above them, seeming to mingle together. Blood-red stones for eyes shot lurid flames at the other's. Underneath was a great slab of gold upon which they stood. An immense book was lying upon a desk draped with black and red curtains, behind which a pope stood, slowly turning the leaves, which were of the finest gold-leaf. He spoke, but he used no words. He opened his mouth, and symbols representing his subject issued forth like living things, which floated in the air for a moment and disappeared. Intuitively I knew his subject to be the day of judgment, for all the symbols that John saw in his visions on Patmos issued from his mouth—actual living things. Rapt in contemplation of the weird panorama, I lost sight of the immediate surroundings, and saw only the symbols John saw. One only I describe—the great white throne (see Rev. iv.): “A throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne,” and he appeared to look like

two precious stones. The rainbows surrounding the throne were most beautiful to behold. The four-and-twenty elders clothed in white, with crowns on their heads, sparkling with gold and gems ; the four beasts with eyes before and behind, in the midst, and round about the throne, as if guarding it,—all these, with trumpets sounding, horsemen riding, confused me, so that when the four-and-twenty elders cast their crowns at the foot of the throne and fell down to worship, I was about to do the same, when my guide touched me, saying :

“ See thou do it not ! You don't know these things as I do. These men are waiting and looking for the day of judgment. The things you have just witnessed are the outpourings of souls impregnated with ideas of God's wrath and vengeance. The concentrated spirit of all such is hurled upon the earth by this conclave of spirits to breed and foster fear on earth, to keep the priesthood in power. It is a pitiful thing that modern religions have nothing better to offer their devotees than *crowns, harps, thrones, and rule over others*. God's throne is not an object, neither is God a person. God's throne is in the human heart, and Love seated thereon is more lovely than all the precious stones of the whole world. The four beasts thou sawest represent the four elements of man's nature : Fire, Air, Water, Earth. When these are made subservient to love, all will worship love, a spirit, God. The

mistake of all religions is that they make God a person, an *idol*. Things subjective—of the soul—they make objective. Salvation is from a lake of fire and brimstone, while in truth salvation is from sin. They read from the book of the law; they are sticklers for the law, forgetting that ‘the strength of sin is the law,’ and that so long as law exists sin will reign. Law enables man to dictate and judge his fellow-men. This must be removed before man can have love and charity in his heart for others. Instead, ‘Christ is the *end* of the law, for righteousness to everyone who believeth.’ Who hath faith? Not he who believeth in the law, but he who believeth in love. Christ said to the Jews: ‘If ye were blind, ye would have no sin, but now that ye say *we see*, your sin remaineth.’ Law furnishes a standard for comparison and judgment. If there were no standard of right and wrong, there could be no sin. Love needs no standards. So long as the law exists, man will essay to govern his fellow-men; and popes, priests, kings, queens, and aristocracy must exist on earth; and God and the kingdom of heaven be a person and a locality, instead of being in the man himself. The thrones of kings are based on the throne of God. The crown of kings, the mitre of the pope, bishops, cardinals, etc., are mere relics of barbarism, based on the pride and pomp of human vanity. To seat God on a throne surrounded by beasts, with eyes behind and before, is an astronomical concept, de-

scended from the ancient sun-worship, sublime and beautiful when applied to the sun and stars—how beautiful to call the stars eyes!—but puerile and childish when applied to a personal God surrounded by beasts. These men think they are in heaven, waiting for the second coming of Christ and the day of judgment, and are laboring to keep up there creeds and dogmas on earth. Their influence is felt wherever the Christian religion exists; but take away their Devil and Hell, and the whole plan of salvation falls. No Church can exist without the belief in a devil. If it is good, then let us give glory to the devil; let him have his due."

Music, sweet, low, and solemn, rolled, echoed, and re-echoed. Seeming to come from every source, it filled the room, and upon its waves my guide and I passed out into the starless darkness.

CHAPTER III.

MY THIRD JOURNEY.

“WHAT seekest thou, my friend, in this dark world?” asked my guide, as we emerged from the great city of palaces and temples.

“I seek one I love who was foully wronged while on earth.”

“Ah! I see; follow me.” We passed rapidly over hill and plain, without guide or light except that emitted from ourselves. At last we came to a forest upon the side of a mountain, and soon reached a collection of what appeared to be huts built in the side of the mountain. We entered one, where sat a man illuminated by a mild phosphorescent glow which proceeded from his person. He raised his head as we entered, disclosing to me the well-known features of Napoleon Bonaparte. A look of stern command was on that face, but he seemed not to recognize us. He was bent over a rude table upon which was spread a map of the Eastern hemisphere, traced and blotted with blood-red lines and markings. Muttering to himself, he said, “The glory of France has departed! A republic exists where once I

reigned supreme. It cannot last. A revolution involving the whole of Europe is imminent. Where is my army? We must be ready for the conflict!" Touching a bell, a servant appeared. "Blow the trumpet! call my marshals!" The bugle sounded; the hut was soon filled with his marshals, who, bowing low, kissed his hand. The old fire came back to his eye. In rapid tones he said: "Let the army be ready to attack the enemy at daylight. Summon them at once; I will review them." Standing upright, his form clothed in his old-time uniform, now tattered, old, dilapidated, and covered with blotches of blood, he presented a sorry picture. The uniforms of his marshals presented a similar appearance, but were far cleaner than his. "Blow the bugles," he shouted. Then rang out the bugle call, answered in a moment by many in all directions.

The heavens became luminous, as if in some conflagration. Slowly, with heavy tread, came the old hosts he had so often led to the gory field of glory. Proudly they passed by; then came laboriously a host of maimed and bleeding heroes, disclosing ghastly wounds freshly made. A host they were, and as they passed I saw that bronzed countenance blanch and grow ghastly. Next came a nondescript army of the dead. Corpses floated by, a countless throng. Close behind came a vast throng of tattered women, shrieking, weeping, howling like demons; little children in rags, with woe stamped upon livid faces, came

close to him, gazing with impudence at him, cried as if in chorus: "Great man! give us back our peaceful homes and our dear fathers!" Close behind them came a troop of fiendish women and men, the ghouls that always follow an army—bloody, tattered, haggard, filthy wretches, robbers of the dead, prostitutes—the froth and scum which war sends to the surface of the caldron of civilization. Shriek after shriek rent the air; the woods took it up, the mountains groaned, and the skies became bloody. Lightnings flashed and thunders rolled like parks of artillery. Napoleon stood with his head drooping, his hand in the breast of his coat. One took him gently by the shoulder and he tottered into the hut, where he fell upon the ground, shaking as if in an ague fit.

"Dost understand what thou seest?" asked my guide.

"Nay, friend! 'twas a strange scene. Explain it if thou canst."

"My son, it is a projection of his own spirit. The events of his life are all photographed in his spirit; whenever his memory recalls those events, the actors therein come in obedience to his thought, as living actualities, and the consequences also. These constitute the flames of hell. These things, and worse, happen to him whenever his mind recalls any of the scenes of his remarkable career. They take away something of his vital energy and mental poise each

time. As you saw him fall down in a fit, so he lies in a comatose condition most of his time ; all his lucid intervals are filled with such scenes as you witnessed. Thus it will continue till his mind loses all trace of his earth life, and there is nothing left of the *voluntary* man. As this disappears, his corporeal form disintegrates, and there is nothing left of him but the aroma of former lives—'the Karma'—which will be attracted to earth again to be born of woman, as another being, retaining, however, the essence of what he has been. It is impossible to say who he was before he was called Napoleon, and it is equally impossible to say who he will be in the next birth. Of the condition he will be in a thousand years hence, when memory, comparison, reason, and the reflection of the mind, which is dependent upon perception of objects, are all lost in the subjective existence of the inner man ; when not even a visible form remains, but merely an involuntary, comatose, dreamlike condition, subject to attraction and repulsion, but totally void of volition,—I say of this condition none but the loftiest minds and the deepest intuitions can know anything. This condition is in close contact with the four elements of earth, viz. : fire, air, water, earth. It is the life of matter. Spirits of this state are imbibed in water, air, food, medicines, stimulants ; in fact, all our life on earth is made up of this unconscious life-seeking embodiment. Do not

stop at this thought, for in truth the mind of man is a womb, in which those not unconscious find entrance, not to be embodied but to influence the mind and prepare the way for the reincarnation of such as may be most needed on earth.

“Napoleon was a child of destiny. The backbone of kingcraft, priestcraft, and that monster idea of superstition, the Divine right of kings, had to be broken. He was called into being to do that work. But look you at his fate! The curse of all the crowned heads of earth, as well as that of all the hierarchies of hell, rested upon him. You have seen the popes, priests, and kings at work influencing earthly affairs. It was they who infused ambition into the mind of Bonaparte, whereupon the genius of his success, the goddess of Liberty, fled away. She is a timid spirit, coming from the highest world where Love reigns. She has a precarious footing, even in America. Already I see the poison of pride and greed of gold corroding the very heart of your nation. Her only hope is in the vast plains, rivers, and lofty mountains of the West. Her spirit is in the air that sweeps o’er the great lakes and plains from the Alleghanies to the Rockies. It is in the waters of your great rivers, in the grass that sighs in the winds of your vast prairies. But not in your pent-up cities; ulcers are they upon earth, reeking with the filth of this world you are now

on—so dark and gloomy that it may appropriately be termed hell.”

We passed on in search of Ina. The search was brief. In a city that reminded me very forcibly of the one on earth where they lived and died, we found the doctor and Ina. But what a difference! Apparently the same old Newcomb House—the same rooms and the same occupants. But instead of comforts and luxuriant surroundings, filth and squalid poverty in all its repulsive features met the eye in all directions. Instead of solitude and quiet rest, there were strange whisperings, rustlings, sighings, and incoherent mutterings. The doctor looked the same as of old, but Ina was haggard and worn. There was no light in her eyes. She sat listless and languid, as if her last spark of hope had expired. As they seemed not to notice our presence, I came to the conclusion that we were invisible to them. My guide had entered behind me. Judge of my astonishment, when, turning to address him, I saw in his place the man with *the slouch hat and cloak*.

Approaching Ina, he laid his hand on her forehead, saying: “Arise, daughter of sorrow, shake off thy gloom! behold I bring deliverance to thee!” Startled as if from a dream, she raised her eyes and looked at him. The doctor fixed his piercing gaze upon him for a moment, saying,

“That is right, stranger. Hypnotize her. I have tried many times lately, but I seem to have lost

my power over her." Ina raised herself, looked around in a dazed sort of manner, and perceiving me, rushed sobbing into my arms. A look of stupid bewilderment settled on the countenance of the doctor at the strange sight of Ina hugging the air and weeping, for he was so gross that he could not perceive a form more ethereal than himself.

Just then the door opened, and the look on his face changed to one of horror as there strode, or rather waddled, into the room a strange object. Imagine, if you can, something in the shape of a man, yet not a man. It was fully four feet high, with a body nearly spherical ; legs scarce one foot in length, terminating in feet like those of a dog ; arms that reached to the ground ; hands like an ape's ; a head, or rather a face, where the breast ought to be, round, flat like a full moon, surrounded by short, bristling hair, that stuck out like quills everywhere ; mouth wide and lipless, in the middle of the face, with four wicked eyes without eyebrows. Such was the monster. Upon his entrance Ina gave a shriek, Parker fell down upon all fours and whined like a dog. The room vanished as if by magic, and instead of it we were in an immense cavern, whose dark rock walls were slimy with filth, in which all manner of noxious insects, worms, and other creeping things clung and squirmed and crawled, chirping, buzzing, hissing ; while from out the dull recesses of the cavern crawled all manner of noxious

reptiles, toads, lizards, tarantulas, centipedes. Hissing, hopping, crawling, they twined themselves around the limbs and body of the doctor, who, growling, snapping, and jumping about, tried to defend himself.

Suddenly the scene changed and we were all in a splendid parlor, in which were many women, the veriest houris, gorgeously attired in semi-transparent draperies, which half hid, half disclosed their voluptuous forms, alluring, lascivious; in form, attitude, motion suggestive and alluring. The doctor, again a man in form and manner, gazing upon them, became inflamed in his voluptuous, passionate, lascivious nature. His eyes gleamed with a lurid light, a smile wreathed his features, and satyr-like he seized upon one of the fairest. She, nothing loth, lured him with lewd gestures, till, void of shame, without delicacy, commenced one of those orgies that hell only knows. First one, then another, he clasped in his arms, till at last, with a howl of disgust, he sank to the ground exhausted, while the fair beauties laughed in scorn, pointing their fingers in derision at him. Then stretched the great mouth of the monster, emitting a roar of laughter, interspersed with the words, "Impotent! ha! ha! impotent! ha! ha!" in which the sirens joined with great glee, dancing and exhibiting their voluptuous charms—alluring—tormenting.

The scene changed. We were in a beautiful grove of evergreen trees, from whose clustering

branches hung festoons of flowers, interspersed with fruit of many colors and kinds, most luscious to behold. The women wove chaplets of the flowers, with which they crowned the doctor. A most pleasant aroma filled the air. They made couches of green branches, upon which they spread flowers, reclining thereon. "Come, doctor, come," they cried ; but when he essayed to do so, a look from the monster turned his desires to disgust, and sinking upon the ground, he turned such a beseeching look upon Ina that I was filled with pity for him. They gathered of the fruit, which they placed before him, inviting him to eat. He ate thereof, but immediately began to vomit. I noticed then that there existed a certain sympathy between Ina and the monster. He seemed to be under her control. She passed sentence upon the doctor ; the monster was the executioner. He closed one of his four eyes, and immediately the doctor was filled by a wild fury of passion ; but when he essayed to gratify his lust, the eye opened and the fever in his veins cooled, like a hot iron plunged in water.

I turned to my guide, who, as if divining my thought, said : "The four eyes correspond to the four elements, fire, air, water, earth ; when they are all open these elements are in harmony in man ; when one is closed inharmony prevails, inasmuch as three only are operative. Fire is the life of all things, but it is destructive when in excess. The inspired writer has said, 'Our

God is a consuming fire.' Fire is love when tempered by the other elements. Hence harmony is life, while inharmony is death. Lust consumes by excess of fire, and when the other elements are consumed, there is nothing for the flame to feed upon, and physical impotency is the result; while the mind retains its potency for a season, as heat remains after the flame has ceased. In this world things are the reverse of those of earth. Selfish pleasure here becomes a torment. The fires of lust here find no expression outwardly, but burn inwardly with unquenchable fury. Such is the case of Dr. Parker. His feelings have not changed, but his mind has lost something. No man feels with mind. And the man without heart is a lost soul. Physically impotent (the ultimate of all libertines), mental imbecility, idiocy, insanity are sure to follow; for indeed here there is nothing to employ the mind except the things that delighted on earth. What we have been on earth is here with us to excuse or to condemn. The things you see here are the phantasies of his diseased mind, projections of his spirit. We have entered into his spirit, and see him as he really is."

At these words a wave of pity welled up in my heart for the doctor, who was sitting upon the ground with his face in his hands; and simultaneously came Ina to my side weeping.

"Oh, Don," cried she, "I feel as I did while I was a girl. Oh! take me away from that horrible man and his associates."

“ Alas ! Ina,” I replied, “ there is only one hope for you. If you can feel sorry for him, if you can pity and forgive the wrong done to you, your spirit may be disconnected from him. Ina ! do not think of yourself and your wrongs at all. Think only this : he was born in ignorance, lived in blindness, acted by blind impulse and passion inherited from a previous life—a doomed man from his infancy. How can we judge his acts ? It is they that judge him ; they are sufficient for his punishment. Let us forget him and all our earth life but our love. Forgive, as you wish for forgiveness. By forgiving him you will impart a quality to his spirit that will assist him to better parentage and conditions in his next birth ; while at the same time you cleanse your own spirit from the poison of the curse you hurled at him. Curses are the poison of hell ; they are the life of hell. Blessings are of heaven ; they elevate the soul. Forgiveness begins in thought, but ends in the soul. It carries with it a purifying influence that in its completeness sweeps away all memories of wrongs done or of wrongs received. Looking from the extreme heights of felicity we can see in each act, in each experience, the wisdom and love of Infinite Providence. God could not be Infinite without you, as well as Dr. Parker ; neither could you be exactly as you are without the sad experiences you have had. All souls are good, and there is no evil without good. God is in all things, and there can be no act without His

presence and sanction. *'God is the soul of evil!'* What right have we, then, to say what is evil? Says Isaiah: 'Lo, I am God, and beside me there is none else. I make the light and I make the darkness; I create Good and I create Evil; I the Lord do all these things.' Judge not then, for in so doing you pass sentence upon yourself, and put yourself in the place of Infinite wisdom. Who can know the ultimate of any act? By what right, then, do we presume to judge our fellow? That which has happened is gone into the bosom of God. Who dares assert that He doth not desire it? All we know of this matter is that we are made miserable or glad by acts we and others do, and often the things over which we rejoice turn back to destroy us, and the things over which we howl and moan prove great blessings. Then, Ina, let us weep at the follies and miseries of mankind, for tears are the baptism of heaven, and the heart is made lighter by shedding them."

"Amen," said Ina, going quickly to the side of the doctor, where she knelt, placing her arms around his neck, crying amid many sobs: "Dear Guardy, forgive me the wrong I have done you! I cursed you because I knew not God. I knew not till now that God doth do all things. I thought you were a free agent, and responsible for all your acts. I see now that we are not what we seem. A power greater than we forces us into being, forces us through and out, not asking our consent."

I knelt by her side begging also for his pardon for the wrong thoughts I had entertained concerning him. He looked at us in a bewildered sort of manner for a moment, then broke into wild curses of both of us, and growing frantic with excitement, began cursing God.

Scarcely had he uttered the name of God when we were startled by wild, unearthly shrieks, intermingled with groans that echoed and re-echoed in the woods and hills, rolling, resounding far in the distance, faintly dying away only to roll back again with redoubled force. The mountains seemed to shake; the rocks opened like mouths, out of which his curses multiplied themselves; the trees shook as if a tempest raged among them. One great sheet of light spread itself on the scene, yellow interspersed with green streaks. Now came an electrical explosion accompanied by vivid lightnings, immediately followed by total darkness and an awful silence. This silence smote me. I awoke; everything had disappeared save Ina, my guide, and myself. The mountains and the woods had fled away, and instead of them we stood by a babbling brook, whose banks were lined with flowering shrubs of unimaginable variety. A soft light enveloped us, while in the distance appeared a throng of men and women most gorgeously attired, bearing banners and garlands of flowers. Some sang, others played on lyres, while some danced upon the soft green

bank. But they remained at a distance. Then spake the stranger :

“ Ina, henceforth thou art free. The curse thou didst breathe in mortal anguish is lifted, because thou hast felt pity and hast forgiven thy wrongs. Remember, thy curses are God’s curses, and they who try to take God’s place must suffer. He who judges or condemns another’s acts curses that other. The whole world labors under the curses man puts upon his fellows. The universal execration of sin is the curse of the Infinite, and the only escape from this slavery is in purging the heart from all enmity, prejudice, and judgment by forgiveness. You have forgiven the doctor and sought his forgiveness. He could not forgive, because his heart is hard ; he has no pity, for pity is the beginning of heaven. The world has no pity for the erring. Its curses are grievous to bear. There is no escape for the doctor, for the world’s curse is a Karma, which, uniting with his own, will hurl him down to the shoreless ocean of nonentity, where he will become another being, born of Karma, of woman or brute, to toil and suffer another earth life, not knowing the why and wherefore of anything. We bid him farewell now ; you are free from him ; but inasmuch as you were an important factor in his life, so long as memory remains for him your simulacrum will haunt him.”

At this Ina wept. “ Alas, sir ! must this be

so ? I have withdrawn my curse from him ; why"——

" I understand you," he interrupted. " Had he also forgiven you he would not have been torn so violently from you, but your curse is not alone. The whole world curses the wrong-doer. That is, good-meaning people everywhere condemn what they have been taught to believe is wrongdoing—they judge ; not knowing the ultimate of an act, they judge from the immediate consequences. The horizon of self is very large in our estimate, and sun, moon, and stars are shining brightly there, but from its small standpoint no sun, moon, nor stars can be seen in that of another. Their day is not so bright as ours. Alas for us when we fail to see God in our kind ! Ina, forget not this truth : you could not be the bright spirit you are destined to be except for the wrongs, the curse, and the forgiveness. There is no virtue without temptation, neither pity without suffering, nor forgiveness without some wrong to forgive. Thank God for the wrongs, then, as well as for the blessings."

CHAPTER IV.

FOURTH JOURNEY.

THE scene changes to a vast plateau overlooking great plains, sparkling brooks and rivers, low ranges of wooded hills, dotted with small, neat-looking cottages of all kinds of architecture, with here and there a palace, and on yonder plain a great city, and several villages nestling close by the hillsides as if for protection. Cattle on the plain attest the fact that this portion of this dark world is not so very different from earth. Vineyards here and there, fields of grain, and orchards loaded with fruit astonish me. I see no sun nor shade, but a mild light, half twilight. A gentle breeze and genial warmth, invigorating and exhilarating, charm me and lure us to sit on a grassy bank overlooking a stream in whose waters, as clear as white glass, are disclosed lazy fish of many varieties and colors. A sturdy, red-faced man came leisurely along with a fishing-rod, and seating himself upon the opposite bank, began angling for fish. I watched him pulling out the shining fish, till, becoming satisfied with what he had caught, he rose to go, when I addressed him thus :

“Stranger, have you always lived in this valley?”

“Ah, no, sir,” he replied, courteously saluting us, “I have not always lived here. My earth home was similar to this, but vastly different.”

“Then you remember your earth life? Please tell us wherein this differs from it.”

“Well, sir, in many ways: there we were often sick; the uncertainty of making a living, the certainty of old age and death, was a horrible condition to be in. Here we have no seasons; if we plant we are sure to reap, and we plant whenever we choose. There is no chance here; certainty rules.”

“How long since you left your earth life?”

At this he looked puzzled, and scratched his head, as he replied:

“Indeed, sir, I cannot tell. It may have been five, ten, a hundred, or a thousand years since I left the earth. I have been here ever since. You see, sir, we have no way of measuring time here—no sun, moon, stars, nor seasons. It is always the same; the trees are always loaded with blossoms and fruit. There is no death here, but things disappear. If I plant more than I need it disappears, so that I only have what I need.”

“But, my friend, you have just caught a string of fish, which I presume you intend to eat, and yet you tell me there is no death. You have to kill and cook them before you eat them, do you not?”

“ Oh, I see, sir, you do not understand ; by death I mean decay, corruption, decomposition. If I cook and eat these fish in a reasonable time it is all right, but if my hunger disappears before doing so, these fish will disappear with my hunger, and leave no trace. You see no fish in the creek now ; they only come when I hunger for them. By some instinct that I cannot explain, I know when they are here.”

“ But, friend, have you no anxieties ? What of your wife and children, and the friends of your earth life ? You loved them dearly ! Are they all here with you now ? ”

“ I see you are of the earth yet. While on the earth I was obliged to lay up ‘ a store for a rainy day,’ for old age, and provision for adversity. Of right that which I provided was mine. I wished a companion ; I found one, and we had children. I vainly thought they belonged to me ; but my children left me. Some died ; others by slow degrees changed so much as to leave no trace of love in my heart for them. I often thought how much better it would have been for me if they also had died when young, for then they would have left a memory of love behind to fill the acting void in my heart. Ah, friend, death is indeed a boon to ignorance ! Since coming here I have learned that I can claim as mine only that which I use. My wife was mine only so long as our hearts beat in unison and there was a mutual interchange of thought and feeling.

She filled my heart so full that there was no room in it for a 'vague unrest ;' no thought of criticism or of judgment upon her acts ever entered my mind. But here as elsewhere we learn, and change in so doing. While the hills, valleys, brooks, fields, orchards, the cloudless skies, and the endless days filled me with content and joy, she tired of the dull monotony, and longed for the sun, the changing skies, and the starry nights of earth ; and soon thereafter she disappeared. I did not grieve, for I had been taught by the way things adjust themselves here that when I needed another she would come, and so she did. How long she will remain I know not, neither do I care. Care and anxiety are destructive. My neighbors and friends do the same. So long as one is content, he or she remains. It is no uncommon thing in visiting friends to find a vacant place or a new face. Content insures a residence and all needs supplied, but no one says this is mine or that is yours. All things are God's. I do not even own myself ; and here is the uncertainty and only anxiety I have. The priests tell us that this is purgatory, and that we are merely waiting here for the day of judgment ; and I am inclined to think that their teachings are one great thing that breeds discontent among the people."

"How so ?" I asked.

"Well, you see sir, they hold big meetings—there is one going on now just over that hill—in which they excite the people with the idea of

evangelizing the world so as to hasten the millennium ; and for this purpose they induce all they can to return as missionaries to earth."

"Indeed ! do you mean to say there is a way of returning to earth ?" I asked.

"Oh, most assuredly there is, and many of our ablest preachers go there quite frequently. There is a college in yonder city where men and women are trained in the art of psychology, and crowds of these adepts visit the earth, and excite the people and the preachers to get up revivals, etc. They say here, that for every revival or protracted meeting on earth, its counterpart must be held here to give it power. They say they are not visible on earth, and these have an advantage over those they wish to influence." He paused, looked at the place where his fish had lain, and exclaimed : "Good sir, you see how it is. In talking with you I forgot my hunger, and the fish have evaporated ;" and shouldering his rod he sauntered away.

I turned to Ina. What was my surprise to see her face radiant with smiles, which had been a stranger to her face so long that I had almost forgotten their bewitching fascination.

Her eyes flashed again with the old joy, her cheeks vied with the rose in its soft pearl and deep carnations. Her attire had also become lovely beyond description. My guide also seemed transformed. The cloak and slouch hat had disappeared, and he was clad now like a Persian

prince, with sandals on his feet and turban on his head. We journeyed rather laboriously at first, for I want you to understand that in this world we were on, though it was, and is, the abode of disembodied people, the laws and conditions are very similar to those of earth. Gross forms are the rule, the exceptions being in the parts we are now in. Here is the realm of vastation, or the throwing off of grossness, and the taking on of etherealized forms. To will here is to be. The spiritual nature here develops its salient powers very rapidly, because love rules and leads the will. We journeyed laboriously at first, but our guide presently said :

“ You are now free ! These forms are becoming more and more ethereal, and this change can be hastened if you will formulate in your minds what you most desire to be and to do.”

We simultaneously cried out :

“ We wish to leave this world as far behind as possible. We desire to explore all the spiritual realms of the universe, not out of curiosity, but to find a place congenial, where we may abide, and forget the experiences we have passed through.”

“ Indeed, you ask too much,” said he. “ Know then that all worlds are spiritual. The infinite expanse of space is full of worlds inhabited by spirits, both in forms and formless ; but it is almost impossible for you to conceive of a formless spirit. To illustrate, everything is attracted

to centers, which are forms. The formless, then, is that which floats around, is an adjunct of forms, and may be coarse or fine. The further it is from the form, the more ethereal, and consequently formless, it is. This is invisible to you, but your clothing and your forms are visible. Still they are both spirit in different conditions. A child at conception is a formless spirit, yet as much an individual as ever it becomes ; nor is it any more spirit before conception than it is after organization.

“ Now please pay attention. The salient powers of any organized being are expansive, flashing, leaping, moving powers. As a fire expands the atmosphere, as flames leap, as the wood moves away in a conflagration, so moves the form from one condition to another. Distance is nothing to some spirits, but gross spirits move slowly, laboriously. All motion is due to will-power. Again, you ask too much, for this reason : Ina's form, i. e. a portion of her spirit, ' lies moldering in the ground,' being consumed by worms. She is not complete till every atom thereof is set free by decomposition, and incorporated into her individuality. It is upon this stream of spirit that the dead return to haunt graveyards, individuals, places, etc., even supposing they have ever left the earth, which I deny in most cases. Every worm that is burrowing in her flesh has a will. Each one is an individual, an entity. They are all reincarnated, and are her children, for they

have been begotten in her flesh. They have become nuclei of attraction, and as they cannot ascend to her she must eventually return to them. There is a vast distance between them. This distance is conditions. All distance is a matter of condition. The burial of the dead is a curse to the earth. Not till cremation shall become universal shall the earth be free from noxious worms, reptiles, insects, wild beasts, and devilish men. Attraction is an awful power, and no matter what world or stage of being you may reach, dear Ina you cannot find perfect rest; for those things born of you, low down in the scale of being, will cling to you like slime, to make you, in the lapse of the ages, dissatisfied with rest, and you will long to return to earth and activity, because your mother-love will desire to help the unfortunate to better conditions. We will visit Nirvana and some of the Dewi Lokas, and then you can choose. Don has not seen corruption, and consequently can become whatever he pleases. Come! use your wills and your imagination. Throw off these vile, ethereal bodies; take on action bodies and raiments of the sun, and away!"

He ceased. I felt a thrill, vibrations, breaking up, not unpleasantly, every atom of my being. I was swiftly passing through space, and as I went I felt myself growing lighter. It was a sensation somewhat like what one feels in falling, where there is no apprehension of danger. Oh,

such a restful, peaceful sensation ! who can describe it in words ? But I do not think I moved through space at all ; it was merely the changing of conditions. Presently the vibrations began to subside, and the sense of motion gradually disappeared. I looked at myself and companions to note the changes. There was nothing visible of them save globes of the brightest light, but by an effort of will, in the focusing of sight, I perceived within the light tiny forms, corresponding exactly with the forms of my two friends. Strange sight ! minute forms, scarce one foot in height, yet perfect in every detail, just as nature made them, with a light more dazzling than the brightest sunlight flashing from them far and near ; literally, a body composed of *actien*—the actinic ray, the chemical properties, the creative principle, of light ; that which builds, molds, colors, and destroys all forms of matter ! Presently I became aware of the presence of numerous forms similar to our own. Our guide spoke, but there was no sound. I felt no vibrations, but I saw the lights of our persons scintillating like stars, and felt his unspoken words as plainly as if they had been shouted in my ear.

“These,” said he, “are the messengers of the gods ; let us follow them.” Even as he spoke, I was conscious of a change in myself. An ecstasy, stronger, sweeter, than mortal has ever felt, was mine. It flashed not through my nerves, but I seemed to be ecstasy itself. I heard no music, but

I felt as if I was all melody itself. All forms had suddenly disappeared ; nothing was left but an inconceivable and indescribable light. The awful expanse above, below, and around presented no object for the eye to rest on ; nothing but light, which came from no source, but simply was. Confused and astonished, I instinctively clasped my hands ; but there was no contact, and yet I knew they were clasped. I looked for my form ; there was nothing visible. I felt for my head, but my hand came not in contact with anything ; still I knew I was intact, because I walked, shifted my position, turned my head this way and that, perfectly naturally, all except my sensations. I was harmony, I was a strain of most ravishing melody, I was a ray of that most wondrous light, I was a prayer. My soul was uplifted as I looked upward with intense longing and rapt adoration, and saw in the dim, uncertain distance a transparent, cloud-like film. Slowly descending, it grew darker, interiorly broken in chasms of colors such as I have never seen on earth ; and out of these chasms there issued a substance felt but invisible. It was far more than an odor ; it was an aura, a breath—something to be known by all the senses at once ; an invigorating, exalting influence, defying analysis and all description. A new life was given me. Quickened, attracted, burning with desire, I rushed towards the cloud, only to be hurled back by a shock that made me think for a moment that I was being torn into

shreds. My blood boiled like lava ; still it was ravishingly pleasant. Tremulous with delight I prostrated myself, crying aloud, "Father ! Lord ! I ask no more ! I give myself to thee without reservation ! Take me to thyself if I am worthy in thy sight !"

Then, a voice, soft, low, zephyr-like, in cadences like a woman's, sounded in my own soul, saying :

"My son, thou art worthy, but thou art not complete. That which thou seest is the veil of Isis ; it is within thee ; but no mortal can raise it or pass within. Thou must know all and be all ere thou canst enter here. This is the Brahma Loka, the abode of the gods, the home of Osiris and Isis, of Brahm, of Allah, of Aum, of Om, and of millions—aye myriads—not known by name. Hither come all unselfish acts, all aspirations of good, all prayers untainted with selfishness and unbelief, like an incense wafted from mortal life, to be answered by this wave of seminal fire that flows eternally from this world to earth, there to spring forth as grass, flowers, trees, fruits, grains, and all things good. Even the minerals and clods under your feet are caused to be by this seminal aura, this fire that burns in the blood of all animate beings, prompting to the production and multiplication of the species. This is the *seed* of things, that flows from the gods beyond the veil, being *projections of themselves*.

" 'In the beginning was the seed, and the seed

was with love, and the *seed was love*. The seed was in the beginning with love, all things grew from seed. and without seed no thing grew. In the seed is life, and life is the light of men.' Thus reads St. John, ch. 1st verses 1-2-3-4, when translated and rendered in comprehensive terms. The forms you saw just now have all combined as one. They have coalesced but they still retain all their individual characteristics. As one all the gods act, as one all spirits on this plane act, and this seminal fire which flows from here to earth is the influence you term life. The best of earth are the greatest reservoirs of it. The earth labors in sin and sorrow through the laws man has made to *regulate this same divine fire* that burns in souls to the propagation of itself. You are a ray of Divine light—the *act'ien* or soul of light and life, the beginning, creator. As quick as thought you may project yourself to earth and into the mind of anyone you choose, there to burn and beget desire, to illuminate, to inspire in art, literature, inventions, etc. It is said that a ray of light requires about eight minutes to pass from the sun to the earth, which might be true if light flowed from the sun, which I deny. The philosopher that Swedenborg saw in spirit, puzzling his brain over the problem of "which is greater, the center or the circumference?" is apropos here. By the very nature of things, by the rotation of the earth upon its axis, by the construction of body and mind, it is difficult to

conceive of any condition without a center and circumference. For this reason A. J. Davis and others have spoken of a great spiritual center, and of spheres in spirit life one above another. All seem to forget this vital truth, that the human mind is but a simple cell and consequently limited in its concepts. Add another cell to it, and the whole panorama of existence changes; the senses are modified; things now visible become invisible, and *vice versa*. The budding of this new cell, if you have it, will show you that centers are everywhere; that wherever a center is, there is a circumference; that they two are naturally self-dependent, and one is no greater than the other. But *whence come the two?* Are they self-creative? or are they dependent upon some other center that has overgrown itself and thrown off its surplus, as astronomers imagine the sun to have done in the case of worlds, and still throwing off light and heat? If there were other principles involved than the actor and the recipient we might feel at rest about it, but when we consider the *spectator*, the *mind* that is analyzing these things, we cannot help seeing a *third principle* at work *creating* the phenomena of existence. Thought is both center and circumference. All things are ideas, and thoughts are the circumference thereof. Mind, in order to imbibe an idea, must focalize its thoughts. This focus is the center of it, but it is only an aggregation of thoughts after all. Thoughts are

the light of the mind, but mind is not limited to centers.

“It climbs in every expanse as far as thought extends, the limit being only the night of ignorance, the shadow of ourselves. The mind which casts no shadow is so expanded that it has no center; it must be all conscious, as much in one place as in another. I have shown you the veil of Isis behind which is the abode of the gods, but this is because your nature does not permit you to comprehend anything unless it has a center. This is a mere *projection of your own center*. Your center enables you to perceive centers outside of yourself, which are pictures mainly of things within. Just so it is in regard to the gods. They are within you, or you could have no concept of them. If light were not in you, there could be no light external for you. If you had no heat in your blood the sun could not affect you. Unless God is within, you can have no idea of Him. Spirit is all, and mind is the door of light. Open wide the door, and light, heat, life, are everywhere. The seed is scattered everywhere, and it is love—God! It takes no time for thought to reach the sun, and if light comes from the sun it also is instantaneous. Light is but a thought. It simply is; and no one can truly say what its source may be. God is! can anyone point to His source? You are; but where did you come from? ‘As a man thinketh, so is he,’ said Paul. ‘God is a Spirit, and ‘the kingdom of *heaven is within*

you,' said Jesus. God is in the kingdom of heaven; His word, the seed, is also there. The light and life are also there, within you; where God is, there clusters the universe, with all worlds, sun, stars, and the Brahma Lokas. There resides in embryo, in the shadow of doubt, unbelief, and ignorance, that which makes all good and all power possible to you. Let us visit the Christian's heaven."

The voice ceased. I felt myself falling, and becoming more tangible to myself. Presently I saw my companions by my side. Hardly had the voice ceased when we were at the walls of an immense city.

CHAPTER V.

FIFTH JOURNEY.

THE NEW JERUSALEM.

WE had become decidedly more material. Our actienic forms had become ethereal, visible, tangible, and ravishingly beautiful. Before us rose the walls of a city so beautiful and grand as to defy all powers of description. Even the gorgeous description that St. John gives in Revelation of the New Jerusalem becomes insipid and commonplace when compared to the original. The great pearly gates opened noiselessly to admit us. No fabled St. Peter stood there to demand a certificate of baptism from us, but there were bright and shining men and women clad in radiant white, sparkling with gems and jewels of all colors and description, many of which are unknown on earth. Crowns of gold, sparkling with diamonds, adorned their heads. Golden harps were in their hands. They played and sang most melodiously, dancing in circles as they greeted us. The wide streets were paved with translucent gold. The vast edifices, ranging in rows far in the distance, in perfect order, uniform in style

and height, were composed of pure virgin gold, variegated with pearls, diamonds, precious stones, known and unknown to us. Vast endless processions of people were marching in stately splendor, all dressed exactly alike, of the same height, thickness, and weight. Gorgeous crowns of gold graced each kind, and harps of gold in perfect tune with each other were played upon by hands exactly alike. They chanted as they marched in perfect time and step,

“ Hark ! from the tombs a doleful sound !
Mine ears attend the cry.
Ye living men, come view the ground
Where you must shortly lie,”

in doleful sound very suggestive of a funeral. Carried along with the procession, we at last reached an open square in the heart of the city, with no seats, no trees, and no flowers, shrubs, or green things ; neither fountains nor springs, but a vast sea of heads. By some instinct unknown to us they seemed to know there were strangers in their midst, and began to hustle us towards the center, but no hand touched us. An irresistible force propelled us.

Arrived at the center, I saw many prelates, priests, monks, and ministers seated in a circle upon thrones, with sceptres in their hands and crowns on their heads. All was hushed in breathless silence. A cloud had settled imperceptibly over our head, out of which streaks of lurid lightnings began to flash, while close down in

the gray half-tone of it there appeared in letters of fire these words, "The judgment-seat of God," "Holiness to the Lord." Simultaneously with the appearance of these words there broke from the multitude a shout like the roar of the ocean: "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Glory to the Lord." Then clanged the harps, then shouted they forth songs of glory, as if it were one voice. Amid songs and sweet strains of music there gradually lowered itself from the cloud, so as to be dimly seen in the white vapor, a great white throne upon which some one sat surrounded by horrible-looking many-eyed beasts (see Revelations for description). Upon the appearance of the throne the multitude prostrated itself upon the golden pavement as if it had been one individual. Then arose one from the largest golden throne and opened his mouth to speak. Out of his mouth went forth a flaming sword, saying: "Arise, ye saints of the living God! Ye are the salt, the rulers, of earth! Stand forth, ye heretics, who with foul, polluted minds have entered into this holy city! What seek ye here? Without the walls of this holy place are your kind—murderers, harlots, whoremongers, liars, thieves, blasphemers, and all that work an abomination! Explain yourselves." While he yet spoke, looking up I saw a mountain overlooking the city, where, upon a rock, sat the Man with a crown of thorns encircling His brows—the same who had long ago folded me in his arms. As I gazed, I saw that He wept. At the sight of this

lonely Man weeping I was electrified. My blood curdled, and crying with a loud voice I said :

“Oh, reverend sirs! we are no heretics, but followers of the one you *pretend* to worship ; while doing so ye give the lie to His sweetest sayings. You have made His words of non-effect by substituting therefor the traditions of men ! For the law of love ye have substituted the laws of Moses : ‘An eye for an eye, tooth for tooth, blood for blood,’ when He expressly declared : ‘I say unto you that ye resist not evil, but return good for evil.’ Ye teach judgment, when he said, ‘Judge not ;’ ‘I come not to judge the world, but to save it!’ Oh, ye blind lead”—

“Stop that blasphemy” shouted he of the sword-tongue. “Ho, guards ! executioners ! bring forth the whips ! Know you not, vile blasphemer, that the Son of God never gave such a command for the government of the world. It was simply advice to the disciples when He sent them forth among ravening wolves. To follow such precepts as that would destroy civilization. Besides, it is contrary to the divine character of God, who will destroy the wicked root and branch by the fierceness of His wrath.”

“Hold, good sir !” I exclaimed. “I perceive you do not understand the divine nature. John said, ‘God is love !’ Now, who ever saw any wrath in love ? or who ever saw anything divine in wrath ? Not one ! On the contrary, you know that wrath is devilish.”

At this he of the sword-tongue became furious, and called upon about half-a-dozen men bearing great whips made of the toughest of branches, which they cast down in front of the throne.

"Now," said he, "Mister heretic, take you a good whip and defend yourself. We will whip that notion of non-resistance of evil out of you."

I refused to defend myself, whereupon at a signal they all fell upon me with the whips. I stood it a few brief moments, but they laid on the whips faster and harder. They cut to the quick; they laid me all open and bloody. I danced in agony; I shouted for mercy; I prayed God to deliver me. Looking up at the throne in my frantic efforts to dodge or ward off the blows, I saw the beasts around the "white throne" wagging their heads at me. This filled me with wrath; I seemed to expand with superhuman vigor, and seizing a whip I laid it around me like Samson among the Philistines. At the very first stroke the cowards ran pell-mell from the ring, while the judge and the crowd roared with laughter.

"Now, you see, sir, the divinity of wrath!" said the judge. "The church knows exactly how to convince heretics. Physical arguments are very great mind-openers. Moral suasion is good in mild cases, but physical suasion is the true kind for reprobates. Bring hither the measuring rod."

At this a man stepped forth with a slender reed

just the height of the other men, and forthwith began to measure each one of us. That done he measured us around the waist with a tape-line, and announced the result as follows :

“This man,” laying his hand upon me, “is too short by six inches, and too big around by eight inches.”

“Let him be stretched and compressed then,” said the judge. “Away with him !” Then addressing our guide he demanded :

“Now, sir ! what hast thou to say for thyself ?”

“I would like to ask, sir, why you stretch and compress him ?”

“Sir,” he replied, “it little becomes one in my exalted position to give a reason for what I order. Suffice it if I stoop this time to grant your request. In the beginning God made men perfect physically, mentally, and spiritually. They were all made in one pattern, exactly alike, but since the fall, under the curse, they have retrograded to the extent that now you see them totally depraved. Hence the difference you see in form, stature, expression, and mentality. A man thinks according to his physical structure. Paul says : ‘As a man thinketh, so is he.’ Now we will make him think as we want him to, and as we can’t stretch and mold his mind directly, we stretch his body, and his mind conforms to it if he survives the torture.”

“Oh, sir ! you fill my soul with anguish,”

cried our guide. "Thou dost spit upon the Father in your thought! Thou thinkest to improve upon God's work in thy fellow-man, when He whom thou dost pretend to worship did command thee to 'pluck the mote first out of thine own eye, ere thou dost presume to pluck it from thy neighbor's eye.' Thou dost assume to be washed clean in the blood of the Lamb, to be born again, to be regenerated, and yet thou hast no pity for those outside your city. Thou dost compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when thou hast made him, he is tenfold more a child of hell than ye yourselves! Wrath never yet made anyone good. Fear will do for children and barbarians, but he who hath love in his heart hath no fear, for the desire of the soul, be he Christian, Mohammedan, heathen, or savage, surely reaches God's throne if it be winged by love; and as surely brings a response, and"—

"Thou speakest well, sir," interrupted the judge, "but know this, no man knows aught of love till he has been redeemed through the blood of the Saviour. Those who are in wrath know not God. Thou art yet in the gall"—

"Hold on, judge! Every man that breathes knows God, for He is the life of"—

"Ho, guards!" shouted the judge, "I call Jesus to witness my forbear"—

"Hold, sir judge! thou callest on a Jew, whom thou callest God, while thou and thy kind hate the descendants of Abraham wherever the name

of Jesus is known. Oh, consistency, thou art a jewel !”

While he was yet speaking he was seized and measured, the result announced being “ Six inches too tall, waist right, chest four inches excess.”

“ Take them to the torture ! Grind, compress, and stretch them till the truth can abide in them ! Rack their joints asunder ! Force them to think as we do ! If they blaspheme, tear their tongues out, and burn their eyes out with a hot iron !”

Then he elevated a huge crucifix, at which the vast throng fell on their faces and worshiped. We were hustled away, but Ina was detained.

“ This,” said our guide, “ is the inquisition ! Its counterpart exists in the churches on earth. They think it is a heavenly institution, but it is hell-born. The Catholic Church does not practice it openly at present, and the Protestants do not favor physical torture, but in its place substitute mental torture, teaching that God will torture sinners after death, and will do so without any *desire for their improvement*, but only for the amusement of God and the saints. The city so graphically described by John in his visions on Patmos contains in itself the mad greed of mankind for gold, and the reverence of kings, priests, and thrones so rampant on earth. It is a magnet that draws the thoughts of all towards hell, hate, and oppression. If heaven is paved with gold, it is perfectly natural to worship gold. If God sits upon a throne to rule the world, it is perfectly

consistent to worship thrones and aspire to rule. If God inspires one more than another, it is proper to consider such a one more divine than others; hence, being more the embodiment of truth than others, he has a right, a *divine right*, to declare the truth, and establish it by any and all means. Hence the crowning of kings and the establishment of popery. It is all of hell, and a man-made scheme, conceived in the lust of rule, inspired by demons who love not their kind. O Jesus! thou lover of the ignorant and the poor! how hast Thou been traduced, lied about, and *crucified even after death!* Alas, the vanity of saints who see so much in crowns and in the glory of treading under their feet sinners, over whom the poor hunted Jesus wept and prayed! Pile up your fagots, make your fires hot! if your God needs a sacrifice we are ready! Roll out to the fierce light of heaven your infernal machines of torture, for surely ye shall learn this hour that they avail nothing! The spirit cannot suffer, neither is love made afraid."

As he spoke, the golden pavement opened wide, disclosing a vast vault of impenetrable darkness, into which we were ushered. The pavement closed over us. There appeared men with torches, by the dim light of which appeared all the hellish inventions of the Catholic inquisition, machines of torture that only the ingenuity of devils could invent—a bedstead of iron with rollers at each end, and clamps for the hands, feet, and neck; a huge

wheel with cross rollers, adjustable with set screws, over corresponding depressions in the wheel, so that one lashed on the wheel, in turning around, could be lightly pressed or all broken to a jelly, according to the desire of the operators. There were machines for twisting, screwing, flaying, unjointing, and suspending; others for enclosing the feet, and by an ingenious combination of screws reducing or expanding them. A monk robed in black, with shaven crown and cowl, holding a cross, abjured us to recant our damnable heresies and blasphemies.

“What do you mean by heresy?” I cried. “Is it to believe that God is no respecter of persons? Is it to believe that God loves all with a father’s love, and hates none? Is it to believe that His mercy is eternal as He Himself is? and that there is no place so low and dismal that He is not there in mercy and love? Are we heretics because we have too good an opinion of Infinite power and goodness?”

“Nay,” replied the monk, “not that, but you deny the vicarious atonement. You deny the immaculate conception and the sonship of God, you deny the authority of the holy Catholic Church, the infallibility of the Pope, and assert that the plan of salvation is a man-made scheme. You deny the holiness of the Sabbath day, which is second to no sin a man can commit. All these constitute the crime of heresy. If you recant

such blasphemy you may be saved even now without torture. What sayest thou?"

"Sir," I replied, "suppose that through fear of torture or through fear of eternal torment I recant, and say that I accept your belief as my own, what good will it do God or your Church? Admit that I escape present torture, I run the risk of eternal punishment for cowardice and hypocrisy."

"Oh, sir," he quickly rejoined, "you forget that by so doing you become a fit recipient for our prayers, and that 'whatsoever sins we remit on earth are remitted in heaven.' The sin of hypocrisy is grievous, but still it is a small one compared to that of scoffing at our holy religion. I am free to admit that most of our membership is made up through fear; most of them have no belief of their own at all; they simply take our word for it. But we are wasting time; do you recant or not?"

"No!" I shouted, "I will not! I would rather go to hell an honest man than go to your heaven a hypocrite. If God sends all heretics to hell, in a little time they will transform it into a place He will be proud of. Do your worst!"

While they were binding me to the rack I felt the thoughts of my guide, who stood calmly watching the performance. He seemed to say: "Don, if you will not to feel, they cannot affect you in the least. This world is but slightly moved from the earth plane; you are under physical laws now simply through the psychological influence of surroundings. This is purga-

tory, but they think it is heaven. To them it is truly so because they know no other. This place has been building ever since Catholicism began to send its devotees to the spirit world. Let them do their worst upon you, then vanish by an effort of will."

They commenced at once to turn the screws at my head and feet, and I began visibly to lengthen out, which of course diminished my waist measure; but when I had completely filled the bed, I was still too thick. They then encased me in an iron jacket, which by the aid of set screws could be contracted. Meantime my sensations were not at all unpleasant. I laughed at them while my ribs were cracking and grinding together under the awful pressure. Presently they clasped an iron mask, made in sections, upon my head, so as to cover the entire scalp from my eyes to the back of my neck, and by turning the screws pressed the skull inward upon the brain. A sleepy languor stole over my senses, while my skull ground and cracked, and blood flowed from my nose, eyes, and ears. I certainly felt like going, although I had not the slightest pain, but suddenly rousing myself, I willed to be free, and stepped out of the machine, leaving it intact, while the astonished devils looked at the monk in wild-eyed horror. The monk crossed himself, said an "Ave Maria," and fled pell-mell from the scene. We were almost immediately by the side of Ina, though invisible to her and the crowd. A

few moments more, and there came the monk with the executioners in hot haste.

“Your Holiness !” he shouted, “the prisoners have escaped us ! even in the torture they vanished ! They are wizards, and undoubtedly this woman is a witch.”

The examination of Ina, thus interrupted, the judge resumed :

“You say, madam, that you are the wife of him you call Don. Then tell me what priest performed the ceremony.”

“Sir, we married on earth as they marry in heaven. Love, which you call God, gave me to him, and also gave him to me, and love performed all the ceremony there was. Our church was 'neath the green trees, the witnesses were angels and the star-eyed night, and the benediction was pronounced by night-birds that chant only the melodies of heaven. ‘That which Love joins let no man put asunder.’ Oh ! give me back my husband !” she cried, stretching forth her arms imploringly.

“Out upon such blasphemy !” cried the judge, “vile prostitute ! unholy harlot ! adulteress ! Cast her out ! God has no pity for such scum of the earth, and why should we have any ? Cast her out ! And find St. Peter, and double the guards at the gates, so that no more such abominations can enter.”

Finding ourselves outside the walls, we made ourselves visible to Ina and passed to other scenes.

CHAPTER VI.

NIRVANA AND DEWI LOKAS.

It was as if we had slept, and dreamed a disagreeable dream. The Golden City, with its golden crowns, its arrogance, its pride of holiness, haunted me, and it was some little time after we were away from its influence before I felt like questioning our guide. At last I asked, "Tell me, sir, is this the ultimate of human life?—must it all end in the vanity of crowns, and the government of many by a few? I mean, is this the highest goal?"

"Nay, friend, the universe is not limited. Men and women make their own conditions, and these conditions make places in the spirit worlds corresponding thereto. This city will stand as long as priestcraft rules earth, for its people are continually receiving new members from earth, good, honest people who have never dreamed of any better condition than to worship some one or something they imagine superior to themselves. Their God is a *person* and sits on a throne, with a crown on His head—a God pleased with the abject homage of the things He has made—a God pleased with praise, which a true man

despises—the praise of cowards. Such sentiments cannot fail to create a heaven in harmony with itself. But do not imagine that there is anything durable in existence either on earth or in heaven or hell, for wherever humanity exists there is change. A million of years are nothing to eternity. I will take you to another world where you may learn more than I can tell you.”

We now went through the process of vastation, throwing off body, form, mind, intellect, memory, etc., as one divests himself of his clothing, till there was nothing left of us but the consciousness of being, the Ego, the I, the think—an *impersonal individuality* void of all human qualities and qualifications. In this state we *three were one* coalesced. We were the mountains and valleys, the trees and flowers, the clouds and the blue skies. We had no sensations such as you on earth know. We were one, and what one willed all willed. By a thought, a wish, the heavens blazed with suns, stars and the reflected light of moons and other dark orbs. We called up the storm-clouds, played with the lightnings, and directed the winds. I was the thought, the question, and the answer. What is there on earth worth knowing? Immediately I was *en rapport* with our small, insignificant planet, with all its learning, its libraries, its temples and cathedrals, its halls of legislation, its governments, and its pretenses of knowledge of God and future existence.

Then I answered : " All that belongs to anyone is the passing moment. All the worth of anything, of all knowledge, of all religions, sciences, is contained in the consciousness of being, of a single heart-throb, the satisfaction of the moment, a single thought—LOVE. Of what? I asked. Of self-completeness—nothing added, nothing taken away. Of human completeness—no future, no hope of some other thing or event, but the *present complete moment*—love of Ina.

As a flash of lightning speeds, so sped I to earth wrapped in Ina's arms. Oh, God ! I ask no more ! I am complete. Then from out the shimmering depths of love, an awful voice sounded in my ears : " If thou art perfect in love, thou art all that is. If thou lovest one perfectly, thou lovest all ! Come up hither and learn ! "

Thus called, we two, now made one, were translated, and stood on an exceeding high mountain. From its height we overlooked what seemed like the whole of creation. An arid waste was the summit where we stood. Not a cloud, no sun nor stars, decked the heavens; still it was very light. Not a green thing greeted my hungry eyes. No flowers exhaled a fragrant perfume to bless the sense of smell. An aching void, in which there was nothing to gratify any sense whatever, was there. A great wall of granite, massive and lofty, reared a forbidding barrier before me. A cloud, no less forbidding, trembled

over its summit, and anon in its darkening folds appeared, in icy letters, the word

“Nirvana.”

“Ah!” methought, “’tis the Buddhist’s heaven. Oh! if I might know what is concealed therein—concealed even from the eyes of Gautama himself! Is it a cessation of existence?—annihilation, as Spence Hardy conceived it to be?” I had scarcely formulated this question when a voice scarcely human, a voice that had lost all its sonorousness and melody, a voice harsh and cracked, like the breaking of dry twigs, broke the silence. It sounded within me, and echoed and reverberated round about me; multiplied itself, till the expanse was filled with it, an awful sound, yet distinct. It said:

“Thou shalt know! There can be no annihilation for anything that has had an existence. Things merge into and become other things, ‘as one wave rolls into another on the ocean.’ But this cannot be predicated of anything save its external appearance or form. The inmost soul or consciousness is identically the same in man, worm, insect, and mammal. It is an absolution, a self-existent entity; no matter how many changes may be wrought in its external manifestation, it is an eternal fact.

“Now understand: nature is a product of love, is in fact the voice of God, or Love, for they are one and the same. Please understand another thing: nature is plastic in the hands of man, for

man, being the consciousness of nature, is master of it to a certain extent. He, being an embodiment of love, is a creator and a destroyer at the same time. Gautama, having wearied of the ceaseless round of existence, of being reincarnated as man and beast through many ages, longing for rest, conceived the idea of destroying the sexual functions, thus putting an end to reproduction of the species. Not, however, by castration, but by a system of meditation upon the evils of existence, thus poisoning the fountains of sexual desire, and throwing back upon the brain the superabundant sexual fire, or seminal aura, which is the life. This mental discipline involves extreme concentration and unwearied watchfulness over the emotional nature, hence a systematic and prolonged culture of the will. Pessimistic meditation is to passion as water is to fire. The least erotic desire must be quenched by a *bath in death*, for thoughts of death kill life, thoughts of evil kill good. He who contemplates the evils of existence antagonizes pleasure, and is a living protest against Infinite wisdom and goodness. He essays to improve upon nature's methods. What for? For a selfish purpose!—for a rest or an escape from the responsibilities of action. Not that it would confer a universal good upon the race—no! that was never claimed by the devotees of asceticism. There are only a few who can expect to reach Nirvana. And upon these favored few, kind Providence showers its

choicest blessings. How much this favors the Christian's idea of the kingdom of heaven I leave you to judge. The difference is merely in the *plan* of salvation. In the one the merit is all in the Son of God, in the other the merit is in the individual himself. Gautama spent seven years in the mountain forests of Tibet practicing the peculiar rites of asceticism.

“ Whatever man sets out to accomplish, kind mother nature encourages, and furnishes the means for its accomplishment, whether it be good or whether it be evil. She never inquires into motives. He who lives a life of celibacy finds the seminal aura in time charging his brain to overflowing. He becomes luminous in vision and in thought. It seems as if nature comes to a focus in him. As the light in a sun-glass burns a hole in cloth, as if to escape imprisonment in a conflagration, so do sexual forces act. They burn, they blaze, and he who is able to ride upon the flame can go anywhere, see any and everything, know all that is to be known. But there is a limit to mere knowledge. This fire surges in great billowy waves up and down. When held by will within bounds it is a great beautifier. The countenance glows with warmth and life; the lips are red; the skin is soft and clear; the eyes emit rays of light, piercing, glowing, fascinating, alluring.

“ But woe to him of weak will when the full tide sets downward. He then can seduce the whole

world of women; he is irresistible. If he falls he can nevermore reach the heights he might have attained had he not fallen. According to the tradition, the fall of Adam and Eve was through love; and he who would rise must climb the ladder of love, beginning perforce at the *bottom round*. It is *Jacob's ladder* upon which the angels descend, and man may ascend into heaven—but at the loss of his humanity. Ah! you seem astonished at this statement, but consider a moment. The very soul of nature is love, and it will not do to make any distinctions or degrees in love. The affinities of matter, the passions of animals and of human beings, are propagative, the way things multiply; and this is at the foundation of nature, and is as much love as that which pulsates in the bosom of angels.

“Evidently the intention of Providence is to develop a perfect humanity. The senses enable us to enjoy and to suffer, and they all spring from the sense of feeling. A perfect person will enjoy all that a beneficent nature has made him capable of enjoying. Here he finds the only good there is in life, the pleasures that he feels. The intellect is given to study the mysteries of being, the laws of action and reaction; to discover what is good and what is evil. It is a guide to our acts. This is its legitimate field. It has nothing to do with the pulsations of the heart or with the flowing of seminal fire.

“Perfection is a perfect equilibrium of all forces,

a natural exercise of the senses. No department must interfere with the perfect freedom of another. Love must be absolutely free in order to keep its elevation as the God of human conduct. The moment it is subject to mental control or legal enactments, it sinks into subordination, where its fires smolder in a furnace of lust. The moment mind enters the domain of love it becomes a matter of speculation, of policy, in which it draws its heat from imagination. Mind draws its sustenance from love, but love is not dependent upon mind in the least. Man cannot purify love; it is absolutely pure in all its phases. It is elevated or lowered in our estimation by acts noble and grand, or selfish and mean. Now the moment it is undertaken to divert the fires of love from one nerve center to the excessive building up of another, the harmony of the whole is disturbed. This is the case in celibacy, from force of circumstances or from intention. The repression of the natural instincts and desires has done more to fill the earth with prostitution, depravity, disease, and crime, than all other causes put together. The Roman Catholic Church evidently borrowed the idea of celibacy and monasticism from Buddhism, but the practice of celibacy existed before Sakya Muni's time. It is practiced, however, by none but the drones and leeches of society—priests, the so-called holy ones. We look in vain for the supernatural powers which this practice is said to confer

upon its devotees. It seems to have been to some extent practiced in the time of Jesus, for He said: 'Some men make eunuchs of themselves for the kingdom of heaven's sake;' but we look in vain for His endorsement of the practice. He certainly never held a screen before His face to shut out the view of the fair sex. On the contrary, His best friends were disreputable women. He also said: 'If ye believe in Me, ye shall not die,' and 'Whatsoever you shall ask in My name shall be granted.' Where shall we find evidences of the kingdom of God? Not among the Catholic clergy, most assuredly, but rather of the kingdom of his satanic majesty.

"Man is a changing being. Not a thing in the universe stands still. The same law holds sway in the kingdom of heaven, for Jesus said: 'In My Father's house are many mansions, and I go to *prepare a place* for you,' thus showing His idea of changes in the spirit world. Suppose a man progresses till he reaches heaven. The law of evolution shows that the process is nothing more nor less than leaving behind that which he has outgrown, as one throws aside a worn-out garment, such as his follies, sins, meanness—traits that he has grown to be ashamed of. It is true these have been of use to him in molding and fashioning a peculiar character, a man differing from all others; but having outgrown them they are of no use to him any more. Heaven's first law is use. Well, he keeps on

throwing off the things that do not fit into the conditions he enters upon, till, finally, there will be little of his earth-life left. For instance, when he gets to heaven and finds no use for a sexual nature, of course it would become inoperative and be laid aside. He finds no machinery there, and his inventive faculties are thrown aside. As there is no hunger and thirst there, he will have no use for digestion, and stomach and bowels are consigned to the waste-basket. As there is no provision to be made for rainy days or possible future want, there will be little or no need of intellect; and as for logic, intuition will take its place, so good-bye to the great minds of earth. There is no pain nor disease there; then good-bye to the physician's best thoughts; good-bye to pity and charity, for if these noble attributes exist there, heaven would be turned into wailing and sorrow at even the thought of the condition of the lost. You may say there is joy there, but you forget that joy and sorrow are inseparable in human nature. The one is as necessary as the other, nor can one exist without the other. As there is no future there, hope—the noblest faculty of man's moral nature—is left inactive, of no use. Benevolence also is left out, for its field of use is where suffering and want exist. Hence you perceive that he who reaches Nirvana or the Christian's heaven must leave his human nature behind him. What are you then after all your celibacy, your fastings, and your prayers? But

they say a Divine nature will be given to the fortunate few. What do you know of a Divine nature? The revelations of the Jews of the character of Jehovah certainly do not show a nature as good as the average human nature. The Divine as revealed by Jesus is a concept of exalted human nature, which all may reach through the use of all the senses and faculties of the mind, body, and soul, in the enjoyment of every good thing our Father hath given. Nothing is made in vain.

“Behold! a new sect has started up among men, called Theosophy. It is merely Buddhism ossified. You ask for the bread of life, they give you a stone. There can be no degrees, no varieties, in holiness. In Nirvana and heaven there is no such thing as individuality; all are exactly alike. Mortals! go down from this desolate mountain! He who enters here never returns, for he has become something else than human. Nirvana exists all the same, for no one can conceive of a condition unless it exists; and it is man’s prerogative to create conditions. Man has made Nirvana, the kingdom of heaven, and all the hells which Gautama and Swedenborg ever saw. But just so fast as humanity rises towards its full stature will the fires of hell cool, and breaches be made in the walls of Nirvana and the New Jerusalem. Go down then to the valleys of sense, where the sun shines and the birds sing; where the flowers bloom and the fields smile with ripening grain;

where the orchards and vineyards laugh for very pleasure at their use. Go back then to your family circles and firesides, to your little ones, your wives, your lovers; for what are the little aches and pains when compared to the heartfelt ecstasies of love? If you know not love, strive to find it! Go back to your enemies; show them your worth if you are better than they, and they will show you the value of love. Nature revenges all departures from the law of love. Impotency, that follows fast upon the footsteps of the celibate, is a monster invoked from the bottomless pit, causing suicide, idiocy, insanity, and crime—all sent by kind nature to teach us the value of love, and the penalties attached to a deficiency of it. But be careful how you trifle, in your loves, with yourself and others. He who truly loves cannot wrong another. Alas for Nirvana! The Indian's happy hunting-grounds are a superior concept. Oh, what would we give if we could take back some things said and done!"

The voice ceased, the cloud gradually settled over the ramparts of Nirvana, and in its closing folds appeared the words, lightning-traced,

"Too late!"

Then there wailed forth like a sigh from a broken heart these words:

In memory's magic halls I roam,
Where things are not, tho' still they seem—
The genial fireside, the happy home,
That senseless haunt the sleeper's dream.

No hope, no future, nor alluring charm
Acts on my mind—if mind remains
Where sense is lacking. My empty arms
Clasp in vain her beauteous form, her lovely manes.
My heart is gone, I cease to feel
The pulse of love, 'so fair, so fleeting;
The hills and plains around me reel,
Defying law, and order cheating.

CHAPTER VII.

PARADISE.

WE stood upon a gently sloping hillside.

Far in the distance the mountain-ranges rose and nestled in the bosom of the sky, which reproduced, as a mirage, every object far plainer than the reality. The heavens were one universal blaze of glory overhead, far exceeding the grandest Aurora Borealis ever beheld from earth. Vast rainbows overarched, resting in the dim distance at each end, as if in a mirror, which reflected them below our feet, as still water does on earth. The earth upon which we stood, when gazed at with fancy's eyes, became a mirror, glowing and picturesque as the soul of him who gazed. Think what you would and immediately it was objectified in that mirror. The grim woods, variegated, flower-decked, were seen below our feet, tops downward, and we hesitated, lest in stepping we should plunge into still, dark water.

But when gazed at "fancy free" with matter-of-fact eyes the whole scene became commonplace and stale. For to him who has no fancy things become stale and lose allurements; we become wearied; even the sun and stars lose their

beauty when seen continuously; their rising and setting are indeed birth and death to us. The green grass exhaled a pleasant aroma, invigorating, exhilarating, intoxicating. The trees waved their branches, flower- and fruit-laden, bowing low as if politely greeting us, and bidding us help ourselves to their glorious flowers and luscious fruits. Innumerable groups of people romped and played with each other like children. Some promenaded in couples, as lovers do, with arms intertwined, or clasped in an embrace. And such forms! such loveliness! My pen falters. Above, as if dropping from the arching, color-decked heavens, garlands of flowers circled as they descended in the ambient air, as circle the gay, thoughtless young in the mazes of the dance. They descend; nearer they come; oh, wondrous thing! they are flowers, but human flowers. Circling, they alight gracefully upon the green lawn as a bird lights. I am unable to explain this metamorphosis of a flower to a human being. I can only narrate what I saw. As the garlands neared the earth the flowers separated from each other, still retaining their places in the circle. But just before reaching the earth each flower opened its petals and seemed to unfold outwardly, and two human beings, male and female, gorgeously dressed in robes harmonizing perfectly with the colors of the departed flowers, stood in order for a quadrille. All manner of flowers were there, so far as I know. There seemed to be a limitless variety

of them, of all shades of color, form, and aroma ; which latter was exhaled by the persons as well as from the flowers. A rose, with its half-opened buds, its green leaves, when metamorphosed into a female figure, presented a face suggestive of that flower ; and the dress, variegated with white, green, pink, and red, became exquisitely lovely. Just so it was with all of them. They spoke not audibly, but their thoughts impinged upon my heart rather than my mind, in waves of sensation far easier felt than described.

Simultaneously they bowed low to each other. Meantime I knew they were going to dance, but seeing no provision for music, I waited curiously. As they bowed, music, grand, orchestral, melodious, burst upon my startled ear. To say that it came from any particular source would not be true. It seemed to well up from the ground ; it seemed to float from above in harmonic waves ; the trees seemed alive with it ; they bowed, they waved their branches as if in an ecstasy of delight, while the dancers glided, tripped gayly, swung gracefully, floated, now high, now low, bowing, smiling, with love-light in every eye. I formulated the thought in my mind, " Who are these ? and whence comes the music ? Are these the fabled fairies ? "

" Nay," said a voice behind me, seeming to issue from a tree that had been persistently offering its fruit to me—" nay, good sir, these are messengers of love, who occasionally visit us and

the world you came from ; every soul hath music and harps of sweetest tone within it, and they exhale music as they exhale the flowers you saw when they were coming."

"But," I thought to myself, "the flowers seemed to exhale them, instead of their exhaling the flowers !"

"Oh !" replied the voice, " they first clothed themselves with the flowers ere journeying here."

While pondering on what I had seen and heard, a gentleman approached and said :

"You seem to be a stranger here, friend ; have you recently come from the earth ?"

"Yes, sir," I replied ; "pray tell me, if you can, what kind of life do you live here ?"

"We live here, friend, much as you do on earth. But only those who are adapted to this life can remain here for any length of time. These whom you see have lived lives of love on earth ; no pride, envy, hate, malice, can come here. Little children who are not weighted too heavily with heredity taint come here and grow to maturity. We have faculties, and consequently powers, that you have only in embryo on earth. We labor here, but not physically ; for instance, we need no tools nor machinery, but we construct machinery, and invent things here for the benefit of earth, being urged thereto by love ; knowing that no world can bestow perfect bliss upon its inhabitants so long as misery exists in any shape or manner on earth. We mold and fashion

matter here in spirit by the *force of will and the imagination*. At first it is laborious and slow, but with practice some become adepts in the exercise of these faculties, and instantaneous productions are the result. Intuition takes the place of intellect and logic, for here there is no unbelief nor skepticism; no such thing as doubt can enter where intuition rules. Of course there are no chemicals here as you have them on earth; but the spirit is here, and we manipulate the spirit of chemicals. Those whom you have seen dancing here bear the results of our investigations to earth. The spirits of all your churches, colleges, institutions, governments, legislatures, etc., are here, and we have circles of those remarkable for will-power engaged in sowing the seeds of freedom in those institutions. But it is a slow process owing to the cloud of Karma that hangs over earth's inhabitants. We manufacture food from chemicals, and soon this process will be made known on earth. These trees bearing such delicious fruit are produced by will force. Our *savans* are constantly improving, and adding new varieties. Just so it is with everything you have on earth. We desire that the earth shall be filled with the glory of love. If it were not for our prescience we should indeed be miserable here. We have the power to scan the future, and can read its pages better than you can your histories of past events. The events of a nation as of an individual are of little value except as

milestones on the road of progress—guiding, warning, protesting. The memory of events is worthless otherwise. So in viewing the future the past is mapped out. The density of Karma is weighed at certain periods and cycles of time, and the changes that have been wrought therein are noted, as well as the increase of true spirituality. From such data we calculate the unwritten future unerringly. As you say ‘History repeats itself,’ we say ‘The old becomes the new, as often as the new becomes the old ;’ and in each renewal there is a closer union, a more perfect sympathy, a closer knitting of the ties of love. As a tree in its growth forms rings in the wood to mark the years of its growth, so is it with the world. Each cycle leaves its ring in the form of a spiritual sphere thrown off from its incomprehensible self, which, indeed, is the mind and spirit of it.

“In studying these spheres we become acquainted with the passions, the mind, the spirit of the world at certain epochs. Thus do we read God’s word. Thus is everyone read and known by us, if we choose to read individuals. The race of mankind is also triune—body, mind, spirit. These three are inseparably woven together ; and although the spiritual part must suffer from its association with the wild animal nature of the race, which on earth is the dominant part, it is that which escapes the meshes of Karma, and, unwearyed in its labors of love and use, continues its work here. It corresponds to Abel, who was slain

by Cain, the first-born, and also to the beautiful character of Christ, who suffered at the hands of brutes set on by the controlling mind of the age, the mind of childhood, of worship, of fear, of carnivorous animals delighting in blood; the mind of traditions, sticklers for the law and the observance of days. I say this animal nature, guided by the best mind they had, crucified the Spiritual One, the spiritual part of *itself*, and this crucifixion continues to this day."

He paused, but in response to my mental inquiry continued :

"All are free here ; there is no restraint ; there are suggestions which are instructive only, but one's own intuitions must be the guide. Some who enter have got satiated or wearied at what may seem to you one eternal sameness, and desiring rest, lie down, and the moment they close their eyes they are awake, and by new vibrations of ecstasy, tested, renewed, and surrounded by different scenes more adapted to their peculiar needs ; for 'in my Father's house are many mansions,' and every desire must find its own. If one enters alone, he or she can find no permanent rest, but changes from one condition to another till they meet their counterpart and are made complete, two in one. Thus complete, all things and all places are satisfying. They, having harmony within, create harmony without. It is such beings who visit the lower worlds, and teach by precept and life the true way. It is such who

are the saviors of the race, the destroyers of the hells. On earth there is such dense ignorance of spirituality, and such bigotry among the leading minds of the churches, that very little progress is made. To observe certain days and forms of ceremonies is the acme of spirituality with them, and the only road to salvation. To be saved is very simple. You need no worship, no holy books, nor holy days, but simply 'do as you would be done by.' To keep the hell of selfishness out is to have God in the soul. Such come here to stay. If any get wearied of well-doing they return earthward of their own accord, to be reincarnated again and again. Worship does not elevate the soul. On the contrary, it debases, because, in the worlds of forms, that which is spirit, and hence formless, must needs fall into forms, wherein intellect bears sway, and love becomes secondary, and in connection with the animal instincts becomes unholy—to be ashamed of and hidden from sight. Worship of the spirit is in love of our kind, and needs no words nor ceremonies. Love is the only happiness, the only heaven, the only immortality. According to your love, so shall it be with you.

“Partake of this fruit, then return to earth ; clasp hands with the angels of love, and work for man, for there can be no perfect bliss in heaven so long as one lamb is out in the awful night of ignorance, in the stormy wrath of love. For, lo ! love hath fallen into the base passion for gold

and the lust of rule. Alas for the *poor lambs* who toil to feed the greedy while they are themselves hungry !

“Woe unto those that are of no use in the world ! for the Angel of Freedom is about to blow his trumpet, at the sound of which all thrones shall topple and all crowns be humbled in the dust. Woe unto the priests of mammon ! ‘God is all and in all.’”

Here ended the manuscript. I have not heard of Don or Ina since, but I am satisfied that they are still on the earth, as they must have been at the time of penning it. If I ever learn more of them I will write again.

Fraternally Yours,

FREEMAN.

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