

**EXTRACTS FROM "GHOSTLAND," VOL. II.;
OR
RESEARCHES INTO THE REALM OF SPIRITUAL
EXISTENCE.**

**By the Author of "Art Magic."
Translated and Collated by Emma H. Britten**

An Edited, Annotated Edition

Published by The Emma Hardinge Britten Archive

www.ehbritten.org/text/annotated/2009-03-0.pdf

EHB Archive # 2009.03.0

This edition of the text is published under the terms of a Creative Commons license.



You are free:



to Share — to copy, distribute, display, and perform the work



to Remix — to make derivative works

Under the following conditions:



Attribution. You must attribute the work in the manner specified by the author or licensor (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work).



Noncommercial. You may not use this work for commercial purposes.



Share Alike. If you alter, transform, or build upon this work, you may distribute the resulting work only under the same or similar license to this one.

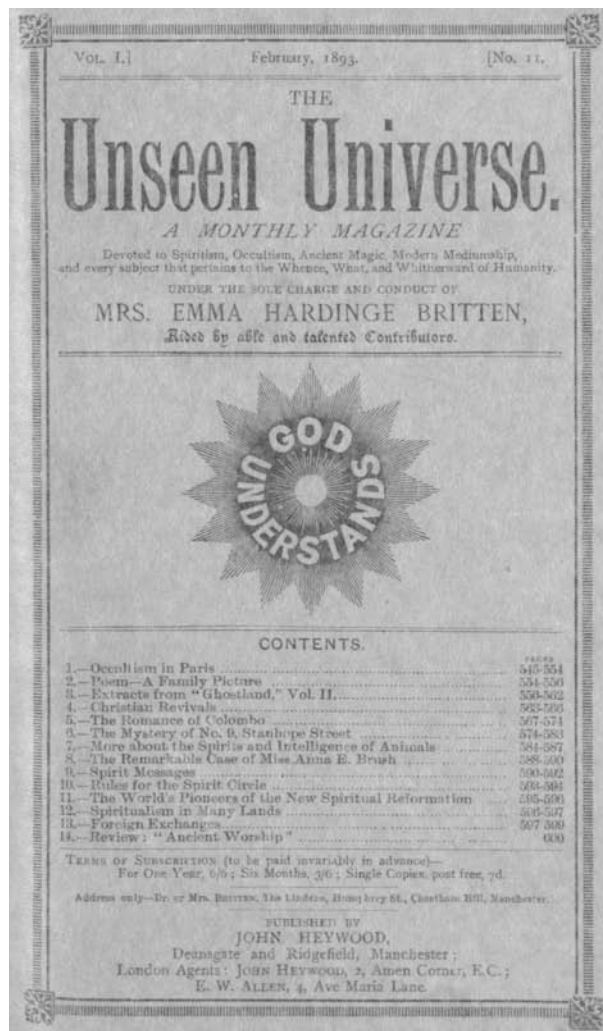
- For any reuse or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work. The best way to do this is with a link to this web page.
- Any of the above conditions can be waived if you get permission from the copyright holder.
- Apart from the remix rights granted under this license, nothing in this license impairs or restricts the author's moral rights.

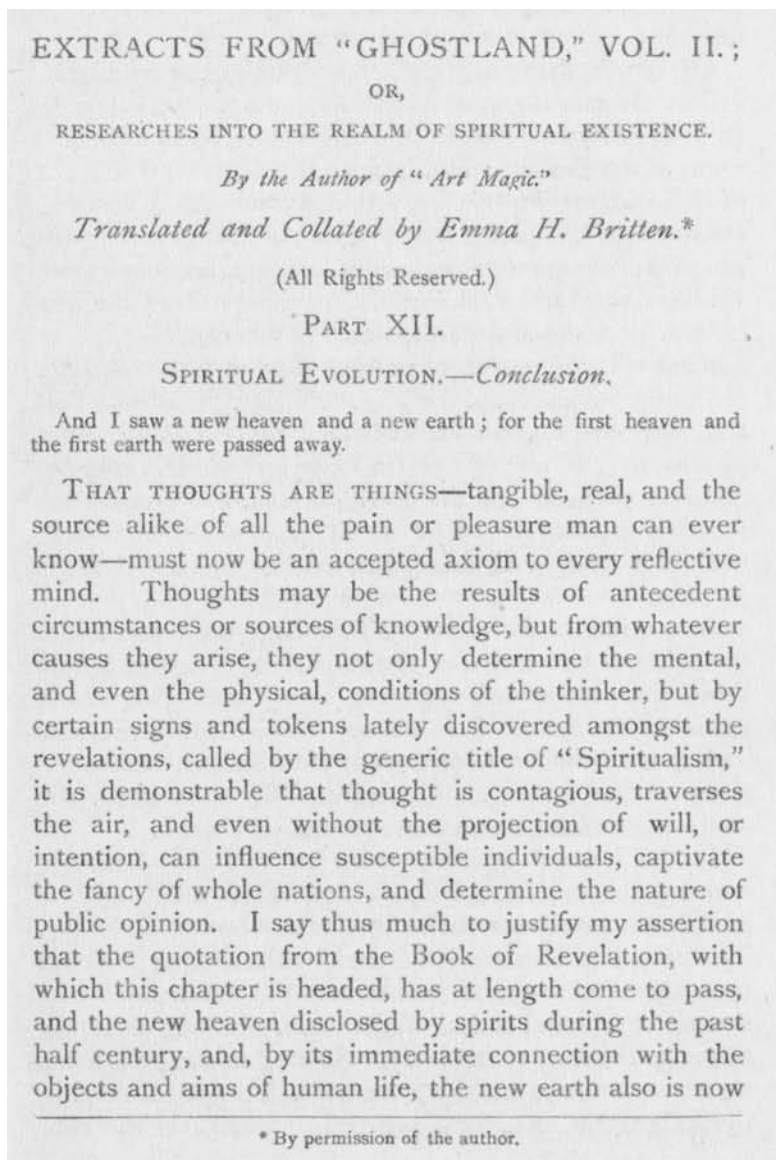
About This Text

This edited and annotated text of this document was reproduced from an Acrobat PDF of the original serialized work, held in the collection of the British Museum, using OmniPage Pro and a Canon LiDE scanner. The resulting machine-readable text was corrected, by hand, against the physical original, with house-style punctuation being normalized, and non-significant typesetting errors and incorrect spellings being, in most cases, silently amended. Pagination has been removed, and scholarly attributions requiring original pagination will of necessity need to be made based on the photofacsimile edition.

The physical version of this text was published serially, in twelve parts, in the twelve issues of volume one of Emma Hardinge Britten's last magazine, *The Unseen Universe*, which ran from April 1892 to March 1893 inclusive/

The title page of the 11th issue of *The Unseen Universe*, and the first page of the final section of "Extracts From Ghostland V. II", are reproduced below.





Machine-readable and photofacsimile versions of this text are also available at the Emma Hardinge Britten Archive site (www.ehbritten.org).

This text is released under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike 3.0 License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/3.0/us/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA. Abide by the terms of this license when using this document.

Introduction

[To be added]

EXTRACTS FROM " GHOSTLAND," VOL. II.; I OR, I RESEARCHES INTO THE REALM OF SPIRITUAL EXISTENCE. I By the Author of "Art Magic." I Translated and Collated by Emma H. Britten.

PART I.

WHAT a wonderful teacher is memory, and what a divine privilege bestowed by the Creator on the creature is the power of retrospect !

As I paced the deck of the steamer that bore me away from the land of my birth and the scene of the sad experiences with which the last record of my biography closed, I seemed to be born into a new life. I had many times before in my changeful career felt as if my very identity had become so altered that it was possible for the soul to live many lives in one, but I never experienced this idea so forcibly as during the period of temporary repose afforded me by my voyage. I could go over and over again in retrospect the series of changes through which I had passed since childhood to the then present hour.

I recalled my boyish life at the German university ; my first experience as a mesmerized subject with Professor Felix von Marx and the " Berlin Brotherhood," and even after the lapse of so many years I felt returning upon me the sentiments of astonishment and delight I experienced at discovering in my soul flights through space that I could see, hear, move, and travel with almost lightning speed, and that without the aid of my poor, sleeping, inanimate body.

All this returned to me with much of the force of my original sensations, and I marvelled indeed how experienced mesmerists could witness such results, and yet believe that there did not exist in man a soul principle independent of the body ; a higher self, over which matter had only a temporary influence, but no control— one which was, in fact, far more potent and far-seeing apart from the material body than in connection with it. I remembered too, how in my many soul flights through space, subsequent to my first being magnetized, I realized that there was a spiritual part to everything— plants, animals, men, and even stones.

I saw the life of crystals in many-coloured flames ; the quality—aye, and the throbbing pulsations—of plants ; the partially developed soul functions of animals, varied in accordance with their different rounds on the ladder of being, and then—sometimes happily, but more frequently with sorrow and disgust—I could observe the real characters of the human beings I encountered in space, and in reading their true natures (often masked by world conventionalities), I became assured that the spirit was the actual individual, and the body only its temporary and external garment.

I recalled, too, with surprise and secret disapproval, Professor Von Marx's assurances, that what I called the spirit in man was " only a life principle engendered chemically by the association of the atoms of matter—that it existed with the body and perished with it." When I questioned him as to what magnetism was, and begged him to explain how it could stray away so far from the body in somnambulism, he would cynically ask me, " What thought was, and how it could look through millions of miles of atmosphere down into the very heart of the mighty sun, whilst the body stood on earth behind the telescope, being only informed by thought ?"

I was answered thus a hundred times, both by Von Marx and the scientists banded together in the secret order I have named as the " Berlin Brotherhood."

Even when I have informed Professor Marx of the frequent apparitions I had seen in the form of my early friend, the beautiful Constance, after her untimely and cruel death, he would only admit that I saw her image, as it was fixed for ever in the astral light, as these scientists called the soul principle of the universe.

Every object they said, animate or inanimate, that had once been formed in matter, was engraved eternally on this same " astral light," and in this way could be at times seen by the magnetized or somnambulant subjects as an actuality.

Von Marx bade me remember how Zwinger, the Bohemian detective, could trace any person or thing, provided always that he had some object in his possession saturated with the magnetism of the person or thing he was required to trace. " Lines of magnetism," he said, " were illimitable, traversed all space, and were always attracted to the source from which they sprang. This," he added, " was the secret by which the ' black trackers ' of Australia and the East were so successful in discovering criminals and finding lost property. It was the secret of the sleuthhound's scent, and the power of the diviners in finding metals and springs of water. It was also," as he affirmed, " the source of spectral apparitions, ghostly forms, and all that the ignorant and superstitious regarded as ghost-lore." I heard all this both from the lips of the Professor and the Masters in the Brotherhood. It was the doctrine also of the English occultists, with whom I was subsequently associated in the London " Orphic Circle."

I heard all this, but for a long time it failed to make the impression upon me intended by the speakers.

On one occasion, when my friend Von Marx had been particularly eloquent in the exposition of the above- mentioned theories, there broke involuntarily from my lips the following audacious words of denial : " What you say is not true, gentlemen. The spirit never dies, but lives and moves on through all eternity, Matter even does not perish : it is only transformed. But matter does not_ think, and is only the mould in which spirit grows and takes form."

I was thunderstruck with my own utterance, and felt deeply humiliated by the blank stare and profound silence with which my words were received by the materialistic scientists

around me. What was spoken was spoken, however, and was destined to bear fruit hereafter. . . . At length, I own, either the reiteration of these occult teachings, or it might be the telepathic influence of the powerful minds around me, produced their effect on my plastic nature, and induced my acceptance of opinions against which both my reason and the soul consciousness within me rebelled. I knew, as did my associates, that there existed Sub-human spirits, living, dying, and marching ever upwards in new forms to the ultimatum of material life in humanity.

We all knew and acknowledged that there were Superhuman or Planetary Spirits and Tutelary Angels of higher orders than humanity. And yet they taught, and I at last believed, that the soul of man, that marvel that could search into, understand, and control all material forms, must perish like the grasses. Aye ! but the grasses do not die—they may pass through ten thousand transformations—but the man, whose mental power enables him to plant, raise, and manipulate them, must perish !

We may change atoms of matter from the beginning to the end of time—yet we cannot annihilate them—whilst the soul which can effect these changes and record their history must perish! " Pshaw, Louis !" my teachers would reply to these wailings of the Immortal within me, " your own arguments are their refutation. If the grasses—aye, and every atom of matter is indestructible, yet must be for ever changing form and condition, why should not the atoms that make up your identity share the same fate ? You have seen that the elementary spirits of rocks, plants, earth, air, fire, and water, are no more permanent than the forms of matter they have passed through. Why should your life principle—or Spirit, if you please to call it so—be the only exception, and remain independent of all further transformations ?"

Silenced, but still only half convinced, I had nothing to urge save the still small voice of the Spirit within me ever pleading to my innermost self, in the language of man's original nature : " The soul is immortal." . . . But I wanted proof. These professors of blank annihilation wanted proof. Logic could reason on either side— but if one really rose from the dead—if but one soul that had survived the shock of death could stand in our midst, and prove beyond a doubt or peradventure that the soul cannot die—our philosophy would have fled like the shadows of night into the realms of outer darkness. Oh for such PRESENT DAY PROOF ! The legends, faiths, and, perchance, the superstitious fables of past ages, could never equal, never transcend it. Oh, if there is a great spirit in the universe whom men call God—why, oh why, does He not render such proof to the fighting soul of man, and for ever solve the stupendous problem of annihilation or immortality !

Even as I attempted to soothe the anguish of my struggling spirit with these wild complainings, a voice from somewhere—I knew not whence—murmured in my ear, in accents sweet as the chiming of a silver bell—"Be patient, my Louis, the proof is, and shall soon be yours. The spirit is now being poured out on all flesh. and you shall drink of the cup of its divine revealings. The spirit cannot die—and the immortal still loves." . . .

Time passed on. I visited many lands—passed through many wonderful experiences. Now I was a soldier fighting amidst the armies of death on the battlefield—now subjecting myself to the strange initiatory practices of Arabian and Indian Occultism in determined attempts to solve the mysteries of the unseen universe around me. True, my long and persistent researches into the realms of Occultism convinced me that there was an invisible world ever penetrating and environing the visible ; nay, more, that the invisible was the real world— the world of force, which held together and sustained the visible ; that the latter, indeed, was but a phantom world without the invisible, and I felt myself being evermore drawn towards that noblest of all philosophies which places the soul of man, burning with thoughts and masterful in its ascendancy over all other created forms, on the apex of being both as a form of matter and a deathless spirit. One only additional waymark in my life's retrospect, all mapped out before me, as I sped over the pathless wastes of ocean, I would now recall. In the midst of my days of renunciation of all earthly passions, winning me away from my devoted researches into the occult, came that strange passage in my life-history that, by no act or will of my own, compelled me to change my whole course, drifting me away from the occult and bearing me along, like the drowning mariner on the plank of safety, into the path of a natural, human earth-life of home and love.

All this I have told in the first volume of my biography. I recall it now only to add that even in the wreck of my newly-found happiness, in the death of my beautiful, my loving and beloved fairy-wife, came the very proof that I had so long, so urgently, and with such wild impatience demanded. Let me quote from my own confessions on this point in my first volume :

In "GHOST LAND," Vol. I., page 480, it is written : " In the peaceful retirement of home I became reconciled to my fate, and the ministry of angels that I had hitherto failed to realize. All my spiritual aspirations returned with a nearer and dearer sense of the sweet companionship, which the spirits of beloved earthly friends alone can bring. How many times during my long nights of sickness, pain, and weariness, have I heard the light step of my angel wife' running through the hall, and stopping just as she used to do on earth when she meant to surprise me, and stealing close, very close, to me. Her ringing laugh sounded softly in my ears. Her golden tresses swept over my burning face, and her tender tones once more whispered from heaven, as they used to do on earth, words of love and consolation, ever ending by a promise of the rest in the higher life to which she had herself attained. Good and gracious Father of Spirits, with what deep ingratitude and pitiful self- denial do poor mortals reject Thy messages of truth, comfort, and blessing, when they refuse to accept, or scoff at the precious boon of spiritual communion." . " Had it not been for the power which bridged over the Lethean river that separated me from all that I had ever loved on earth, physical health might have resumed its sway, but reason would have fled from its shattered throne within my mind for ever. One by one I had seen the fondest, truest, best of all that I had ever anchored my warmest affections upon, fall by my side, vanish from my sight, and leave me alone. With a heart full of passionate impulses, veiled by the cold exterior of disciplined asceticism, I had been compelled to see every tie of affection snapped, every earthly hope shipwrecked. I had borne so much, and strained at the cords of mental energy so

fearfully, that I know I must have become a raving lunatic if I had turned despairing glances to the land of the hereafter, and sought there in vain for my own goal of rest and reunion with my vanished loved ones. Looking through the eyes of my beloved ones as they all returned to me one by one, each assuming his or her place in the bright procession, with all the well-remembered tokens that could bring me the assurance there was no death—only change—I could see bright angels higher still than the spirits of earth, and a Deity over all upon whom I could lean my trembling soul. Once more the tides of spiritual life and force rolled in upon the storm-beaten shores of my destiny. Once more the grand and beneficent scheme of the ever-progressive universe was unrolled before me. I began again to recognize myself as the link between the lower and higher worlds at the same time that I learned the necessity of hedging in the aspiring intellect by the safe boundary lines of matter and mystery, lest the soul, penetrating too far into the arcanum of the illimitable beyond, should become last and overwhelmed in the immensities of being too vast for finite minds to comprehend. . . In scaling these tremendous heights of knowledge I have experienced many a fall and paid many a penalty, Again and again I have returned from the awful pilgrimages, hounded and bruised by the conflict of finite reason against infinite possibilities, but ever as I came, I found rest, peace, instruction, and consolation, in the loving ministration of earth's enfranchised spirits. I have learned that communion between the denizens of this planet and her spirit spheres is the highest, purest, and most elevating of the soul's faculties. Mortals have at present but an imperfect realization of this sublime truth, amidst the folly, fanaticism, greed, and imposture, that have disgraced the movement of Spiritism—miscalled Spiritualism—a movement that has served to externalize much of the darkest features of human nature, but as yet has been permitted to do little more than point to the unwrought ?nines of treasure that lay hidden beneath the possibilities of that communion. As yet, the movement is far too redolent of human shortcomings. " Heaven speed the day of the unveiling, when it shall be recognized as the Kingdom of Heaven come upon earth !"

[Thus far I quote from our author's former volume. I now proceed with his later writings, thus.]

All I had known and loved came back to me in such palpable form through my own experiences and the unpremeditated showing of others around me, that I could scarcely doubt again the permanence and undying character of Spirit, the ever-changeful and temporary conditions of material forms ; or—as Spirit teachers themselves alleged—matter, as the mould in which Spirit grows and forms.

When at length recovered temporarily from sickness and the anguish of bereavement, an unconquerable desire arose in my mind to seek, through other instrumentalities than those with which I was immediately connected, for the truth, and nothing but the truth. I resolved no longer to strive to fortify myself in preconceived opinions, but to seek for truth when and wherever it might be found, and, listening to the advice of a voice which spoke to me spontaneously and unsought. and in times and manner beyond my own power of control, I determined to go to America, where, as report informed me, a new and widespread method of intercourse between mortals and spirits had suddenly arisen.

I embarked on this mission the more readily because I had received a letter from my late wife's good father, Lord —, to the effect that he, too, had grown weary of the cold, hopeless philosophy of mere Occultism—that he had received striking and wonderful proofs that the spirits of earth were not mere apparitional images fixed in the astral light, but living, breathing souls of the beloved friends and kindred that they had once been on earth. To prove and test this, he too had resolved to proceed, in semi-incognito fashion, to the American Continent, from whence strange and wonderful rumours had reached him and others, of the familiarity by which the spirits of humanity were making their continued life and presence known to those they still loved and watched over. Would I meet him there? "Aye, will I," was my mental response to his long and deeply interesting communication. After his own peculiar fashion, he intended to sink his rank and position, and be known only by the name I have since assumed for him, as Mr. J. Cavendish Dudley. Mentally, I would do the same; mentally, too, I telegraphed to him, as I had successfully done many times before, "I am coming." I knew that thought fled faster than electricity, and I was not mistaken in my supposition. And thus it was that by a long and thorough retrospect of the past, I felt that I was a new creature—had been born again and yet again in the same body by crowds of earthly experiences—that even my darkest hours and saddest experiences were the fires in which whatever of pure gold my spirit might contain was to be purified; that I could not in retrospect afford to part with one pang I had suffered, or one teaching or sorrow I had undergone; and that when I landed in New York to meet my friend, John Cavendish Dudley, I, plain Mr. Louis Gray—as I had resolved only to be known—should be a newly resurrected soul under a new name in an old body; but I should then enter upon the noblest of all quests—the way to Heaven—in which I humbly hoped to tread in the path beaten down for me by the experiences of God's Angels of Light, love and truth.

PART I I.
IN AMERICA.

I WAS to meet my friend, " John Cavendish Dudley," as he desired to be called, at New York, the port of destination to which I had taken passage on quitting India, and by agreement we had determined that I myself was to be known as Mr. Dudley's son-in-law, Louis Gray. Why two seekers in a new and unknown cause should propose to make researches into the length and depth of that cause, in what was to them a terra incognita, and that under other names rather than their own, is a point that need not be discussed beyond the fact that Mr. Dudley feared his titled name and my foreign one might subject us to undesirable notice, and hinder the cautious and unobtrusive methods by which we proposed to conduct inquiries into a matter of which we neither of us entertained any high expectations.

Mr. Dudley, I knew, had realized the truth of spirit communion in his own family, and his only purpose in visiting America was to investigate the subject " at headquarters " and through its earliest discoverers. For myself, though I had abundant evidence to prove the existence of Elementary Spirits and " Planetary Angels," I could hardly bring myself to believe in the fact of the soul's immortality, or that the forms, voices, and sudden inspirations that marked my life path, were aught but occult impressions made upon the " astral light " by former dwellers in the mortal form, and were perceived and felt by me only when my own conditions were favourable for such perceptions. The tales of spectres and apparitions with which the traditions and histories of every land abounded could not be all imagination. Imagination itself, if only " a shadow," must be the reflection of some original substance, but where and what that was remained to me an unsolved mystery.

In all the initiations of the various grades of Hindoo religionists I knew beyond a peradventure that invocations to ancestral spirits formed a necessary and important part.

Were the wise men of all ages in India for ever invoking myths ? Exorcisms of the evil spirits of evil men were and still are constantly used in all ceremonial rites, and that not only in India, but also in Ceylon, and all through the East wherever I had travelled. Still I asked, Was the history of supernaturalism in all lands and all times superstition or reality ?

If the former, how could humanity originate a something from a nothing ? If the latter, did not the universality of that reality prove a common origin in the nature of being ? I would know. " I will know," my soul cried ; and so I set sail to join my friend in the land from which proceeded the claim that the great problem of human spiritual existence had been solved. . . . I found on landing a dear face greeting me on the thronged and busy wharf ; warm hands pressing my own ; a loving though hurried welcome—for I soon perceived that everything in New York was hurried, and everyone was in a hurry—and then a drive to my friend's hotel ; an hour or two of rapid work in refreshment and

imaginary rest, and then Mr. Dudley said to me : " Louis, are you equal to accompanying me in a brief visit ? I have to make one by appointment this morning."

" Certainly," I replied ; " where, and to whom ?"

" Oh, never mind the where, except that it is in the city. As to the whom—well ! it is to the Father and Head Centre, as it were, of New York Spiritualism,— Judge Edmonds. You don't know him, but I do, a little. I met him last night at a circle, and"—

" A circle, what's that ?"

" Oh, you'll soon find out what a circle is when you are initiated."

" Initiated !" I cried, in dismay, " Why, John, have those Yankees and Spiritualists actually got you into their toils and initiated you ?"

" They are quite harmless, Louis," replied my friend, laughing ; " and take my word for it, you'll never regret being as much initiated into Spiritualism as I am."

A long drive through the most busy throng I had ever seen out of the heart of London city, and we stopped at a large building full of offices, and were shown by an attendant into a small room, through another open door of which voices could be plainly heard in conversation. Judge Edmonds, the attendant said, was engaged just then, and we were to wait for him in his private room.

If we were in private, the speakers in the next apartment were not so, for every word they spoke was plainly heard through the open door. The subject of conversation seemed to have been some legal point, and soon after we had entered we were compelled to hear one of the speakers say :

" Now, Judge, I pay you for your excellent opinion with pleasure, but I beg to say I came to you for other purposes than to obtain legal advice. I will tell you candidly I wished to see if you were in your senses, and then to learn how a lawyer of your vast ability and high reputation could sacrifice your position as Judge of the Supreme Court, and all on account of your belief in that abominable humbug, Spiritualism."

The voice No. 2 answered (speaking very quietly) : " How do you know it is a humbug, sir ?"

Voice No. 1 : " I-low ? Because I have investigated it, and found it so."

No. 2 : " In what way ?"

No. i : " I went to one of those precious so-called mediums, and not one word that she professed to tell me was true."

No. 2 : " How long were you there ?"

No. 1 : " A whole hour, sir, and for that I paid her five dollars, and I'm very sorry for it."

No. 2 : " Well, what was your next experience ?"

No. 1 : " Next I Why, you don't suppose I was going to pay out another five dollars to any of those swindlers ?"

No. 2 : " And your final conclusion is, then

No. 1 : " That there is not one word of truth in the whole thing."

No. 2 : " Won't you be seated, sir ? Good ! Now, listen to me. I have seen in this and several other cities at least four hundred mediums—professional and private, mostly the latter, who received no pay at all. My daughter and niece, resident in my house, are both mediums. About forty of the first ladies and gentlemen in this city are mediums, and I am one myself. During the eight years I have been investigating Spiritualism, I have spent over a thousand hours in testing mediums, and the result is that I have found it all true. You have spent one hour in investigation and seen one medium, and found Spiritualism all a humbug. I have given up my office as Judge of the Supreme Court, with an income of several thousands of dollars a year, because I know Spiritualism to be true. You grudge five dollars spent upon it because you deem it all false. Which of us two has the greater right to pronounce upon the truth or falsehood of Spiritualism ?" . . .

The above conversation, under the circumstances in which I heard it, I should not have presumed to repeat, had not the Judge himself subsequently named and published it on several occasions. At its close, the last speaker himself joined us, and after a kind welcome to my friend and an introduction to myself, entered freely on subjects that most interested us all. Judge Edmonds at that time, some thirty years ago, seemed to be an elderly gentleman, but still in his prime, with an astute expression of countenance ; keen, deep-set eyes, and a piercing glance, before which the least attempt at dissimulation seemed impossible. Fixing that searching glance upon me, he said in a low, determined tone, " Why do you come to me, or seek any farther than in your own mediumship ? The highest and the lowest of spirits can come to you, and you have visited the spheres in company with one of its blest inhabitants. Is not this true ?"

" It may be so," I said. " Yet I need more evidence than that which comes through myself."

" All mediums do ; in that they are all alike," replied the Judge. " However, tell me nothing about yourself, or what you seek, but come to my house to-night ; it is my semi-monthly reception. Many of the mediums of this city are in the habit of attending, and some of them may have evidence to give you."

He handed us his card of address and invitation, and we at once took our leave.

Judge Edmonds's residence was a palatial dwelling in Fifth Avenue, the St. James's of New York. When we arrived, the splendid reception rooms were crowded with well-dressed and very agreeable people, who, strangers as we were, soon made us feel at home with their kind and courteous treatment.

Shortly after our entrance, a lady, whom I afterwards learned was well known in spiritual circles—a Mrs. Cargill—was asked to sing. Accompanying herself on the piano, she sang a simple song in a rather low but pleasing voice, but as Mr. Dudley and I approached the instrument, and stood near it with a view of hearing her better, she suddenly rose from her seat, came and laid her hands on my arm, and with eyes closed, sang, in a voice of immense power and volume, a brilliant cavatina which my late beloved wife's music master, Signor Garcia, had composed expressly for her. It had never been published, and, except in my Blanche's own matchless and highly-cultured voice, I had never heard it sung, and yet now it resounded in my ears vocalized magnificently, by one whom every visitor present declared to be a totally uncultivated and very mediocre singer, except, as they said, "when under influence."

But this was not my only surprise. A young lady, the most simply dressed and unassuming-looking person in the room, came up to me, and taking my hand without reserve, began to converse with me in the Tamil language, one of the ten Hindoo dialects. The speaker, then, giving me a sign which none but an initiate of a certain order could know, passed on rapidly to speak German, and in a totally changed tone of voice, in the deep and never to be forgotten accents of Felix von Marx, the strange girl, in the purest German, repeated to me, word by word, the last speech my beloved teacher had ever addressed to me on earth, concluding with the promise he had then made me, thus : "You shall soon know the absolute, my Louis—know it for yourself" "What, then, is the absolute ?" I murmured, in German, as the young lady paused. "Spirit, my Louis ; Spirit the Alpha, Spirit the Omega ; Spirit is God ! " "Do you then believe in God ?" I queried. "I do now," replied the influence, "and regret I ever denied him."

A change passed over the lady's face, and she cried, as she fixed her eyes just above my head : "Oh ! what two lovely female faces I see. Both have golden hair, hanging in long curls,—such angels they are ! And both so love you, sir. One says her name is What a strange one ! For ever." "

For ever what ?" I said.

"Constant ; no, not Constant—but Constance. She spells it so."

"And the other ?"—"She holds up a piece of white muslin."

"What does that mean ?"—"Her name in French." "Still, I would have her give it in English."

" In French or English it is the same—Blanche. Stay, stay ; now she holds up a lovely baby. She dances it above her head ; and, hark ! She says : Our child is not dead now, but lives for ever."

" For Heaven's sake, no more," I murmured, turning away, for I was almost paralyzed.

As the young lady retreated, Judge Edmonds himself advanced, and said, courteously :

" Has my daughter, Laura, told you truly, Mr. Gray ?"

" Even so, sir," I replied ; " but is that young lady your daughter ? Truly, she is an accomplished linguist."

" Upon my honour, sir, as a man, I declare she has no knowledge of any language but American, and to you I may say, English," replied the Judge, with a solemnity of manner that left no room for doubt or question. " Yet she has spoken and written in ten different languages," he added, " and that with perfectly grammatical precision. Of this many friends here present can testify, Mr. Gray."

" Mr. Gray, Mr. Gray ! there's no such person here," shouted a voice from the far end of the long drawing- rooms, and then, the crowd giving way, made room for a young man, apparently about two or three and twenty, who, with eyes tightly closed was holding the tip of one forefinger lightly on a little fancy table, or, as they called it there, an inlaid stand, which—seemingly without any human means or volition—was pushing and gyrating itself through the drawing-rooms with no other contact from any living creature but the young man's one forefinger tip, which much of the time he held above the table, without ever touching it.

" Seymour, the actor," said the Judge, who was standing close by me. " He is one of the most powerful nonprofessional mediums in the city. See, he is coming up to you."

The Judge was right. The entranced man, still with eyes tightly closed, came up to where I stood, and again shouted out

" That's no Mr. Gray. That's my old college friend, the Chevalier de B ," calling my real name.

" Hush !" I said, involuntarily, though somewhat checked by the keen, piercing glance fixed on me by Judge Edmonds, who said in a low, but evidently amused tone

" These spirits know everything, and cannot always keep secrets."

" Don't you know me, then ? cried the still sleeping medium. " Don't you know Conrad Kleeberg ? See ! that will remind you."

Instantly the little table began to gyrate like a drunken man, ultimately falling over on its side. Alas ! alas ! I did know, and know too well what that sign meant. It meant that it was

Conrad Kleeburg, one of my college companions ; one noted as an intemperate sot, and although a youth of only eighteen, one who had died in the streets of a drunken frolic. I could not question the medium they called Seymour then, for all around me was too new and strange, but, beckoning to my friend Dudley, I begged him to terminate our visit at once.

After taking a kind leave of the Judge, and receiving a general invitation to his fortnightly receptions, I was making my way as best I could through the crowd, when I was stopped by another young man with closed eyes ; one Mr. Pettee, as I afterwards learned.

In a sweet, low voice this person whispered, " Chevalier, Chevalier, do you want your fortune told ? Juanita is ready."

" Great Heaven !" I cried ; " What ! are you too amongst the dead, Juanita ?"

" Juanita is not amongst the dead," said this new speaker. " She still lives, and would fain tell her friend's fortune now, although she is no longer a gipsy."

" For God's sake, John, come away !" I cried to Mr. Dudley. " I know not where I am, nor where all these people get' their weird words from, but—hark ! what is that ?"

I paused to listen. Four gentlemen, members of a Spiritualists Association of Musicians, were singing with exquisite pathos and beauty a lovely quartet, set to Whittier's touching poem, " Gone." The words, the exquisite harmonies, the delightful blending of those well- trained voices were the last sounds I heard in that strangely new and, to me, wild and wonderful scene.

Reaching my hotel, and my own apartment, dazed and confused with the memories of the past evening, I stretched myself on my bed to watch through the livelong night, as the apparitions of the vanished loves of earth once more passed in shadowy, stately steps before my eyes.

Father, mother, brother, and friends ; my adopted father ; the gipsy, Juanita ; my college saint, Constance ; my fair and lovely bride and the dead baby—all alive ; these were the glorious forms that passed in vivid panoramic life and beauty before my now open vision, and I started up from my couch as the first gleams of the coming day and the last fading stars of night shone through the uncurtained window, and throwing up the sash to breathe the refreshing breeze of the morning, I involuntarily spoke aloud the words—" The dead ! there are no dead !" Instantly, as clearly as I had ever heard him speak on earth, sounded the deep tones of Felix von Marx's voice in my ears, " I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore." I looked round in amazement to discern the speaker—too real, too actual to proceed from any supermundane source—but I found the door was locked as when I entered it, and I was alone.*

PART III.

I HAD come to America in the expectation of obtaining crucial evidence of the existence of the human soul after its separation from the body by mortal death. Whatever I might have seen, felt, or believed in the course of my Spiritual researches, the one grand central fact of all knowledge most desirable for humanity to realise seemed to me to be the indisputable proof of the INDIVIDUAL SOUL'S IMMORTALITY, the certainty that the spirit which all the phenomena of life and death testified to as being the real man, was the same I AM in some world of life after death as it had been on earth. Still, whilst I fully acknowledged the genuine and truthful character of the manifestations addressed to me at Judge Edmonds' evening reception, on the very second night, too, of my landing in America, yet in reviewing the nature of my feelings concerning them I was obliged to confess that they sorely disappointed, even if they did not offend me.

The intelligence as well as the descriptions given, were entirely out of the pale of human contrivance, thought transference, or any of the baseless suppositions by which individual spirit influence could be set aside as the source of causation, yet that the spirits of those that had passed through the solemn, and in some instances, the awful change called death, the piteously lamented ones, the invisibles, gone ! none could say whither—those existences around whose fate was woven the great unknowable mysteries of eternal silence, a sleep never to be broken, a disintegration horrible to contemplate, leaving a void in nature never to be filled up—that the subjects of these awful mysteries should visit a brilliantly-lighted drawing- room, laugh, talk, sing, make tables dance, and take part in all the procedures of pleasant, social, but still commonplace everyday life, all this was to me so startling, so utterly foreign to all my previous conceptions of possible life beyond the dreadful grave, that I did not know, as I reviewed my feelings on the day succeeding Judge Edmonds' reception night, whether I would not far rather have remained in the mysterious gloom of the dark valley of death, than have been so completely disenchanting by the realities of spirit communion. I know now that the pain of this disenchantment lay with myself, and resulted from the vague and phantasmal conceptions I had formed of Spiritual existence through my purely occult experiences, but I doubt if thousands of others besides myself have not been repelled from what they considered to be the mere commonplaces of Spiritism by the self-same sentiments as I then cherished. Happily for me, however, two circumstances arose which impelled me onward for a time, at least, in the methods of research I had commenced. In the first place I soon discovered that if the lowest round of the ladder on which the angels ascend and descend is on earth—the highest is still in the supernal Heavens. The second impulse which favourably urged me forward was the fact that I was happy enough to meet a young lady whom I had known as one of the clairvoyant magnetic subjects of the " Orphic circle " to which I had been affiliated in Great Britain.

The lady in question was Mrs. Emma Hardinge (now Mrs. Britten), and the renewal of our acquaintance in this land of the far West was a source of equal pleasure and benefit

to me and my esteemed friend Mr. Dudley. We found Mrs. Hardinge devoting herself and her remarkable medial powers to the service of the public, and sitting "without money and without price," giving tests of Spirit communion to all who chose to visit her. The place in which these seances were held was a fine building on Broadway, in the heart of the city, and rented at a very high cost solely by a Mr. Horace H. Day, a wealthy merchant, so devoted to the cause of the newly discovered marvel of Spirit communion, that he ungrudgingly spent a large annual income in affording the public free and open means of investigation. On the first floor of this building was a seance room where all who chose could come without any payment to obtain tests by rapping and writing through one of the original "Rochester knockers," to whom the noble proprietor of the establishment paid a handsome salary. Here, too, all the literature by way of books and journals could be purchased. On the floor above, a handsomely furnished apartment was placed at the disposal of Mrs. Hardinge, whose tests were rendered by writing, clairvoyance, pantomimic representations, and trance speaking. The upper floor of this great building was appropriated to the printing department of a weekly paper entitled *The Christian Spiritualist*, the chief portion of which was written and edited by Mrs. Hardinge. In these rooms, which Mr. Dudley and I constantly frequented, we witnessed nearly every phase of the phenomena whereby spirits from the life beyond made their presence known to mortals. The time of which I speak was between ten or twelve years after the date of what was called, from its special publicity and continuous phenomenal activity, "the Rochester knockings." There were even then many thousands of believers in Spirit communion resident in New York City, and these included professional men, merchants, authors, journalists, and persons of the highest circles of learning and intelligence. There were at the least twenty different grades of professional mediums who could be consulted for a small fee, and at least a dozen young ladies—including Miss Laura Edmonds and Mrs. Hardinge—who sat free for all corners, strangers high or low, whoever chose to call at the hours appointed. Two of the New York papers were conducted by eminent believers in the faith, and one of these, the *Daily Times*, announced that, at the least, a thousand circles were held nightly in this great commercial, busy, matter-of-fact city, by its shrewd and keenly inquisitive inhabitants. Some of the well-proven facts I learned during the last few months of my residence in this immense field of research I will briefly tabulate as follows :

1st. The Spirit world is a human world, every class and grade of humanity being represented there.

2nd. The special characteristics of mediumship seemed to determine the different classes of Spirits that could communicate through special phenomena ; the rappings, table movements, and physical force manifestations being generally wrought by strong, powerful, and probably earth-bound Spirits--very often by Indians and Negroes, though not always so—whilst the more intellectual phases of the power seemed to find fuller expression through trance, writing, drawing, seeing, and inspiration by a higher class of Spirits.

3rd. Nearly all the mediums, out of some thousands I have then and subsequently visited, seem to have one or more special Spirit guides, who act as medium Spirits for

others less able, for some cause (said to be a lack of organic power in that direction), to impress human mediums for themselves.

4th. The most exalted Spirits that have passed from earth, and from whom the world would expect to receive correspondingly fine communications, seem to be the least capable of representing themselves through earthly sources.

This has been accounted for, in many communications through different sources, by the fact that mediums in general are not of the same grade of mentality as the most rarely endowed Spirits who have passed from earth, and these last, living in far more sublimated conditions of spheral atmosphere than the inhabitants of states nearer to the earth, find it impossible to control directly persons whose natures do not assimilate with their own, hence arises the necessity for the interposition of medium Spirits.

5th. It is claimed by all intelligent communicating Spirits that the various channels, through which the communications pass, do influence materially the nature of what is given—in some instances limiting, in others changing, the phraseology ; in most cases, colouring whatever intelligence is rendered by the idiosyncrasies of the medial channel of communication.

Amongst the most gifted of the mediums for the manifestations of what are called " tests," or proofs of Spirit identity, I class those persons who have been influenced to draw or paint Portraits of Spirits, and then, under the same control, send them to the relatives who, in general, were total strangers to the mediums. At the time of my first visit to America there were, amongst many others, three persons in especial who became widely renowned for this remarkable gift. Their names were " Rogers, Anderson, and Walcutt." The last-named person is claimed by Mrs. Hardinge, in her voluminous " History of the American Spiritual Movement," to have drawn two thousand and twenty portraits of Spirits, utterly unknown to him, and at their request to have sent them to varieties of distant places to their relatives, by whom they were invariably recognised. It is alleged that Mr. Walcutt has publicly shown over two thousand testimonials to this effect, and yet I was assured by several of the most capable and thorough investigators that all the different drawing mediums (and there were many more than I have named) invariably put themselves so unmistakably into their work that any one acquainted with them could at once pick out and identify the artist of each picture, and that amongst any given number.

The same special characteristics I found most commonly appearing in the writings and trance addresses of various mediums, inducing me to believe that the poverty of language, and limitations of ideality, manifested in many communications claiming to emanate from illustrious spirit sources, are caused by being marred in transmission by the imperfect methods of the telegraphy through which they must pass. This is not always the case ; many Spirit communications received through different sources being highly characteristic of the communicant. Still, the reverse is so often apparent that I have felt obliged to admit what the Spirits have so often urged upon my attention, namely, the extreme difficulty that attended their efforts to work the Spiritual telegraph

successfully, and the many obstacles that human mediumship places in the way of conveying their ideas.

As a final close to details, which I fear may prove wearisome to the reader, necessary as they may be to the elucidation of the subject in question, I shall now transcribe the report of a circle which took place during the first few months after the tidings of the celebrated "Rochester knockings" had become widely known and universally commented on. The séance I am about to refer to was held in the house of the gentleman who kindly furnished me with the report, Dr. Robert Hallock, a well-known physician of New York and a thoroughly cautious and scientific investigator. This gentleman, like many others, had commenced his researches with experiments in magnetism. Being himself a very powerful operator, he had excellent opportunities of observing the transition which so often occurred in his subjects, when they passed away from his own or other human influences, to the control of Spirits. The subject or clairvoyant of the séance I am about to describe was a German girl, a domestic in Dr. Hallock's family, and one deemed especially well qualified for independent control, as she was in all respects a perfectly passive person. On a certain occasion, when a number of Dr. Hallock's friends had assembled at his house to witness his magnetic experiments, after his seeress had been placed in the trance condition, one of the company present proposed that she should be sent clairvoyantly to the city of Rochester to find out, if possible, how the weird " knockings " were produced. The gentleman who made this proposition alleged that he was well acquainted with Rochester, and knew every point of the road that must be traversed in order to reach it. The clairvoyant's description of her journey being pronounced accurate, and Dr. Hallock's assurance that the girl had only been a few months in America, and never out of New York City, gave the circle confidence in any farther statements she might make. Passing into the street and house indicated, which were both correctly described, the seeress entered a large room, wherein she said twelve persons were seated round an uncovered table. Then followed this dialogue :

Q. What are they doing ?

A. Spelling out communications which come by, knockings. Oh, how loud they are ! Can't you hear them?

Q. Can you see what or who knocks ?

A. Yes ; they are a lot of rough, black-looking men and women, who fill up every part of the room. They are giving little papers to one fine- looking, big gentleman, who stands right behind a young girl, sitting at the table. He takes the papers from the rough people outside, and then throws flame on the head of the young girl, and the flame comes down right through her fingers on to the table in sparks, and with every spark a knock comes.

Q. Where does he get the flame from? -

A. Speak louder. He raises his head, and can only hear what you say when I hear.

(Question repeated.)

A. He shows me a sort of a machine he carries in one hand, and from this comes the flame • it passes into his other hand, and this he holds over the young girl's head.

Q. What is the machine ?

A. He says it is a battery of all the magnetisms in the room. Q. Who are the black-looking people you see in the room ? A. Why, don't you know ? they're spirits, not people.

Q. Nonsense ! Spirits are all bright and glorious beings—angels, you know.

A. No, no, no! I tell you ; they're spirits. They're all workmen and workwomen, and the Spirit man with the machine is teaching them how to make those knocks you hear. It's only such as them and him that can make knocks.

Q. Ask him his name.

A. He says he was known on earth as Benjamin Franklin.

Q. You said there were papers given him by the crowd ; ask him where they come from. A long silence here ensued, when the clairvoyant said in a loud voice to Dr. Hallock, " Magnetise me again."

After a few passes the medium threw off his hands, and then cried, as if in great delight —

Oh, I see now another circle right above the table, and all above the people in, the room. They are fair, bright spirits. Some of them are lovely, and some more common ; but they look lovingly on the people at the table. They are the fathers and mothers and friends of the people sitting round the tables, and it is they that throw down the papers.

Q. Where do they get the papers from ?

(Again a silence, and the medium murmured, "Magnetise me again.")

A still longer pause, when the medium, clasping her hands as if in ecstasy, cried :

Oh, Heaven! I see circle above circle, and all fairer, and—oh, how much brighter than the lower ones ! They reach away and away up through the sky, away, away up right into the sun. Ah me ! I cannot see higher. I dare not look. Oh that I was there ! Oh send me there ! I am amongst the angels !

Q. What is the highest circle you can see ? Tell us that.

A. Three gloriously bright men, and now there's a fourth. Why-- that's the same one that had the machine, and made the flames come through the young girl's fingers—the flames that every time made knocks—and it is these four that send down the papers, down, down through all those circles below them, till they reach the black-looking crowd round the tables. You were going to ask what they are doing this for, and I will tell you without asking. These are all spirits of earth, but they get their commission from angels not of earth, and it is to build a church—a church in which all the earth shall worship together ; the church of God dwelling amongst men. The black crowd you see are the carpenters, masons, and builders. The friends of the sitters give messages of love, and these are the first links between the earth and the Spirit world. The spirits in the circle above them are designers, architects, and councillors. The highest four are the electricians, who bring the fire of LIFE from the heavens, and form the chain that binds together God and man.

Here the clairvoyant ceased, and having become demagnetized by Dr. Hallock, soon resumed her natural state. It is proper to say that from the time when she first asked for more power, or magnetism, she became completely transfigured, and seemed to have gained in height and beauty. Her air, voice, and manner were superb, grand, and impressive. She had entirely overcome her foreign accent. " In a word," says Dr. Hallock, in his report, " I never saw any human being so marvellously changed and so thoroughly in the condition of what might be termed ' in the spirit.' . . " My own comments on the scene above described I shall reserve for a future occasion, simply remarking that the descriptions of this untaught German girl corresponded singularly with some visions I subsequently received through other mediums, and tended to show in their general sum of intelligence that the Magnetists, Electricians, and Scientists of earth had, on passing into the , Spirit world, devised this scheme of telegraphy between the Seen and the Unseen Universe, and that the more material or earth-bound Spirits were final and necessary links of the great and graded chain that bound together the realms of matter and spirit, from the lowest to the highest states of being.

PART I V.

As my official duties in India only permitted me to remain a few months in the land of the West, I resolved to devote the entire of my time to such researches in Spiritism (or, as my American friends universally designated their cult—"Spiritualism") as my then present opportunities permitted.

These were most abundant, especially on the occasion of my first visit to America. Like my friend Mrs. Hardinge, and very frequently—in her company—I pursued my investigations in high and low places alike. Undistinguished media, amongst the rank and file of society, were to be found in attics and "shanties." Circles were held in the palatial residences of millionaires, in the tents of miners, and in the humble lodgings of workpeople. One eccentric old gentleman, a veritable incarnation of Shakespeare's apothecary in "Romeo and Juliet," had fitted up an underground kitchen beneath his botanical herb shop, and here he invited in, aspirants to the enfoldment of medial power to attend his afternoon circles, and receive the benefit of his magnetic passes as a means of developing latent spiritual gifts. In any number of streets, frequented only by humble working men and women, we climbed uncarpeted stairs to the top floors, to witness the working of the telegraph between Heaven and earth, through knockings, table tiltings, and trance utterances. Evening after evening we spent in a certain splendid drawing-room, wherein a lady, who was an enthusiastic devotee of the faith, assembled around her, celebrated actors and actresses, journalists and reporters, musicians and artistes, all of whom had some phases of phenomena to exhibit, and claims to urge of how the power of good spirit friends aided them in their several professional pursuits. Scarcely an evening passed in which we did not either visit some wealthy merchant's splendid dwelling, listening to the marvellous inspirations of highly-cultured private mediums, or their professional compeers, or else we formed parts of the heterogeneous groups that thronged the barely furnished upper rooms of far humbler workers. Sometimes, too, we visited the public circles, where all classes commingled in curious and anything but exalting association. In many of the scenes Mr. Dudley and I thus visited, the sceptic or scoffer might have found ample food for ridicule or contempt, whilst the one-ideal scientist might have discovered plenty of available material to strengthen his theories concerning "thought transference," "hysteria, delusion, illusion," or the thousand and one vague phantasies concerning the sources of intelligence, which calm and dispassionate observation might have recognized as being of spiritual origin. As it would be superogatory at this late day to point to the individual instances we received of this intelligence, I will proceed to sum up the results of many weeks of untiring investigation in our New York wanderings, in search of spiritual light. By the keenest exercise of my own clairvoyant powers I never discovered one single instance in which fraud or deception was attempted to be practised upon us. Comparing this state of the case with the repeated charges of imposture brought against professional mediums in subsequent periods of the movement, I am inclined to believe that in the first few years of the great spiritual outpouring there was far more real devotion to the cause than at present; also, that frauds and tricksters were at that time too much afraid of the unknown power they might encounter to venture upon such dangerous ground.

Allowing also, for some share of " hysteria, self-deception, or thought transference," there were, as I insist, and all the early investigators of the movement will bear out my assertion, most wonderful evidences in every direction of the agency, presence, and power of the spirits who had once lived on earth. When in the course of conversation some member of the circles would talk of "departed spirits," loud rappings or table movements would call for the alphabet, and spell out remarks to the effect that the spirits were not departed, but lived there in a world within the material world, and were as much alive, active, and busy as ever they had been. Some of the spirit communicants were as gay and full of " quips and cranks " as if they were a part of the mortal company. Some would rally those present on their " sad grave faces," whilst others would insist upon prayers for the opening of the circles, and the performance of spiritual songs or hymns. Every phase of what poor humanity was, I saw thus represented, and with it all, invariably were given tests of identity that could have only proceeded from those the world calls " dead." Very often tidings from afar and prophecies of future events were rendered, together with intelligence unknown to, and undreamed of by those present, in short, numberless evidences that an intelligent power beyond and above that which was in mortal form, was then working the mysterious telegraph between the seen and unseen universes. I must state also that we were not satisfied to pursue our investigations in one place alone. For thousands of miles over the long lines of iron road that intersect the mighty land of the setting sun, we sped on and on, now and then stopping at some of the great centres of its various states, and then on and on again, over mountain ranges and through primeval forest roads, as much filled with admiration of this wonderful new world, and counting with as much astonishment the fastly throbbing pulse-beats of its thronged towns and cities, as we were amazed at the speed and force with which the spiritual telegraphic lines had everywhere been planted by the invisible inhabitants of a hitherto unknown world. Where can I pause in this giddy rush of travel to tell of aught that other wide explorers have not seen before, and other equally eager researchers will not declare they have already known ?

I will e'en make a halt at the noble capital with its marble palaces and gilded domes--its splendid legislative halls—and its legislative bands of men gathered in from thousands of miles of distance ; and—yes, actually scores of them re-echoing the cry, " The Spirits have come ! the Spirits have come !" At Washington I found more private mediums amongst bold, daring, thinking men, and fair cultured Women, than in any one other great centre of America. Drawn together as we deemed, under high official though very reserved patronage, and in circles where Spiritism was rather the fashion than the subject of scorn or abuse, we had the pleasure of witnessing all manner of astounding evidences of force, exercised in such modes as baffled every attempt at explanation except that which the force gave of itself, namely, as the work of ministering Spirits. One curious phase of what I might almost call involuntary mediumship I may mention, first, because it was especially pleasing to me as a student of occultism, and next because it seemed to be out of the ordinary lines of method employed by spirits. In a highly respectable position in one of the Government offices I was introduced to a Mr. Laurie. It seems that both the wife and daughter of this gentleman were mediums, the young lady being the instrument of the most stupendous movements of ponderable bodies ever

witnessed in this generation, the elder lady being a trance and musical medium of such extraordinary capacity that I have heard her, in a single evening, improvise the words and music of five or six songs, rendered in as many different voices, and those ranging from a deep baritone to a shrill bird-like soprano.

But it is of the Government official's mediumship principally that I am about to speak. Mr. Laurie was what was called a drawing medium— that is to say, he drew involuntarily and so constantly, that when not actually engaged in writing official documents he felt impelled to draw on every piece of paper, card, or plain surface that came within his reach. He himself, assured me, in the social gathering at which I first met him, that he had executed thousands of drawings, and that, by an impulse he could not resist, and what was still more grievous to the executant, his drawings—as he himself declared— were without sense, meaning, beauty, or interest. On my request to be favoured with a sight of these remarkable productions, paper and pencils were readily furnished. These being laid on a table before the artist medium, he suddenly grasped the pencils, and using one after another with incredible speed, he drew a cup, a plate, a knife, and at last covered a large sheet of paper with what at first seemed to be a shapeless mass of scratches, but all representing in different parts, at all sorts of angles and kinds of order, vestiges of animal limbs, heads, horns, or hoofs ; parts of insects ; scraps of plants ; a leaf here, a piece of fruit there ; a horn sticking out of a blossom, and here and there half-formed human heads, hands, or limbs, large and small, but all massed together in inextricable and seemingly meaningless confusion. There, Mr. Gray," said the poor artist, in a perplexed tone and hopeless manner, " that is my precious mediumship, and that is the stuff I have for years past been obliged to scribble out under some spell— Heaven alone knows what ! for on earth no being has yet been found who could explain why I do it, and what it all means."

" Here is one that can do so, I think," put in my friend Dudley, pointing to me, at the same time giving such an imploring glance towards the poor artist that I had not the heart to decline the invitation now pressed upon me from all quarters, firmly as I had determined not to speak of my occult perceptions during my American investigations of Spiritism.

Unable to retreat, however, I spoke as follows :

" Dear sir, I must remind you that we mortals live in an external world, composed of the same kind of material as that which in other combinations we call our bodies. Our souls grow within these bodies, as in a mould, and death, which releases, does not kill our souls, though it returns our bodies back to the earth, to be taken up in new forms.

" Just as our souls use matter as a mould to grow and form in, so does the earth contain a soul world, invisible to material eyes, but just as real and deathless as are the souls which escape from our bodies. This soul world is composed of realms of atmosphere, graded from the thick gross air breathed by mortals, to realms of ether, finer and more sublimated than mortals have ever dreamed of. These graded atmospheres permeate one another, the finer interpenetrating the more dense, but the most rarified stretch away into spaces only limited by the sublimated soul spheres of other planets. Thus is

the universe, as far as finite mind can explore it, filled with suns, planets, and systems of material worlds, interpenetrated and encircled with graded spheres of soul worlds. Then, again, just as there is a soul in these our carnal bodies, and a soul world within and around this material earth, so there is a soul part to every object on this earth ; and just as the soul part of man never dies, so those of minerals, plants, and animals never die, but move onwards and upwards through a long succession of births, lives, and deaths, to the apex and completion of this planet's highest form—man. In the disintegration of material forms, also, the magnetic or life principle of every form is taken up by the soul world, and goes to fashion the scenes, substance, objects, and uses of the soul world. Thus, the spheres to which the spirits of animated beings gravitate after death have been forming, furnishing, and growing progressively with the material world. The soul, or Spiritual part of things, being as much fairer and finer than the material objects in which they grew, as the blossom is fairer than the root from which it sprang, so are the realms of soul life infinitely more beautiful than the transitory realms of matter. And thus, too, all that ever has been on earth is not only preserved in the Spiritual realms, but the Spiritual principle of all things leaves its impress behind upon the earth. This is in part proved by that singular power called psychometry, showing that there is a soul of things which can be felt as well as being discerned by clairvoyance. Now, dear sir, as I have told you that the soul of the world in different stages of sublimation stretches away to the soul worlds of other planets, suns, and stars, and is called thence astral light,' so this astral light," filling up every portion of the soul world from the highest to the lowest depths of being, receives and retains for ever the impression of every thing, form, object, and being that has ever existed.

" The astral light or rarified ether filling all space corresponds in its nature and functions to the Spiritual body of animated beings, and as their spiritual bodies and innermost spirits, in duality, constitute soul, so the Spiritual part of all material things, clothed and enveloped in astral light, constitutes, in duality with the innermost spiritual part, the soul-principle of worlds and all material bodies in space. Material forms in time grow old, decay, and break up, but what they have been remains engraved in the astral light, which receives the impress of all the vestiges, wrecks, and ruins of forms that have been broken up and massed together, age after age, and it is the pictures of these vestiges, wrecks, and ruins, fixed in the astral light and inhering in and about the earth, that you, good sir, have drawn.

" In these sketches you see the mausoleums of the ages, still retaining portions of the undying elements of soul— the soul of the world—yet massed together in fragments and vestiges only. See this cup I hold ? ' I added (taking up a china cup from the table), who can tell the history of the clay of which it was formed ? Go back through the ages and the colours that paint its surface, the coal mines of the fire in which it was burned ; the trees that hardened into that coal, the creatures that sheltered under or lived on the fruit or leaves of that tree ; in a word, a million years of births, deaths, growths, and transformations, are all locked up in the history of this cup.' . All around me were silent, save the artist, who, in a low voice broken by emotion, queried softly, " But why am I selected to draw these broken mausoleum forms of the long, long ago ?"

" Because you are fitted to do so," I replied. " These are the days of the unveiling, the seals are all broken, the veil of mystery is rent in twain, and the foundations of the religion of Nature are being laid. You are one of the builders, though you know it not; and Spirit revelators, who have seen in you the capacity to do this work for them, have not hitherto found an opportunity to explain to you the nature of the part they have impelled you to perform.

" Be not discouraged, you are helping to write the Bible of the future.

With the keen spirit of enquiry which so strongly and happily marks the American character, many questions were courteously but anxiously pressed in upon me, which I, perhaps, startled my listeners by answering rather from the basis of Occultism than from that of the Spiritualism by which they had been accustomed to judge of Spiritual entities. . . .

" John," I said to my good friend and fellow-traveller, Mr. Dudley, the next morning, " do not call upon me again to make speeches to people who can teach me more than I have ever forgotten ; " so saying, we entered the cars that were to bear us away to scenes of still greater wonder than any we had yet witnessed.

PART V.

FOR some time prior to the conclusion of my first visit to " the land of the West," and my earliest investigations into the actualities of the intercommunion between the Spirits that had passed on to the second and higher stage of existence, and those still remaining on earth, I was possessed with an insatiable desire to ascertain the exact relationship subsisting between the seen and unseen realms of being, both in respect to sub-mundane and super-mundane Spirits (as I had been taught to recognize their existence in the schools of Occultism), and the Spirits of humanity, as I found their agency demonstrated in the flood of testimony pouring in upon me from every fresh place and scene I visited in my American researches.

I had ever believed from the pleadings of reason and the aspirations of the soul within me, that death, as we know it on this planet, did not end all ; but whilst I felt intuitively certain of continued existence beyond the grave, I was, as I have before confessed, but little prepared to discover the very matter of fact mid-regions of being to which I was introduced, in the wonderful telegraphy that I found in operation between the natural and Spiritual worlds in America.

I spent one night in writing to friends in India and mapping out my plans of action for a certain period near at hand. The next day, in a visit to J. B. Conkling, a renowned test medium of New York, I was assured by writings executed through this man (a total stranger to me), that I should not quit America at the time I had arranged, and this information was accompanied by the repetition of certain phrases in my last night's despatches, which no human eye but my own had seen. Following upon these startling remarks came the word that I should receive a letter that evening from the party I had addressed, which would tend to verify the prediction thus made.

With Mr. Dudley's usual spirit of scepticism he said " But, Monsieur Spirit, Mr. Gray has just posted a letter announcing his return ; he will not, I am sure, change his plans." " Mr. Gray has not posted any such letter," was the answer, written rapidly and seemingly automatically by the medium's hand. " That letter is yet on the table in your friend's bedchamber."

" What puerile stuff to write about !" methinks I hear some grave professor or learned lady utter. Is it so, good sir or madame ? Be patient a while, and then judge. On returning to our hotel late that same night I found a letter from India, written by a friend and containing kindly advice for me to prolong my leave of absence, promising to join me in America, and suggesting a later period by some months for my return. Whilst closing the portfolio in which this with other letters were placed, the one I had written in the morning, announcing my immediate return to India, and which I had intended to have posted with several others, dropped from the table to the ground, having been evidently overlooked.

Sitting with this missive in hand, and rejoicing in the affiaren chance by which it had been left unmailed, these were the mental results which the slight and seemingly inconsequential Spirit communications elicited.

These spirits can SEE what is going on here on earth, read writing over my shoulder, and master the contents of my letters. Should determined scepticism allege that the something called a spirit might have read the letter, and its very language on, or in, my brain, I reply that something- did not read my failure to post that letter in my brain, for I did not know I had failed to do so. Then it follows that if these spirits, as I still call them, must know some things through our minds, they also know some things NOT in our minds ; added to this, they saw a letter awaiting me of a nature totally unexpected by me, and one which I had not read, but they had, in order to give the assurance that I should not leave the country at the time I had stated. Here was the evidence then that we are surrounded by invisible intelligences, who both see and know more than we do, and yet are themselves unknown to us.

Is it then so puerile to demonstrate the fact that we are environed by such intelligences as these, and to prove that we are in contact with a world hitherto unknown to us ? If this knowledge be worth anything to humanity, especially if it be something to learn, that the world from which these intelligences come will be our world in the next stage of existence, then surely it matters not how slight or trivial may be the means by which such knowledge is demonstrated.

Voices—not of the inaudible nature to which I had been accustomed to listen, through my soul, not by my natural ear—voices purely human, striking on the natural ear and stirring the material atmosphere—such voices came to me and spoke, in tones as clear as my own. That others have heard such voices too, here is some of the testimony I have to give : I made a journey to a remote seacoast town in Maine, called " Sullivan." There I received from the ex-mayor and some twenty aged people, affidavits, that in the year 1806 they had heard, during several months, the spirit of a deceased lady, one Mrs. Nelly Butler, who had died under suspicious circumstances in that town, talk, sing, preach sermons, answer questions, appear visibly, and take part in the conversation of large gatherings of people in various places. One old sea captain, a relative of the deceased lady, gave me a pamphlet written and published by an eye-witness and auditor of these marvellous phenomena — one Elder Cummings. This pamphlet, detailing the doings and sayings of the apparition, together with the testimony of scores of the inhabitants of the place, and their affidavits to the truth of their statements, I subsequently gave to my friend Mrs. Emma Hardinge, who-has made extensive quotations therefrom in her magazine, " The Western Star," and her larger volume entitled, " Nineteenth Century Miracles " (page 487).

Bent upon KNOWING, not merely theorizing, upon what worlds of being might subsist outside of this earth—" the all" to the materialist, the footstool of an eternal Heaven or an everlasting Hell of torture to the intelligent Christian—I made another journey, this time alone. I went first to Delphi, Indiana, and by recommendation of Spiritual friends, called upon a kind and courteous physician of the place, one Dr. Beck. This gentleman

warmly welcomed me, and arranged for my journey to a neighbouring town called Medina, giving me at the same time an introduction to a lady resident of the place, a Mrs. Lewis, in whose house I witnessed one of the most extraordinary of all the phenomena I had yet encountered. Mrs. Lewis and her family were devotees of some Christian sect, but not Spiritualists ; yet in the house of this good lady I heard the voice of an invisible speaker, who, in hoarse yet distinct tones, called me by my real name and title, swore with a rude oath that I was a good fellow, " though an impostor," declared that he lived in that part of the spirit world which filled that house ; that he meant to stay there and take care of Mrs. Lewis's children just as long as he thought proper, and, interlarding his conversation with many oaths, he protested that he was doing a better work by telling the real issues of earth life beyond the grave than all the beggars (his own polite word) who preached a pack of lies in the church sentry boxes.¹ Passing another day with Dr. Beck subsequent to this remarkable interview, my courteous companion took me to a neighbouring town called Williamsport, and there, in a long conversation with the Editor of the Williamsport West Branch Bulletin, I heard the history of " Bill Dole," the talking spirit ; of the crowds of eager enquirers who had for many months past thronged Mrs. Lewis's house to hear Bill talk, swear, knock, sing, and " cut up all manner of tricks," all as absurd and utterly apochryphal in connection with our ideas of departed spirits as it would have been to have presented the churchyard scene of diabolism and invocation of the dead, in Meyerbeer's opera of Robert le Diable, as genuine history. The Williamsport Editor furnished me with his printed reports of scenes and interviews with "the talking Spirit of Medina." These also I have given for republication to Mrs. Hardinge, who, I have understood, subsequently visited the scene of these marvels herself.

There is yet one more experience, a part of which— and, I regret to add, a part only— that I deem it right to inflict on readers who should be, and doubtless are, already familiar with the phenomena I have to relate. My chief reason for reiterating accounts of already published manifestations is to point to the effects which such sights and sounds as I can testify to, impress upon some at least of those who personally witness them.

Having been summoned in haste to return to New York to welcome the friend from India, whose letter J. B. Conkling's spirits had, it seemed, made themselves acquainted with—as before narrated—I remained in the City over a fortnight before I found the opportunity to proceed to those distant scenes in which I most desired to continue my investigations. At the end of that time, in company with Mr. Dudley, my friend from India, whom I shall speak of as Mons. Lotti, and two Hindoo servants, our little party proceeded partly by railroad and subsequently by a long stage coach journey to a place called Dover Village, situated in Athens County, Ohio, there to attend some circles for spirit manifestations, of which the most wonderful accounts were in circulation.

We had to encounter much fatigue, and no small amount of crowding in travelling to this place, and if we had not at last been able to secure a private conveyance, horses, and a

¹ * For further accounts of "Bill Dole," the talking spirit of Indiana, consult my "Nineteenth Century Miracles," pages 510 and et seq.—Ed. U. U.

driver on the road, we should have fared still worse in reaching a scene already the centre of attraction to multitudes of curious investigators.

The place we at length arrived at was a wild, stony district in the midst of bare hills, clusters of tall pine trees, mountain ranges destitute of vegetation, and strewn with ancient boulders scratched over with stony histories of their far and wide travels in tens of thousands of years ago. The habitations in this lonely spot were few and far between. Two rude ill-kept houses of public entertainment had been set up to accommodate the crowds of people who flocked to the scene of wonders, but these at the time of our arrival were so full that we had to drive to a more promising scene some miles further on.

It was several days before we could obtain the privilege of entrance to the weird circles we wished to attend ; and then a visit was organized for us by Mr. Jonathan Kooms in a " spirit house " which he himself had built, out of pine logs cut from a wood behind his own farm, one of the very few habitable places scattered about in this remote and desolate district. I learned that this same Mr. Jonathan Kooms was a settler there who, with a wife and large family, sought a home free from the competition and strife of more crowded places. The excellent farmer told us himself, in the interview we had with him previous to our introduction to his circle, that he was one of those whom the world had called an " Atheist ; " that he had travelled all the way to Rochester, New York, to hear and study the spirit rappings, and learn, if possible, if there was indeed any awakening from " the endless sleep of the grave." He found, as he declared, the dead all alive again, and heard and saw tokens from father, mother, and friends whose forms were mouldering in the silent tomb. He was assured by these spirits that he himself, and his whole family of nine children, even to the infant in the cradle, were all imbued with that peculiar magnetic power through which the inhabitants of the spirit world, living themselves in a realm of ethereal magnetism, could work the telegraph, and talk, sing, play music, write, and do all that as mortals they had ever done. By the direction of these dead-alive, as Mr. Kooms phrased it, he had built a large log house, on a high bare hill, where concealment, imposture, or confederacy were simply impossible. For several years, as the good man informed us, he had opened this " spirit house " to all comers free of charge, often sheltering and providing for visitors at his own expense, and for all the hospitality he had extended to hundreds of strangers—for the sights and sounds which testified to the presence of the inhabitants of a new and hitherto unknown realm of being ; for the demonstration of wonders that should have been searched into by every college student and professor on earth, and revolutionized the idle talk of every Christian pulpiteer, this family had been mobbed, pelted, persecuted, and insulted ; their farm produce refused ; their barns and haystacks burned ; their house windows broken, and themselves generally tabooed and as much martyred as if they had been criminals of the worst stamp.

I heard all this from the family themselves, from their far-off neighbours, from many press reporters who had visited them, and, still later, from the researches of the untiring Spirit historian, Emma Hardinge, in her published accounts of this wonderful family, and

the cruel persecutions that assailed them, as narrated in " Modern American Spiritualism."

At the seances which Mr. Kooms and his children granted us, I found a one-roomed log house furnished only with rude seats, a long wooden table, a large collection of instruments of music, pencils, ink, paper, and quantities of Spirit writings and drawings stuck up against the logs. Most of the instruments were strung up to the roof, and quite out of reach. These instruments I heard tuned in the darkness of the shut-up room, and played on with masterly skill. Choruses and part singing were given by the Spirit performers with a power and sweetness impossible to describe, and long orations were made by voices speaking through the trumpets on all sorts of scientific subjects. Quantities of writing were thrown upon the table in pencil, and often in wet ink, some of which have been collected and published in small tract form.* I asked why the speakers used the trumpets to speak through, and the Spirit at once answered me : " For the same purpose as you use your throat." Mr. Dudley asked, " Have you Spirits, then, no throats ?" The reply was, " Yes, but we could no more speak in or through your atmosphere without a material conductor than you could speak or even live in our atmosphere with your earthly bodies."

These and many other answers quickly, sharply, and wittily given, manifested the intelligence of our strange visitors, and the interest they took in our conversation. That their knowledge of us far surpassed that which we had of them, was shown by the fact that they addressed Mons. Lotti, Mr. Dudley, and me by our real names, and asked after some of our friends by name in India and England. Of Emma Hardinge they spoke as if she were one of themselves, one voice jocularly shouting out, " She is going to put me in her book " (a book not written till some eighteen years afterwards). When I questioned, " How do you know her, and who is she ? " such an answer was given as convinced me they knew of her through me—and that correctly, too. There is but one more incident connected with these wonderful scenes which it seems in order for me to recall. For many years during my occult researches I had been visited, instructed, and followed by a noble spirit, ever represented to me as a " planetary angel "—one sent to the earth to aid in establishing a new dispensation to its inhabitants in which the intermediary assistance of human instruments was required. This planetary angel—so named in our occult seances—had ever appeared to us veiled, and shrouded in luminous mist, except on a certain occasion to be hereafter referred to. To return to the scenes I am attempting to describe. One special night, when my own little party constituted the principal portion of the assemblage, amidst the clamour of distant peals of thunder, echoed and re-echoed in long-drawn murmurs amongst the wild Ohio hills and vales ; whilst the darkness of the Spirit house was constantly illumined by successions of zigzag blue lightnings, and bells rung above our heads ; the reverberations of the thunder sounding in the drums, and stirring like moanings of unquiet spirits the musical instruments around us, one mighty and distracting peal of heaven's artillery shook the Spirit house and the very hill on which it stood to the centre, whilst a succession of blinding wild fire seemed to pierce the roof, walls, and atmosphere around, forming to my perception one vast, boundless amphitheatre of rushing flame, dazzling every eye but mine, and causing every human being present but

myself to bury their faces simultaneously in their hands ; then it was that I alone sat watching and gazing up calmly at the unveiled and gracious face of a mighty planetary angel. He whom I beheld seemed to be soaring away into the very heavens ; he whose face and floating head I saw through the now transparent roof, filling the fiery sky with his glorious and majestic head ; he of whom I alone had knowledge in that place, looked for an instant lovingly, protectingly into my eyes ; an instant in which I lived a lifetime ; at the same moment a spirit touched me and placed in my hand a roll of papers which I intuitively hid away in my bosom for study alone. Then the face in the heavens, the fiery atmosphere, all vanished. The lightning torches went out as if a giant's hand had quenched them. Amidst the far, far distant mutterings of the thunder, now but faintly echoed amidst the mountain ranges, sounded out the signal raps that called for light and intimated the close of the circle, and as the lamps were relighted by one of the family the father remarked

"This is the heaviest thunderstorm I have ever known since we lived amongst these wild hills."

PART VI.
(A NEW DEPARTURE.)

To those who have ever visited Koons's spirit house, in Dover village, Athens Co., Ohio —and I am authoritatively assured the number who have done so exceeds ten thousand —it will seem no stretch of the imagination, nor yet an attempt to draw on the credulity of uninformed readers, to say that I received on the night of the circle, described in the last chapter of these memoirs, a roll of papers addressed to me by my real name. The papers were placed in my hands, by what purported to be a spirit hand, gigantic in size, cold as ice, illuminated by phosphorescent light, and presenting a visible appearance only half way up a bare white arm. At the same time a voice, speaking through the trumpet, addressed me as " Louis," assured me the contents of the roll were written by " Oress," a most ancient angel, described in Mrs. Hardinge's history of Modern American Spiritualism, and well known to me as " the veiled angel."

Messrs. Partridge, Brittan, and many others whom I had the privilege of conversing with during my visits to America, assured me they had personally received messages on papers placed in their hands, and claimed to be of spirit authorship ; whilst a volume of similarly- written papers, collected by a frequent visitor to Koons' circles (Dr. Everett), was published and freely circulated amongst the earlier literature of Spiritualism. The reason why I have not given to the world the literary contribution I myself received, was the fact that the papers were chiefly addressed to me alone, and contained personal matter, which I am now only able to give in brief and general intimations to my readers. One portion of the document in question advised me that I had received sufficient evidence of the existence of the mid-region or Hades succeeding the life on earth, to which the spirits of its inhabitants, from the lowest to the highest grades of being, gravitated after death, such state being determined, it was alleged, by the spirit's own moral and intellectual unfoldments. Progress throughout eternity also, was one of the teachings conveyed in these papers, although the means of advancement were affirmed to be entirely due to the spirit's own efforts " to achieve good and truth." But this was but a part, and an inconsiderable one, of the teachings received, as above stated. I was charged to quit the scene in which I was then occupied, and rebuked for observing only what the inhabitants of the above-named " mid-region " could do, instead of employing my brief span of earthly life in giving to the world an account of those steps in the ladder of human progression, which preceded and succeeded the first and second stages of the life of man on earth and in the spheres. Promises of future aid and wider perceptions of the plan of creation were laid out before me, all of which have been amply redeemed ; and, in fine, the directions for future action were so firmly and wisely indicated, that neither I nor my companions, when the matter was laid before them, hesitated to accord compliance thereto. It was in conformity with these directions that I at once took leave of my little party, and accompanied only by Ali, the esteemed Hindoo mentioned in the first volume of these papers, I set out for California, the land of gold, and the extreme Western section of the North American Continent.

In pursuance of the strange but unconquerable desire that possessed me to know and practically realize various phases of human nature, and that under various conditions of trial and temptation, I determined to make my journey to the far west a pilgrimage of observation rather than a passage from one land to another, favoured by the latest developments of science. Instead of taking the ocean passage to California, therefore, I joined a party of emigrants whom I accidentally met at Rock Island, and who were en route to Omaha, intending to journey by mule and cattle teams " across the plains." At Rock Island I visited one of those scenes which spoke in clear yet voiceless tones of man's abiding faith in the existence and constant presence of a world of Spirits, wise to counsel and strong to protect humanity through all entanglements of the mysterious woofs of earth life. This scene was none other than a cavern in the rocks which overhung the Mississippi river, in which, as was alleged by those who had known and loved him, the celebrated Indian chief, " Black Hawk," was wont to resort to consult his guardian Spirit, a being who only appeared to him, and had been seen by others in the form of a large snow-white bird. The very practical inhabitants of the island assured me the belief in Black Hawk's Spirit bird only arose from the fact that the caves piercing these ancient rocks were still the haunts of large white birds such as were described as the good Indian's familiar. Still others related to me wonderful tales of Black Hawk's insight, wisdom, and prophetic powers, guided, as he himself asserted, by this Spirit bird. The good people also showed me a high mountain peak named " Black Hawk's Tower," from the fact that thither the noble Indian was accustomed to go climbing that giddy height alone—" by night, to watch and talk with the spirits of the stars," by day to commune with his own soul, beneath the blue arch of God's cathedral in nature. One of these pleasing narratives, in which all might unite in admiration of the good and noble in man, was this : In the last struggle between the English and those that had once been their colonists, some time in 1812, I believe, Black Hawk, as the leader of a brave and successful Indian reserve, performed such good service for his white allies, that they rewarded him with the pay, uniform, and title of "a British general." At the close of the struggle, and when the red-skinned officer had retired to his mountain tower of observation, he perceived coming up the river a barge laden with casks of those intoxicating liquors, the use of which the good Indian had strictly forbidden to his people, and the importation of which he had covenanted against with his English allies.

The general report of the incident, was that Black Hawk having retired to the cavern of his familiar spirit, the smugglers agreed with some of the drink-loving Indians to land their illicit cargo on the beach at a point completely remote from the chief's retreat or observation. They were then to conceal the forbidden cargo in another convenient cave, and receive their stipulated reward. Whichever account was the true one, certain it is that the noble chief, in his general's uniform, appeared suddenly on the scene, carrying in his hand his white wand of authority. Under his direction the casks were opened, the jars broken, and all their deadly contents poured remorselessly into the river. Throwing off his hat, sword, and uniform, the grand savage then set up his well-known war whoop, inciting on his Indians to drive off the intruders, who, hastily collecting such of their spoil as they could rescue, beat a rapid retreat.

From that hour Black Hawk renounced all allegiance to his treacherous former allies, and, resuming his Indian attire and warlike habits, for the rest of his life kept that part of the island which had been assigned to him, wholly free from the intrusion of that form of civilization, more ruinous to the integrity of manhood than all the innate and natural proclivities of savage life. As I may not again have the opportunity of referring to the scenes and characteristics I witnessed amongst these North American aborigines, or so-called "savages," I will note at this time some of the specialties in connection with their spiritual beliefs and practices, to which all too little attention has been given. Whilst these "red-skin" tribes have been shamefully used, not to say abused, cheated, and persecuted by the civilized robbers who have stolen their lands and driven them away—away even into the last strip of earth that catches the parting beams of the setting sun—their enfranchised spirits have been amongst the most numerous of the visitants from the land of the hereafter that have aided in establishing the new Spiritual movement, and their influence has evermore been exerted amongst the white races for good and helpful purposes. Amongst the vast throngs of American mediums there is scarcely one who has not at some time or other been controlled, and that most beneficially, by Indian Spirits. They have been noted for their curative powers, both in respect to mesmeric passes, and directions for the preparation of excellent herbal remedies. On one occasion, when visiting some courteous friends in Wisconsin, I was invited to witness a remarkable evidence of occult power exhibited by the Jossakid or "medicine man" of a north-western tribe. These men erected on a private lawn, lent for the purpose, a huge, high tent, the thick canvas of which completely shaded the three upright poles, 18 feet high, which formed the temporary erection. This done, the Jossakid was divested of all clothing but a small loin cloth, and then, bound hand and foot and tied up with many yards of heavy rope, he was thrown upon the grass beneath the tent canvas, which was then closely drawn around him. Several musical instruments, including two military drums, had been tied up to the top of the triangular tent poles, and these were rudely and discordantly played upon within two minutes of the Jossakid's being laid beneath the canvas. In about five minutes after the clamour of the instruments had ceased, the poles at the top were separated, and forth from the opening, swarmed out a dozen or more large white birds resembling Solan geese; then followed a flock of black birds like crows, all of whom flew rapidly away or disappeared out of sight immediately. Whilst the assemblage of some twenty or more visitors were looking in all directions for the vanished birds, the musical instruments one after another were flung out, and lastly came flying up through the tent top opening the Jossakid himself, bound and tied hand and foot just in the same condition as when two of the visitors had tied him. The tent curtains, instantly thrown apart by the aghast spectators, revealed nothing but the grass slightly pressed down where the Jossakid had lain. It is of no use for my readers to fancy they solve the problem of this performance by crying, "Oh! that is nothing but what I have seen performed many and many a time in the presence of this medium, that, and the other." The repetition of these supermundane powers proves nothing. The main question still remains unsolved—Who and what are the operators, and by what possible laws can they work?

Conversing on one occasion with a very intelligent Indian Chief, thoroughly familiar with these marvels, he insisted that there were many beings intermediate between animals,

birds, and men who were waiting to be born as men, and that these were the operators, and, when seen, in all cases appeared as animals or birds, with some distortion of form. To the skilled occultist I need hardly say this theory, repulsive as it may sound to the Spiritist, corresponds too closely with the doctrine of "elementary existences," as taught by the leading minds of Occultism, to escape attention. Granted that the phenomena briefly noted above were neither rare nor attractive, they surely merit the consideration of such scientists as profess to explain all the motions of the universe on the principles and motor powers of "matter and force." As to the parrot cry of imposture, so often levelled against the persons called "Mediums," in whose presence alone such phenomena seem to occur, I beg to say that imposture, as an attempt at solution of these mysteries, cannot apply to uninstructed, ignorant, and almost nude Red Indians; and as for the particular case I have been describing, I am also enabled to affirm, upon the testimony of numerous and authentic travellers in the north-western sections of America, that such manifestations are no rarity amongst the Indian tribes, but have been witnessed under precisely similar conditions to those narrated above repeatedly.

On my own behalf I have no explanations to offer. When I find the microscope revealing to me the existence of a nation in a dewdrop—a nation invisible to the unaided eye of man; and the telescope disclosing the existence of millions of suns, stars, and systems equally hidden from the limited perception of the external sense of sight, I conclude that life—ceaseless waves, seas, and oceans of life may be, aye, and are, throbbing and thronging beyond, above, and between the infinitely little and the infinitely large, that our as yet only rudimental instruments of science reveal; and when I discover intelligent powers and motions performed by invisible operators, I am fain to conclude there are other existences beyond, above, or beneath those that either the microscope or telescope have as yet brought to light, and I am not ashamed to confess that I should deem myself more disgraced by veiling my ignorance concerning the causes and operators of those invisible though intelligent motions by a careless "Pshaw!" or a contemptuous "I take no interest in such stuff," than if I stood, as I did on the occasion I have recorded in Wisconsin, and mentally cried to my soul—"What do these things mean? I will never rest until I know, and can answer this question for myself, if not for others."

PART VII.

ACCORDING to previous arrangement the next step in my American pilgrimage was a journey to Omaha, there to join a band of emigrants about to proceed overland to California, the newly discovered and attractive gold fields of the United States. I believe the company, of which I proposed to form a part, were, like myself, bent rather upon adventure, the pursuit of health, or the desire to explore the wonderful scenes of natural beauty, which were to be found in the vast ranges of the " Rockies " and Sierra Nevada mountains, than impelled to take the overland journey by the desire to seek wealth in the mining regions.

Be this as it may, my own reasons for joining in such an adventure were fully justified by the results obtained. Were I writing a guide or sketch book, I could recall matter of interest enough to fill many pages in descriptions of the marvellous scenery through which we passed, and the constant series of incidents which attended a journey of some three thousand miles, pursued by the primitive methods of horse and mule conveyances, the only means of overland travel. from the Eastern States to the land of the setting sun, prior to the construction of the Pacific railroad.²

As I am writing only of researches into still more distant lands than any hitherto known to earth's inhabitants, I shall dwell no farther on the scenes or events of my pilgrimage than may be necessary to explain their effect upon the special objects which impelled my wanderings.

I may mention that our party, which included some sixty people, was divided into groups or sections, placed severally under the charge of certain experienced persons, fitted for such an office, whose duty it was to act as captain of the various divisions of our little army. I was complimented by the offer of one of these onerous posts, but declined the honour on the ground of inexperience in American pioneer life.

The gentleman who was induced to fill this position in the group with which I was associated was a German, and to my surprise and pleasure I recognized in him one of my former college companions, and an initiate in the same society of Occultists, to which, as a boy, I had been introduced by my beloved friend, Felix Von Marx. My old acquaintance I found was known in the camp as " Marcus Franke," a sobriquet, as I at once inferred, adopted for the occasion, and one which I do not feel at liberty to exchange for his real name, now well known in the United States in a distinguished professional capacity.

Amongst the few experiences which I propose to note in these sketches, and the one which most agreeably varied the externalities of our six months' travel, none were more interesting to me and my college friend than to wander off together from our

² Presuming the reference is to the first US transcontinental railroad, this reference would mean that "Louis de B____" had his hands on the manuscript at least as late as May of 1869 (Editor).

encampment at midnight when all was still, and in the quiet and loneliness of vast mountain ranges, amidst towering spires of mighty rocks, deep, dark, rugged canyons, gorges and valleys formed ..by volcanic upheavals, tumbling cascades and mountain floods, to sit beneath the starry roof of the sparkling heavens, strewn over with glorious galaxies of shining worlds, or repose in the long streams of moonlight that flooded the paths we trod, and there and then exchange memories of boyhood's experiences, speculate on the wonders we as " flying souls," or, in more common parlance, clairvoyants, sent forth into space under control of our magnetic masters, had witnessed, and wonder and wonder still where and what was that Unseen Universe of which we, in our somnambulistic flights, were permitted to enjoy brief and broken glances and glimpses.

Remembering my companion as a boy, and recalling my own boyish impressions as I then deemed of him, I found him now greatly changed.

Frank and genial with his comrades, his fine clairvoyant powers rendered him an especial favourite with the masters under whose control we both acted. Meeting him now after an interval of nearly twenty years I could scarcely have recognised in " Marcus Franke," as I must still call him, the kind, high-spirited, and much-loved associate of my early years.

I found him now gloomy, reserved, and evidently weighed down mentally by some secret sorrow. His face, once so ruddy and bright, was deadly pale, his cheeks fallen and hollow, and in his dark eyes there were restless, furtive glances, continually looking over his shoulder as if he feared to behold some one or something he equally dreaded and expected. Yet his manner to me was warm, even affectionate, and his obvious anxiety to be near me and accompany me in my midnight rambles overweighed the feelings of strangeness and even repulsion with which his presence at times inspired me.

It was on a certain brilliant moonlight night when Marcus and I, after long and silent wandering amidst the stately scenery of the mighty " Rockies" had thrown ourselves to rest on the side of a grassy knoll, and when the starry hosts above our heads glanced like the eyes of watching angels mounted on their silver thrones, that my companion remarked, in a tone evidently softened from his usual sternness of mood, " Louis, have you, like me, found the mid-region peopled by human souls—that border land between the elementary nature spirits and the planetary angels, the tutelary guardians of this earth of ours ? "

Without waiting for a reply, he went on to say hurriedly : " You know we were taught in our occult initiations that the Nature Spirits' were elementary men, but, when grown through many gestating processes, and born into human form, that our life and death was the last of us, the end of earthly being, and all for which earth was designed. Louis, I have found by sad and most woeful experiences that something survives the shock of death, and that mortals do live beyond the grave, or leave a something more behind them than that phantasmal aura which our masters declared to be the secret of haunted

houses. Do you remember, Louis, they taught us that the forms that were seen as apparitions, ghosts, spectres—nay, the very displacement of objects caused in haunted places, the sounds heard of cries, groans, and even words, too, were all a phantasmal essence left behind the death of the body, and faded out and away when exhausted. Do you believe this still ? "

" In part, but in part only," I replied.

" What, then, is the difference—what the true part and what the error of this teaching ? "

" The truth is that there is a magnetic aura to everything that is animate or inanimate upon earth, and that this leaving its impress behind is seen and felt at times by clairvoyants and psychometrists, and most properly called the soul of things; but this does not account for haunted places or haunted persons."

" What does, then ?" murmured my companion, hoarsely.

" Marcus," I rejoined, "the Soul within man is the real man ; the body. alone dies ; the soul cannot die. After death, the Soul goes to its place—each soul to the sphere to which it belongs. In the earth's mid-regions or spirit spheres are many-graded states, the lowest of all being HERE-ABSOLUTELY HERE-WITHIN AND UPON THIS VERY EARTH ; but those souls that linger here, earth-bound, are only criminals, or those whose entire loves and passions have been bound up with earth, and it is these who from time to time are heard and seen in the places of earth, where their crimes were committed, or on which the whole passion of their natures was concentrated. Do you understand ?"

" Not entirely so. The criminal or the earthly-minded may be thus enchained, but in many a haunted place one sees the form of the innocent victim ; nay, even some clairvoyants, as you and I know, have seen the representation of the crime acted out again. How can this be, unless the innocent victim is earth-bound as well as the criminal ?"

" It is not so, my friend," I replied. " The victim may be, and is, far away, amongst yon shining orbs or in some Eden of peace and beauty ; but, mark me, the mind of every criminal takes objective shapes after death, sometimes even before it. Thus, when the mind cannot forget the crime it has committed, the aura of that deed is at once recalled with all its minutest details. The mind first conjures up the crime in memory, and this strong impression recalls all the psychometric details just as completely as if a spirit were there. The spirit of the victim of earthly wrong, also, often does return to the wrongdoer, sometimes in the nature of an avenger, but more frequently as a pitying angel, striving to reform the evils done on earth. Whatever the motive may be, the spirits who return to earth—especially in the case of visitation to the criminals who may have wronged them— return through the magnetic aura they left behind them on earth. If death has occurred through violence, that deed forms the ever open gate through which the spirit must return ; and thus it is that spirits so often return in the semblance even of the very garments they wore, the magnetic aura of which is still on earth ; whilst the

spirits of those destroyed by violence must indeed pass through the gate by which they departed, and in so doing rehabilitate themselves in all the scenes, circumstances, and appearances which characterized their departure from earth."

" Can you give me any proof of this ?" murmured my companion.

" I can and I will, Marcus, though I only do so in kindness. By your side stands the image of a poor girl you once loved and secretly made your wife. When opportunity opened up to you a richer and more brilliant destiny, you destroyed her. Yes, you put her out of life, vainly deeming that death would end all."

Then followed a description needless to insert in this place, but sufficient to convince the wretched and horrorstruck listener that the vision was a real one, and only too horribly true to the fatal past.

After a scene too painful and full of agonizing remorse to bear narration, my unhappy companion, amidst choking sobs and tears, questioned whether the apparition I had described was what I had spoken of as the projection of his own bitter thoughts, ever, ever fixed on the memory of his victim and the crime that had deprived her of life, or whether it was her real living spirit haunting him as it seemed to do—might I say ?—in retributive vengeance for her dreadful fate.

" Your belief in a constantly haunting presence, my friend," I replied, " is principally the projection of your own mind ; the real living spirit of your hapless Ernestine is not necessarily there. It is your unceasing thought, clothed in the magnetic aura of your dead wife, which haunts you. That which I now see and now describe to you, and have seen around you frequently since we met on this journey, is your actual, living Ernestine. She leaves her home of brightness and beauty to come to you on a mission of peace and mercy. Listen ! be still and silent ; move not, speak not, and you shall hear her very message."

At that moment a passing cloud intercepted the flood of light poured out through that bright, clear atmosphere by the moon. For a few minutes the very stars seemed cold and dim, and a low wailing breeze swept like the sighs from a breaking heart through the echoing rocks and giant redwood trees. The occult powers that I had held suspended during my American researches I recalled to my aid by a mighty effort of will. The fair, white spirit at once emerged from the cloudy envelope of the dim, murky earth, and shone for a moment in the resplendent light of her own bright home in the land of the hereafter, as if a door had suddenly been opened into the realms of Paradise. The lovely vision, surrounded by a landscape of dazzling beauty, flashed on the eyes of us two mortals for a moment—a moment in which was crowded up a lifetime of ecstasy. Like the chiming of a distant bell, a voice, too, close to our ears, but yet so very far away, rung out the words : " LOVE! I PITY, I FORGIVE. Go AND SIN NO MORE."

When the last pale star of the night waned, and the first faint blush of the rising sun had streaked the grey horizon with a thin pencil line of crimson, heralding in the coming day,

Marcus Franke and I, walking arm in arm, were nearing the tents in which we were severally to have been quartered during that memorable night. Long and earnest had been the converse which we held together after the angel of our midnight watch had departed. What its nature had been may be gathered from my companion's last words at parting. " Had you scorned me, Louis, reproached me, even denounced and haled me on to the world's cruel justice, I should never have blamed you or rebelled against either your words or acts, but what you have said has not only lifted every sense of burden from my soul, but made of me a new man. You are right when you tell me the spirit can be incarnate in mortal form but once, and yet live many lives in one incarnation. I died last night—died truly to the dreadful past, and am now born again to live a new life, and become, as you bid me—a new man. Henceforth I will redeem the wrongs done to one angel by doing good to many others. For her sake, if not for my own, my whole life shall be a psalm of good to all and every being around me, and instead of idly lamenting over a past I can never recall, I will live out my span of mortal life in such deeds and thoughts as shall make me worthy to rejoin my angel in Heaven."

Nobly, grandly, bravely, has Marcus Franke kept his word. A better man, a more divine nature enshrined in mortal form, does not walk the earth. Already he has gone through all that the re-incarnationists fable as many lives, in one, and that _one, including the worst impulses of crime and the highest achievements of virtue, in less than half a century of earthly reckoning. Magistrates, legislators, and rulers in church and state, learn to reform your criminals instead of killing them. and you will fill the after life with angels instead of demons.

PART VIII.
OF TRUE OCCULTISM AND THE EVOLUTION OF SPIRIT.

ENOUGH has been written in my previous sketches to show that the grand desideratum of my North American pilgrimages had been attained, and that I not only believed but KNEW that the soul of man, formed and moulded on earth in the image of his creative prototype, lived, and moved on through eternities of being after quitting its temporary casket of a material body.

I knew also the fact, sublime and consoling in its reality, that the Spirits that had once lived and been formed as men on this, and myriads of other earths in space, were the progenitors of those radiant and glorious existences on whose tutelary care the rule and government of worlds devolved, and were, in their occasional visitations to mortals in olden time, worshipped as "gods " and " lords."

It was much to know that amidst the vast and numberless hierarchies of planetary and sun angels, archangels, and beings of whom the dazed mentality of finite existence could only vaguely discern, that the arisen spirits of our best beloved, the angels of our homes, and the dear companions of our rudimental lives on earth, held their place and made their mark, were it even on the lowest round of the ladder which reached down to the depths, and scaled the heights of eternity. Still better, it was glorious to realize that there was such a ladder ; that its name was " progress ;" that its every round of existence was open to all ; and that the watchwords of that eternity through which its spiral heights were piercing, were upward and onward " for ever."

Thus far the profoundest depths of Occultism, and the most sublime visions of Deific being, were bridged over, to my apprehension, by the hitherto missing link of human Spiritual life, and the demonstrated fact of a soul world teeming with the arisen pilgrim spirits of earth marching up the ever ascending path of infinity.

In long, and to me, interesting conversations with my friend Marcus Franke, I expressed the sentiments of deep gratitude, which I now reiterate to the Supreme Soul of Being and His ministering angels, for the mighty boon of direct Spiritual intercourse between the dwellers of earth and the spirit spheres, and I look now upon my own past sentiments of repulsion from the simple, commonplace methods of communion which spirits employ—obviously in consideration of human weakness and materiality— with regret and self-abasement.

I did not at first remember that humanity, trained by priestcraft to regard death, judgment, and life hereafter, even the Father of spirits Himself, with commingled sentiments of horror, awe, and dread—neither knew nor could understand any of those subjects, unless they were enshrouded in veils of mysticism and fear, from which it was the interests of the priesthood to warn away their all too trusting votaries. And now this veil of mystery was rent in twain.

The spirits spoke to their friends and kindred each through the newly discovered methods of Spiritual telegraphy, just as such friends and kindred would have conversed together, and as they were accustomed to converse when both inhabited the same spheres, and I had been offended only because the ideal veil of mystery had been so thoroughly swept away. Still I have reason to believe I only shared the sentiment of the moving world around me. Our remembrances concerning our arisen ones are so constantly associated with the last act of the earthly drama, that the deathbed, the deep bitterness of the shroud, the pale and the speechless monumental grave, have obscured to thousands of eyes the living identities, cheerful voices, and pleasant messages of the real men, women, and children that have never slept " the sleep that knows no waking," nor lingered amidst the mouldering ashes of the dead.

For this awakening from death to life I am myself so grateful that I can but marvel why any other solemnities should be observed in the transition, than those of consigning the worn-out and decaying house of clay from which the real man has escaped, to the purifying action of the sacred element of fire—thus freeing the earth of the impurity of corrupting matter, and releasing the spirit from the last relic of magnetic attraction to the old garments it once wore.

Enfranchised alike from doubt, fear, and mystery, I rejoiced in constant converse with my ascended friends, and was enabled by their wise counsels to connect the links of being in one unbroken chain from Deity to protoplasm, and upward and onward again to Deity, until thousands of problems were solved by those simple words " Modern Spiritualism." Thus, whereas at first I had been disposed to regard my Spiritual associates with astonishment at the calm, deliberate, and perfectly human characteristics of their intercourse with " the spirits," I now felt impelled to deepen that astonishment into indignation when I observed how few there were in the ranks of believers who could rise beyond the personal gratification derived from renewed intercourse with their beloved ones, to any apprehension of the stupendous floods of light which Spiritualism sheds on the mysteries of being—past, present, and future ; of the wondrous qualities of the soul, of the eternity of spirit as an element, and the true nature and being of the existence men worship as God.

Before I attempt to place my own views on record concerning these vast and mooted points, I will briefly sum up the results of my wanderings in some of the different countries I visited prior to my return to India. In California I found a wide and far-reaching interest in the communion between spirits and mortals, but a total absence of any philosophy growing out of this communion, except in such glimpses as were awakened by the few inspired lecturers and trance-speakers who from time to time visited the country. In these Pacific Coast regions, as in all mining countries, I traced the presence and influence of the " Elementaries " both by sights and sounds. When I say the Elementaries I feel bound to digress somewhat from my narrative of travels in order to reiterate the philosophy I have already placed on record in " Art Magic " and " Ghostland," and re-affirm my certain knowledge that spirit exists in germ in atoms of matter, from the rarest gases to the most solid crystalline rocks. As forms of matter

decay and disintegrate, the germ or spiritual principle is liberated, and then for a while takes on a temporary existence as an elemental spirit in the soul world—that is, in a world that permeates all material bodies in space, even as the souls of men permeate their bodies. In this soul world the elemental spirit remains attached to the forms of matter from which it sprang, until it is again attracted on some other earth in space, to the next higher stage of being. Thus, in seemingly interminable chains of births, lives, deaths, and re-births, the spirit-germ gestates as an embryo until it gravitates to the kingdom of animated being. After the embryotic or gestating processes of life, death, and re-birth through the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, the spiritual germ ceases to be a mere elemental, but becomes a spirit with ascending rudimental functions through the animal kingdom.

Still passing on through myriads of worlds in space, the last grand ultimatum of spiritual being is man, the self-conscious apex and end of spiritual growth and soul progress through matter. Do you ask "Where is the proof of these pilgrimages?" I answer you a priori, the assurance of the soul's immortality. That which never has an end never can have had a beginning. Spirit, then, must be an original primordial element like matter, like force—ever existent, untreated, eternal. Like matter, it waits in time for the commencement of such gestating processes as will bring it into form, and give it an ultimate and independent existence. For this divine and sublime fulfilment spirit becomes a temporary dweller in ever varying but ever progressive forms of matter, until it obtains its ultimatum in man. My next (to me) proof, is the life of all things, each growing with an intelligence peculiar to itself. Thus in the mineral kingdom we have those preferences, attractions, and repulsions called "chemical affinities." In the vegetable kingdom we have yet more subtle manifestations of instinct, such as good and evil natures, beauty and bane, health and poison, sweet perfumes and deadly exhalations, plants love and hate—grow under one hand and perish under another. They are magnetic and aesthetic, and some even carnivorous, laying traps for and devouring insects. They have sex, and reproduce their kind. They live and die, and are the subjects of improvement and progress. As to the animal kingdom it is too vast a field to enter upon in this chapter, save to say in addition to reason, I demand justice for everything that moves, breathes, and at last thinks. I demand a commencement, a cause, and an ultimatum for the destiny of every spark of spirit, as much for the infusoria of the air or the animalcule of the dew-drop as for the man that rules and governs all, and as the last proof I can give that the philosophy I advance is true, I allege that I, like all my fellow-students in true Occulism, and thousands of finely developed clairvoyants, have seen these elementals, visited their spheres, and recognized their actual existence in matter.

Few, indeed, are the miners who doubt upon the spirits of the mines. Few are the geologists and chemists who fail to speculate upon, and marvel over, the silent but inevitable processes by which minerals grow, change, crystallize, die, and are taken up again from the ashes of the past into progressed forms. Few are the botanists who do not hold converse, unconsciously at times to themselves, with the spirits of the woods, the trees, the grasses, and the flowers; and none the naturalists who have not caressed the tender bird, the noble steed, or the faithful dog, and thought—if he has not

spoken the words —" It won't be Heaven to me unless I meet thee there." Of all this I shall write more anon, for the world waits, and the kingdoms beneath us demand the truth.

The history of life eternal is written, but few read the page aright as yet. The eyes of humanity have been gazing through theological spectacles until the vision has become dimmed, and can only discern the lurid fires of a blasphemous hell, or the fantastic glare of an imaginary, great, white, heavenly throne. Awakening from the nightmare of man-made delusions, the souls of men are standing face to face with the Creator's works, and shaking off the horrible phantoms of priestly conjuration ; they are beginning to hear the voice of God in the anthem of the waves ; to listen to the Titan factories in which he works in the storm and the bellowing of volcanic fires ; to trace his laws written in the fiery scriptures of the skies ; to read sermons beneath the arches of forest cathedrals; to wonder at his variousness in the ten thousand forms of nature, and recognize his bounty in the adaptation of every creature to its place, the place and point at which its means of sustenance are found. And all this is closed by the march of the ever-growing, ever-expanding soul up to man—man, the vicegerent of Deity on earth, the prophecy of what he shall yet attain to when the purified spirit becomes as Deity and a part of the central sun of the universe. Again apologizing to my readers for digressing from my promised narrative into the paths of new and perhaps unacceptable philosophy, I ask permission to continue my brief resume of notes of travel in the next chapter.

PART IX.
THE EVOLUTION OF SPIRIT.

IT was amidst the wild and glorious mountain scenery of Santa Cruz, California, in a lonely house once occupied by a party of miners, whose mortal forms had been suddenly engulfed during a violent storm in the Pacific Ocean, the heaving waters of which laved the foot of the mountain on which I had taken up a temporary residence, that I determined to devote a few weeks to a season of restful study and retrospect of my late wanderings.

My sole companions were my faithful Hindoo attendant Ali, the reserved mourning widow of one of the lost owners of the place, and her Mongolian servant. The voices of Nature were the only sounds that broke the deep stillness of that charmed spot, amidst which the ceaseless monotony of tossing waves chanted alternately the requiem anthem for the dead, and shouted the resurrection hymns of triumph for the ascended spirits that had left their prison-houses of clay in the mausoleums of the deep sea. During the hours of sunlight I wandered through valley gorges, shaded almost to midnight gloom by arcades of giant "redwoods," and ascended to craggy mountain summits, communing with the soul-worlds of being—now from the depths below, in the murmurings of the Nature spirits,"—now from the supremest heights, in inspiration from the angels of the solar realms. At midnight, when the vast expanse of the heavens, so widely visible in those mountain regions, became studded all over with the fiery scriptures of the skies, and, like "angels mounting their silver thrones," the solemn stars by myriads seemed to respond with divine assurance to my restless questioning of "whence and whitherward," I would draw from my cabinet the roll of MS. given me at Koon's Spirit House in the Ohio Hills, written, as I found, and presented to me by "Oress," the most ancient angel of the band there assembled, and with the aid of the writer's own corrections and the ten thousand speechless voices of inspiration around me, I prepared what I was confidently assured would yet prove to be, in the days when humanity should be fitted to receive and understand it—a true, brief, and plain compendium of The first God ever conceived in man's apprehension— the last that he, as an inhabitant of the speck in Infinity called "the earth"—will ever know, is the sun and its spirit spheres, the physical centre and spiritual ruler of that solar system of which the earth and its sister planets are the satellites. The visible sun may be simply described in its primordial formation as a nucleated mass of the three primal elements in the universe, namely, MATTER, FORCE, and SPIRIT. These three uncreated, eternal, and infinite elements are the ALL OF THE UNIVERSE. Their order of resolving into forms proceeds thus : Matter is the formative mould, Force the ever-acting principle of motion, eternally aggregating and disintegrating matter by the dual modes of attraction and repulsion ; SPIRIT saturates every atom of matter in the universe, but does not attain its grand, ultimate attribute of INTELLIGENCE until it has grown through matter into form. Spirit takes form through Matter as a mould, impelled upward and onward by the life principle of Force.

Suns in their original constitution are, as above stated, nucleated masses of cosmic matter, vitalized by force and saturated by spirit. When in the tons of eternity, suns have attained the massive proportions of a system, by centrifugal force they throw off rings, which, retaining the qualities and powers of the central mass, aggregate into satellites called planets. These again, by the laws derived from the parent sun, throw off moons, or satellites, which revolve around them ; whilst the entire system moves, each member of that system in its respective orbit, around the grand central star ; every planet, with its attendant moons, registering its attraction to, and repulsion from, the parent sun by the perihelion and aphelion points of its special orbit.

OF THE LIFE AND DEATH OF MATERIAL BODIES.

Suns, planets, systems—every form of matter, indeed, whether in mass or unparticled atoms, grows to a maximum point of perfection, analagous to the prime of humanity and manhood ; the form, be it what it may, then " turns the hill of time," and goes down to the valley of death, disintegration, and re-birth, into some other and more progressed condition on the highways of infinity. It may require such billions of mortal time as defy the computations of mathematics to define, ere the material of suns and their systems run their appointed course. It is all one with the birth, growth, life, and death of man. The macrocosm and the microcosm are one, and the laws of being impressed on a dewdrop, prevail through galaxies of blazing suns. But the tale is not yet completed.

OF SPIRIT THE IMMORTAL PART OF BEING.

I have said that every atom of cosmic matter in the universe is vitalised by force and saturated by spirit. Matter grows up to its prime, waxes old, and dies. Spirit grows through matter, but NEVER DIES. It only passes out of the form of matter when that form disintegrates, and then commences a new set of ever- ascending phases of being, clothed upon by the life force which becomes a spiritual body. Next ; shedding even this envelope of a life-principled body, it becomes pure spirit, and, as such is A SUN GOD. From the first condensation of a material sun into a central star, giving birth to planetary satellites, suns equally inevitably throw off SPIRITUAL particles which aggregate into spiritual spheres, filled with the spiritual parts of every substance, whether of mineral, plant, or animated forms, grown in the parent mass. As in the planets, earths, and satellites of every sun in space, so in the central parent mass itself, Spirit spheres are grown, thrown off in zones, belts, and unparticled glorious realms of Ether, and are filled with the spiritual parts of all that ever was, or ever can be born of the physical parent mass. This is the law of life and growth in the mightiest sun that sparkles through the galaxies of infinity as in the humblest satellite that moves around the orbit of the central star. Nature or creation— call it as man may—is far more unique, and the laws of being far more simple than man with all his aggregation of scientific terms or complex mathematical sums would make out. " Words, words, words !" and these only mask the sense and simplicity of the infinitely large and the infinitely little. Thus, once again, the life of a man is as the life of a solar system, or a galaxy of systems ; and thus, again, the parent sun, the physical creator of planets and all that is therein, from a crystal to a man, forms, fashions, and endows with life and being, every physical form or atom of

his satellites at the same time that he throws off the spiritual elements within his own being, creating, through the ever-restless action of force a spiritual sun, the counterpart and supplement of his own glorious being.

In this Spiritual Sun and its spheres, like the spheres of earth and other planets, are conserved all the beauty, perfection, and deathless spiritual life of the physical parent sun. Here the glorious and perfected souls of solar men become the deific and tutelary lords of creation. They are the angels of the entire solar system, and in their ascending spheres become archangels, gods, "thrones, dominions, powers," ruling and governing the planetary worlds of their own system until time shall be no more.

Here let us rest.

Even if my readers will follow me into this revival of the ancient teachings upon the problem of Deity, they may tire of stretching the forces of mind up and away to the solar roads of infinity. They may shrink also with conventional, though all too unreasoning disgust, from what it has become the cant of sects to call "Heathenism, Paganism, or Fire Worship."

We know that the views of antiquity concerning Deity, now reproduced in these Spiritual teachings, will be indignantly rejected by those who have been accustomed to image forth their God as a huge man, seated on a huge throne, listening to hymns of praise from the saints in Heaven, or to shrieks of agony from the tortured in Hell to all eternity. It matters little to me, however, what men think now or what they accept or reject for to-day. In the years that shall be, humanity will all worship with me the Central Spiritual Sun, with its Elohim, tutelary gods, angels, and guardians of this solar system, and bend their mortal lives on earth, only to be worthy to join these hosts of Heaven. Meantime, I write because I have heard THE VOICE, and obey the command it implies, "Be still, and know that I am God." It is a strange and significant fact that all religious systems upon the face of the earth originated in solar worship, most commonly in the acceptance of the physical sun as the sign and symbol of a Spiritual sun. So taught, so worshipped India, Egypt, Chaldea, Persia, Greece, and Rome. So believed, so wrote, though mostly in Cabala, the wandering Jews. So did the Cabalistic writers of the Jewish Scriptures imply, when they put into the mouths of the Elohim the words—"Let us make man in OUR image"; when they gave the Jewish nation in charge to one of the Elohim, "Jah" or "Jehovah"; when they filled their Scriptures with a thousand figures of speech, all indicative of Deity in the brightness of solar glory, or the obscurity which hid that brightness in clouds and darkness from sinful men. So wrote the Cabalists in imaging forth the fall of Spirit through the creative sunbeam in the fall of man and the origin of sex. So, in a word, will all the original mysteries of theology be yet explained, and the subtle webs of priestcraft be broken and swept away.

The little child, in the simplicity of its one, sole knowledge and belief—namely, the love of father and mother, knows nothing of the complexities of life, and is not distracted from its primordial loves by the clamorous demands of art, science, and worldcraft. Even so in the infancy of the race the antique man knew and loved his Father God in Nature,

and saw his image in himself. Before priestly arts had confused his mind, or the world's rushing tides had swept away and effaced the original writings of Creation on the consciousness of the creature, the child man perceived, as well as felt, that the warmth and power of the mighty sun was life, and the light of the glorious orb was revelation. The earliest of all arts and sciences, agriculture and astronomy, only confirmed that faith, and if more evidence were needed to prove solar, and, subsequently, " fire worship," as the original natural religion of man, the fact that in our own modern times this is the first natural belief of the untaught savage, might have shown to the crafty and designing priesthood that the worship of God " in Spirit and in truth " was the first and the last—the Alpha and Omega—of divine revelation.

In writing of the " Gods" or tutelary spirits of this planet and its sister worlds in our solar system, let it ever be understood that I infer and believe that the same laws of life, origin, growth, and ultimate, both in regard to matter and spirit, obtain in ALL systems discoverable to man and apprehended by spirits throughout the universe. The universe ! what do those petty assemblages of letters imply ? Take one single galaxy. To the unaided eye of man it is only a nebulous cloud, no bigger than a handbreadth. Examined through the telescope it is a cluster of millions of suns, each the centre of systems like our own, though exceeding ours in magnitude, as the sun exceeds the flame of our midnight camp. To know or even dream more of how these galaxies thicken on the eye of science, until the stretched cord of mind trembles, shivers, and threatens annihilation, let my readers glance over the words of my favourite author, Fichte. He clothes my unspeakable views of the universe in words which I could never imitate. Hear him !

Writing of THE Gov, not of a single system, but of the CENTRAL SUN OF THE UNIVERSE, the great German writer says:

God called up from dreams a man into the vestibule of heaven, saying, " Come thou hither, and see the glory of my house," and to the servants that stood around he said, "Take him, and undress him from his robes of flesh ; cleanse his vision, and put a new breath into his nostrils ; only touch not with any change his human heart—the heart that weeps and trembles!" It was done. And with a mighty angel for his guide, the man stood ready for his infinite voyage ; and from the terraces of heaven, without sound or farewells, at once they wheeled away into endless space. Sometimes with the solemn flight of angel wing they fled through Zairahs of darkness, through wildernesses of death, that divided the worlds of life; sometimes they swept over frontiers, that were quickened under prophetic motions from God. Then, from a distance that is counted only in heaven, light dawned for a time through a sleepy film ; by unutterable pace the light swept to them ; they by unutterable pace to the light. In a moment the rushing of planets was upon them—in a moment the blazing of suns was around them. Then came eternities of twilight, that revealed, but were not revealed. On the right hand and on the left towered mighty constellations, that by self-repetitions and answers from afar, that by counter-positions, built up triumphant gates, whose architraves, whose archways—horizontal, upright—rested, rose—at an altitude by spans—that seemed ghostly from infinitude. Without measure were the architraves; past number were the

archways; beyond memory the gates. Within were stairs that scaled the eternities below ; above was below—below was above, to the man stripped of gravitating body , depth was swallowed up in height insurmountable—height was swallowed up in depth unfathomable. Suddenly, as they thus rode from infinite to infinite—suddenly, as thus they tilted over abysmal worlds, a mighty cry arose, that systems more mysterious, that worlds more billowy, other heights and other depths were coming, were rearing, were at hand.

Then the man sighed. and stopped, shuddered and wept. His overladen heart uttered itself in tears; and he said : " Angel, I will go no farther ; for the spirit of man acheth with this infinity. Insufferable is the glory of God. Let me lie down in the grave, and hide me from the persecution of the infinite ; for end, I see, there is none." And from all the listening stars that shone around issued a choral voice, " End there is none." "End is there none ?" the angel solemnly demanded : "Is there indeed no end ?—and is this the sorrow that kills you ?" But no voice answered. Then the angel threw up his glorious hands to the heaven of heavens, saying, "End is there none to the universe of God. Lo! also there is no beginning."

As are the planets, comets, meteoric sparks of our little speck of a solar system in space, clustered around its spiritual sun spheres, so are the vaster, grander, and endless solar systems of INFINITY clustered around an unknown but ever-existent central SUN OF BEING, and its name is—GOD.

PART X.

When, in 1872, I solicited and obtained permission from the author of "Art Magic" and "Ghostland" to publish the latter work as a serial in my Boston Magazine, "The Western Star," I found it necessary to excise such portions of the MSS. I translated and edited as were exclusively devoted to abstract scientific treatises. In the second volume of Ghostland, now being published in serial form in this periodical, I find a similar excision of scientific propositions still more essential from the fact that they are more extended, and therefore less applicable to the uses of a light magazine of limited proportions, and devoted chiefly to the exposition of one special set of ideas, namely, the destiny of the human spirit, and its powers and possibilities here and hereafter. I deem this explanation due alike to the noble gentleman whose original writings I feel the necessity of excising, and those readers who may deem the really learned author's views concerning the origin of Spirit and its subsequent progress through the different kingdoms of nature, lack that support of scientific demonstration with which the author's original MS. abounds, but which, for the reasons above hinted at, I have not ventured to fill up the pages of this magazine with in extenso.—[ED. 17.U.]

OF THE EMBRYOTIC ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE HUMAN SOUL.

The longer and more persistently I have studied the sublime gospel of Nature through her ever open volume of works, illustrated to a certain extent by the encyclopaedic lessons of science, the more I have become convinced that my Spirit Teacher's theories are correct, and that the original elemental condition of all being in the Universe spring from the Triune consensus of MATTER, FORCE, and SPIRIT, as explained in former chapters of this work. The recognition of this grand primordial and eternal Trinity is what alone can solve the sphinx-like and otherwise insoluble problems of life, growth, dissolution, and the soul's immortality. Ever bearing in mind that matter is the formative-mould—the growth and development of Spirit, the object of being—and force, through the dual modes of attraction and repulsion, the source of motion by which worlds, suns, and systems exist, I now propose to outline the progress of the embryo and ultimate unfoldment of Spirit, in the nature of a human soul.

By the union of Hydrogen and Oxygen gases in certain proportions, we produce water. Water, under certain conditions, crystallizes into the hardest known substances, and these again can be reduced back into water, and rarified into the original condition of gas. The magician which can effect these transformations is FORCE —and force with its dual modes of expansion and contraction is so completely outwrought through the galvanic battery—itsself the conservation and illustration of force— that I do not exaggerate when I affirm that, given a battery of sufficient size, and the ages in which to effect the process, we have in hydrogen and oxygen gases the electro positive and electro negative elements of matter that would create or dissolve a world, a sun, or an entire system. . . . As fluids are the intermediate states between gases and crystals, etc., we may assume that the primary rocks were formed by contraction from the fluidic conditions of matter in ancient seas. How early the formation of zoophytes, or ocean

plant life, began we may be unable to trace, but from the time when such formations were found to exist, and correspondingly, the disintegration of the hard crystalline rock gave birth to rusty mosses and coarse lichens, and from these, as germs, whether in the plant-animal forms of the sea or the parasitical plant life of the rocks, the growth of SPIRIT in embryo may be traced. It is impossible to investigate closely the wonderful organisms of the ocean zoophytes, and absolutely determine whether they are purely vegetable or animal forms, or rather, to avoid the inference of their being a co-mixture of both kingdoms.

* Study the characteristics of the lowest forms of vegetable life, from the rudest moss clinging to the ancient rocks to the most fully perfected and highly-trained blossom or fruit, and you shall ever find that the rudimental life and ultimate decay of every form in the vegetable kingdom is accompanied by the appearance of some animated parasite in the nature of the insect or caterpillar species. It may be argued that the existence of invisible infusoria in the atmosphere, or animalcule in the dew-drop is sufficient to account for these animal appearances, but even were this admitted we should have to question where did the infusoria of the atmosphere come from except in exhalations from the earth, and where did the animalculx of the waters originate except in the

* Here I omit the long and learned descriptions given by the author of Zoophytes, Corals, &c., seeing that they might be found tedious to the general reader, and may be profitably studied in the thousands of popular works on natural history now in print.

inevitable transition of the cosmic matter of the planet itself into fluid-life. Taking then the rude, simple, but unanswerable aphorism that SOMETHING CANNOT HAVE SPRUNG FROM NOTHING, and reversing the proverb again and again, we are compelled to admit that the germs of plant-life MUST have existed and grown out of the original matter from which the planet was composed, and that the germs of animal life, whether coincident with the vegetable kingdom or growing out of it, still MUST have been there, unless nothing can give birth to something. Thus, then, the onward march of radiates or five-rayed creatures, articulates or jointed creatures ; molluscs or soft-bodied architects of the seas, fashioning their own wonderful habitations; the vertebrate or rudimental nerve and brain-formed creatures, up to the almost infinitely varied and complex orders of fishes, reptiles, birds, and mammifers, all, all, without one break or one missing link, stretching away from the lowest to the highest, show the Lord of life in Nature practising, now by stages of function, and now by powers of mind, to reach the apex in the man, who simply transcends all lower forms of being by uniting in himself all the powers, functions, and fragments of mind in the creatures below his own standard.

In the mineral kingdom even, we see preferences and determinate results in "chemical affinities." They grow also from first combinations until they arrive at the strength and maturity of their being. Then they begin to decay, grow old, die, or disintegrate, and fulfill the eternal law of progress by being taken up again into other and always higher states of conformation. We find, more over, that animal forms of all kinds are taken up in rocks and enter into the nature of minerals just as rocks and minerals form the embryotic state

of animated life. * As to plant life, mark the various features they have in common with the lower rounds of the animal kingdom ! Plants grow from a seed or a root, as the fish, the animal, and the man spring from a germ. Both plant and animal require, like the human germ, to be surrounded by such elements of nutrition as will serve to expand it into its resultant form of life. Plants are nourished by heat, and coloured by light. They have sex ; reproduce their kind ; sleep by night, expand under the influence of sun and air ; are peculiar to different soils, climates, and atmospheres. They have tubes corresponding to veins and arteries for the flow of the nourishing sap. They shed their sap like life blood when cut or torn. Some of them are cruel and harsh, like the stinging nettle or the deadly hemlock ; some are kind and curative, others touch and intoxicate the brain and shatter the nerves, and some are carnivorous and crafty, forming traps for the capture of insects, which they close upon and devour. Volumes might be, and have been written on the plant kingdom—its varieties and antetypes of humanity. As to the animal kingdom, who that has studied the habits of the geometrical bee, and mathematical ant, does not perceive how the faculties of the masterful man are distributed to the various lower creatures according to the functions of which their forms are capable ? At this point a few sentences only must suffice. A lifetime might be spent in studying the habits of both the small creatures I have named ; how the bee determines the sex of its queens and its working neuters ; the nature of the flowers from which it can gather its food ; the wintry weather against which it provides ; the exact law of geometry observed in the construction of its cell, and the inimitable methods of manufacture in the products of its labours.

At the city of the ants, I pause to note the construction of roads, the combinations of labour by which burdens are carried, the disposition of homes, the rearing up of tiny mountains, the breeding and care of the young, the order of life, in a word, that puts men's commonwealths of disorder to shame ! What weaver has ever transcended the woof and web of the spinning spider, or the paper homes of the yellow wasp ? What architect has ever builded more warm and commodious homes than the bird ? What mother or father has ever more fondly cared for and reared its young than the feathered tribes ? Can the cave of the troglodyte man, or the wigwam of the savage, equal the clay but of the beaver ? And is it not from this mere "grovelling animal " that the miller has learned how to dam up the waters of the flowing stream ?

Mark how the tiny nautilus sets sail with the tides, and teaches navigation ! how the migratory birds win their way through the pathless wastes of air, and how the blind mole engineers his way in the direction of the cardinal points of the compass ! I declare, for I KNOW, that there is not a power, thought, or faculty of man that is not found distributed through the realms of fish, reptile, bird, and animal life somewhere, even to the worship of superior beings, so manifest in the eyes of the loving bird or dog turned in such mute worship on man ; in the subjugation of the strong and mighty beasts of the forest, or the noble steed, to the weak form but controlling intellectual powers of man. . . . To sum up : the only lines of demarcation between what is presumptuously called the " reason " of man, and the " instinct " of the lower creatures, is to be found in the assemblage of all powers and possibilities of being in the man, and their distribution in varied but lesser groups of power in the lower kingdoms ; in the perfection of form in the man, and its

limitations in the animal and plant ; the two latter being arrested only on certain rounds of the ladders of progress from the germ to the apex of creation— MAN.*

As my next step in this chart of life, or, the " evolution of spirit," may present some allegations still more diverse from the range of ordinarily received opinions concerning the origin--to say nothing of the destiny of the human soul, I reserve what I have to present for a succeeding chapter.

PART XI.
EVOLUTION OF SPIRIT.—Continued.

To those who have attentively perused the last few chapters of these papers I now purpose to anticipate and answer some of the unspoken, but inevitable questions that must grow out of the propositions previously stated. It will be asked in the first place by what intermediary process of change the Spiritual essence which I claim to "sleep in the rock, live in the plant, and live, feel, and think in the animal," arrives at the perfection of material being in manhood, the state wherein all previous Spiritual experiences are combined, with the addition of prophetic intimations of immortality. Next it will be questioned whether the animal kingdom has a conscious and individualised existence beyond mortal dissolution, and, if so, where ; and finally, the problem has yet to be settled as to the location of the world of Spirits and its ultimate point of attainment—if, indeed, any such ultimate can be known or defined. As a response to the primary question covers much of the ground that is occupied throughout the entire subject, I will now pause on one of the first steps in the ladder of "Spiritual evolution," a doctrine which is all too little known or recognised outside of the students of Occultism.

OF ELEMENTARY SPIRITS.

Throughout the realm of nature every form of matter, whether tangible or not to sensuous perception, is accompanied by a Spiritual essence, corresponding to the several states in which matter exists. As long as these states are beneath the status of humanity, they are properly classified by Occultists as "Elementary Spirits." Sometimes they grow and take shape purely from unformed elements or the emanations of the mineral or ,plant kingdoms—more frequently they originate from the breaking up of the forms of matter, when the spiritual part of the disintegrated substance takes on shapes and states always characteristic of the element from which it grew. Let it be understood that Spirit is the primal and ever-present first part of the Trinity of Spirit, Force, and Matter, which constitutes the sum of the Universe, and there will be no dissent from the allegation that there are Spiritual existences corresponding to the Air, the Water, the Earth, and, that heat and light generated by the galvanic action between the sun and his planets called Fire."

These elementary existences have been written of and believed in as an item of superstition, but never thoroughly defined or accepted as a proven fact in being, except by the few who have seen or encountered them— or the devotees of Occultism, whose experiences transcend in a measure those who simply hold communion with the Spirits of humanity.

I myself and all my associates in the schools of Occultism (amongst whom I am privileged to include Mrs. Hardinge Britten) have not only seen but made ourselves acquainted with the nature of elementary existences, and what I am about to write is given as the result of absolute knowledge.

The lower classes of elementals, such as those which emanate from, or grow out of, mineral or plant life, are seldom intelligent enough to communicate with mortals, though they are powerful in their own realms of being. The elemental spirits of minerals are frequently found lingering in the mines, and giving by sounds, impressions, and sometimes by the appearance of very small, dwarfish apparitions, signals which lead to the discovery of mineral veins and precious metals. There are few mining regions in which there are not traditions, or genuine narratives, of the appearance of what are called " Kobolds," and manifestations of the interest which such spirits take in the discovery and use of mineral " lodes." William Howitt, in his *Berg Geister*, and Mrs. Hardinge Britten, in her own experiences, have each written of these " Kobolds " in terms that admit of no denial.* The miners in California, Mexico, Bohemia, Hungary, and other regions wherein metals abound, all unite in describing pigmy apparitions, sounds, and other indications of sympathy rendered during mining operations by beings of a clearly sub-human nature. Elemental Spirits of the air, water, woods, and earth, have been believed in, and in hundreds of reliable instances been described, in various countries, and on occasions too numerous to be the mere phantasy of " folk lore " or imagination.

As a practical Occultist myself, I insist that I and my fellow students have not only encountered these " Nature Spirits" in unnumbered instances, but received proofs of their existence from many eminent persons, who, like Occultists in general, consider there are more evidences of the manifestation of Elementals than of excarnated human spirits.

The "nature " or purely " Elementary Spirits" subsist as such for a brief period only ; they are then re-incarnated in the animal and bird kingdoms, and from thence enter into spheres peculiarly appropriate to animal Spirits, until their brief term of spheral life terminates in an incarnation as man.

These steps in the ladder of Spiritual evolution seldom, if ever, occur on the same earth or planet throughout the entire chain. There are millions of billions of earths in space, of which man on this mere speck in infinity knows nothing, and up to the astronomical revealments of the last few centuries could have had no knowledge of. All is changed now. Infinity instead of space, and eternity in place of time—are words so fraught with boundless meaning that profound thinkers modestly substitute the phrase " I do not know " for the language of narrow egotism, "impossible." Thus, instead of trying to sneer out of popular acceptance the visionary creatures of ancient " folk lore," the true psychical investigator will wait and watch, and after attempting to discover the boundary lines between Spirit and matter, he will reverently enter into the arcanum of spiritual evolution, and pursuing his researches from the incarnate to the excarnate worlds of being, he will soon discover that he cannot intelligently master one ascending step until he has descended, and in the profoundest depths realized that there are beginnings of form, but never of elements ; and ends of states, but never of being.

Should I be questioned, whether in the spirit of ridicule or earnest inquiry, wherein are to be found the realms of elemental and animal Spiritual existence, I should answer by reminding my questioner how exact science has determined that there are yet finer

states of atmosphere than those in which the microscope has detected the invisible insect world of " Infusoria," and more subtle fluidic conditions than those which hold the nations of Animalcule inhering in the dewdrop.

For the present, science has denominated that finer and more sublimated atmosphere as " nether," and so named the realms of air which the aeronaut discovers beyond the earth's atmosphere. Whilst it is deemed impossible for human life, as now organized, to exist in such realms, there is no reason to suppose that Spiritual life, invisible as it is to our sensuous perception, does not and cannot dwell therein. On the contrary, since the advent of modern Spiritualism there are the best of reasons for believing that what science calls "nether," belting and zoning as it does the earth's atmosphere beyond a given height from the ground, is in fact the Spiritual atmosphere. Furthermore, as Spirits insist that the Spirit spheres commence here, right within and upon this globe, and extend outward until the Spirit spheres of one planet impinge upon those of its next planetary neighbour in space ; also that this " nether," growing finer, purer, and more sublimated as it surges outward, and soars away in space, constitutes the realm of the soul world ; penetrating down through the lowest depths and ascending to the supremest heights beyond the earth.

The coarsest realms of this soul world, then constitute the country of the Elementaries. Here they linger during a brief space of embryotic existence until they are attracted as vital sparks to the germ life of some member of the animal kingdom. Born thus into a new attribute of Spiritual life, namely, INDIVIDUALITY, the spirits of the animals on the lower planes of life, such as the radiate, mollusc, articulate, the reptile, or other metamorphic forms, continue to transmigrate until by long continued successions of lives, deaths, temporary spiritual states, and re-births on higher planes, they are fitted to advance from these temporary paradises of rest in spherulic states to the last and culminating point of their embryotic chain of being—MAN. Here the gestating process of the spirit ENDS. I deny emphatically that the spirit of the man ever returns to earth to be born again as man. The transmigration of soul life from the elementary to the animal, from one stage of animal existence to another, and finally to man, is all as purely ENIBRYOTIC as is the gestating process of the nucleated cell to the fully perfected infant in the maternal organism. Once born as man, the spirit, whether originating its human experiences in the highest or lowest of conditions, has attained the apex of its earthly material destiny, and commences a totally fresh set of experiences as a spirit, and moves upwards and onwards -- it may be through higher planetary or solar migrations—until it becomes a solar angel, endowed with all the divine functions of being, incomprehensible to mind still enshrouded in the veil of mortality in earthly existence.

It only remains to add, that the vast and seemingly unaccountable differences which exist in the characters as well as the destinies of pilgrim souls entering upon the planes of mortal life, are due to the fact, that different grades of human nature attract to themselves different spiritual elements of animal life, but always such as are in harmony alike with their physical and mental natures. Thus the characteristics of special animal natures frequently reappear in human life, and not unfrequently present traces of their

alliance with th, animal kingdom in their physiognomy. Of course it must be remembered that there are an infinite number of modifying conditions accompanying the embryotic life of each mortal, and these aid in determining character and mind, physique and physiognomy. The physical and mental conditions of the parents, atmospheric, solar, and planetary influences prevailing during the embryotic period of life, to say nothing of the mental and physical states of the mother, and the subsequent training of infantile and youthful periods, all these and a thousand other modifying conditions attendant upon the offspring of humanity,—in man's present state of lamentable ignorance both of physical and psychological powers, must all be borne in mind as factors in the formation of the embryotic germ, and the development of human character. For the continuation of superhuman life in spheral states, I shall write of this in my next paper. At present I can only shrink back from my theme to myself, when I take count of the pitiful insufficiency of words, mere words, to clothe ideas which stretch away from infinity to eternity, and become perverted, almost caricatured, by the attempts to attire the majesty of the Universe in the robes which befit only the "poor player." Whether it were best to be the painted butterfly springing from the dead chrysalis to live its little hour of joy and gladness in the bright sunshine, unconscious alike of life, death, or hereafter, or the mighty thinking ever-aspiring and never-realizing, immortal man—torn and rent with fruitless research for the knowledge which evades his grasp—compelled to wander on for ever ! for ever ! through an Infinity of which even the most remote shadow is lost in immensity, who knows?

Once more the murmurs of my impatient and restless spirit are hushed by the voice of the angel echoing still the Divine tones of the Infinite, so distant—yet so near— within the soul of man himself—" Be still, and know that I am God ! "

PART XII.
SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION.—CONCLUSION

And I saw a new heaven and a new earth ; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.

THAT THOUGHTS ARE THINGS—tangible, real, and the source alike of all the pain or pleasure man can ever know—must now be an accepted axiom to every reflective mind. Thoughts may be the results of antecedent circumstances or sources of knowledge, but from whatever causes they arise, they not only determine the mental, and even the physical, conditions of the thinker, but by certain signs and tokens lately discovered amongst the revelations, called by the generic title of " Spiritualism," it is demonstrable that thought is contagious, traverses the air, and even without the projection of will, or intention, can influence susceptible individuals, captivate the fancy of whole nations, and determine the nature of public opinion. I say thus much to justify my assertion that the quotation from the Book of Revelation, with which this chapter is headed, has at length come to pass, and the new heaven disclosed by spirits during the past half century, and, by its immediate connection with the objects and aims of human life, the new earth also is now with us, and shapes the entire thought and ideality of mankind. Of course there are some conservatives, some bigots, and some uninstructed minds that cling desperately to their stereotyped beliefs in the old heaven and the old earth of the Fathers ; but, besides the uncounted millions of Spiritualists in this age, the mysterious and subtle forces of public opinion are sweeping in tides of contagious progress through the regions of thought, and once more I allege they are sounding the trumpet-call of the new -heaven and the new earth, which have been revealed to humanity as the objects of present life and future destiny.

Briefly summed up, then, modern thought affirms that the purpose of earth life, whether upon this or other planets in the universe, is to complete the last stage of material progress for the spirit of man, and prepare the fully-formed soul for a fresh set of spiritual experiences in the realms of spherical being, onward and upward through eternity.

In concluding the views which I have set down, under the authority of truth, as the evolution of spirit, it only remains for me to define, as best I may, something of the nature of the change from matter to spirit which the soul undergoes through the process of mortal death, and something of the nature of that spiritual life upon which the soul enters through that same process of change.

In the human organism there are two sets of nerves, namely, the cerebro-spinal, or agents of will, and the ganglionic, or agents of the involuntary processes of life. The condition of sleep is induced by the fatigue imposed upon the cerebro-spinal nerves and the consequent subsidence of will and action of the brain, resulting in unconscious quiescence of the body. As long as the ganglionic nerves continue to act, the processes of life, such as respiration, digestion, etc., etc., proceed. Death, on the contrary, is the

suspension of action in both sets of nerves. The life functions of the ganglionic nerves cease to act, consequently the will and brain powers are at once also stopped. In sleep, trance, or temporary suspension of the voluntary nerve-powers only, the clairvoyant eye can discern the silver cord of life binding the soul to the still sleeping form. In death this cord is snapped asunder, and the soul is loosed from contact with the dead form of matter. As there are almost innumerable causes for the separation of the body and soul in the irrevocable change called death, so there are innumerable varieties of state in the awakening of the soul from its tenancy of the body.

Even after the life cord is severed, it is sometimes impossible for the soul to attract to itself all the magnetism lingering in the dead form for longer or shorter periods of time ; and, as this magnetism is the life principle that forms the actual spiritual body, and by clothing on the spirit, become the duality called soul ; so at this point I emphatically denounce the practice of hasty burials or any disposition of the tenement which the spirit has quitted, but which may for many hours, or even days, retain portions of the life principle necessary for the full development of the soul. As to the locality and nature of the Spirit spheres, I have written in former chapters of the souL WORLD, which I know to exist with this material world. This soul world is constituted of a spiritual essence, or nether, finer and more sublimated than any form of matter known to man. It is susceptible of being seen by the clairvoyant eye of the spirit, or traversed by the spirit still connected with the material body, but it is totally impervious to any sensuous perceptions, except in the case of certain individuals called " psychometrists," when the spiritual and imperishable soul of things still attached to matter can be sensed by touch. Material bodies could not live in the spiritual atmosphere, though spirits can at times master the conditions which, through certain magnetic processes, enable them to demonstrate their presence in an earthly atmosphere for a brief period of time. The spirit world of being is graded into many spheres, the denser and grosser permeating every portion of the globe, from the centre to the circumference, and the finer permeating, in part, the grosser and denser ; but also in its most rarified states, stretching away in space, impinging upon the spheres of other planets, and filling up the entire solar system, until the spiritual atmosphere in its infinite sublimation reaches the divine and archangelic realms of the solar system-- sun spheres.

The object and purposes of earth life are dual. First, they represent the gradations of material being from elemental life up through the kingdoms of the mineral, vegetable, and animal, closing and perfecting in the human. Next, they give to humanity the first rudiments of mental, intellectual, emotional, and self-conscious nature, thus preparing the soul for the everlasting series of growths, unfoldments, powers, and possibilities which await it as a Spirit—an angel, archangel, ruler of powers, thrones, dominions, deity. All planets, satellites, and earths known to teaching angels or traversed by " flying souls " (human spirits) have the same gradations of mineral, vegetable, and animal being on them as this earth, although many are infinitely lower, furnishing germs of life to be, incarnated on this earth ; many infinitely higher, receiving and growing spirits of the lower kingdoms which gravitate from this to higher earths. Another speciality of all spirit spheres is that sphere life never retrogresses ; it is formed, furnished, and grown out of the earths of which the spiritual part is the soul world, just as the shoot, stem,

tendrils, blossom, and fruit sprig from the tiny seed or unlovely root though once grown, they never return to be root or seed again ; also, just as much finer, fairer, and more perfect as is the fruit and the blossom than the seed or the root, so is the spirit world more gracious, lovely, and perfect than the root world through which it became unfolded.

And still another speciality of these spheral relations is, that while on earth all things are outside of the man, and must be acquired from without, all possessions, sense, knowledge, and power results from the state of the spirit within. It is thus that some spirits are in darkness, they having no light within, whilst others reflect their own goodness and lustre of heart and mind on all objects around them, and appear in light of indescribable radiance. Some spirits in the lower sphere of earth, at death, know no difference between the earth they have left and the new state they have reached. They walk, speak, and act as in dream life, and are only aroused to consciousness of their change by spiritual teachers. Embryotic life passing from earth before birth, even if it is but imperfectly formed, is received by good and loving spirits who become their spiritual fathers and mothers, and quicken the unformed germ into due proportion. Let it be remembered that the ALL of kindred, affection, goodness, knowledge, use, and power that constitutes the heavenly ideal MUST be acquired here or hereafter, by every ascending soul, or such souls as would ascend to the perfection' of being. Nothing is eliminated hereafter,' therefore, but sin and evil. Nothing is lost of goodness or knowledge, and all the good done or knowledge acquired is NECESSARY CAPITAL FOR THE SOUL in eternity. Even the tender and unselfish love of parents for offspring is unfolded by the ties of love which attract hearts starved of such sweet emotions on earth to the embryos they receive and train as their own in the realms of spiritual paternity and kindness. Conjugal love, too, here finds its true and natural expansion in far higher unions than those of earth, though the propagation of species is entirely limited to material conditions. In my wanderings in spirit through the spheres of earth, especially in the sun sphere, I have realized those mystic words of old, that I have seen things unspeakable, and heard words which it is not lawful to utter even if it were possible to do so.

The disabilities attending these flights of soul are, alas ! alas ! that on return to earth, the flowers and trees look so coarse, the air so thick, the fairest of forms so unlovely, and all things so marked in rudimental grossness, even to repulsion and ugliness, that I feel it to be in the provident care of the All Father that poor humanity, whilst lingering on its first form in the schoolhouse of eternity, should see and know the earth through sensuous perceptions only, whilst spirit perceptions are mercifully veiled beneath the shadows of matter. When my friend, Emma Hardinge, was asked whether the united choir of many thousands of voices and instruments performing the inspiring strains of Handel were not approved of and chorused by the spirits on high, she replied, entranced by teaching spirits, " It is shadow music, made by shadows, and choiring to shadows."

When in special and high conditions of inspiration this fine Seeress was privileged to look upon the actual form and face of a dweller of the glorious realms of the higher

spheres, she lamented that she had ever done so, so coarse, dull, and unlovely appeared the faces and forms of earth around her, for many days of partial remembrance.

In my first volume of " Ghostland " I have endeavoured (but, oh ! how imperfectly) to give some faint idea of the country and inhabitants of the Sun world. I make that attempt no more. It is enough to repeat the words of the old but ever true song, " There is no night there."

Let the wildest flights of man's imaginings soar away into infinity, and he shall only sink down baffled, and so dazed, unable to endure the brightness, and unfitted for the rudimentary existence necessary to prepare him for that brightness.

"The evolution of spirit " are the only words in which I feel able to convey any just ideas of the aim, end, and purpose of earthly existence. Educate the soul in the purest emotions, the noblest aspirations, and the deeds and thoughts of universal kindness. Train the mind to research into the depths of nature, the schools of art, and the laws of science. Fit the body by temperance and use in every available direction, and earth life work is done. The preparatory steps are all taken ; all that earth can give or heaven demand. Let the end come in any form, or at any time, and whether it be in the early morning, at noon, eventide, or the wise dispensers of events see fit for the soul to wait till the last chimes of the midnight hour have struck, man knows enough now, through the new day of spiritual revelation, to trust himself fearlessly to the tides which will bear him to the immortal shores of the beyond, and in the certainty that the new earth is but the stepping-stone to the new heaven, he may respond to the call of the Lord of life eternal, " Master ! I am ready, aye, ready !"

###