

THE SOUL, AND HOW IT FOUND ME.

BEING

A NARRATIVE OF PHENOMENA CONNECTED
WITH THE PRODUCTION OF
"ENGLAND AND ISLAM."

BY

EDWARD MAITLAND.



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"There is an animal body and there is a spiritual body."—PAUL.

"And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh ; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

"And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit."—JOEL.

"And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast : and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast ? who is able to make war with him ?

"And there was given unto him a month speaking great things and blasphemies."—JOHN.



Yours faithfully.
Edward Maitland

PREFACE.

WHOLLY undeveloped as to the inner regions of their nature as for the most part now-a-days people not only are, but are proud to be, and engrossed, therefore, by the aspects merely external and comparatively trivial of existence, the number of those able either to test by its internal evidence, the genuineness of aught transcending the commonest that may be put before them, or to judge of truth by an appeal to the consciousness, directly and independently of any appeal to the senses, is necessarily exceedingly small. Hence it cannot but happen that of those who may read this book, there will be few to whom the question will not continually recur, "Is this Reality or Romance?" and who, consequently, on reaching, if indeed they do reach, the end, will either close it in despair of being able to come to a decision, or remain fixed in their previous incredulity.

Such and so vast, in respect of the contents of this book, are the issues at stake, that not only is the world entitled to the fullest enlightenment respecting their genuineness and authenticity possible for it to receive, but it is incumbent on me as its writer to omit nothing that is calculated to minister to the purpose for which the book has been written. Hence it becomes a duty to supply the only additional guarantee in my power, namely, such as may be afforded by my own positive affirmation.

That, then, which I have to do in this preface, is to make, as I hereby do make, the most absolute and unqualified declaration, that the contents of this book are in whole and in part, in spirit and in letter, entirely and unreservedly true, in that fullest and most comprehensive sense of the word in which alone it can consistently be used by one, the chief occupation of whose life has been the pursuit, regardless of consequences, of the highest truth for the highest ends; by one, moreover, who has never, even under circumstances of trial the most crucial, suffered a moment's obscuration of the faculty either of observation or of comparison.

I can confidently declare further, that to be compelled to accept for the facts described in this book any explanation or interpretation other than is herein set forth, would be both for myself and for those who with me are cognisant of them, to find existence itself devoid of consistency and reality, and become the chaotic and meaningless phantasm which by the materialistic and superficial philosophy of the day it is so lightly assumed, so recklessly pronounced to be.

EDWARD MAITLAND.

LONDON, *September*, 1877.

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THE SOUL, AND HOW IT FOUND ME.

CHAPTER I.

THE INTRODUCTION.

THE history I am about to relate is that of the occurrences by which the production of my book "England and Islam" was accompanied, and those who, with myself, were the subjects and witnesses of them, were constrained to regard it as containing a New Revelation from the spiritual world. The narrative will constitute both the Introduction, which, under ordinary circumstances, would have appeared together with the book, and also the completion and confirmation of the book. For it will show that in respect not of doctrine only, but also of the "Miracles" whereby such a revelation is wont to be accompanied and attested, no single circumstance was wanting to make the correspondence between it and its recognised predecessors, of whatever age, complete.

Although virtually pledged by the fact of the publication of "England and Islam" to a fuller statement than was at that time practicable, I should gladly have refrained from making common a relation so intimately connected with my own interior history as by the nature of the case this must necessarily be, were it not for my absolute assurance, not merely of its truth, but of its supreme importance to the world. Complete as was that assurance in the first instance, during the actual occurrence of the events by which the extraordinary character of the work was attested, all subsequent examination, experience, and reflection have but served, if possible, to strengthen it. It is thus under the profoundest and maturest conviction of the soundness of the claim advanced respecting the source and character of the utterances, of which I have in a manner so strange and unlooked for been made the instrument, that I have yielded to an imperative sense of duty, in submitting this introduction, complement, and supplement to "England and Islam" to the public eye. Delivered as were the contents of that book, not only to me and for me, but through me and for all, I should, I consider, be disregarding a most solemn obligation were I to suffer any personal preference for reserve to interpose between it and its proper career. And in this view I am

sustained by the concurrence of all those who shared with me the experiences detailed, and who, though unspecified here by name, are both accessible to interrogation, and well known as competent and trustworthy persons.

I am impelled before commencing my narrative to make an endeavour to conciliate two of the most important classes of those who object to aught that involves claims such as those I am advancing. These are the adherents respectively of the current religious and scientific orthodoxies. Addressing first the former, I would remind them that, strange and unlooked for as may be the experiences recorded in this book, they are in no whit unprecedented; but that so far from their being incredible by reason of their novelty, they are but the counterpart of those upon which the faith and practice of Christendom are founded. The records of corresponding experiences in past ages, and to which by common consent the term sacred is applied, teem moreover with predictions of their repetition at a time not obscurely indicated as the present. Hence, so far from those who by styling themselves Christians profess to believe in the inspiration and truth of the Scriptures, being justified in regarding as antecedently incredible a relation such as that contained in this book, the presumption *a priori* is for them wholly the other way. If the prophetic

utterances of the Hebrew and Christian scriptures be true, the occurrence at this time in fulfilment of them of something closely approximating to that which is here related, is absolutely indispensable to the maintenance of their credit.

I come to that class which, in deference to the behests of modern science, rejects prior to examination, however attested, any experiences such as those accepted as a matter of course by the Christian, and herein described, on the ground that they are inconsistent with the materialistic hypothesis of existence at present in vogue. As no pretence is made by Science to a knowledge of the limits of possibility, this doctrine means in plain language that, not truth and evidence, but an arbitrary hypothesis, is to be accepted as the measure of fact. So obvious is the absurdity of such a position that it is scarcely necessary to premise that in all I may narrate I shall hold myself bound by ascertained fact only, and shall leave hypothetical impossibilities to shift for themselves. As, however, the so-called scientific mind, while affecting to attach supreme importance to facts, regards as "miracles" and "contrary to experience" and "incredible antecedently to examination," occurrences such as those which I have to relate, it may be instructive to call attention to at least one indisputable fact, which it is apt to exclude from view. This

is the fact that, so far from its being the case that such phenomena are so opposed to experience as to be generally incredible, it is notorious that the belief in their possibility has prevailed in all ages, places, and peoples; and that there is at this moment in all parts of Christendom a large and rapidly increasing number of persons of high intelligence, culture, veracity, and judgment, who not merely believe, but who claim to know positively by their own oft-repeated experience, that there are facts in existence for the explanation of which the materialistic hypothesis is wholly inadequate; and who, consequently, are aware that it is not to those who find themselves compelled to recognise the existence of a spiritual world that the reproach of credulity and superstition really attaches.

For, rightly defined, superstition is not belief in spiritual existences or influences. It is belief, in regard to no matter what subject, exercised without reference to reason and evidence. The term thus indicates precisely the mental attitude of the materialistic scientist of our day. For by erecting into a fetish an unproved and unprovable hypothesis—unprovable by reason of its negative character—and resolutely closing his eyes the while to every fact that cannot be brought within its range, he constitutes himself a blind worshipper of a thing of his own creation; and thus

makes not truth, but his own hypothesis, the measure and interpreter of the universe.

It is as possible to be superstitiously incredulous as to be superstitiously credulous; to be superstitiously materialistic as superstitiously spiritualistic; superstitiously irreligious as superstitiously religious. There is another term which, equally with that of superstition, by its misuse ministers to irrational incredulity. This is the word *supernatural*, a word wholly devoid of meaning until a definition for Nature be agreed upon. It is absurd to speak of the supernatural while the functions and limits of the natural are undetermined. The assumption that the spiritual world is not equally with the material a part of "Nature," is wholly arbitrary.

Restricting the term Nature to that which is derived and secondary, and not self-existent and absolute, the spiritual world becomes as much a part of the natural order as the physical. The hyper- or extra-physical is not necessarily the præter- or super-natural. All things in Nature, so far as is ascertained, consist of a duality of existence. Why should not Nature itself, as a whole, also be dual, consisting of matter and spirit? Once admitted that the order termed Nature consists of two regions which, however distinct in kind, are yet so far identical in essence as to be capable of associa-

tion and combination, and communication between them under modes such as revelation, miracle, prophecy, apparition, so far from being supernatural or incredible, becomes natural and inevitable. Who is to dictate to the infinite Consciousness into how many grades and spheres of being it shall distribute itself?

There is one view of existence in which a revelation from God himself ceases to be supernatural. This is when, by the adoption of a low form of Pantheism, we regard God not as transcending nature, but as the animating soul of nature, and together with it constituting an inseparable whole. In this view it would no more be correct to regard a communication from the soul to the body of the whole as supernatural, than one from the soul to the body of the individual. If the former be supernatural, so is the latter, and we perform a miracle every time we voluntarily move a limb. It is only when accepting the higher Pantheism, which also is Christian, we regard God as wholly transcending nature and subsisting independently of it, and still as operating in the world, that we come to the term supernatural in its strict sense. A revelation from him to the spiritual world is then no less supernatural than one to the physical world. But though supernatural, it is not incredible or irrational. For what is irra-

tional and incredible is the supposition that the universe should be so cut off and separated from its producing, sustaining, and renewing source as to incapacitate that source and itself for holding intercourse with each other. Whether God be but the animating soul of Nature, or one wholly transcending nature, there is no more difficulty in conceiving of a communication from the soul of the universe to one of its members, than from that of an individual to one of his members. The difficulty is to conceive otherwise. The doctrine of correspondence between the part and the whole, which is irresistible to those who have succeeded in obtaining free course for their thought, exhibits the whole teaching of modern science respecting the limits of possibility and the incredibility of the supernatural, as the very climax of unreason.

The threefold existence of which those of us who by penetrating the outer crusts of our nature and reaching the true centre and self, have found ourselves to be partakers, may thus either be distributed under the terms nature and supernature, of which the latter will apply only to God, and the former include both the material and spiritual worlds; or, restricting the term nature to the material, may be distinguished as natural, spiritual, and divine or deific. But whatever the nomenclature preferred, the conclusion remains

the same—namely, that the belief in the possibility of communication between the higher and the lower of any of these grades, so far from being irrational and superstitious, is rational and necessary, provided only we recognise the existence of one and the same conscious life as pervading the whole.

It is here that for the modern world consists the difficulty that prevents its reception of the "supernatural." The order of existence is unchanged from the beginning. The spiritual must still as ever be defined as the basis of the material, and God as the source and substance of both, of whose consciousness all things are modes. Modern science, however, looking only to the external aspects of the phenomena under which existence is presented to us, and incapable of discerning the informing spirit, has taken upon itself arbitrarily to deny the consciousness of the whole, and thus has committed the absurdity of deriving the greater from the less, the whole from the nothing, consciousness from unconsciousness, life from death, the positive from the negative, existence from non-existence. Those who have followed the argument on this point in "*England and Islam*" (pp. 207-214) need no further demonstration than the one there given of the necessary truth that, so far from existence being conceivable of as unconscious, consciousness and existence are

identical terms, even where failing to rise into the human mode called self-consciousness.

When science, by extending its thought into all regions of the complex existence shared by us, shall have attained the true meaning of consciousness, and recognised its identity with existence as a necessary truth, it will cease to be atheist and materialist, and become pantheist and spiritualist. And learning further to regard Personality as no accident, but an essential attribute of existence, it will no longer regard it as "superstitious" to believe in the possibility of intercourse between any of the grades or modes into which the Infinite Personality has differentiated itself, any more than it now regards it as superstition to believe in the relations of mind and body, parent and child. That the world has once seen and known this, appears indisputably on an intelligent study of the facts of its history ; and also that when its present term of blindness is past, it will do so again. To myself the contents of this book are indications that such a time is at hand. And in this view I have the concurrence not only of those to whom they are known, but of that vast, though as yet unrecognised, body to whom it has been given already to have the spiritual vision restored, and of whom I am but as the latest born. Once more I would remind those who, in deference to a materialistic

science, disbelieve in a hyperphysical existence, and consequently in the impossibility of spiritual communication, that they are submitting themselves to an authority that is self-convicted of irrationality. For, in denying the universality of consciousness, and committing itself to the absurdity of deriving existence from non-existence, science has outvied any miracle postulated by theology; for it has literally made creation out of nothing. Some of the keener of its professors, perceiving the fallacy of such a position, yet refusing to take the step that would lead them to the truth, have attempted to extricate themselves from the dilemma by a denial of the existence at all of consciousness, that is, of existence itself.

Those who, while repudiating the science, falsely so-called, of materialism, own the allegiance rightly due to true science, may further be won to give heed to the things related herein by learning that even the supernatural or spiritual is not independent of ascertainable laws and conditions; and that phenomena appertaining to regions the most occult, are by those who have investigated their nature readily referable to their proper place in the divine order, and capable of reproduction under known conditions.

CHAPTER II.

THE PREPARATION.

THE facts I have to describe occurred under the closest observation of persons well qualified by intelligence, education, and mental habit to exercise over them the most rigid scrutiny. Of these several, including myself, had been long accustomed to severe intellectual training in various fields of philosophical inquiry, and were, moreover, previous to their occurrence, wholly sceptical as to their possibility, and only yielded assent when a continuance of doubt would have been no longer compatible with a claim to rationality.

Appertaining as must phenomena of the kind referred to in this book, if possible at all, to those higher or inner regions of our nature with which it is the lot of comparatively few persons to become acquainted, and the very existence of which is ignored or denied by modern science, it may fairly be surmised that they are in the highest degree unlikely to occur, save to those who by constitution or habit have previously been in some special way fitted for their manifestation. For

this reason, and also because the relation I have to make must for the general reader depend for its value upon the tone, character, standpoint, and previous history at least of the narrator and principal witnesses, it becomes necessary that I should depart from the reserve most agreeable to myself—so far at least as may be requisite for the removal of any antecedent moral improbability—and give my narrative a more or less autobiographical character. And, indeed, properly considered, to no little extent does my own previous history belong immediately to the facts; seeing that although the final and crowning experiences came upon me wholly unexpectedly, yet on looking back and reviewing all the circumstances, I can plainly perceive that I had long, though unwittingly, been undergoing exactly such a course of preparation as, according to the testimony of all ages, was most consistent with the actual result. For the phenomena in question belong to that region of our nature which, while it is neither the physical, the moral, nor the intellectual, was yet the region to the special cultivation of which the whole course of my life, intellectual, moral, and physical, had persistently tended,—though, as I have said, unwittingly to myself. For my course of life had, as I can now perceive, been precisely such as is calculated to minister to the development of that region of our nature in

which alone man can become cognisant of phenomena such as those in question—namely, the spiritual consciousness. The fact that I had followed such mode as being in itself the best discernible by me, in that it constituted for me the truest culture of that perfection the aspiration towards which has ever seemed to me alone worthy of man's best energies, and without any expectation of a result of the kind ultimately attained, seems to have been regarded as the reverse of a reason for withholding the return by which I was finally rewarded.

The preparation of which I speak consisted in the steadfast encouragement of the desire—which I believe to have been innate, so far back beyond memory was its origin—to accept for my life's devotion only the highest and most useful work discernible by me, and to do such work in the most perfect manner possible to me.

The cultivation and realisation of an ideal perfection had always seemed to me to be alone worth living for. How long it took me to discover that such an end meant the cultivation of goodness as well as of truth and beauty; how long to learn that the highest and most artistic work must be the genuine outcome of the artist's own life and character, and that the only perfection a man can place before the world is that which he has himself attained in some region of

his own nature; and how near to, or over the brink of, what precipices the pursuit led, it needs not here to recount. It is enough to say that thus seeking the highest perfection in idea as the object of realisation in fact, and in the search learning to ascribe man's great and manifold shortcomings to his ignorance of his own nature and destiny, I at length found myself wholly devoted to an investigation into the significance of the various modes in which the world's religious consciousness has found expression, and the nature and meaning of existence itself. To believe in perfection at all, involved the belief in the existence of a solution of all the problems from the failure to comprehend which the world's evils arise; while my devotion to the pursuit of such a solution involved the further belief, both that it was not beyond the reach of the human mind, and that its discovery would afford man precisely that which he needed to enable him to pursue his development toward the perfection of which he is capable, but which so few seek. It was this end alone that animated all I wrote, or felt capable of writing. No other was able to present itself with sufficient attractiveness to stimulate to exertion. Whether, under the guise of fiction or essay, whatever the direction followed, it was always my endeavour to probe the consciousness to its depths in the hope of finding some

ultimate basis of belief and practice. No form was sacred to me, no letter infallible, that concealed from me the underlying spirit of which I was in search, and which I was instinctively persuaded was there, was good, was discoverable; and the discovery of which was indispensable to the fulfilment of the end of existence. Though I knew it not at the time, I have since learnt that every successive writing that came from me was a faithful record of a step in my own spiritual history. And the key to my whole thought and work was my instinctive conviction, that the existence of which we are parts is as a whole absolutely perfect, and would so appear to us could we only see it aright; and that there is no reason inherent in the nature of things why the parts should not also in their degree be perfect. To say that in no existing system of religion did I find any satisfactory presentation of what I felt to be true in this respect, is only to say that all existing religions seemed to me to fail alike to present an adequate conception of the perfection of existence, whether as whole or part, as God or Nature.

It was only within the last three or four years that I had come to make such progress in my inquiry into the world's religious history as allowed me to entertain any very high anticipation of success. I then found the facts, of which I had made a vast collection, becoming so in-

creasingly luminous and harmonious, as irresistibly to suggest the notion that some intelligence other than mine was concerning itself in their exposition. To such an extraordinary extent in the latter part of this period did my accessibility to ideas become developed, that I constantly seemed to myself to be leaping, as it were, several bars at once of the ladder I was climbing, and reaching one far in advance of any legitimately within reach, and without my being conscious of the means whereby the interval had been bridged. Sometimes the achievement was so palpably independent of my own powers, that although I had not the smallest belief in the existence of any personal source of suggestion, I could scarcely refrain, at each new and startling disclosure, from looking up from my work and audibly expressing my thanks as to some actual though invisible informant.

During the last year, 1876, I especially observed that precisely in the degree in which I succeeded in approximating my mode of life and tone of feeling to the standard I had set before myself as the best, so did my accessibility to ideas increase, and my progress in my work become assured. It so happened that the period in question was in all outward respects one of the most critical and harassing through which, in the course of a singularly chequered life, it has

been my lot to pass. All those ambitions and acquisitions, which are ordinarily accounted as indispensable to the enjoyment of life, seemed to be trembling in the balance and on the point of passing away. Nevertheless, in proportion as the prospect outwardly became darker and more intolerable, the prospect inwardly became brighter and more satisfactory. It was as if I were being subjected to a contest between two sets of influences which were seeking to draw me in opposite directions, in order to determine to which side I really belonged. And I was distinctly conscious of finding myself supported through the crisis by the reflection that possibly, so far from being really a hindrance, the ordeal might prove to be the means of educating and fitting me for the work on which I was engaged. I was beginning to learn that the real question involved in the religious history alike of the race and of the individual, was that of the nature and place of the true Self. And as the period of anxiety in question approached its climax, the more complete my acquiescence in whatever fate might be in reserve for me, the stronger became also my impression that the achievement of my task in respect to the race was conditional on its prior accomplishment in respect to myself. Hitherto I had been under the belief that I could solve the mystery of the world's religious history by a process that was

intellectual only. But I was now ascertaining that the failure of all who had preceded me in the same attempt was due to their sharing this very belief, and that they had missed the goal of which they were in pursuit through their ignorance of the existence and nature of the region in which, as I was now learning, that goal really lay. The attempts made by every one of my predecessors in the study of comparative theology, or mythology, as they mostly called it, had one and all failed, for precisely the cause that I was now discovering. They sought in the outward and sensible for that which was interior and spiritual. Denying the reality of the ideal world, and seeking to gauge the higher phenomena of existence with faculties belonging to the lower only, and this even while disbelieving in the reality of that which they were engaged in exploring, they were in the position of dwellers on the outskirts of the solar system seeking to ascertain the nature of the sun with implements merely planetary, and even while holding the sun to be an illusion. They attempted to work a problem in the higher mathematics with formulas belonging to the rudimentary arithmetic. They sought to explain phenomena without any knowledge of or belief in that whereof the phenomena were but the sensible expression. For them the concrete and derived was the self-existent, and

the abstract and substantial was the non-existent, and but a figment of the fancy. Arrested by the outward and the seeming, they had failed to reach the inward and being. Such was the history of every previous attempt to solve the problem of the world's religions. The lesson that others had failed to learn, and their failure to learn which had insured the failure of their whole enterprise, was the lesson which circumstances were now combining to teach me. It was exactly in proportion as I became detached from that outward and apparent self which is to the individual man what the planet is to the system, that I found myself approximating to that true and central self which is to the individual man what the sun is to the system. To find this self for myself was to find it for all persons and all periods. The endeavour to ascertain the nature of the religious consciousness generally and of its modes of expression, in the absence on the part of its students of any development of their own religious consciousness individually, was not more likely to be crowned with success than would be the endeavour to solve any intellectual problem without any development of the intellectual faculties. As well might mere body hope of itself to comprehend the nature and phenomena of mind, as for mere intellect to comprehend those of spirit. It was only after a long

and arduous course of exploration, historical and psychological, external and internal, accompanied by much personal training in the habit of self-suppression and correction, that I discovered what proved to be the key to all I was seeking. This was the demonstration of the facts that the region of the religious consciousness has an existence at once real and distinct from every other part of our nature; that the development of that consciousness finds its climax alike for all in the ascertainment of the true place and nature of the essential Self; and also that this self is the same at once for the part and for the whole of Existence.

My increased accessibility to ideas, and consequent enhanced capacity for entering into relations with the region whence they have their derivation, had been coincident with a certain change in my mode of life to which it is necessary to advert. It was in the pursuit of what I deemed to be the more perfect way, that I had been led to give special attention to the question of diet. I had never been fully content with the prevailing mode of sustaining our organisms. It had struck me as inconsistent with the perfection conceivable as possible, that man, the highest product of the visible world, should be so constituted as to be able to sustain himself only by doing violence, not only to his sensitive fellow-creatures, but to his own higher feelings. Such

a practice, if necessary, seemed to be in a measure a justification of that atheistic system of thought which regards nature itself as but a first habit, and devoid of any permanent and inherent standard of perfection. Hence the discovery, made, as at length it was, by a careful study of the history and physiology of the subject, under the guidance of one who is destined to bear no small part in this narrative—that so far from our belonging to the carnivorous species, our proper food is grain and fruit, and that the best lives and highest work have ever been those of abstainers from a flesh diet—opened to me a delightful view of the perfection possible to our race. And it was no small enhancement of my satisfaction to reflect that, in repudiating the doctrine of salvation for the body by the suffering and death of another, I was making a further protest against the corresponding doctrine of salvation for the soul by means of vicarious atonement. For one of my original instinctive convictions—namely, that this doctrine is no other than a direct blasphemy against the perfection of the divine character, and the most prolific source of the world's evils—had received the fullest confirmation from all that I had discovered respecting the world's religions. It is mainly to the increased sensibility of my mental surfaces, through the elimination from my system

of all unsuitable substances, that I ascribe the increased accessibility to ideas of which I have spoken. And all my experience goes to show that it is not to any original or unavoidable defect of material or structure, but to the coarseness and unsuitability of the food on which we are in the habit of sustaining our organisms, that our general insensibility to the finer influences which pervade the universe—and by the operation of which alone man becomes redeemable from exclusive engrossment by the lower planes of his nature—is ascribable. It is, I am confident, because our sympathetic faculties are so dulled and narrowed through our cruel and unnatural mode of sustaining ourselves, that we have lost that sense of oneness both with the whole of which we are parts, and with our fellow-parts of the same whole, in the due recognition and culture of which religion and morality respectively consist. We are accustomed to over-materialise ourselves to such a degree as to lose all cognisance of the immaterial and essential part of us.

As I proceeded, it became more and more manifest that my work was in some mysterious way identified with myself. Each step in my own progress was a step in it; and each step in it was a corresponding step for myself. Every successive withdrawal of the outer coverings of the central truth of which I was in search, was

accompanied by a like withdrawal of something that had hitherto served to conceal me from myself. Together we were reaching the bed-rock of truth ; together we were being built up into the superstructure. I was bent on penetrating the inmost recesses of the human consciousness in search of its fundamental and central fact ; and I had started from the outermost sphere of that consciousness—from the consciousness, that is, of my own physical existence. Nevertheless, so far from receding from myself as I quitted my original standpoint, I found myself getting ever nearer and nearer to what I recognised more and more as my own true and permanent self the nearer I approached the object of my search. I seemed to be travelling from the earth to the sun. Yet, so far from losing myself or my footing, I obtained as I advanced a firmer hold on, and appreciation of, both ; until at length it became evident that my approach to the sun was but an approach to my own true primary centre and self, whence the outer, secondary, derived, and apparent self and centre could be discerned as but a planet revolving in a distant orbit. The centre reached, the true *ego* of my system disclosed itself as subsisting independently of the exterior organism.

The explanation of this phenomenon proved the solution of the problem to which I had devoted myself, even the key to man's religious

history. The quest on which I was really engaged; the end for which so many religions had existed; the object of the profoundest hopes and desires of those countless millions of the human race who had felt the strivings of the spiritual consciousness; and the means whereby the manifold Saviours of mankind had achieved salvation for their kind,—all had reference to one and the same fact, all meant one and the same thing. And it had been simply because I had been working genuinely, with heart as well as with head, adding to knowledge sympathy, and with total subordination of my own will, habit, preference, and interests to whatever might seem to me to be true and right—in a word, because I had, so far as it was in me, striven to be loyal to my ideal of Perfection—that I had been enabled to ascertain what that was. The world's religions were, like the world's languages, the outcome of one and the same instinct, and were therefore essentially one and identical, however they might differ phenomenally. The religious consciousness was no other than man's recognition of the spiritual nature of that which constitutes his true self, and of the identity of that self with the substance of the whole of which he is a part—namely, with God. And the religions in which his spiritual consciousness had found expression were products of his desire for a demonstration of the fact of that identity, and for the as-

surance that the whole reciprocated the sentiment of the part. For it was felt to be necessary to "salvation," not merely that man should be conscious of his substantial identity with God, but that God also should on his part manifest the same consciousness. While all religions were thus egoistic, in that they made the individual self their starting-point, they were also pantheistic, in that they regarded God as that self, its parent substance and true centre. It was thus that I found that my quest was really for the nature and place of the true self and centre at once of the part and the whole, of the individual and universal, of myself and God. And it was because in seeking for the source and nature of the religious consciousness of mankind, I had not declined to submit my own consciousness to the process, that my work had assumed the personal character of which I have spoken. All the ancient religions, I had found, were, while regarding personality as an element of existence, essentially pantheistic. All had made assurance of salvation dependent upon the joint recognition by God and man of their substantial identity. And all sought, by means of the subordination of the outer and sensible self of the body, and exaltation of the inner and permanent self of the soul, to arrive at a positive demonstration of that identity. All these religions, moreover, contained, either actually or

potentially, the knowledge of the process whereby God and man in turn become, or manifest that they are, each other. For the system of thought known to Christians under the term "Christ," was, I had found, identical in kind with that which already existed in the Hindoo, Egyptian, Zoroastrian, Hellenic, Hebrew, and other systems. And, indeed, it had only been by my first ascertaining the true character of the esoteric doctrines of the religions antecedent and exterior to Hebraism and Christianity, that I had been able to reach the central idea of which "Christ" was the fullest expression. In each nation had been planted a germ of the tree of true religious knowledge; and it had depended upon the mode in which the plant had been cultivated how far it attained its true and full development. In Hebraism and Christianity was the culture carried to the highest perfection. Elsewhere, after attaining a certain growth, it fell away and decayed without having reached its full stature. In "Christ" alone it was perfect. But even then the world was not ripe for its full comprehension. And the idea comprised in "Christ" was subjected to the arrest and distortion which have left its full realisation by the world for attainment at a time which is still in the future. It is not enough, I found, that the human consciousness attain its full development in a single people or

individual only ; it has yet to be attained in the race. To attain its due perfection humanity must recognise its essential oneness with God, and must moreover receive assurance that God also recognises his essential oneness with humanity. But to this end it is indispensable that humanity learn the truth respecting the nature of that existence of which itself and God are to each other as part and whole; and that religion, science, and philosophy be recognised as being what they really are—namely, one, in that they all are concerned with the nature and culture of the common existence.

It was the discovery of a correspondence between the development of the consciousness of man, both as race and as individual, that more immediately qualified me for the solution given in "England and Islam" of the problem of the present crisis. The insight that had been given me is there applied to the disclosure of the scheme of the world's past, present, and future.

The one universal object of aspiration and worship, whether for individual or for race, is, I had discovered, Existence. But, as I had also discovered, it depends, both for individual and for race, upon the stage of development of the consciousness in what Existence is held essentially to consist. The course of that development comprises many stages, but it is always in the

same direction—namely, from the recognition of the outward, natural, and sensible to that of the inward, spiritual, and real, as the constituent of the true self. Progress consists in rising from the recognition of the physical, to that of the spiritual life. It was, therefore, no arbitrary rule that dictated the divisions of religious doctrine and practice into esoteric and exoteric, the inner and the outer, formerly any more than now. The souls of the individual and the universal are ever seeking mutual recognition. But while the universal soul is constant in its divine and absolute plenitude, it depends on the degree of its development in the individual how far or under what mode or grade it is cognisable by the individual. The man living wholly in sense, and recognising the physical life as the sole or chief good, adores the universal existence under those aspects in which it ministers to him physically. Thus in all ages have the Sun and Sex, as the agents of physical existence, been the prime objects of worship. As the consciousness unfolds, and man passes through the intellectual and moral into the spiritual part of his nature, he learns to recognise in the existence shared by him, elements transcending the merely physical. Only when he has attained the full development of his spiritual consciousness, and by his satisfaction therein has learnt that he has reached not only his own true self and centre, but

the true self and centre of existence itself, does he relegate the physical life and its material agents to the category of the phenomenal and transient, and make the supreme object of his culture the spiritual life, together with its source, the spiritual Sun and Soul of all, whose power, wisdom, and love he formerly adored under their material symbols of light and heat, and the attributes of Sex, though he did so unconsciously, through mistaking the symbol for the substance, "Nature" for God.

All religious history, whether of the race or of the individual, shows that it is not with "Nature," the outward, phenomenal, and derived, that the developed consciousness can rest content as the ultimate object of culture and aspiration—this suffices only the worshipper who is outside the sacred mysteries—but the animating soul of Nature, the infinite, eternal Spirit, at once immanent in and transcending Nature as a body voluntarily and for a time and purpose assumed. Only when man recognises a portion of that spirit as subsisting in and constituting his own true substance and self; only when he has received demonstration of his essential oneness with the universal substance, even God, does he find satisfaction and content. To him, then, the material and phenomenal are comparatively as nought, for he does not consist of them, enter though they may for a time and purpose into

association with him. Rather are they apt to minister to the obscuration of his spiritual perceptions, and of his attainment of that peace which, by virtue of its appertaining to the spiritual and not to the intellectual part of him, "passes understanding." Such temporary obscuration, however, must be regarded as constituting an essential stage in his development. Even the soul-germ must be nourished in darkness.

The doctrine of correspondence between the spiritual and physical regions of existence once suggested to me, it soon proved to be the key not only to the relations subsisting between the individual and the whole, showing man to be in very fact but a repetition in small of the universe at large, and of the solar system in particular, but also to the history of the race. Following this clue, I was led to see in Israel a typical or solar people, whose history represented a series of solar cycles corresponding with the "days" of the earth's physical creation as given in Genesis. And it was the examination I made of the course of development of the religious consciousness of the Hebrews that led me to the threshold of the discovery of the place of the present epoch in the scheme of the world's development as set forth in my book. I had ascertained, as I believe, indubitably, that while a close correspondence subsisted between the stages ascribed to the earth's physical and

those of its spiritual creation, as exhibited especially in the religious development of Israel—as representative people of the dark races—the process had not been completed in Israel; but that in consequence of the rejection of Jesus, who represented for them the full manifestation of the Soul, it had been transferred to another race and people; so that the development of man's religious consciousness was still proceeding, in the same order and under the same impulse, towards its ultimate completion, although the people originally chosen to be the medium of its development had forfeited the distinction. That is, while a few in Israel had carried the culture of the true self, or soul, to such perfection as to have received in Jesus the demonstration they sought of the substantial identity of man and God, of the individual and the universal soul, the nation at large rejected that demonstration, and thereby forfeited its share in the full consummation of its spiritual development. This revelation of "Christ," as the fullest expression in humanity of the nature and character of the supreme spirit of the universe, at the end of what I had found to be the "fourth day" of the world's spiritual creation, corresponded with the apparition of the sun at the end of the fourth day of the world's physical creation. The "fifth day," during which we specially, as representative people of the white races, have "peopled

the waters" with our own highly vitalised race, and thus fulfilled the correspondence with the fifth day of Genesis, is now completed. And it is upon the "sixth day" of its spiritual creation that the world is now entering. That day, in the physical creation, was devoted to the making of man "in the image of God, male and female." It is, I was shown, the spiritual correspondence to this that has now to be fulfilled. Hitherto, during the spiritual "fifth day," under the sacerdotal degradation of the character and doctrine of Christianity, the idea of "Christ" as a "man-child" has "ruled the earth with a rod of iron;" so terrible a foe to the true development and regeneration of the world has been the system which has usurped the name and authority of Christianity. Now, as all signs show, the time is approaching for the recognition of the element in the nature and doctrine of Christ, hitherto so fatally neglected. Not as a "man-child" or with a "rod of iron" is "Christ" henceforth to be known; and not by the sacrifice of others, but by "love," will the world be saved. Hence the doctrine of the "sixth day," on which we are now entering, will consist in the practical recognition of the divine nature as comprising the feminine as well as the masculine elements of existence; and in the accordance to both sides of the dualism of which Existence consists, that

equal rank and influence which are essential to the full constitution of man "in the image of God," and of the true Christ, "male and female." The "man-child" régime of force and will, and the sacrifice of others to self, and of intuition to reason, of sympathy to selfishness, of the feminine to the masculine, has but plunged the world deeper and deeper into evil. It is by the exaltation of the other side of the dualism to its proper place, by a régime of love and self-sacrifice, and the subordination of our own lower to our own higher, and the culture of the intuitions and sympathies of the soul, that the world's redemption is about to be accomplished. The race is approaching that stage which in the individual corresponds to maturity, even the maturity of the spirit, in which man recognises woman not as his servant and plaything, and companion on but one and that the lower plane of his nature, but as his complement and supplement on all planes. It was because the impending cataclysm was to issue in the completion of the work of the sixth day of the spiritual creation, by the full recognition of the Soul and its essential dualism, that the powers of evil were gathering together once more to seek to defeat the divine ends by thrusting themselves, in the shape of the as yet unvitalised Empire of the North, between England and the East as representatives respectively of the

light and dark, the male and female, divisions of humanity.

A brief recapitulation will aid the comprehension of the process of development. While the object of prime solicitude, and therefore of worship and culture, is the existence of which all men recognise themselves as a portion, it is only on the completion of their system of thought that they are able to recognise the soul as the basis of that existence. It is life, the physical life, that first claims our devotion, while that is to the outer and undeveloped sense the sole constituent of the individual. But to rest content with this stage, and make the self consist in the bodily organism, is to remain in a merely animal condition. Consisting as does man of a manifold nature, there are many spheres to be penetrated ere, starting from the outermost orbit of sense, he wins his way to the true centre and sun of the spirit. Once there, he sees all things from the centre of his system and of all systems, and knows that he has reached the inmost sanctuary both of his own consciousness and of all consciousness, and that the consciousness of the part is that also of the whole, even God. But above and beyond the fact of this identity between his own and the universal soul, he has yet to learn the nature of the common soul of existence. The study of religion, whether carried on by an

examination of one's own consciousness, or by that of its history in the world, leads necessarily to the discovery of the identity of the individual with the universal soul—that is, of the truth of the ancient pantheism—and this prior to the attainment of any insight respecting the soul's precise nature. The latter is a matter of personal development both for race and for individual; and the steps whereby the development is attained are the same for both in all cases. It is by a regular law of growth that man attains the knowledge of the nature of the individual, and thence of the universal soul. Only in an advanced stage does he discover the correspondence between his inner and outer nature, and find that as is the body so is the soul; as is the individual so is the universal. The knowledge which is of the intellect alone will lead him to regard the soul that he has come to discern as the source of all as one and single. Only when he reaches the stage at which the affections are developed does he find that duality is essential to production, and that therefore the soul, individual and universal alike, must be dual. It is still the soul of the universe that is manifesting itself in humanity, as that of the sun does in the planet. It is the spiritual Sun of Suns that is seeking to suffuse with a higher life the world that has been projected from its physical counterpart. But man must first recognise the

existence of that spiritual sun, the universal soul, and his own portion in it, before he can proceed to the comprehension of its nature. To do this he must turn his gaze inwards, where it shines in his own inner self, precisely as he must look from the earth to the physical sun if he would learn concerning the system, and step thither in idea. So far from being competent now to discern the nature of the soul, man has almost lost his consciousness of its existence. To this end a new dispensation is requisite, even one which, while it shall repeat and renew the work of old, will also complete and fulfil it. The spiritual Sun has now to re-manifest itself to man's darkened gaze, and to do this in such guise that man shall recognise both its existence and its nature. Learning from the individual the universal, or from the universal the individual soul, he learns at once himself and God, and completes the cycle of his development by ascertainment of their essential oneness. Such are the principles on which the ancient religions were framed. Interiorly and really they were a worship of the Soul itself at once of each and all. Exteriorly and apparently they were a worship of material expressions and limitations of that Soul in the visible world.

I had thus ascertained that for all religions alike there was but one name given under heaven

or on the spiritual plane. The multitude, immersed in sense, looked for an earthly conqueror. The few, highly cultured in spirit, looked for a spiritual perfection in him who, by achieving the conquest over matter, sense and death, was to demonstrate the identity of God and man.

I had thus found that so far from the religious history of man presenting a scene of aimless confusion, it had followed a consistent course throughout; and that notwithstanding the persistent efforts of man's outer nature to obstruct the development of his inner, each successive stage had served only to bring man nearer and nearer to the complete recognition of the reality, nature, and substantial identity of God and the soul, and of the absolute perfection of the real existence. And not only were the religions identical in object and aim, but the histories and characters of those in whom they culminated were identical also. Representing the full incarnation of the soul, the "saviours" of mankind had in all essential respects the same history, by virtue of the fact that while the soul, or *being*, is one, the body, or *seeming*, is one also. And as man physically is a portion of the matter of the solar system, while spiritually he is a portion of the soul of that system, it followed by virtue of the law of heredity that the more perfectly he represented his divine parent in essential being,

the more nearly would his external history indicate a correspondence with the physical solar phenomena. Neither through accident, imitation, nor superstition did it come that the characters and careers of Chrishna, Osiris, Mithras, Buddha, Jesus, and other of the world's recognised "saviours," bore so close an analogy to each other and to the phenomena of the sun's annual course. It was due to the fact that man's history in both his physical and spiritual regions is one, and that between him and the system of which he is a part there subsists a family resemblance which is strong or weak, according to the measure in which he possesses the spirit of that system. The function of all the religions was the culture of the soul. And the method consisted in the perfecting of the body by means of pure living, in respect of diet and habit, and of the mind by the practice of pure thinking and feeling, and the cultivation of the intuitions and sympathies, and the encouragement of aspiration towards the highest perfection conceivable. According to the completeness with which this rule, the rule of perfection on all planes, was followed, would be the degree of development of the spiritual consciousness, and the perfection of the manifestation of the spirit in the flesh, whereby demonstration was to be given of the oneness of deity and humanity. For a "saviour" was one who, by mani-

festing in his life the perfection possible to those only who, by virtue of their having "the spirit without measure," were exempt from the ordinary limitations of humanity, demonstrated on one or more planes of his nature the identity of the human with the universal soul. The "Hero," or demigod, was a "Saviour" on the physical plane. The "Christ" was a "Saviour" on all planes, and notably on the spiritual.

While I had thus reached the conclusion that the world's religions were all designed, interiorly at least, with a view to the culture and development of the soul as constituting the point of identity between man and God, and as being the part of man alone worthy the highest consideration, inasmuch as it was his only real and permanent element, I had still to ascertain the grounds of the confidence with which the reality and immortality of the soul were regarded. It is one thing to see intellectually that a thing must be; it is another thing to know absolutely that it is. It was by a process purely intellectual that I had come to regard the pantheistic hypothesis, which involved the reality and indestructibility of the soul, as a necessary truth. But it was evidently more than an intellectual conviction that had been attained by the ancients. Their whole system was constructed on a basis

of positive assurance—an assurance which I had found, to my surprise, was not confined to the non-Hebrew systems. For it is a mistake, I found, to suppose, as is ordinarily done, even by “professors” of comparative theology, that the Hebrews did not share the general belief on this point. So far were the Israelites from rejecting or ignoring the doctrine of the existence and immortality of the soul, with which they had been familiar in Egypt, that the whole Mosaic system was built on the assumption of the existence of a world invisible to ordinary sight, and tenanted by spirits unembodied and disembodied. It was simply because no doubt existed on the subject, that any specific declaration was deemed superfluous. The Hebrew pantheist saw, with his fellows, that the doctrine of the identity of the individual with the universal self, involved the continuance of the individual. No mere earthly or external end had all the long and arduous course of purification, edification, consecration, and sanctification, sacrament and ceremony, enjoined in his law, any more than in that of the corresponding “mysteries” of the Gentiles. It was for the sake of the spirit that the body also was to be made perfect. Only a pure body could be a fitting abode for the “son” of Jehovah, the soul that was seeking to incarnate itself fully in Israel as its chosen people. But how came

they and the initiated of the kindred religions to attain the certainty they enjoyed? For, that certainty had been attained by them is manifest in every fragment that has survived of the ancient rituals, as witness the ritual of Osiris, the Orphic and Pindaric hymns, and abundant other remains. "The vulgar," says Plutarch, "believe that nothing remains after death. But we, initiated in the sacred rites of Bacchus, and witnesses of his holy mysteries, know that there is a future state." Many writers, including Strabo, Isocrates, and Eusebius, express themselves in like manner. Hence it was evident to me that until I had either attained the like certainty for myself, or discovered the grounds of the certainty enjoyed by them, I had not found the ultimate solution of the problem of the world's religions, as they were interiorly and really. Nevertheless, though utterly in the dark on the point, I worked on, rejoicing in the light that continued to pour on me with ever-increasing plenitude, and revelling in the surprises which were constantly greeting me, as proving beyond all doubt that I was on the right road; and not despairing of being enabled, sooner or later—though how, where, or when, I could by no means divine—on my own part, with the initiated in the sacred mysteries of old, to exclaim, "I know that I am immortal."

It was with no small satisfaction that I found that the pantheistic doctrine of salvation by the culture of the soul, was based on a conception of the perfection of the divine character, to which the idea of vicarious sacrifice was wholly repugnant. The system of seeking to appease the deity by offerings consisting of the blood and agony of others, instead of by pure living and the subjugation of one's own lower nature, was, I found, no essential part of religion, but was a concession to the grosser notions of the masses who, immersed in sense, required, for their own satisfaction, some visible token of atonement and reconciliation, and preferred acquiring it at the cost of others. It was a tribute to sense from which the spirit wholly recoiled; and one that, by being elaborated by priests into a system and accepted by the vast majority of mankind, came in time to constitute that sacrificial régime which has been the world's greatest bane.

With regard to the sacrificial part of the Mosaic system, the clearer my insight became, the more forcibly my choice was narrowed to one of two hypotheses: Either that in deference to the prejudices of the masses of the Israelites, Moses condescended to the permission of sacrifice to a very limited extent; or that he forbade it wholly, together with all bloodshed; and that the sacri-

ficial system of the Hebrews was an after invention of a degenerated sacerdotal order.

In passing beyond the limits of the initiated into the sphere of the ignorant, religion has always become degenerated into a fetish-worship, varying in its degrees of cruelty and sensuality according to the general status of the people and their priests. And these two regions of its manifestation, the inner and the outer, the spiritual and the material, the sympathetic and the selfish, the intuitional and the sensible, became in the hands of their respective representatives—the prophet and the priest—as essentially antagonistic to each other as light and darkness. The prophet, cultivating the intuitions and the sympathies, and appealing directly to the soul and God, represented the spiritual side of man's nature; while the priest, cultivating forms and appearances, appealed to sense and the outer self, and made salvation dependent on the sacrifice of others for self instead of on the sacrifice of the lower self to the higher by the leading of a better life. The process whereby I had thus been led to discover the true nature and source of the conflict ever raging in the world, between the soul and sense, being and seeming, prophet and priest—a process of which the abandonment of a flesh-diet was an essential part—proved to be indispensable to my

preparation for the work I was destined to perform. For the main object of "England and Islam" is to exhibit the world's present evil plight as the inevitable result of man's persistent attempt to build himself up in defiance of all the true principles of his existence. Both his politics and his science represent the attempt to construct society on the simple basis of the body, the Soul and God being ignored. And in his religion, he has built on the doctrine of a deity who so far from being a Parent to his creation, is evil and a lover of blood. Recognising the dualism of his own and of all existence only to suppress one essential moiety of it, he has made its masculine constituents all, and its feminine naught. And, finally, he has rejected the teachings of intuition, experience, and of the facts of his own structure, in order to degrade himself from the ranks of the frugivorous and teachable to that of the carnivorous and intractable animals. With his very life-springs poisoned at their fount, through the ignorance or treachery of his counsellors, until the very art of healing has become but a synonym for the introduction into his system of fresh poisons, it is for those who have preserved their spiritual vision no occasion for wonder, but an invincible necessity, that the patient should at every point present symptoms of the disease raging within; or that a crisis should arise from which he could

be extricated only through intervention on the part of some higher power. His own sooth-sayers have proved themselves at their wits' end when, true to their traditions of blood, they counsel, no sacrifice of that to which the mischief is due—the patient's own evil habits of life—but a fresh sacrifice, and on a vaster scale, of some other.

It was thus in man's past history that the clue to and cure for the present was to be found. How I came to learn positively and definitely that my work was to be not exegetic but didactic, and that it was to consist in the exposure of the true nature and inevitable results of the prevailing system; and how I attained certainty respecting the reality of the soul, and was enabled, with the initiated in the ancient mysteries, to exclaim, "I know that I am immortal," will appear as we proceed. The stage thus far reached is that in which the phenomena presented by man's religious history are seen to be wholly inexplicable, save on one hypothesis—namely, that there is on part of the world a constant effort ever exhibiting itself in an ascent through grades innumerable of consciousness, to attain full recognition of the soul by which it feels itself to be animated; an effort in which, while it is perpetually obstructed by the lower elements which enter into its composition, it is

perpetually seconded by a corresponding effort on part of the soul itself, which is at once that of the individual, the planet, the system, and the universe at large, to infuse itself more and more fully into the world. The confirmation of this hypothesis, together with the further discovery that it is through the meeting and combination of the ascending soul of the world, on attaining its full development in some one of its children, with the soul of the universe, which has descended upon it, that humanity obtains that full recognition of its nature and source which has ever been recognised as a special manifestation of God in the flesh, were shown me during the delivery of "England and Islam." Then only was I enabled fully to perceive that the "Christ," in whatever age and people, is he in whom such union of the ascending and descending, the human and divine souls, is recognised as having taken place; and that it is by virtue of the filial relationship borne by man to the spirit of our system, whose material symbol is the sun, that the correspondence is due between the phenomena of the sun's annual course and the histories of the world's Saviours or "Sungods," and proportionately for every man according as he resembles his divine Parent. Many facts illustrating this correspondence had already been exhibited by me in the little volume

entitled "The Keys of the Creeds," which constituted my last stepping-stone from the region of intellectual to that of spiritual perception, by the attainment of which alone man completes his system of thought.

CHAPTER III.

THE COMMUNICATION.

IT was in the very commencement of last year that I discovered the central idea of the system expressed in the term "Christ," and the nature of the process whereby it had been attempted to represent that idea as realised in the person of Jesus, and others who before him had been invested with solar characteristics; and I continued, saving for one interruption, my work on the world's religions under the influence of a perpetually increasing sense of illumination, until the autumn, when some weeks passed without my being able to proceed. The interruption in question was caused by my being put under strong impulse to take part in the efforts then being made for the rescue of our animal brethren from the horrors of the physiological laboratory. I was conscious of a distinct vitalisation for this purpose, and under its influence I was enabled to put forth some words of appeal that went straight to the heart of England. For the two letters I wrote on the subject were reprinted in thousands both by public societies and private indivi-

duals, and served both to win new converts to the cause of humanity, and strengthen the hands of the existing workers. To the use thus made of me in respect to the question of vivisection, and the vivid insight given me respecting the true nature of the influence which has manifested itself among us under the name of materialistic science, as an incarnation of the principle of evil on its lowest planes and in its most hideous aspects, I can distinctly trace the full opening of the spiritual vision which qualified me for the work I was so soon to be called to. For I was thereby shown that the priests of science, possessed by the devil of selfishness, were bent on dragging the world down to a worse hell than ever the priests of religion had made it. And the principle of both priesthoods was the same,—even salvation for self by the sacrifice of another.

With autumn came a period of lassitude, which for many years past has regularly recurred at that season, and which on this occasion reached an extraordinary degree of intensity. It was as if by some mysterious sympathy with the sun, I myself were going out as it declined from the zenith. So extreme had been my exhaustion that my return to vigour was like a new birth.

This return was marked by a singular pheno-

menon. I had for several months found myself withdrawn from writing in the direction and style I considered suitable for the work I had undertaken, and compelled to adopt a tone rather of exhortation and denunciation than one suited to history and exegesis. But I had managed with tolerable success to strive against the influence that was thus affecting me. On resuming, however, my work after my recovery from my indisposition, I found myself no longer able to write but in the direction I had striven to avoid. The question of the day had not yet been suggested to me for treatment; and I was still engaged with my analysis of the world's religions. I found that whenever I permitted myself to work in what I may call the prophetic direction, my accessibility to ideas was of the most vivid kind; while any attempt to write in the one I desired was marked by an instant arrest of perception. I wrote hundreds of pages, only to be set aside, in the endeavour to make progress with my task. My efforts were vain; and I set myself carefully to search for the cause of the phenomenon.

Doing this, I found that my period of lassitude had been taken advantage of to impress on my mind a vision of the perfection appertaining to existence, and possible to the world, of so lofty and captivating a nature that the contrast made

with it by the world as it is, filled me with indignation at the blindness and folly which, as it was shown to me, alone prevented the realisation of the vision. This, then, had thus far been the end of my search for perfection. I was allowed to see, even as the pantheists and mystics of old had seen, that the existence of which the world is a part is capable of possessing in the part a perfection in the highest degree corresponding to that of the whole: that the individual soul is the life of the part as the universal soul is of the whole; and that the cause of the world's sickness and misery is its voluntary suppression of its essential self, the soul, in favour of the phenomenal envelope of flesh and sense which it mistakes for its true self. And I had been allowed to see the vision of the ideal, only to find myself exploding with wrath at the self-imposed shortcomings of the actual.

It was in vain that I endeavoured to stem the current that was carrying me with it; in vain that I tried to write and rewrite in the direction I wished. All was useless. I could write but in one direction, for in all others the way was barred to my thought. And while my accessibility to ideas became more and more pronounced whenever I yielded to my new impulse, total darkness fell upon me whenever I set myself against it. It was clear that even if I had not

succeeded in yielding my own will, I had at least lost the power of enforcing that will, save in the direction shown me. The question was, whose and of what kind was the will that was thus endeavouring to substitute itself for my own? I knew by repeated experience that as the winter solstice approached I should find myself full of vigour to work with effect in one direction or another. For that has always been to me a time of renewed energy; and I had looked forward to it as the time in which I should best be able to complete my long-cherished task. Now, however, I was wholly at a loss to discern the nature of the work before me. My own seemed hopeless. After having, as was shown by manifold indubitable signs, found the right road, and made good the first and most difficult stages, I had suddenly been lifted from my tracks, carried through space, and deposited at once at my journey's end. Having thus missed the latter part of the road, it was impossible for me to describe it, as I had intended, so as to enable others to follow me. And the precise work on which I had so long been engaged was placed beyond my power. Hitherto I had groped my way by reasoning. Now I was to see. But I could not enable others also to see, unless they too possessed the necessary vision. It was as with the blind; I could but tell what I

saw, not prove to them that I saw it, or enable them also to see it.

As November passed, I found myself the subject of a new experience. The ideas, which hitherto had been but ideas in that they were perceptible to the mind only, acquired a habit of becoming visible to the eyes. Not to the bodily eyes, as I soon found, but to another set of eyes belonging to some new sense which had suddenly become evoked in me. This faculty, which I took for a sort of "second sight," exercised itself independently of light, time, or place. The objects which it presented to me sprang up between other objects and myself, sometimes eclipsing them, but bearing no relation to aught that was seen by the bodily eyes. They were visible thoughts; but whether the thoughts suggested the images, or the images the thoughts, I was unable to determine. They appeared to be simultaneous. Recalling what I had read of the prophets and ecstasies of former times, and comparing my experiences with theirs, I found that I too had become a "seer." While in this state I was under no need to think my way to any conclusion. The suggestion of a thought was accompanied by a palpable vision of all that it involved. Neither was there any need to hunt for words in which to set it down. For every vision was accompanied by its own

interpretation and terms of description. It seemed like a compendium at once of fact and explanation, which had but to present itself to my consciousness through the new faculty to be fully comprehended. Recognition was instantaneous, without the aid either of sense or reason; and comprehension complete. It was at once inspiration and revelation.

It was accompanied by a degree of clairvoyance also. It seemed to me that I saw the interiors of people better than their exteriors; their moral and spiritual state better than their physical. In several instances, on meeting persons with whom I was well acquainted, I failed to recognise them, owing, it seemed to me, to my vision being pre-occupied with what lay behind the surface or within the physical. Especially was I conscious of the existence of a vast interval between the health, moral or physical, of those I met, and the standard that I had now learnt to recognise as possible, and which for the first time I seemed now to have myself attained. In all others did vitality, spiritual, moral, intellectual, and physical, appear to be at a low ebb. I could find no one who in any degree made the best of his capacities. Nowhere did the actual approach the possible.

What especially struck me also—and this I could observe in myself as well as in others—

was the distinction in kind which I was able to discern between different kinds of vitality. Man appeared as a compound of various qualities of life, the contrast between which only became manifest when, by the full kindling of that which appertained to his inmost part, all were revealed in their due character and relations. This inmost part seemed to be as a sun from which all the rest radiated, becoming darker and denser as they receded from the centre. And while from the centre all things could be discerned, from any one of the encircling spheres could be discerned only what lay upon or without that sphere. The centre itself was hidden unless for those who had actually attained it.

It is no exaggeration to say that when viewing the world from this centre, as when under the influence I was enabled to do, so low on all planes appeared to be the general standard of health, as irresistibly to produce the impression that the hospitals and reformatories must have been discharged into the streets.

If the faculty by which these things were perceived by me, I thought, were the same that was possessed by the prophets of old, I could well understand an Isaiah declaring of the people about him, "from the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in them; but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores." And

what individuals were, that also appeared to be our whole system, social and other. In every department was rottenness. Selfishness, deceit, and cruelty dominated all. Religion was a pretence; science the shallowest of shams; politics, art, industry, all were the outcome of a view of existence in which the struggle was all for the lower self and the outer sense, and naught for the soul and perfection. Humanity appeared but as a capacity, and no achievement, save only in the wrong direction. Representing the attempt to build up an existence without the life, the world was a failure of the most disastrous kind.

Thus was this new development of my powers used to foster the prophetic impulse,—an impulse proceeding from some source other than myself so distinctly as to convince me that my own individuality had been either set aside or enhanced for the time, and that I was being actuated by some influence which had taken possession of me for its own ends. There was, however, no abnegation of self-consciousness, or loss of my own individuality. The effect of the disclosure to me of the low standard of health and happiness prevailing around me, was to kindle the sympathetic sentiment into a passion, difficult to be restrained from unseasonable utterance.

Especially urgent was the charge to smite and

spare not any who, by doctrine or practice, wilfully ministered to the negation or obscuraton of the common Soul of the country. And herein one of the problems by which my life had long been perplexed found its solution. Through no desire of mine had it come that I had remained as isolated and apart from all my fellow-workers in the various walks of literature, art, and science, as if I had been a being of a different kind. Though of anything but an unsociable disposition, I had absolutely no intimacies in any of the quarters stated. And now the reason was disclosed to me. I had been thus kept aloof from the world of the current orthodoxies expressly in order that, when the time should come, the influences which had me in their training should find no obstacle of personal considerations to hinder their free use of me as their mouthpiece.

I had at this time a singular experience. It was during a country walk. I was pondering the meaning of the Tree in ancient myth and symbolism, being at the moment in an extraordinarily intense state of accessibility to ideas. Several times it had seemed to me that I was in some way on the point of seeing what I wanted, and of so realising the idea of a Tree as to discern its spiritual principle. Of the general propriety of the Tree as an emblem of universal nature I was well aware. For had it not, like everything else

that has life, the dualism that consists of the inward idea and the outward phenomenon? And was it not also, like man, a compound being of two natures, planted on earth and aspiring towards heaven; and by virtue of the sustenance derived from the elements, living and growing, and proving its worth by its fruits? And was it not, moreover, the type whereafter consciousness ever develops itself, under whatever mode or form, whether mineral, vegetable, or animal, from the snow-crystal to the very tissues of the human body? Of all this I was aware; yet I felt that the ancients had some insight into the matter that I had not; and that where I could only surmise, they knew.

Various experiences had led me to suspect that there subsists between all living beings a bond of sympathy to which, if only the desire on one side reach an extreme degree of intensity, the other side may be forced to respond by disclosing to view its animating idea. I say idea, because I was as yet wholly removed from the ascription of aught corresponding to personality in that which substands existence. I ascribed a certain reality to that of which ideas are perceptions, but I had no notion of personality in the matter.

On the present occasion, after several attempts subjectively to realise the idea of a tree, and seeming each time to come nearer and nearer to

what I wanted—though what precisely that was would be hard to say—I at length succeeded. For just as the process in my mind once more approached its climax, and I reached the very inmost recesses of my consciousness by a spasm, as it were, of intensity, I chanced to cast my eyes upon a tree of considerable dimensions, near which I was passing, when the tree itself responded to my desire by suddenly trembling and shivering throughout its whole structure ; and opening from top to bottom it disclosed, pervading its entire fabric—trunk, branches, and furthest twigs—a slender and delicate form, most exquisitely traced, and vivid, luminous, and distinct as a flash of silvery lightning.

The apparition lasted but for an instant, and the tree closed up again, hiding what I had seen from my view ; but leaving the notion vividly impressed on my mind that the tree was actually instinct with a life or soul identical with what might be predicated of my own, on the hypothesis of the substantial identity of all things ; and that through the intensity of my sympathetic desire I had succeeded in bringing our respective essential selves into actual contact. After walking on a few steps meditating on the phenomenon, I returned to take another look at the tree, half fancying it might repeat the feat. But in vain. It differed nothing now from its brethren, and I

was unable to repeat the spasm of intensification. The active part had been mine; the tree had but responded under compulsion. How far the response was real I had no means of judging. What had occurred, however, was precisely what would naturally occur on the hypothesis that "the same incorruptible spirit is in all things," and that by virtue of its being spirit, and inherently living and sympathetic, the more rudimentary and inert modes of it should yield to the higher and more active. Might there not be between the soul of a tree and of man an interval far less than between the soul of man and that of some yet loftier intelligences, even while all were substantially identical?

The experience had for me a peculiar value, owing to the sentiment I had always entertained towards trees. Accustomed in years long past to spend whole seasons in the giant forests of the coasts of the Pacific, with no shelter but the trunk and shade of some gigantic tree, I had learnt to regard a tree as at once a home and a companion whom to quit was to regret, and to invest it with an individuality corresponding to my own. And now it seemed that the tree really was in its degree a person, and possessed of a soul so far identical in nature with my own that it could acknowledge my magnetic traction.

While the experience was suggestive, it was,

of course, not conclusive. And had it been a solitary one, or unconfirmed by subsequent experience, I should not have thought it worthy of communication.

It was during a walk in St. James's Park in the beginning of December last, that I was first impelled to direct my thoughts seriously to the matter that was weighing like an incubus upon the public mind. If, it occurred to me, I can only see into this Eastern Question, as I am being enabled to see into other things which have so long perplexed the world, what service may I not do my country and kind!

Even as the thought arose in my mind, it became visible to my spiritual sight in the form of the following vision, which I will call

The Vision of England and Islam.

In this vision I beheld hovering among the treetops an extensive nebula or cloud, which moved on before me as I walked, and hid from me the objects behind it. It was at first dark, but presently became lighter, and soon it was luminous throughout, like a mist lighted up with a light that was neither of the sun nor of the moon, but of both combined, so soft and yet so white was it. As I gazed, some portions of this cloud became brighter than the rest, and soon at

various points in it appeared great blurs of an intenser light, which gradually became more and more distinct until it was no longer a nebula, but a well-defined and harmonious system, having sun and moon and planets shining through the now scarcely-perceptible haze. It was an exact representation of the process supposed to be that through which a solar system passes in the course of its transition from nebulous diffusion to concentration in individual orbs. It was chaos, by virtue of inhering divinity, becoming kosmos.

The process had not attained its final completion when I beheld another cloud, devoid of luminosity, rising on the outskirts of the system whose evolutions I was watching, and threatening to overspread and eclipse it. This dark cloud was rapidly increasing in bulk, partly by reason of its own growth from within, and partly through the accretion from without of influences resembling itself which from all sides were hastening to join it. Thus increased in bulk and density, it moved as a solid mass within the circumference of the bright system, developing as it advanced a vast arm, which it thrust into its very midst, between its sun and moon, as if with the design of forcing them apart. The spectacle at this moment reminded me of the nebula in the constellation Orion, in which the luminous cloud appears with a great rift in it

made by an arm of darkness coming from outer space and reaching to its very centre, as if clutching at its heart to tear it out. Then the bright system became overspread by the dark one, and the two seemed, as it were, to be grappling together in deadly strife. Finally the vision faded, leaving me under the impression that the luminous system had prevailed in the contest: for its points of light, the sun and moon and principal orbs, were regaining their brightness, while the dark cloud was melting away and disappearing.

The vision left me at no loss to understand its significance. For, in accordance with what I have since learnt to be the experience of all who have possessed the faculty which constitutes a "seer," an integral part of the process consists in impressing on the mind the meaning of that which is being shown. This, at least, so far as waking visions are concerned. With those given in sleep this is not always so, the power of receiving and of interpreting dreams being different gifts. The experiences of antiquity are those of to-day. To one is given dreams; to another the interpretation of dreams. But this does not, so far as I am aware, apply to waking visions. In the present case, as I have said, I was at no loss; for the same influence that gave me the vision impressed on me also the conviction

that I was beholding a representation of the "Eastern Question," and a full knowledge of its significance; and, as in numerous other instances, while that significance proved to be in precise accordance with all that had been shown me in the course of my studies respecting the nature of existence and the course of the development of the human consciousness, and the scheme of the world, still it was so far in advance of any point I had previously reached, as to be inexplicable to me save on the hypothesis of suggestion by some intelligence other than my own.

For the full interpretation it will be necessary to read and understand "England and Islam." For that is but an expansion, subsequently given me, of what was contained in my vision. The bright system had represented the scheme of the world's development, moral, social, and political, as well as spiritual, as depending for its final accomplishment upon the harmonious union of the light and dark races, as represented in England and Asia. To England, as the most highly vitalised in the spiritual region, of modern peoples, and representative of the soul and conscience, had been allotted the destiny of redeeming the world by the universal extension of the spirit by which her coming higher development was to be animated. In order to bring about the manifestation in humanity, as a whole,

of that dualism the recognition of which, by virtue of its constituting an essential element in the divine existence, is indispensable to the perfection of man's life, it was necessary that the connexion between England and the Eastern peoples should be maintained uninterrupted. The issue at stake, while of vital importance to England nationally, was of far higher importance both to herself and the world spiritually. Only by the universal and practical reception of the dogma that "God made man in His own image, male and female," and the consequent accordance of equal rank and influence to both sides of the divine dualism, the emotional as well as the intellectual, love and sympathy as well as force and knowledge, the intuitions as well as the reason, could the world be redeemed from its present state of woe. It was because the powers of evil were resolved to thwart the realisation of the divine idea, by still exalting the principle of selfishness and force, and the sacrifice of others, in place of the rule of love, that they had entered into and taken possession of the as yet unvitalised empire of Russia, and were using her political ambition to promote their own ends. The severance of England from her duty and destiny in the East meant the driving back of the soul of the most highly vitalised of the earth's races into itself, and its withdrawal from

future use for the world's higher development. The coveted alliance between the Anglican and Greek Churches would further minister to this end by quenching the superior vitality of the Anglican in the chill embrace of the Russian, and confirming its sacerdotal predilections. For, while England, however imperfectly, was for the world the champion of the conscience, or sense of God and the soul, Russia was the representative of the negation of the conscience, and champion of the mere outer sense and reason. Hence it was that, as I was shown in my vision, Russia was receiving the eager alliance of all those among us who were worshippers of the outer sense and reason, and despisers of the soul and its intuitions. The dark influences I had seen hastening to unite themselves with the dark cloud for the purpose of overwhelming the bright system, represented by the sun of England and the moon of Islam, were the various orthodoxies of Church and State, science, literature, and art, sacerdotal and political, which, caring only for the material and nothing for the spiritual, confessed themselves thereby the willing slaves of "Antichrist" and the "Beast" of Sense, expressly for the time incarnate in Russia. The "1260 years" were passed, and the "Dragon and his angels" had once more assembled for the fray; and I was made vividly conscious, to a degree impos-

sible to convey, of the rapid mustering from all quarters of the heavens in order to array themselves against them, of influences which were impressed on me as being no other than the "Michael and his angels" of the Apocalypse. The contest was shown to me to be one for the possession of the world during the coming millennium, between Spirit and Matter, as represented respectively by England and Russia, the chief battle-field being the domain of Islam, while behind the combatants were the gods and demons of the upper and nether worlds. It was the old epic of existence—a new re-enactment of the Solar Myth, on a scale transcending that sung by Homer, vast almost as that sung by Milton.

At the beginning of my vision my mind had been a complete blank respecting the nature and merits of the "Eastern Question." I had little knowledge and no preferences in the matter. At the end I felt that I had full knowledge. Every fact gathered in my recent studies, moreover, seemed at once to have found its proper place and bearing; and seek carefully as I would and did for flaws in the view presented to me, everything I found served but to confirm my vision. Singular facilities for testing its soundness were all at once afforded me. Persons long resident in and officially connected with the countries concerned seemed to have

been sent to me expressly, and it was with no little surprise that they noted the completeness of the correspondence between the results of my intuition and their experience.

Confident that what had been shown me was not for my own exclusive benefit, I had parted from my vision to hasten home and write the letter referred to in the opening section. But I had no sooner written so much than I found that it was neither letter nor pamphlet that would contain all I felt myself charged to say. And the notion of having a small volume ready by Christmas was soon dispelled. For it became evident to me that it was not I who was writing it; but that some influence stronger than I, and possessed of full knowledge on all subjects whatever, was making use of me and of all I had acquired in the way of spiritual perception, intellectual knowledge, or literary skill. It was early in my progress that I found that the work had been fairly taken out of my hands, that I was but a mouthpiece, and that "England and Islam" was being written, not by me, but through me, in order to declare to a generation incapable of discerning aught transcending the sphere of sense, the nature of the crisis at which the world had arrived in the process of its self-devitalisation in respect of its animating soul. And very far removed from any feeling of self-complacency on

my part was the reflection that, descending for a purpose so transcendent, the tutelary Spirit of the Earth had been able to find no better mouth-piece than myself. For all thought of self was wholly lost in the consciousness given me of the tremendous nature of the crisis. Like Noah, I could already hear the roar of the advancing deluge, and the ark had all to be built; and who was I that the task should be committed to me?

Now was made apparent to me the meaning of the impulse which had so seriously interfered with the progress of my former work. For the groove in which I was now impelled was precisely that out of which I had striven in vain to keep myself. It was no more in my power to stem the flood of my intuitions, and fall back upon mere reason, or to reserve for my projected book the conclusions I had designed for it, than to withstand the influence of gravitation. I can liken the phenomenon only to a case of obsession, in which the individual stands aside, while his organism and faculties are made use of by some other individuality. While any attempt to take a line other than that which was dictated to me was to find myself wholly deprived of power, to let myself go freely with it was to find the universe opened to my view. My consciousness of unlimited power of perception while under the influence was absolute. Mind seemed

to have lost its limitations, and the veil to have been withdrawn from between the finite and infinite. The barrier of sense was gone; I was at home in the centre of my own and of all consciousness. In this and in all other respects, as I have learnt by subsequent study of the records of similar phenomena, my experiences were identical with those of numbers who have been used as mediums of spiritual communication. There is no obliteration of individual characteristics, only such a heightening and intensification of all the faculties as enable the subject to receive impressions from influences to which ordinarily he is insensible. As with a musical instrument, the tone and characteristics are his own and the same whoever plays upon him; only the melody and sentiment are those of the player. I was particularly struck by finding that all my previous ideas respecting the loss of self-consciousness during the ecstasy of communication were wrong. For no single instant did I fail to retain the most perfect intellectual self-possession, but was throughout able to stand, as it were, beside myself and watch, while some spirit other than my own was delivering itself through me. It may be well to remind those who are incredulous respecting the reality of such experiences that so far from the literature of the subject—a literature derived from all ages and races—being scanty or inco-

herent, the phenomena of inspiration have been reduced more or less exactly to a science; so that incredulity as to their possibility is but another name for total ignorance of the subject. Of this, however, at that time, I was myself wholly unaware.

As I proceeded, it became more and more clear to me that all I had experienced in connexion with my studies of the nature of existence and the meaning of the world's religions had been but a preparation and training for the present task. I had been shown the true intention and possibility of perfection of the world, and disciplined and enlightened for the express purpose of exposing the shortcomings of the prevailing system, of which the impending cataclysm was but the inevitable outcome. And I had been shown all this with a view to the abrogation of that system as at once ruinous to man and degrading to the idea of God; and with a view also to the initiation of a new era, which was to constitute a new "day" in the earth's spiritual creation, even that sixth and final work-day in which humanity would at length recognise and prove itself to be made "in the image of God, male and female," on the spiritual as well as on the physical plane of its nature. It was in no spirit of presumption, and with no rash haste, but with all slowness and diffidence, and infinite patience of observation and analysis, that I at length accepted as the

only conclusion open to me, the conviction that I was being used for a purpose other than my own, and one lying above, beyond, and outside of any entertained by me; and that I had been allowed to make the stupendous discoveries which had rewarded my labours, expressly in order that they might minister to the development of the new stage in his spiritual consciousness on which man was about to enter, and to enable me to be the mouthpiece of the spirit charged with its promulgation.

The little volume of about two hundred pages which I had at first sent to the press, and which had occupied me nearly ten days, proved wholly unable to contain all that presented itself. The matter came in a torrent, to arrest the flow of which I had neither the power nor the will. Though in perfect accordance with all that I had previously ascertained, it was to a great extent new even to me, for it constituted a perpetual revelation of hitherto unsuspected vistas on the road I had been travelling, but far in advance of any point I had reached. And I, who had hitherto deemed the power of divining and predicting the future to be beyond the range of possibility, now found myself taken to such altitudes that past, present, and future seemed to me all one. Experiences crowded on me of such a nature as to make me suspect that time and space have

indeed no real existence, and that to be "in the spirit" is to be independent of them. The individual was merged in the universal, and the universal was one.

It will be observed that I have now reached a stage in my narrative in which I consider myself entitled to employ, respecting the influences which were impelling me, terms which imply personality. The fact is, that what I had previously accounted an ideal world was now unmistakably demonstrating itself to me as a spiritual world. For we had now come into such close communion with each other that it was no longer for me vague and impersonal, but teemed with life and individuality; individuality, too, that could make itself manifest to the senses. I, who did not believe in "spirits," had nevertheless in my pursuit of the ideal and the perfect, and adherence to my intuition, wandered, or rather been led, so far in the right direction that I now, without any thought of such an issue, found myself holding such intercourse with personal though invisible influences that to have doubted of the reality of their existence would have been to reject all reason for believing in that of my own. And when, no longer doubtful of the fact, I set myself to consider what might be the class of beings with whom I had so wonderfully come into relation, and found that the utterances with

which they inspired me were identical in character with those of the great prophets of old; that the burden of both was the same, inasmuch as it had been the like passionate love of the perfection of all existence as inherently divine, that wrung from them those cries of denunciation and exhortation which constitute the world's loftiest poetry, and that their whole burden was of God and the soul and the intuitions of the conscience,—I had no reason to doubt or hesitate as to the character of the influences which were compelling utterance through me.

While my condition was abnormal, it was in no way morbid. Compared with the ordinary standpoint of myself and others, the altitude on which I stood was enormous, but the difference was only that between the balloon inflated and the balloon collapsed. I, however, no more than a balloon, could thus have inflated and exalted myself. Neither was it merely that my range of vision was greater by reason of my exaltation. This of course happened; but I had new eyes to see with, and a new class of informants from whom to obtain knowledge. For the region to which I had ascended was the familiar habitat of intelligences for whom to descend into the denser regions of consciousness is an impossibility. No words can describe the sense of difference between thus soaring aloft

in purest realms of space, and lying shrunken, limp, and collapsed on the ground. For me alone out of so many, many millions was the problem of the universe at length solved. I knew that existence is spiritual, while almost all others deemed it material. I knew that the soul is king, while others worshipped sense. I knew that existence is God, and that God is love, while in every department of his activity man was exalting his outer and lower self, and seeking to save that by the sacrifice, not of his fellows merely, but of his own higher and true self. I had beheld the scheme of the universe, and seen that it was perfect in goodness and in beauty, and that I even, in my degree, was a function of the whole, to aid the evolution of order out of disorder, of good out of evil, of soul out of sense. I had at length won my way into the holy of holies of all the world's true churches, and could exclaim with the initiated in the sacred mysteries—whether of Parvati, of Isis, of Bacchus, of Ceres, of Mithras, of Jehovah, or of Jesus,—“I know that I am immortal!” And all this had come to me solely by virtue of my persistent rejection of every orthodox doctrine or usage, religious or social, that militated against my sense of the perfection of existence, and by my preference for the right to the expedient, regardless of any advantage that compliance might

have procured. The very refusal to accept aught at secondhand or on the authority of tradition, was accepted as a recognition of God as still living and operating.

Though on the very threshold as it seemed of Divinity, the region was, I found, one that was far from being unknown to mortals. Many are they whose footsteps I recognised, and whom now I need no longer envy. What an Elijah, an Isaiah, a Daniel, a John, a Paul, a Behmen, a Swedenborg, a Davis had seen and recorded, I now saw for myself. Whole troops of high thinkers and pure livers had by virtue of a like faculty penetrated to the same high latitude. Spinoza had fallen short only by reason of his failure to transcend the sphere of the intellect. Yet even by this he had been enabled to recognise in existence "an infinity of things other than the material universe only."

It is impossible to render anything like an adequate account of this portion of my experiences; only they who have themselves been "in the spirit" can comprehend the significance of the phrase.

It is not so with that portion of my experiences which are of a more material order, and of which I will now give some account. The first manifestation of a physical kind consisted in my finding, as I sat at my writing-machine, my

hands suddenly grasped by some invisible influence, and forcibly guided over the keys, without any effort of my own, mental or physical. For the greater part of a page I sat and watched, while my hands went apparently of themselves. Not only was the grasp forcible and distinct, but the movement was of a character wholly different to my own, so as to make me feel confident that had I been using a pen, the handwriting would have been in a character entirely strange to me. Instead of the light, rapid, pianoforte touch usual to me, it was measured, firm, and stately, as of one playing solemn music upon a grand organ. "This," I said to myself, "must be what is meant by being a 'medium.'" It was the first disclosure to me of the fact that there are unseen and intelligent forces which can operate directly upon and through the human organism, and independently of the mind of the individual.

The passage thus written is the first half of the solemn address of England to the Turk, at p. 185 of "England and Islam." The remainder of that address was given in the ordinary way—namely, by suggestion or "inspiration," the constraint being mental merely. The physical constraint had been withdrawn apparently as soon as the influence had convinced either itself of my complete docility, or me of its reality.

A day or two later I had a yet more startling

experience. This was while writing the passage occupying pp. 164—167,—for the order of this and the passage just referred to has since been inverted. These four pages were written without drawing breath, the matter flowing through me like water through a vertical tube, without conscious effort of my own, save only such effort as may have been necessary to keep me from obtruding myself. My endeavour throughout was to yield myself up wholly to the influence of whose presence I was distinctly conscious as of one hanging over the back of my chair, and bending closely over me. It was a good deal past midnight, so that all without was quiet, and I was alone, and locked in my rooms. The passage I had been writing had intently engrossed my attention, for it was a revelation to me, and both words and ideas had come without mental effort on my part, all my thoughts being occupied in admiring the sublimity of the utterance, and the ease of its expression, my feeling the while being one of absolute conviction that I was being used as an instrument by some great spirit for the delivery of one of the loftiest utterances ever made to the world. No sooner had I reached the end of the sentence on p. 167—that declaring the identity of the soul of the individual and race with the soul of the universe, which after surpassing all limitations finally finds itself

“one with God, even God Himself”—than the Influence I had felt bending over me spoke aloud, in a tone at once firm and measured, and indicative of supreme satisfaction, exclaiming, “*At last I have found a man through whom I can speak !*” So full and strong was the intonation, that the tympanums of my ears palpably vibrated to the sound ; and I observed that as palpably they had been struck, not from without, but from within, showing that the influence, of whose external presence I had previously been fully conscious, had projected itself into me, and there spoken. It did not, however, as on a subsequent occasion, use my organs for the utterance, though it had, no doubt, as I afterwards found to be invariably the case, employed my vital force. The lowness of my temperature showed this ; for I immediately went through the usual formula of placing my hand on my forehead, feeling my pulse, and so on, in order to reassure myself of my condition, not so much for my own satisfaction as for that of some imagined sceptical physiologist who might be supposed to be investigating the occurrence. My examination was perfectly satisfactory ; for the pulse, though full and strong, was regular and slow ; and the head was cool to coldness, a symptom I have since learnt to be indicative of the loss of force always suffered by “mediums,” through the subtraction by the

operating influence of the magnetic aura, or *agaza*, as the life-fluid and agent of force is termed by the sensitives and ecstasies of the East.

But who or what was it that thus uttered itself aloud to me? I had been declaring, with the intensest conviction of its truth, the doctrine of a soul at once individual and universal that was ever seeking by infusing itself into man, to redeem him from the lower planes of his nature, and make humanity, as it were, a fitting body for deity. I had discovered that it was the universal, under the aspect of the national soul, that was the true object of Hebrew aspiration; and I was full of the thought that England herself had a like soul of her own, that was ever seeking to incarnate itself in her people. And I was approaching the thought that the souls of all the nations were one and the same, even the soul that was at once humanity and deity; and that, if only by being one in spirit, man could arrive at the recognition of his essential nature, he would attain the perfection that was his due. Such a soul, if ever it succeeded in finding for itself full expression, would indeed be entitled to the appellation, "Son of Man." There were but two, I thought, that could prompt to such utterance as that which I had been writing, or thus express themselves in regard to my task. These were the soul itself of my country, and some

lofty spirit, perhaps the angel or Elohim of the earth, who was charged with the superintendence of the development of the consciousness of the planet. Whoever it was, the tone and the words were unmistakably those of one who had been seeking long and in vain, trying here and trying there, to find some one of England's millions of sons sufficiently detached from absorption in the outer and lesser self, and sufficiently earnest in heart and pure in habit, to be amenable to influence by the spirit of his race; and who, having pitched on me and trained me for his ends, had at length for his satisfaction and my own, given such emphatic utterance to his hearty commendation. It was not until my book was on the point of completion that I received any positive intimation on the matter. In the meantime I accepted the encouragement and redoubled my efforts, restricting myself as nearly as possible to the diet of Daniel and all seers, in order that there might be naught in my system which, by deranging the circulation and blunting my faculties, might interpose an obstacle to the free course of the spirit.

Of the circle of friends with whom I associated at this time there was but one who was sufficiently sympathetic to my work and aims to be fully entrusted with a knowledge either of their nature or of my experiences. This was one con-

nected with me by various ties, of which those of the mind and spirit were the strongest, and who by reason of such relationship had become associated with me in a variety of enterprises, intellectual and beneficent. Of this friend whom, for reasons by-and-by to be sufficiently apparent, I will call the Seeress, the bright intelligence, cultivated mind, indomitable spirit, and eager sympathy with the pursuit of perfection wherever discernible, proved an invaluable aid and support throughout my work. She it was who some three years previously had been instrumental in showing me the method of pure living in respect of diet. And it could hardly have been by accident that almost at the same moment we both became consciously amenable to spiritual impression.

The first occasion on which her possession of the faculty manifested itself in regard to my book, was in this wise. I had written the passage on pp. 290—299 without having communicated to her my intention of utilising the incident there detailed, as I wished to complete it first. It was on a favourite subject of hers, Woman and her Work in the future. And I had written to the end of the paragraph on p. 299 under the impression that it was being, as was now usual, written through, rather than by me, so strong was the influence that dictated it. I had the

whole clearly in my mind, but on reaching this point I found myself unable to continue. A moment before I had been full of the thought that I was to set down, and the expression of which was to complete my day's work. But as suddenly and completely as the stream from a barrel is stopped by the turning of the tap, did the flow of my thought cease, and the power to proceed utterly forsake me. It was in vain that I ransacked my mind for the remainder. It was not there, any more than if it had never been there. So complete and abrupt was the desertion that I looked round me and exclaimed aloud to my missing thought as to a person, "Where are you?" There was no response. I was still fresh, having two or three hours' work in me, so I determined to go on with another part of my book. So struck, however, was I by the occurrence that I first took note of the hour. It was 11.30 P.M.

The next morning I received, written in a strange hand, a manuscript, accompanied by the following statement. It was from my friend the Seeress.

"A strange thing happened to me last night. I had finished my work, but was not inclined to go to bed, though it was half-past eleven, as I had a sense of irritation at the thought of what you were engaged in, and at my exclusion from any share in it. And I was feeling envious of men for the superior advantages they have over

us of doing great and useful work. As I sat by the fire thinking this, I found myself suddenly impelled to take a pencil and paper in my hand. Having done so, I began to write; and continued writing, with extreme rapidity, feeling myself the while more like one dreaming than waking, and without the slightest idea what I was writing, though supposing it was something to correspond with my discontented mood. I had soon nearly covered two large pages with a handwriting which, as you will see, in no way resembles my own. Here is the paper. I know nothing more about it than I have said. It is quite the contrary of what I was thinking at the time!"

The sheets in question contained the passage in "England and Islam," beginning near the end of p. 299 and continuing to the latter part of p. 302, with but slight alteration. It was my missing thought, identical in substance, but more exquisitely rendered than could have been done through my less delicate organisation. And the only explanation that either of us could frame was that it had been really and truly a personal spirit of high degree who had been communicating it to me in the first instance, and who, knowing and fostering our alliance, had suddenly quitted me and taken it to my Seeress in order to gratify us both by allowing her a share

in my work, and proving to me at the same time the genuineness of my inspiration.

The faculty once kindled, the Seeress proved of inestimable assistance to me, her communications which after this, were for the most part given in sleep, making a remarkable adjunct to those made to me. One of these I have recorded at p. 438. It was in connexion with this vision that I was spoken to the second time by the invisible speaker. The circumstances under which this happened are worth noting, as showing incontestably that the phenomenon was due to no exaltation of mine.

The vision was that in which I was represented as charged with the rescue of England, under the guise of a railway train, from a régime that was leading her to destruction; and as I had then for some days been familiar with the narrative, its perusal could no longer be exciting to me. I was sitting alone in my room, reading the proofs of the passage, and having my mind occupied solely with the letterpress. And when in doing this I reached the statement that I had said in the dream, "No, we will not leap down, we will stop the train," the same voice that had previously exclaimed, "At last I have found a man through whom I can speak!" now said, in a pleased and eager tone, as of one who had been following me in my reading of the proof, "*Yes!*"

yes! I have trusted all to you!" It was at once an encouragement to me to persevere in my task, no matter at what disadvantage to myself; and an intimation that the visions given to the Seeress were intended to constitute an integral part of the prophecy. I have referred in my book to the effect produced by this vision on the recipient. It was so serious as to make her dread a repetition; and on feeling herself threatened with another, at a time when she needed repose, she warded it off by taking a narcotic. It seemed, however, as if the "spirit" would not be baffled. For that same night, and, so far as could be ascertained, at the very hour at which I was noting down what had just struck me as a valuable thought for next day's work, a dream of singular vividness, and exactly illustrative of my thought, occurred to an inmate of the same house, one who was so little given to dreaming as to remark in relation to it, although wholly unaware of my friend's experiences, that "it seemed as if 'Mary' had brought Spirits into the house."

Those who are acquainted with the corresponding histories of past ages will readily recall the similarity subsisting between them and this one in respect of the association of two individuals of opposite sex for prophetic purposes. Few of the prophets of old were able to dispense with the aid of a prophetess, and her superior impressibility and

quicker intuition. The discovery of the correspondence between our position and that of the ancient seers, when at length it dawned upon us, produced a profound feeling of satisfaction at this further indication of the reality of the whole matter, coupled with no little amusement at its strangeness, and contrast with the ordinary conventions of modern society. Of the *metaphysiology* of such an association for such a purpose this is scarcely the occasion to treat. But good if not sufficient reasons are not wanting with those who have made the science of Mantic theurgy their study. There are regions in humanity wholly unknown to physiology, not only as to their facts but as to their existence. When the "Schools of the Prophets" are restored, there will be no lack of facts whereon to reconstruct a lost science.

Anything like a full account of our now daily experiences of this nature is out of the question. We seemed to be literally living "in the spirit," so completely beyond the range of the material were the things that were constantly occurring. We did not regard them as "supernatural," but as belonging to a region of nature transcending that of ordinary observation. Neither, although they were of such frequent occurrence, did we accept them hastily or as a matter of course, but invariably subjected them to the severest scrutiny. Among the most

notable of the waking visions presented to me, were the scenes of Jesus and the adulteress, and the expositions of that stumbling-block of belief the Solar myth, of that crux of students the Zodiacal planisphere, and of that despair of biblical interpreters the Apocalypse. In the first of these, which is given at p. 463, it seemed to me that I was actually present beside Jesus himself. So distinctly were his features impressed on my sight in the waking vision given me that I should have no difficulty in recognising him by the recollection. I felt when writing the passage as if I could have similarly described the whole of his life; and the impression was irresistible that I had either been present with him, and was now simply recalling my own reminiscences, or that the whole was being reproduced for me in a series of living tableaux by some one who had been present. The image of the apostle John was vividly impressed on my mind in connexion with this experience. I even sought to know whether I should quit my work and write the whole history of Jesus while the recollection was so strong upon me. But the suggestion received a decided negative. It was intimated, however, that it might be given to me to do something akin to it at some future time. Of the possibility of holding familiar converse with spiritual beings, I received ample proofs. It is

necessary only to be sufficiently impressible to hear them distinctly.

I had long been a student of the various schemes in which the ancients formulated their conception of the universe. But only as I approached the end of my book did the planisphere of the zodiac become for me a thing instinct with life. It was presented to me while sitting at my work, in a series of waking visions, in the guise of a vast spiral and vortex-ring, representing at once the process whereby divinity evolves from itself rings of substance, which become concentrated and consolidated in individuals, material, or spiritual; and also whereby these pursue their never-ceasing development in accordance with the impulses cherished by them—impulses leading them to or from God. The whole of what I have described on pp. 565—588 and 624—628, was shown to me in a series of living pictures, and impressed on me as having a significance identical with that given at p. 532, of the parable of the Prodigal Son.

I was spoken to aloud on two other occasions during the writing of my book. Not at these times by a spirit that had never been in the body, but by one with whom once more to hold intercourse, and from whom to obtain such recognition, was a delight of the profoundest kind. It had been impressed upon me to describe the character

of the mother of Jesus, and to take that of my own mother for the type, a specially vivid perception of her being given me at the time. The passage in question occurs at p. 468; and as I was in the act of completing it, the well-remembered tones struck on my ears in the most unmistakable manner, calling me by the appellation she alone had ever used for me, and exclaiming, "*O, Eddie! Eddie! we have found each other at last!*" No use was made of my organism for this utterance; but, during the violent burst of joyous sobbing which followed, it was used by a personality which I was distinctly conscious of being other than my own. The emotion felt by me was not of a kind to seek vent in such a manner. With me it was a combination of curiosity and gratification. My intellectual faculties were even more on the stretch than my emotional; and I was occupied in examining intently a phenomenon so strange as that of a person discharging tears and sobs, to which he was conscious that he was himself no party, while on her part it was an immense and unrestrained burst of gladsome weeping. The passage in question contains a declaration respecting a doctrine of the highest importance, both in the system of Christian belief, and in that of some of the advanced spiritualists of our day—the doctrine, I mean, of the Immaculate

too has done it unto me"—was scarcely finished when my mother's voice again addressed me, saying aloud in a reassuring tone, "*C—— shall be my care !*" As she had been mother as well as grandmother to him from infancy, such guardianship was not unnatural. But no specification was made as to whether her promised undertaking referred to this life or the next. I may add, however, that it failed to remove my gloomy impression.

I was marvelling somewhat that I received no sign from my father, until I was reminded that I had a few months previously had a dream which had struck me so much at the time of its occurrence, its character being so unlike that of an ordinary dream, that I related it to some friends; but which, as I had no warrant then for attaching importance to dreams, I had allowed to slip from my memory. I can now regard it as an actual visitation, designed to encourage me in my work. Hence I record it. It was in this wise.

My father, as is well known, was accounted a pillar of that school of evangelicalism which attaches supreme importance to the doctrine of vicarious atonement. This doctrine constituted for him the essence of Christianity. It was the point above all others on which he could not tolerate difference of opinion. As I had the

strongest instinctive aversion to that very doctrine, considering it as a blasphemy against the perfection of the divine character, and the basis of that exaltation of selfishness and cruelty, which under the form of sacerdotal orthodoxy has been the most fruitful source of the world's evils, the subject was one on which it was impossible for us to be in accord. Almost his last words to me had been a reiteration of his faith in it, as his sole source of hope for the future—a remark, in reply to which, under the circumstances, I could only observe that I thought he would find that God was better than he gave him credit for being.

In the dream I refer to, which took place eleven years after his death, he had the aspect of one coming from a higher sphere, so ineffably lofty, refined, and placid was his expression. And I at once saw that I could now without offence refer freely to the subject which in his lifetime had been an impossible one between us. I had meanwhile acquired an absolute certainty that mine was the right view, and that the doctrine that blood is food either for soul or body, is the doctrine not of salvation but of damnation. The world's whole history had proved it to me. So, seeing by his aspect that he had freed himself from the effects of the constitutional dyspepsia, which I more than suspected to be the basis of his Cal-

vinism, I said fearlessly, " Well, father, what do you think of vicarious atonement now? Do you still think me so wicked for rejecting it?" It was as I had surmised. There was not a trace of the anger such a suggestion would have evoked in his lifetime. But in its place, his face was radiant with the most angelic smile possible to be imagined even upon his singularly benignant countenance. It was a smile at once of the heartiest assent and approbation, conveying more than words could say. He evidently considered words unnecessary. For presently, without speaking, he rose in the air and vanished from my sight.

I must not give the impression that the work involved no intellectual labour on my part. It is true that while I was plainly directed as to the matter of which it should consist, and very much was shown to me of which I had no previous knowledge, there was also much that came within the scope of mere reason; and the utterance of which, while imperiously required of me, was committed rather to my intellectual than to my spiritual faculties. But the *afflatus* included my whole being; and the intensification of my intellect for the purpose was plainly apparent to me, as I was enabled readily to follow and surpass, and to detect the underlying fallacies of, trains of thought which previously I had been

unable to grasp. No longer was it now a matter of wonder to me why the utterances of those who have been endowed with the prophetic faculty, are so often pervaded by intense scorn and bitter invective. The opening of the spiritual eyes, while it reveals the perfection which belongs to existence in itself, reveals also the imperfection by which it is characterised with us, together with the causes of that imperfection. For it reveals the selfishness and heedlessness of man himself as the cause of his own evils. The "prophet" is one who sees absolutely that to which the most knowing about him are utterly blind—namely, the rationale of which facts, the motives of which deeds, are the phenomena; and he is unable to tolerate the shallow views and false methods by which they insist on spoiling the existence whose capacity for perfection is manifest to him. He sees that the one law is love; and the world insists on making it hate. He sees that it is by a life of purity and sympathy that man is to be redeemed; and man himself insists on foulness and sacrifice. He sees that the source and end of all things is the inner and invisible; and all about him make it the outer and material. He sees that men are spirits, clad but for a brief space in garments of flesh; while men insist on mistaking their clothing for themselves, and deny the spiritual part of them, and under the

delusion that matter and sense are all, seek to build up the world. That the prophet's exaltation is intellectual as well as spiritual, is now in no way doubtful to me. He only has no call to reason for himself, because he knows. If he seek to reason, it is for others, for whom reason is all; and these he is enabled to outreason. For himself, he is at the top of his being, where the mind is in unity, and thinking and feeling are one. He has completed his system of thought. For himself, the appeal is direct to his consciousness in its original integrity, ere it has differentiated into the contrasted opposites of thinking and feeling. His mode of knowledge is thus as that of the absolute, even God, in its primal perfection. His vision is without limitations, for having attained the centre of his own consciousness, he has attained the centre of all consciousness. If he blunder, as he sometimes will, it is through accidental defect of the organism. Humanity, degenerate, cannot perfectly reflect the movements of spirit: something is lost in translation. Hence, inspiration does not involve infallibility; that appertains to spirit alone. The prophet is but as a painter who, in transferring his vision of the ideal to canvas, may fail to impress others with its excellence.

And then the speed at which one is driven under such influence! I marvel now, on leisurely

re-reading, to find the expression at all commensurate with the inspiration, and not rendered scarcely intelligible by reason of the haste both of writing and printing, and the impossibility of anything like adequate revision. After I was once fully and consciously under the influence of the spirit, the matter came in a flood; and no attempt at condensation, division, or arrangement was possible. As well attempt to rail off a torrent. I neither could, nor dared, contract or omit. Even introduction and abstract of contents were precluded me, and this not by reason of lack of time only. It was necessary that the book should be out by a given date, but not that it should be at once perfected, recognised, or understood. Provided only those who were entrusted with the destinies of England had the opportunity of reading it ere Parliament met, or decisive action could be taken, the controlling influences were content.

Nevertheless the re-reading disclosed a number of blemishes which, with one who aimed at making the perfection of the expression correspond to that of the spirit, could not fail to be a source of disappointment. These were far from being all included in the list of corrections afterwards added; and the only one of real importance even then had escaped detection. Those readers of "England and Islam" who are conversant

with their Bibles will have seen that, in the reference to Enoch, on p. 386, I have failed to distinguish between the two Enochs, the second and the seventh from Adam. It must be left for a subsequent edition to amend the text. The error arose from my allowing a suggestion to pass from the margin into the text without being subjected to verification. It was one of many experiences which served to account for the discrepancies as to fact which abound more or less in all compositions similarly originated—namely, the failure of the medium to overcome the limitations of his organism, and, by freeing himself wholly from preconception and preoccupation, to become perfectly amenable to the influence inspiring him. No inspiration of spirit can insure to the instrument absolute infallibility in respect of fact and detail. How rare is it for the instrument to be so perfect as to utter no false notes, let the example of Paul be a witness.

In more respects than one does the term “breathless” express the character of the operation; for I was conscious of a complete suspension of the ordinary respiration during the delivery of all the higher passages, in which I most distinctly knew myself to be under spiritual control. Frequently this suspension continued over several pages—that is, for perhaps an hour of time; and though, at the termination of the expression of

the thought that was being infused, I drew long breaths in the ordinary manner, and subsided to my ordinary level, there was no sensation of distress. So far from this, the condition was one akin to that of ecstasy, although always accompanied by full intellectual consciousness. My impression at the time—and it is confirmed by all subsequent experience—was that I was hyper-vitalised by some spiritual individuality other than my own, and possessing power of all kinds infinitely surpassing mine. For when thus inspired, the mind seemed to have escaped all limitations of sense and matter, and to have attained full identity with the universal mind. The condition was one of supreme content, for one knew all things, and there was no *beyond* to which to aspire. I have reason to believe that the condition is one which I have since learnt is familiar to several of those who are termed mystics, seers, and ecstasies—as Behmen, Swedenborg, and the American T. L. Harris. They speak of it as produced or accompanied by an internal respiration, which, on becoming substituted for the ordinary mode, stimulates the consciousness to its highest pitch, until the soul itself is set free from the limiting effects of the organism, and enabled to expand and soar unrestrained.

The Hindoos were accustomed to induce this

state artificially, by following certain directions contained in a passage in the Vedas, with which some of my readers may like to make acquaintance :—

“Hold the breath. Remain without movement. Repeat inwardly A. U. M.” (the initials of the Hindoo Trinity) “twelve times, thinking that the Soul is one with God. Draw in a full supply of breath, and hold it while inwardly repeating A. U. M. twenty times ; and again while inwardly repeating it as often as possible, thinking meanwhile of God as perfect being, which can be revealed only by its own light. Continue this exercise three months, without fear or idleness. In the fourth month good spirits will appear to you. In the fifth you will acquire their qualities. In the sixth you will become God.”

It was, I have little doubt, his realisation of this condition, though not thus artificially acquired, that suggested to Buddha his conception of Nirvana. This was not an absorption in God such as would be accompanied by a deprivation of individuality. For, so far from the sense of individuality being lost during the occurrence of the ecstasy, it is distinctly heightened, as if by an infusion with a larger yet substantially identical individuality. Complete suffusion of man by God does not necessarily imply the annihilation

of personality. Rather does it seem probable, to judge so far as I may by the experience vouchsafed to me, that the effect of such suffusion is the expansion and enhancement, and not the effacement, of the individual.

These phenomena of the consciousness are facts which lie at the common centre of all religions, Hindoo, Christian, or other. And when men once more learn to combine the habit of looking inwards with that of looking outwards, they will discover that existence contains no small array of facts indicating the necessity of a revision of the limits at present assigned to "Nature."

So far from the non-reality of these phenomena being presumable on the ground of novelty or rarity, the recognition of them constituted also an essential element in the system of the great sect of the Neoplatonists. The chief end and aim of the strenuous efforts, by means of a régime of asceticism to dematerialise themselves, made by the school which found its chief exponent in Plotinus, was no other than the attainment, through ecstatic exaltation, of power to hold spiritual and divine intercourse, to work miracles and to prophesy. Inheriting or re-discovering the secret of the mysteries, Hebrew and Gentile, they acquired the faculty possessed in perfection by the long succession of seers and prophets which culminated in Jesus of Nazareth, to whom

was given "without measure" the spirit they sought to develop in themselves. Realist as opposed to nominalist, and therefore in both faith and practice spiritualist, all these made the essential oneness of existence their fundamental doctrine. Intuition was self-perception ; and there was but one Self in the universe. But being thus pantheistic, and exalting the parent-hood of God, and allowing therefore no place for mediating priest or atoning victim, their doctrine found no mercy at the hands of a ruthless and dominant sacerdotalism.

The fact that truths of such stupendous import should thus have been consigned to oblivion, now to be re-discovered by those who own no allegiance to any existing system, ecclesiastical or philosophic, constitutes the crowning condemnation of all existing systems whatever. It is on the rejection or distortion of the fundamental facts of existence that the world's current orthodoxies rest. Whether religious or scientific, each alike subsists by means of the denial or suppression of the facts of the world's experience. Though constituting themselves arbiters in respect of things spiritual, even the churches have become nominalist instead of realist, and have banished or quenched the spirit. Though pretending to rest upon experience, the schools have eliminated every fact in experience that cannot be reconciled with a

materialistic hypothesis. Hence, for neither department is there in its system of thought any place for the phenomena by the renewed exhibition of which at this time the existence we partake is once more demonstrating its nature. Thus weighed and found wanting, the world's orthodoxies demonstrate nothing but their own incapacity to bear a part in the dispensation to come.

I have sometimes been disposed to regret that I did not, while under the influence, make some serious attempts to determine its miracle-working capacity, by obtaining manifestations other than those given spontaneously. So far from doing this, my desire was to be wholly subordinate, that is, so long as my own intuitions told me that the influences were good ones; for there are bad spirits as well as good, and it is absolutely indispensable to "try the spirits." Hence my attempts to influence my visitants were restricted to a request to be allowed to sleep undisturbed, in order to be up to my work—a boon that was never refused during the whole time the work continued; and such exquisite sleep did I enjoy that half my usual quantity amply sufficed to renovate me.

One night I thought it was going to be otherwise. I had returned from posting my day's work to the printer, but found myself, notwith-

standing that I had been out in the air, still so conscious of the thronging presences that I rose and opened my windows and doors. Even this had no effect, so overcharged was my brain with the magnetic aura. Suddenly it occurred to me that I was in the condition known as constituting physical mediumship, and I determined to ascertain; so, after getting into bed, I mentally requested the presence to give me a sign whereby I might know my impression was correct. There instantly came three strong taps on the wall beside my bed. I then said, "Now two more on the other side of the room;" and two were given in the opposite corner. "Now one more, and good night, for I want to sleep." This was followed by a blow on the handle of the door, which seemed half turned by it. I took this for a parting greeting; and so it proved, for the sensation of which I complained left me at the same time.

Never failing to subject with my Seeress our respective experiences to rigid analysis, we never succeeded in finding explanation save such as involved a total subversion of the modern theory of existence and confirmation of the ancient. Yes, the whole world, with its thousands of years of belief in "miracles," was right; and the half-dozen generations of savans were wrong. But though miracles were true, gravitation and natural

law remained inviolable. The effects were not without positive and ascertainable causes. The supernatural existed, but no longer necessarily as the supernatural. It was requisite only to enlarge the limits we had been wont to assign to "nature." All was done by personal beings, ordinarily invisible to the eye, who, by virtue of their superior knowledge and powers, could wield forces of which we have no cognisance, and who had been able to manifest themselves through us, by virtue of our following a pure intuition in regard to the conduct of life.

During the opening to me of the significance of the Apocalypse and the zodiacal planisphere, I was irresistibly impressed with the conviction of the identity of the influences at work in them. The hand and style, so to speak, of both sets of tableaux as presented to me, were the same. And I was convinced both by the intrinsic identity of the two revelations and the method of their opening to me, that it was one and the same spirit that had originally inspired them, and that was now repeating and interpreting them to me. These impressions continue unweakened; and if I refrain from employing respecting my guiding influence the phrase used by the elder prophets, and styling it "the Angel" or "Spirit of the Lord," it is from no lack of conviction of the propriety of

the appellation; but because the term is not one that accords with modern ideas so as to be readily appreciable; and because also it might imply a presence more fully palpable to the bodily senses than was assumed by the influences operating through me. It was moreover with difficulty that I could detach myself from old habits of thought, and give full recognition to the personality of these influences. The ancients had no such difficulty to encounter. They had not to recover the conception of the universal existence as a Person. It was for them a necessary truth. Thus in the case of the highest of all communications, whether the influence is exerted on the individual directly by the spirit of the universe or system, or whether some third personality is charged with the function, are questions on which I cannot yet speak positively. "The Lord" and "the Angel of the Lord," are terms which seem to be used by the inspired of old to signify the same influence. Some of the later experiences recorded in this book will show that spirits themselves speak of "the Lord," when designating the infinite Spirit as energising and operative.

I had previously, of course, regarded the planisphere of the zodiac as a humanly constructed scheme. But now it was shown positively as being no other than a spiritual revelation to the early world of the method of creation and

redemption on the physical and spiritual planes ; and as applying to the individual as well as to the universal, by virtue of the fact that all are modes of the same spirit. All derived existence, macrocosm and microcosm alike, it was shown me, are but vortex-rings and spirals, great or small, of the living conscious substance of the infinite spirit, individualised concretes to its abstract, and containing in their degree all the attributes of the original divine existence. The scheme of the zodiac used by me was one ascribed by students to the second Hermes, an Egyptian prophet-priest of an age so early as to be virtually pre-historic. And when illuminated and vivified for my spiritual eyes by the influence that was inspiring me, the conviction became irresistible that the spirit who had given to Hermes and the early world the scheme which represented the history of all time, was the same that had given the Apocalypse to John as a fuller disclosure of the final stage of that scheme ; and to myself the new and final application of both, for purposes affecting the world's immediate future. .

The very peculiarities of diction that mark the Apocalypse were pointed out to me by a scholastic friend as subsisting also in " *England and Islam.*" Of one point of identity I was fully conscious. It was that of method in the delivery. It accounts for the repetition observable in both :

and the same applies to the whole book. The matter was given, not in one continuous vision, but in a series of visions, in which the same truths were disclosed, but on each successive occasion with fuller detail and deeper insight. It was as if, finding the medium incapable of receiving and comprehending a full revelation at once, the informing spirit had repeated his instructions, each time giving further knowledge as the perceptions of the medium became developed, enabling him to reach a deeper stratum of meaning.

Respecting the faculty of prophecy, it had now become clear to me that it comes of no personal qualification, save that of the requisite kind and degree of impressibility, whereby the individual is capable of being used by some superior intelligence to utter himself through. It is open to any one, as my own experience proves, to enter into communication with the spiritual world. It needs but the purification of the organism and the earnest cultivation of the intuitional and affectional faculties. For those who live thus there are always good and lofty spirits ready to hold open and palpable converse with them. Men, and indeed all other fleshly creatures, are themselves but spirits incarnate or materialised. And spirits do not of compulsion, by reason of their projection into material forms, whatever their grade, forfeit the right or

power of communication with their unembodied fellows. Similarly, no individual spirit, incarnated or not, is cut off from communication with the great parent spirit of all, by reason of aught save the encouragement of lowering and depraving sentiments.

Only on special occasions, however, when human affairs reach a stage at which the assistance of the higher orders is necessary to carry the world over from one to another "day" in its spiritual creation, is it probable that the loftiest influences directly interfere. It is to action of this kind that I have learnt to ascribe the chief revelations which have been made at various critical periods of the world's history. All are utterances of one and the same spirit, whether the instrument used be Hermes, Daniel, John, or any other. That there have been constant minor revelations imparted by an order of spirits which, while high, are not so high—of revelations, namely, having reference to the conduct of life, individual or national—and that it depends upon the aspirants themselves what is the grade of the influences attracted to them, and that it is necessary to "try the spirits, whether they be of God," by the pure intuition, are facts which were communicated to me only after the completion of my book.

The character I have drawn of Mr. Gladstone

was given to me in a series of visions resembling that in which I had been shown the "Eastern Question." Few of my experiences struck me as more remarkable than the extreme pertinacity with which my guide insisted on recurring to him throughout the whole course of the book. Any scruple I raised respecting the propriety of dealing thus freely with individuals was instantly swept away, with the intimation that there was to be no respect of persons, and that all alike were at his disposal to do with as it pleased him. He represented the Soul of England, incarnate in every one of England's children, human or animal; and the more of that soul that had been infused into any one of them, the greater his claim upon them. My understanding rebelled continually against the utterances in which I was claiming Mr. Gladstone as the Joshua as well as the Moses of England's coming regeneration, and as leader against the influences which now engage his sympathies. Equally improbable did it seem to me that he should become the champion of the union of England and the Moslem in a faith so developed as to include the essential elements both of Islamism and of the Christianity which is that, not of Caiaphas and sacerdotalism, but of Christ and the intuitions. I was reminded during this colloquy of my own change of view, though that

indeed had come about, not by any reversal of my method or direction, but by continuing to advance in the direction I had always been following, even of that of the ideal perfection, no matter how wild and barren the tracts through which the pursuit might lead. It was only, I was assured, the exchange of his curvilinear motion for my rectilinear one, that was required of Mr. Gladstone, to enable him also to win his way to his true centre and self instead of continuing to career round it at a distance. He, too, was, so far as he could at present discern it, a follower of perfection. But it was the perfection of the phenomenal and outward, not of the spiritual and inward. And I was shown distinctly and compelled to declare that, vast as might appear the improbabilities, they were not greater than had been surmounted in my own case; and that he had but to recognise the truth that "Blood is not Food" in any plane whatever of the divine existence, to find his spiritual perceptions opening under the genial influences of his country's Soul, and in his turn win from the representative of that Soul, even as I had done, the expression of supreme complacency, "At last I have found a man through whom I can ACT!"

It was not merely as a possibility that this was given to me. There was no *if* in the matter. At least, I was not permitted to regard it as a

mere contingency. I was shown, in prophetic fashion, that it was actually so, for I was transferred into the future, where, to my spiritual vision, it was made to appear as an accomplished fact. Intellectually I was sceptical, but was withheld from obtruding the doubt. And now, when by the withdrawal of the Spirit the intellect alone operates, it appears to me as if it must have been no positive prediction of what would be, but only an attempt to bring it about. It is no new thing, however, for the medium to distrust his utterances when the influence has been withdrawn. It is often for the purpose of sustaining his own faith, as much as for producing conviction in others, that the revelation is accompanied by appeals to the senses.

While some of those whom I was called on to describe were set before me in visible pictures, as was the case with Jesus and Paul, others seemed to be brought in person to speak for themselves by impressing their thoughts on my mind, but without becoming palpable to the senses. The latter was the case, I had no doubt, on the occasion of my reference to the late Lord Amberley, of whose presence in person, together with that of the great spirit who was guiding me, I was vividly conscious. He was allowed to come to me as a freethinker of the day who was especially animated by the earnest desire to find in the world's

order a higher perfection than that which he was able to discern. He was anxious to have it known that he himself does not now regard the work on which he was engaged at his death as representing his final conclusions. With his motives and method, so far as they went, he was satisfied. His heart was right. He was grieved at being driven to negatives, but his perceptions had not then been sufficiently matured to enable him to reach the true centre and make the true generalisation. It had needed the removal of the bandage of the flesh from his spiritual vision to enable him to see the interior significance of the facts he had so industriously collected. Through some defect of power, either on his side or on mine, my visitant had great difficulty in impressing me as he desired. I was conscious that other spirits were competing with him for utterance ; and I was somewhat confused between the various influences. During the writing of the passage, which extends over seven pages, commencing at p. 602, I was repeatedly recalled by him from my excursiveness. It was only when I had at length written the paragraph on pp. 608—9, that he was satisfied, and left me. His demeanour was marked by an intense affectionateness, and his chief anxiety was towards his parents, that they should know he was in good case, and that his faithfulness to his intuition

had been recognised and rewarded by the withdrawal of all barriers.

Though failing, as I must expect to do, to obtain for the reality of the experiences I am relating full and universal credence, I have the satisfaction of knowing that the number is by no means small, even in the present period of spiritual eclipse, of those who have carried the cultivation of the interior regions of the consciousness to such an extent as to enable them to follow me with confidence. For the rest, who by dint of ever seeking outwards instead of inwards, have become oblivious of the very existence of the region in question, it is scarcely possible adequately to describe either the phenomena or the faculty whereby spiritual communion occurs. To those who persist in holding the senses to be the sole avenue of perception, it is wholly impossible. For it is necessary to conceive of cognition as occurring by the direct action of mind on mind, and without intervention of any sense. It is, I believe, a direct appeal of spirit to spirit under the operation of sympathy, desire, and will, without recourse to any material instrument. It is true, however, that while the knowledge in question is acquired in a wholly non-sensible form, the communication is frequently accompanied by an appeal to one or more of the senses. And these are, as might be expected, the senses

which are most keen in the recipient. I have known instances in which the sense of smell was excited by spiritual visitation; more often the sense of touch. I have myself experienced this. But generally it is sight and hearing that are appealed to. In the case of the visitation just recorded it was neither of these; but simply a consciousness, absolute and incapable of being distrusted by myself as subject, of the presence of one who was really what he claimed to be, communicating his thought directly and irresistibly to my thought. The great delicacy of this and all other faculties of a hyper-organic character, makes it essential to their maintenance at a high pitch of perfection that the subjects—sensitives as they are usually called—should be carefully kept from exposure to the trials and anxieties of ordinary life. The ancients knew this well; hence they took care of their “mediums” as their most precious possession, as the instruments of divine communication; to neglect whom was to refuse to listen to the voice of God. The “school of the prophets” was no other than an establishment for the development of the mediumistic faculty. And it is scarcely doubtful that the precautions by which the vestal virgins were guarded were due to the same cause. It is only under a materialistic “science,” whose system consists for the most part in rejecting all facts

save those only which suit the current hypothesis, that the diviner faculties of which women are the chief possessors, instead of being religiously guarded and scientifically developed, could be relegated to the category of "hysteria" and "hallucination," on the shallow assumption that religion and revelation are morbid phenomena. The results of this irrational conduct are not far to seek or difficult to characterise. It is in no small measure through the denial of "clairvoyance," lest it might demonstrate the existence of the soul, that science has been precipitated into the bottomless pit of vivisection. In saying this I speak that which I know. It is not by the moral qualities only of woman that the redemption of the world will be accomplished. Her spiritual faculties will play a no less important part.

The reiterated references made in "England and Islam" to the subjects of flesh-eating and vivisection are due to the same compulsion that controlled me throughout. Man's whole idea and habit of life, I was shown, have come to be so utterly at variance with all possibility of the perfection of which his existence is capable, that only by incessant and unsparing denunciation can he be in any measure impressed with their heinousness. Of the view given to me in this respect during the progress of the book, and of the true place of the carnivora in the scheme

of the world, I afterwards received a confirmation and extension of a kind wholly extraordinary and unanticipated, as will appear in a subsequent chapter. Not only do these practices, I was assured in the most positive manner, indicate the low spiritual grade of those who indulge in them, but they minister to man's further degeneration in all parts of his nature, by reason of their irreconcilability with his physical and his affectional constitution. They are modes of exaltation of that selfishness which, as it could never have produced the world, so it can never sustain or redeem it.

That "God is Love," and that man must be the same in his relations to the whole sensitive creation, is the basis of every gospel of redemption ever delivered to the world. The utterance on p. 498, respecting the Two-in-Oneness of the Divine Personality, was the product of a sudden burst of illumination, which made all I had before said respecting the Duality of Existence appear dim and feeble. It is a repetition and amplification of the truth as it was in Jesus; but as it has never been recognised among the followers of Jesus, least of all by Paul, and now re-delivered as the precursor of and accompaniment to that new manifestation of the Soul by which the world's redemption is finally to be accomplished. Strange and incomprehensible to

most, it is not through myself alone that the doctrine has found utterance. About the very time that it was given to me it was declared also on the other side of the Atlantic, in a publication which reached me some three months later, and was the first intimation I had received that others beside myself were under training "by the same spirit" for the work of the coming regeneration.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONFIRMATION.

THE clouds and mists rolled back like a scroll; the heavens surpassingly clear, and bright with a light which was neither of sun nor of moon, but of both combined, so brilliant and withal so soft was it; and to the empyrean thus illumined a hand stretched out to write, as on a vast wall, in gigantic letters of fire, the word **READY**. Such was the vision, thrice in one night repeated, whereby the conclusion of the "New Revelation" was announced. And the dreamer was one ungiven to dreams, a simple-minded and true-hearted dame of well-nigh ninety years, and who, moreover, had not only never heard that such a work was in progress, but would have deemed it an impiety to contemplate it. It was enough for the spirits that our Seeress was beneath the roof.

It seemed as if the conclusion of my book was being waited for only to give me the assurance I desired respecting the character and quality of the influence by which it had been dictated. The manner of its bestowal had been such as to

indicate a long period of anticipation and preparation on part of the controlling influences. Had further evidence been wanting to complete the conviction of the reality of the agencies at work, the circumstances in question would have supplied it. Of these, then, I must give some account.

Towards the middle of January, by a combination of events in which throughout their whole course we had recognised something wholly removed from the ordinary, the friend and coadjutor whom I call the Seeress, who in the previous November had a few weeks before been forced to quit the Continent and return to England, came to reside near at hand to me—namely, in J—— Street—in a circle of which, while one member of it only was previously known to her, all but one had become abstainers from flesh through her means. Of these, moreover, who were four in number, all but one were believers in the phenomena and doctrine known as “spiritualism,” and were in varying degrees possessed of mediumistic gifts. The non-believer was no disbeliever, but simply an inquirer, a stage she was destined soon to quit for that of positive assurance.

The day after my friend's arrival at the house in question, I called and was introduced to the circle. Nothing was then said on the subject either of my book or experiences ; but as I after-

wards learnt, on the same evening, on an intimation being given that the party were to sit at the table, a séance was held, and a communication received, saying, "A new prophet is among you ; one whom you have seen to-day." Several guesses were made as to whom this could be, the Seeress keeping silence ; for although sharing my convictions respecting the nature of my book, she was as yet no believer in the current "spiritualism," her experiences having been identical with mine. At length my name was suggested, when an energetic answer in the affirmative was given through the table, with the addition, "Send for him, that we may speak with him." It was added that the Seeress herself also was chosen for a work ; an announcement at which the friend who had been the means of bringing her there hid her face in her hands, and with much emotion exclaimed, "I knew it, I knew it!" To the further question what spirit it was that was speaking, it was replied, "John the Baptist," with the direction for me, "Let him come to-morrow."

The employment of such a name was conjectured as implying, not that the spirit of one so long passed away was likely to have returned to earth, but that it had been adopted either by some spirit who desired thereby to intimate that he was exercising the Baptist's function of herald, or that it was the spirit who had

formerly spoken through the Baptist, and who was now once more engaged on a like mission. The emotion and exclamation of the lady who had uttered the words "I knew it," were due to the following circumstances.

This lady, whom I will call Mrs. W——, had about four years before this time been much impressed by reading a certain romantic story which set forth the way of the perfect life, in a manner which appealed to her so forcibly as to minister to her renunciation of a diet of flesh. Becoming spiritualistic soon afterwards, she received an imperative direction to seek out the writer and communicate to her a message respecting her future course of life. Having ascertained the writer's name, and found that it was the Seeress of this narrative, she had taken a long journey to see her, having first written to apprise her of her probable coming. I will give the rest in the Seeress's words.

"One morning, being at home in the country, I awoke to find a telegram signed Anna W——, announcing that the sender would be with me that very afternoon. At the hour named I met her on the way as she was driving from the station, and her manner and appearance surprised me as much as had her communication, and as, subsequently, her conversation. She was tall, erect, distinguished-looking, with hair of iron-grey, and

strangely brilliant eyes. She told me that she had received a distinct message from the holy spirit, and that she had been impressed so strongly to come and deliver it to me, that she could not refuse. The purport of her message was that for five years to come I was to remain in retirement, to continue the studies on which I was engaged, and the mode of life on which I had entered, and to suffer nothing and no one to draw me aside from them. That when these probationary five years were past, the holy spirit would bring me forth from seclusion, and that a great work would be given me to do. All this was uttered with a rapt and inspired expression, as though it had been some sibyl delivering an oracle. And when she had ended, seeing, no doubt, the surprised expression of my face, she asked me if I thought her mad, a question to which I was at some loss to find a reply ; for hitherto I had had no experiences of prophets or prophetesses, but rather shared the general impression concerning those who professed to be either. After delivering her message, my prophetess kissed me on both cheeks and departed. The mode of life she referred to as that which I was not to abandon, was the study I had just commenced, of the physical sciences, and to which I had been irresistibly impelled against all my natural tastes and affinities. On think-

ing over her communication, however, I found myself less and less surprised at it, for the reason that it coincided closely with certain ideas by which I had been haunted from childhood, but which had always been discouraged as mere fancies. These ideas included the notion that I distinctly remembered having voluntarily quitted a previous state of existence for some purpose I was eager to accomplish, and which, though I knew not precisely what it was, was in some respects connected with animals, for whom I always had an extraordinary affection. So cold, and hard, and ugly, however, had the world seemed to me as a child in comparison with what I recollected of my previous home, that I was throughout childhood constantly pining to return to it. My very dreams were like reminiscences; and, what used to puzzle me exceedingly, these often possessed an allegorical character, disclosing a philosophy far in advance of anything I had a conception of in my waking state. It seemed as if it were the real and perfect world to which I had returned in my visions, and that the world to which I awoke was an imaginary and miserable existence, a hell, or at least a purgatory, for which I had left a heaven. With but one or two trifling exceptions, I heard nothing more of my prophetess until last winter, when being in London for my studies, I received from

her a letter, saying that she was visiting some friends in J—— Street, and was expecting to see me, though she had no idea where I was. I was at the time terribly troubled about a place to live in, not merely through my then home disagreeing with me by reason of its proximity to the river; but I was subjected to extraordinary influences, whose character I could in no way comprehend on any ordinary hypothesis, and which made a further residence there impossible. That they were not of a subjective nature, or due to my own fancy, was shown by the fact that they excited the utmost uneasiness in a pet animal I had with me. Afterwards, when I had learnt something of the reality of the spiritual world, and of the work that was in store for me, I was at no loss to explain them. I was fairly being driven out of my abode, but whither, and to what end, I had no conception. It was while I was at my wits' end what to do, or where to seek a home, that I received from my friend the prophetess the communication which led to my joining the circle in J—— Street. The incident which has been related in this narrative—namely, that of my being impelled to write a passage in 'England and Islam,' without being aware what I was doing—occurred while still at my river-side residence. It was there also that I received the dream described in that book. I can now

only regard the influences which operated to drive me from the house as those of friendly spirits, who knew that the air of the locality was injurious to me, and who moreover had a special object of their own in making me join the circle in J—— Street."

Such being the circumstances, all of which were previously known to me, by which the message I have recorded had been preceded, it was impossible not to attach more importance to it, strange as it might seem, than would ordinarily have been justifiable; and I accordingly obeyed the summons by attending the sitting at the appointed time. Of what is called "spiritualism," in any serious sense, I knew nothing. The various endeavours I had made to investigate it having resulted in my failure to convince myself even of the genuineness of the phenomena; and being a fairly-accomplished conjuror, I was not ill-qualified to detect any attempt at imposition. In the present instance, although the characters and antecedents of the parties utterly forbade any suspicion of insincerity, and I had the strongest conviction of the genuineness of whatever might take place, and knew by my own recent experiences that existence was by no means so limited a range as represented by the current philosophy of the day, I was resolved, nevertheless, to keep my analytic faculties on the alert

in order to avoid the possibility of deception, conscious or unconscious. Consequently, throughout the whole of what took place, notwithstanding its extraordinary character and absorbing interest, while all the rest of the party were at times under influences which made them appear like so many sibyls or pythonesses possessed or inspired, I never for a moment relaxed the vigilance of my scrutiny; so that the sitting had for me all the conclusiveness of a crucial test many times repeated.

The circle consisted at first of the whole party present—namely, the five ladies and myself. The early manifestations were of a strange and conflicting kind. The room was far from dark, nevertheless the more sensitive of the sitters declared that they perceived shadowy forms hovering round us. They were conscious also that there was an antagonism between the influences present, as if good and evil spirits were contending for the possession of the table through which we were communicating. The messages given were in accordance with this view. These all purported to be for me, and to have reference to my book; but while some of them were endeavouring to urge me to finish it at once, others sought to dissuade me, declaring either that there was yet more to be said, or that I had made important misstatements. Sharp conflicts,

moreover, took place, even between the sitters, as to through whom the messages should come, one claiming to be conscious of a spirit seeking to speak through her, and another declaring that that was an evil influence, and that the right one was beside her. All this was done apparently in the most perfect seriousness, the speakers being evidently unaware of the strangeness of their conduct. At length, so turbulent became the proceedings, and so seriously affected the sitters, that at the instigation of the prophetess the sitting was suspended, after it had continued for more than an hour, in order to give them time to recover their equanimity. Meanwhile she herself engaged in prayer, while the Seeress, utterly exhausted, sank into a sound slumber.

The interval was broken by one of the ladies, the non-vegetarian, advancing to the table and declaring that a powerful spirit, claiming to be that of Oliver Cromwell, was demanding to be heard, as the matter involved the destinies of England. But at this moment the Seeress awoke suddenly, and said that she had just received an intimation that it was through her that the communications were to come, and that the other spirit was a bad and false one. Upon this the previous speaker retired abashed, confessing that now she saw that she was under an evil influence.

We then assembled again round the table, when it was intimated that two of the party were to quit it. These were the non-believer and the flesh-eater.

The reason of this exclusion was subsequently made evident. Only those who were pure in habit and firm in faith could be made partakers of the higher influences now about to present themselves. The contrast between the character of the proceedings now and what it had been was very remarkable. Instead of disturbance and conflict, there was perfect calmness and peace, and a total absence of any attempt on the part of hostile influences to obtain possession of the table. It was like the return of serenity after a storm. What first occurred now was deeply affecting to me, not only as constituting an absolute demonstration of the reality of that in which we were engaged, but by reason of its own intrinsic character. As it lay apart from the special object of the sitting, and moreover requires for its confirmation a reference to an after occurrence, I will defer its relation until I have told the rest.

The table at which we sat was a small one, weighing about ten pounds, and the answers were given by means of raps, tilts, and jumpings, in which it sometimes rose completely from off the floor. We sat so as to keep entirely clear of

it, and stretched out our hands so as to touch it lightly on the surface near the centre, with the ends of our fingers, a process necessary to charge it with the magnetic aura.

In reply to the first question, asking for whom the communication was intended, it was indicated by an inclination of the table that it was for me. To the question whether the communication concerned my book, an answer was given in the affirmative in a very impressive manner. To the next question as to who the spirit was that was speaking, and whether he was concerned in the dictation of my book, the following reply was given in a firm and unhesitating manner—

“The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord. All flesh is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever. The ideal is the real.”

After pleased comments from some of the party at this striking apposition of the old and new methods of expressing the reality and eternity of the Divine Idea as compared with that of its phenomenal expression in creation, I inquired—

“Is it then really John the Baptist that speaks and that controlled my book?”

“The same spirit.”

"And that spoke through Isaiah also, whom you have quoted?"

"The same spirit."

"Through Hermes, Daniel, and John of Patmos also?"

"The same spirit."

"And I am to understand that my book was really dictated by the spirit that spoke through the great prophets of old?"

"Yes; by the same spirit."

To my question as to who or of what grade the spirit in question was, no further answer was vouchsafed. I then inquired whether he had any further instructions; to which the answer was given—

"Make haste and finish your book."

"Tell me first, 'am I right in predicting a great war in which England will be engaged?"

To this there was no reply, and the prophetess remarked that the higher spirits never answered questions respecting the future. Anxious on the point, I inquired whether I had done right in saying what I had said on the subject; for I feared that I might have exceeded my directions through some misapprehension of my own. The answer given was in the affirmative, with the addition—

"Publish your book at once."

"Is there anything I need withdraw?"

"No."

"Is there anything I should add?"

"Yes—Consummatum Est."

"Meaning that the revelation is finished for the present?"

"Yes."

"Am I to put that phrase in the book?"

"Yes, yes."

"Where? at the end, in place of the *finis*?"

"Yes, yes, yes!" and the raps came in a shower all over the table, as if in delighted satisfaction at having been so readily understood; for the very questions seemed to have been suggested by the influence; while the table, which for the whole of the last few questions had been poised in the air several inches from the ground, danced and rocked and vibrated like a living and sentient thing. To my renewed inquiry whether my prophecies would be soon fulfilled, no answer was given; but on my repeating the question whether I had done my part of the work satisfactorily, the reply was emphatic in the affirmative. The sitting finished with a fresh injunction to "publish the book without loss of time; to live the perfect life; and to go on working hard at righting wrong."

No description can give any idea of the solemnity which pervaded the whole of this sitting. It seemed like an impiety in me to keep cool

and collected as I did, in order to scrutinise it all closely, while the disclosure of the circumstances now seem almost like a betrayal of the sacred mysteries of old. It may be interesting to the physiologist to be informed that my temperature during the evening was of the same extraordinarily low degree I have before mentioned as occurring under the process of supplying force for spiritual communication. The brain felt like a mass of ice.

In order to show how much reason there was both for gravity of feeling and for depth of conviction, and being desirous of not withholding anything that may by any means tend to impart to others the grounds of my own confidence, I will now relate the incident which occurred in the interval between the two parts of the sitting just described.

The period of violent and conflicting manifestations was followed by a succession of minute taps on the table, apparently between my hands. On my inquiring who it was, the table spelt out the name of my wife, who had died twenty years before in Australia, and was unknown, even by name, to any of the others. It was *Esther*.

Completely taken by surprise—for after such an interval the thought of receiving such a communication had not occurred to me—I exclaimed,—

"Have you, then, been with me all these years without my knowing it?"

"I have been with Mary" (my Seeress), was the answer; and it was one that accounted for much that had puzzled us both. My remaining questions were put mentally; when the replies indicated a perfect acquaintance with my history and feelings. To a question in which I indicated the anxiety I was feeling on a certain family matter of importance then pending, I received for answer—

"Trust the love that has always been with you."

Such an interposition, occurring at such a moment, struck me as indicating on the part of the high influences at work not only the most delicate appreciation of human feelings, but a desire to adopt the extremest means of impressing me with the reality and importance of the work for which they had selected me.

On calling next morning to see how the sitters had fared after the evening's experiences, the Seeress said that a curious thing had happened to her in the night, which had rather distressed her, as nothing had occurred to account for it. While asleep some one had said to her—

"Tell him not to ask me about money matters—it lowers me."

The voice awakened her; and, sitting up, she

asked aloud who it was that spoke ; whereupon a faint voice, seeming to come from a distance, replied, " Esther." She took it as a caution for the future rather than as a rebuke for the past ; and was surprised to learn that the matter respecting which I had asked whether I had really cause for anxiety, did, though not immediately, involve a reference of the kind.

For my relation of the following incident I must ask the indulgence of the parties implicated. The testimony it affords to the reality of the spirit world and the after-life, as well as to the importance there attached to my work, is too strong for it to be suppressed, no matter in deference to whose or what feelings. To myself, and those who were cognisant of it at the time of its occurrence, it afforded at once a convincing proof of the greatest fact in existence ; while to myself and the Seeress it was evidence both of the reality of all we had experienced, and of a concert subsisting between the gentle spirit of her who had gone so long before me, and those mightier ones who were giving the world through us a new revelation of the things that make for its peace. The sitting just recorded occurred in the middle of January. This incident came about a week later.

Calling one evening on a near relative, who knew nothing whatever of my recent work or

experiences, I had let fall, indicative of the unusual character of the book I was on the point of publishing, two or three remarks which to one unfamiliar with the regions of thought in which I was now at home, were perhaps not unnaturally calculated to arouse some apprehension respecting my complete sanity. At least, I thought I detected signs that an idea of the kind was not far distant from his mind. And I was not mistaken. For the further relation of the incident of the apparition of my son on New Year's Day, procured me on the spot a homily on the de-spiritualising virtues of blue-pill; and a day or two later, a letter urging me to submit my work to some literary friend. Somewhat nettled at the assumption involved in the advice thus volunteered, and recalling sundry unappreciative remarks from the same source respecting a previous book of mine, I replied, somewhat maliciously, that as well might the Seer of Patmos have been advised to "submit his work to some literary friend," and thought no more of the matter, nor did I make mention of it to any person whatever.

Sitting the same evening with my circle, I had the delight of receiving fresh evidences of tender and intelligent interest from the same dear spirit of whom I have spoken. And I was rejoiced to note a manifest advance both in intellectual perception and decision of character since her entry

into the spirit-life. Among other things she said, referring to our son—

“Make C—— lead a better life. If he only had the courage to live as you do, I should have power over him.”

As the youth in question lived but the average life of young men in general, I took this as a confirmation of my view that the prevailing mode of life, especially in respect of diet, is radically defective, in that it ministers to the quickening of anything rather than those sympathies and intuitions wherein alone we are amenable to spiritual impression. On asking whether I should communicate this message to him, I received for answer—

“Not yet. Say nothing to any one.” And presently the communications closed abruptly with the words—

“I will come to Mary alone;” and the influence withdrew, as it seemed to us, with a haste and perturbation we were unable to account for. The hour was between nine and ten.

The next morning, about ten o’clock, I was surprised by a visit from the Seeress, who said hurriedly, “I have something very extraordinary to tell you, but cannot wait now, as I have to go to the City. Be in for me in an hour’s time.”

She returned about the time named, breathless with haste and excitement, and threw down

on my table an open letter marked "private and confidential," telling me to read it. I did so, and found it was a letter from the relative named, addressed to the quarter in which, he rightly surmised, interference was most likely to be effective, urging the suppression of my book at all hazards and on any available pretext, on the ground of its author's undoubted insanity. The language was of the most peremptory description; and indicated a desire to keep me in the dark and unsuspecting until I could be taken care of.

The true source and significance of this action at once became apparent to me. I had been warned that hostile spiritual influences were seeking to keep my book back from publication; and that it would need all my caution to counteract them. It had been withheld from me, however, for reasons since made obvious, that spiritual influences of the kind would find access in the quarter in question. Asking the Seeress how she came by the letter, I received the following explanation.

"You remember how our sitting was closed yesterday evening by Esther saying she would come to me alone. Well, in the night I dreamt that a lady, dressed in a dark costume and with a veil over her face, came to see me in my room. She sat opposite to me by the fire, and when she lifted her veil, I was struck by the resemblance to myself. She seemed greatly agitated, and said

with much emotion and earnestness, 'He has been so imprudent. For God's sake go instantly to X——'s. I will go before you.' 'What is the matter?' I asked; 'what has he to dread?' 'His relatives,' she replied, specifying them. 'They will stop his book, and plot against him to take him away. He has been so imprudent.' And this she repeated several times; concluding with again imploring me to lose no time in seeing Mr. X——, and saying that she would prepare the way for me.

"When I got up," continued the Seeress, "I was in considerable perplexity what to do. I had learnt to believe in my dreams; and her distress was so evident and her injunction so positive that it seemed a duty to comply. But what was I to say to Mr. X——? I had no reason that I could give for going to him, except one that would have made him think me out of my mind. While I was hesitating, Mrs. G——"[the lady with whom she was staying] "said she had some business in the City on which she wanted my advice, and asked me to drive thither with her. The invitation came so opportunely that I took it as intended to settle the matter. So I just called on you to make sure you would be in on my return, and then went on my way, still wholly at a loss what to say when I got there. However, my faith is tolerably strong after all we have seen of late, and she said she would prepare the

way, so I went boldly in and asked for Mr. X——. To my dismay he was engaged; and my friend was waiting! But, as it turned out, it was the very fact of his being engaged that made the result possible. It was the impossibility of discussing the letter before a third person that enabled me to bring it away. For on being informed of my call he came out of his office, accompanied by his visitor, and on seeing me said eagerly, ‘Oh, you are just the person I want to see. You know Mr. Maitland.’” [I had introduced her to him for a literary purpose.] “‘Can you tell me,’ he continued, looking exceedingly serious, ‘what to do about this letter?’ and he placed that from your relative in my hands. I was in a state of great agitation, everything in the matter being so extraordinary; and not least of all that Mr. X—— should not have thought a moment of my having any reason for going to him, and should trust a comparative stranger with such a letter; though I see now that he was bound to consult some one, and that some one who knew you, and who was likely lately to have seen you. As he was still engaged, and my friend was waiting, and I wanted to think what to do, I asked him to let me take the letter with me into the City, where I was going on business, and that I would return with it as soon as possible. So I hurried

over my business with Mrs. G——, and came on here straight. And now what is to be done? The tone of that letter shows that there is real danger."

I sent her back to Mr. X——, desiring her to say that his correspondent had taken for serious a joke I had played on him; and as for the rest, she and plenty of others could vouch for my sanity. So she went; and on returning told me that Mr. X——'s manner had struck her very much as that of a person who was evidently acting under some influence of which he was unconscious, but which he was unable to resist. For he had expressed surprise at himself for trusting her, but said that he could not help it; that he was bound to consult some one likely to know, and as she was a person of intelligence and acquainted with me, and competent to judge, he would take her opinion of my condition sooner than a stranger's; and as she was herself an author and a clergyman's wife, he would take her opinion also about the book. Had she read it? and was there in it anything that struck her as irreligious or otherwise objectionable? He was at length reassured on all points, and so the matter terminated. And I shall always feel grateful to Mr. X—— for the courage, tact, and firmness displayed by him in a question so perplexing and so delicate; while I more than ever rejoice that it is out of what,

in relation to the dominant orthodoxies, may be accounted a *Nazareth* rather than a *Jerusalem*, that these volumes have proceeded.

The Seeress's recognition of a resemblance had not been imaginary. I had myself observed it, but had refrained from mentioning the fact. On my now for the first time producing a portrait, she exclaimed—

“That is the lady who came to me in my dream!”

The book was not, however, safe past all rocks; and the greatest watchfulness was requisite to circumvent the influences which were evidently bent upon arresting its issue. To the discomfiture of these my own faculty as Seer enabled me to contribute not a little. It seemed to have been specially sustained for the purpose, for the book was no sooner out past recall than the faculty was withdrawn.

It was not so with my Seeress, whose capacity for spiritual impression steadily increased. It was chiefly through her that our communications were received; and it was by way of enforcing on me the necessity of paying heed to the products of her gift, that the following admonition was delivered. It was spelt out by raps on the table,—for we had not at this time learnt to communicate in writing.

“A blind man once lost himself in a forest. An angel took pity on him, and led him into an

open place. As he went he received his sight. Then he saw the angel, and said to him, 'Brother, what dost thou here? Suffer me to go before thee, for I am thine elder.' So the man went first, taking the lead. But the angel spread his wings and returned to heaven. And darkness fell again upon him to whom sight had been given."

It suggested the probability that many of the exquisite apologues of the East were similarly derived.

It was only as Parliament met that the book appeared. And then it was far from "Ready" as I could have desired. Poured through me like a torrent, it had been printed as fast as it came, without possibility of due revision, either for manuscript or press, though the printers admirably seconded my endeavours to make it as perfect as possible. Anything in the shape of introduction or index was out of the question. Indeed, I had been fortunate in finding a publisher at all; for, as I have since seen reason to believe, an avowal of its character would, so far as the trade generally is concerned, have prevented its acceptance. But when first sent to the press, however, I myself was not aware of its nature. My belief, as already stated, is that my guides, though desiring that the book should come out as and when it did, were not desirous that it

should have immediate recognition. A message I received from them almost immediately after its publication led me to think this. It was to the effect that there was a disappointment in store for me. I was wrong to anticipate an early success for my book. The seed was sown, and in good time would come up.

I should not have published the following communication, as it was not delivered under my own observation, save for the verification I received concerning it.

The first of the two messages purported to come from a son, long since dead, of the lady I have called the "prophetess," whose name for his mother is "the White Messenger." The messages were written through her, but in a hand different to her own. The first one refers to the sitting which I have described, and is as follows:—

"I am the son of the White Messenger, and I am well acquainted with you since the night you were spoken of by the great spirit who told of you through me at the table in J—— Street. I was hoping to convey his name to my mother. I am unable through her to tell you how wonderful was the sight of him and his when he came. A great work is indeed begun, and to those who can interpret, the writing on the wall is plain. You will be sorely spoken of by the bigoted and ignorant, but you will reap a harvest which even we cannot estimate. My mother is

very happy to make you her friend on earth, but she does not know how great the benefit is yet. My friend, David of Carnac, wishes to say a word to you."

The message which followed was headed by some cabalistic signs, of which one represented a stone such as are to be found at Carnac, Stonehenge, and other Druidic circles. Then came the following:—

"I greet you, Brother of our circle, and in the future you will know me and call me Friend, as does this woman whom I love as my sister, I, who have passed away ages ago. And I will teach you the secrets of the past as I teach her. True Druid, true Prophet, hail! We will help you to set up true and living stones in the hearts of people; truths—white stones that will last for ever, and ever, and ever. PURE LIFE is our great law. Only establish that, and you will bring back the golden age, which is no myth, but a fact. The stones of Carnac are witnesses." My correspondent added: "I have written this almost in darkness, and I know the earnest noble spirit that writes it. As I read I feel them round me, and truly realise the communion of saints."

This communication reached me while on a visit to my Seeress's country home, and we discussed together the probabilities of its trustworthiness with some freedom, both of us being yet young and proportionately sceptical in such

matters. In the evening we sat down to the "planchette," an instrument of which we were just beginning to learn the use. To our surprise and satisfaction, on our asking if there was any message for us, our invisible friends wrote, in reference to the subject of our day's discourse:—

"You distrust Mrs. W——. She is genuine; but her genii are not always of a high order." We have since found that those of few persons are.

The spirit who had guided me in my book had manifestly taken his departure on its completion, and left me wholly without fresh impulse or idea, to recover my normal state. The tension of mind and body alike had been tremendous. For the greater part of two months I had worked almost continuously from twelve to eighteen hours a day, without once finding my mental vision clouded, or my powers exhausted beyond the ability of four or five hours' sleep to restore them. I fully anticipated a serious reaction; but no symptoms appeared of anything of the kind. It was gradually, as by the letting out of air through a minute puncture, that the influence by which I had been hyper-vitalised seemed to withdraw, so as to let me down with all possible gentleness to my usual level. But though the great spirit had departed, we were not left comfortless or alone with the everyday world. For, as I have said, we had established relations with influences which claimed to be our "guardians"

and "genii;" and these declared themselves ready and willing to lead us into all truth, provided only we obeyed their directions and "lived the perfect life;" a life, as we found, by no means to be confounded with that of asceticism. Neither were some of the dear ones who had gone before, backward to maintain communication with us, and, so far as they might, disclose the mysteries beyond the veil. We even made new acquaintances with the spirits of some recently passed away, and who eagerly availed themselves of our faculty to renew their intercourse with earth. The regard and affection showed for "Mary" by the "genii" were most marked. They delighted to call her "our Seeress"—it was from them she first obtained the name—and to enable me through her to comprehend the nature and functions of the sibyls, pythonesses, and prophetesses of the ancient religious systems. It was a re-discovery of an anciently known and supremely valued function of woman. Of the existence of the faculties of clairvoyance and prophecy we could no longer have any doubt. And not only was it made clear to us that the traditions of a revelation to the early world were perfectly true; but we were shown the modes of its communication, and the process whereby the faculty had become gradually obscured and lost; and also the means whereby from time to time the Influences who seek man's

welfare endeavour, by a resuscitation of religious feeling, to regain their ascendancy. All these things were made clear to us, to the complete solution, so far as the time had yet allowed, of the various problems of the world's religious history.

It was made evident also, that it was not for nothing that all these things had been shown to us, and that our work was by no means over. Among other indications of what was required of me, were frequent allusions to Spinoza. My acquaintance with the doctrines of that great thinker was of the slightest, and was instinctive rather than acquired. Conscious, however, of a profound sympathy subsisting between us, it was with no small satisfaction that I received the following account of a vision which was imparted to my Seeress just before my book appeared. For I accepted it as at once a confirmation of my past intuition, and an earnest of future enlightenment. I will entitle it

The Vision of the Glasses.

"I was walking alone on the sea-shore. The day was singularly clear and sunny. Inland lay the most beautiful landscape ever seen; and far off were ranges of tall hills, the highest peaks of which were white with glistening snow. Along the sands towards me came a man, accoutred as

a postman. He gave me a letter. It was from you. It was this:—

“‘I have got hold of the rarest and most precious book extant. It was written before the world began. The text is easy enough to read; but the notes, which are very copious and numerous, are in such very minute and obscure characters that I cannot make them out. I want you to get for me the spectacles which Swedenborg used to wear; not the smaller pair—those he gave to Hans Christian Anderssen—but the large pair, and these seem to have got mislaid. I think they are Spinoza’s make—you know he was an optical-glass maker by profession, and the best we have ever had. See if you can get them for me.’

“When I looked up after reading this letter, I saw the postman hastening away across the sands, and I called out to him, ‘Stop! how am I to send the answer? Wont you wait for me?’ He looked round, stopped, and came back to me.

“‘I have the answer here,’ he said, tapping his letter-bag, ‘and I shall deliver it immediately.’

“‘How can you have the answer when I have not written it?’ said I. ‘You are making a mistake.’

“‘No,’ said he. ‘In the city from which I come the replies are all written at the office and

sent out with the letters themselves. Your reply is in my bag.'

"'Let me see it,' I said. He took another letter out and gave it to me. I opened it, and read in my own handwriting this answer addressed to you :—

"'The spectacles you want can be bought in London. But you will not be able to use them at once, for they have not been worn for many years, and they want cleaning sadly. This you will not be able to do yourself in London, because it is too dark there to see, and because your fingers are not small enough to clean them properly. Bring them here to me, and I will do it for you.'

"I gave this letter back to the postman. He smiled and nodded at me ; and I saw then to my astonishment that he wore a camel's-hair tunic round his waist. I had been on the point of calling him *Hermes*. But I now saw that it was John the Baptist ; and in my fright at having spoken with the Baptist I woke."

This singular method of impressing on me the supreme importance of the doctrine of Correspondence between the spiritual and physical worlds, as the key to the nature of the universe, implied an ingenuity and even playfulness on the part of our spirit-friends, not a little encouraging respecting the nature of the existence on "the other side," at least for those who are not above—

or beneath—cultivating their intuition here. The first act of the Seeress on rising was to verify the statement that Spinoza had been a maker of spectacles. For she was quite unaware of the fact; as also was she of the import of the allegory.

A few days later, in answer to an inquiry for instruction respecting this dream, a "genius" calling himself A. Z. wrote: "Ask the guardian of Spinoza to tell you what you are to do." A second attempt produced the information that I should have to leave London in order to receive and carry out instructions. And after another interval I was told that I was "to go to France in the spring, or later, to meet Spinoza's guardian," and that they had tried to get him here. He would communicate with me "by inspiration."

The allusion to Swedenborg in the vision just described, was especially gratifying to me. The little I knew of that remarkable man had convinced me that I was on his tracks, and that our experiences in a very great measure coincided. His own followers also had already recognised a certain identity in our respective ideas. Early in the previous year I had received a letter from the Council of the Swedenborg Society, informing me that they had been struck by the coincidence between the system of correspondences of the solar phenomena and the history of the human soul as regarded in the ancient religions and set forth in my book, "*The Keys of the Creeds*,"

and the system of Swedenborg ; and they offered to present me with Swedenborg's works. I had replied that I was desirous of studying him, as I had an instinctive consciousness of sympathy with him ; but that now I should prefer to wait until I had found all I could by myself ; that I felt more and more I was being led in the same way ; and should eagerly compare notes at my journey's end. After the publication of "England and Islam," I claimed and received the fulfilment of their kind offer. I now can say that I recognise to the fullest extent the claims of Swedenborg to be a true seer, and to have enjoyed with the spiritual world the intercourse he claims. To the truth of all that he has said respecting the correspondences subsisting between the spiritual and phenomenal worlds ; the existence in the former of various orders of intelligences, and the general accuracy of his teaching, I can bear my positive witness. And while there are some directions in which he seems to have gone beyond me, and I am unable to confirm his statements, there are, I think, others in which I was permitted to see beyond him. One of his most advanced disciples, an accomplished and well-known London physician, has recognised the inspiration of my book and its revelation of new spiritual truths.

We were naturally desirous of knowing something about the beings who called themselves

our "guardians" and "genii." Our interrogations were responded to by the one that had given as his symbol the letters A. Z. And in reply to our inquiry whether he claimed identity with the Alpha and Omega of the Apocalypse, he said that it meant the same thing; that A signified the heart inverted, and Z the convolutions of the brain. He was the guardian of "Mary," and his colour the red of the prism. The colour of my guardian, I was told, is "blue, which, blending with the red, makes the royal purple." Interpreted by the spiritual significations assigned in "England and Islam" (p. 595) to the various colours, this communication struck us as very remarkable; and suggested the idea that it might be through the affinity subsisting between our genii themselves, that they had associated us together for the work here. They were friends above, and we their earthly counterparts were bound to be friends here.

We were continually observing the Jewish character of their utterances. In all that they told me they confirmed what I have said in my book respecting the ancient religions, and the world's past history and future course. It was, as may well be imagined, no small satisfaction to have, actually written down by themselves, a visible confirmation of the truths previously given to me in vision and idea. In some of

their subsequent statements they have given knowledge, which, though I was on the high road to it, I was far from having reached. The highest mode of communication, we were told, is by direct inspiration, or the presentation of ideas to the mind when in a waking state. The next is by visions, waking or sleeping.

An attempt which I made to obtain more precise information respecting the spirit who had specially controlled the writing of my book, elicited this response from a spirit unnamed:—

“The spirit you name belonged, no doubt, to a higher circle than ours. The spirits of one circle do not, as a rule, know individually other circles; and I have no knowledge of him of whom you speak.” I hope yet to obtain precise information on this point. But everything I have been told serves to show that the occasion of the dictation of my book was a special one.

That under such superintendence human affairs do not go better than they do, is ascribed by them to the wilful perversity of men. “You are free,” was their repeated declaration; “and our power over human will is restricted.” It is because of the defective mode of life followed in regard to the physical as well as to the mental and spiritual part of us, that they are unable to find access to the soul of man and to influence him for good. Living grossly, and suppressing the

intuitions and sympathies on behalf of low and selfish ends, we “quench the spirit” that is striving to utter itself within us, our own as well as theirs. It is in vain that they tell us to “seek the kingdom of God, and the law of the perfect life,” when we pride ourselves on following the outer sense, and cultivating everything but the spirit. In vain that they admonish us to “work hard at righting wrong,” when our only thought is how best to gratify our lower nature at the expense of no matter what principle. The utterance last quoted bore reference to the efforts made by “Mary” and myself on behalf of the removal of two of the most serious blots on our present system—namely, the practice of torturing animals for “science” sake, and the exclusion of the working classes from places of intellectual improvement on Sundays. In regard to the former, our experiences were, as will presently appear, of the most startling description. Here is one utterance we received in this connexion. It was sent to us by the “prophetess”:—

“Sunday recreation is God’s work. Antivivisection is angels’ work.” The distinction is a subtle one, but obvious to a little reflection.

Among the curious coincidences which seemed to be specially contrived, so frequent were they, was the following:—

A friend was calling on me, and in discussing

some points in my work with him, I remarked that the New Testament must not be taken as having been written as it now stands, and that we must bring our intuition to bear upon it in order to escape serious mistake. Among other things, I told him it had been clearly shown to me that the Gospels had been tampered with in the interests of sacerdotalism; and that the belief both in a bloody atonement for the soul, and in the necessity of a diet of blood for the body, was at once the cause and the consequence of the degeneration from the true doctrine of perfection. Both were products of the spirit of priestcraft, and the Gospels had been mutilated with the express object of degrading Christianity in these respects. It was almost impossible, I added, for spirits of a high order to communicate with flesh-eaters.

I was in the middle of these remarks when the Seeress entered the room. Finding us talking, she sat silent until I had spoken as above. Then, producing a letter, she said—

“This is most singular. I have called on purpose to show you this letter, which has just been received by the prophetess from a lady at a distance, and which the writer says she feels compelled to write, although it contains what she has always believed to be wrong and even wicked. It is a message purporting to come from the spirit who directed the Gospel of St. Luke, and

it says—in fact, exactly what you have just been saying, and in the very same words, about the gospels having been tampered with to suit sacerdotal ends, and the difficulty that high spirits have in communicating with the world on account of the practice of flesh-eating, and others which minister to man's deterioration.”

CHAPTER V.

THE REITERATION.

EITHER because I had not sufficiently comprehended the scope and design of my book, and of the end it was intended to fulfil ; or because my confidence in its inspiration was in danger of failing me as I returned towards the ordinary level of spiritual vitalisation, communications reiterating its significance continued from time to time to be given me up to the moment when it was necessary for our circle to disperse. The messages written through the planchette were especially satisfactory to me, as constituting an ocular demonstration of the reality of our intercourse with invisible intelligences, and of the forces employed. So real indeed are these, that, chancing one day to place her hand over the centre of the instrument immediately after the delivery of a message, "Mary" received a somewhat severe burn, which exhibited itself in the form of a large watery blister on the finger, accompanied by much pain, no light or fire being near at the time. On our asking for an explanation, they wrote—

"We are sorry Mary put her hand in our midst. It was chiefly for this that we gave directions for the new writing-table made in the form of a cross, that no one may approach, lest we suffer by the contact."

They declared, however, that they could communicate with me better by visions given through her than in writing. It is to an account of some of such visions that this chapter will be devoted. The first was given at her home in the country, and was heralded in the following singular manner:—

Awakened by a bright light, the Seeress beheld a hand thrust towards her, holding in it a glass of foaming beer, the action being accompanied by the words, spoken with emphasis—"You must not drink this." This had occurred on the night previous to the vision about to be related; and, having no conception of its intention, we were amused by the conflict to which it gave rise, between her own desire to heed the injunction, and her husband's wish that she should live, as he considered, more "generously" than was her wont. No indication had been given as to whether the injunction was temporary or perpetual; and the difficulty was finally composed by her resolving to follow it at least for that day. The next morning set all doubts at rest as to what this singular visitation had meant. The Seeress came down almost completely pros-

trated by the intense and harrowing excitement of the scenes presented to her ; and it took all her remaining power to write, while fresh upon her, the description of them. As usual, while to me, in my quality of "interpreter," every line was full of significance, she herself could discern comparatively little meaning until I pointed it out to her. I will call it

The Vision of the World's Fall.

"The first sense of consciousness which broke my sleep was a sense of floating, of being carried swiftly by some invisible force through a vast space ; then of being gently lowered ; then of light, until gradually I found I was upon my feet, and that before me was an open country. Hills, hills, as far as the eye could reach—hills with snow on their peaks and mists at their base. This was the first thing I saw distinctly. Then, casting my eyes towards the ground, I saw that all about me sat huge masses, which at first I took for blocks of stone, cast in the form of lions ; but as I looked at them more intently, my sight grew clearer, and I saw, to my horror, that they were really alive. A panic seized me, and I tried to run away ; but on turning I saw the whole country filled with these awful creatures, and the faces of those turned towards me were most dreadful, for their eyes, and something in

the expression, though not the form, of their faces were human. I was absolutely alone in a dreadful world peopled with lions—lions, too, of a monstrous kind. I fled from the spot, but on my way, in passing through the midst of them, and seeing them at their horrible repasts of blood, it suddenly struck me that they were perfectly unconscious of my presence. I even laid my hands, in passing, on the heads and manes of several, and looked into their very eyes, but they gave no sign of knowing that I had touched them, or that they had seen me. At last I found myself alone in what seemed to me a huge hall, yet scarcely a hall, for it was not built by art, but seemed formed by Nature. The walls were solid, yet they were composed of huge trees standing close together, like columns; and the roof of the hall was formed by their massive foliage, through which not a ray of outer light penetrated. Such light as there was seemed nebulous, and appeared to rise out of the ground. In the centre of this pavilion I stood alone, happy to have at last got clear of those terrible beasts, and to be undisturbed by their howlings.

“As I stood there, I became suddenly aware of the fact that the nebulous light of the hall was concentrating itself into a kind of focus on the columned wall opposite me. It grew there and spread, revealing as it spread a series of moving

pictures, but like actual scenes being enacted before me. For the figures in the pictures were alive and moved before my eyes, though I heard neither word nor sound. All was absolute silence. And this is what I saw—

“First, a writing on the wall,—‘This is the History of our Planet.’ These letters, as I looked at them, appeared to sink into the wall, and to yield as it were to the pictures which came out, dimly at first, then strong and clear and vivid as actual scenes. First I saw a beautiful woman, absolutely perfect, with the sweetest and most womanly face conceivable. She was living in a cave among the hills with her husband; and he too was beautiful, more like an angel than a man. They seemed perfectly happy together; and their dwelling was like Paradise. On every side was beauty, sunlight, and repose.

“The picture sank into the wall as the writing had done. And then came out another, the same man and woman driving together in a sleigh drawn by reindeer over fields of ice, with all about them glaciers and snow and great mountains lost in wreaths of mist. The picture was alive. The sleigh moved at a rapid pace, and the pair talked gaily to each other. But what caused me much surprise was that they carried between them, and actually in their hands, a glowing flame, the brightness of which I felt

reflected from the picture upon my own cheeks. The ice around shone with its brightness. The slow-moving clouds upon the snow mountains were tinted by it. Yet strong as were its light and its heat, neither the man nor the woman seemed to be burnt or dazzled by it. This picture, too, the beauty and brilliancy of which struck me greatly, sank as the former had done.

"Next I saw a terrible man clad in an enchanter's robe, standing alone upon an ice-crag. In the air above him, poised like a dragon-fly, was an evil spirit, with a head and face like that of a man, but no more. The rest was the tail of a comet, and seemed made of a green fire which flickered in and out as though swayed by a wind. And as I regarded these two, suddenly through an opening in the hills the sleigh, bearing the beautiful woman and her husband, passed by; and I saw that in the same instant the enchanter had been seized by some kind of emotion, the nature of which I could not at the time comprehend. His face contracted; and the evil spirit lowered itself and came between me and the enchanter, concealing him from me. Then this picture sank and disappeared.

"I next beheld the same cave in the hills which I had seen before; and the beautiful couple together in it. Then a shadow darkened the door of the cave; and the enchanter stood before

it in his black dress, asking admittance. Cheerfully and even affectionately they both bade him enter; and as he came forward with his snake-like eyes fixed on the fair woman, I understood the nature of the change I had before noticed in him. He wished to have this woman for his own, and was even then planning how to carry her away. And the evil spirit in the air beside him, seemed busy suggesting schemes. This picture sank as the others had done, and but for a brief instant I caught sight of another. It was the enchanter carrying the woman away on his shoulders, she struggling and lamenting, and her bright hair streaming behind her. This lasted but for a second, and passed away giving place to the one which most of them all gave me the most vivid sense of horrible reality.

"I saw a huge pile of wood prepared in the midst of a market-place, a pile such as is used for the burning of heretics and witches. The market-place, round which were rows of seats as though for a large crowd of spectators, appeared yet quite empty. I saw in it only three living beings, the beautiful woman, the enchanter, and the evil spirit. Yet I think that the seats were really filled by invisible persons, for there appeared every now and then to be a stir as of a great multitude; and I had moreover a strange sense that I stood in the presence of a large

concourse. The enchanter led the woman to the stake, fastened her there with iron chains, lit the faggots about her feet, and withdrew to a short distance, where he stood with his arms folded, looking on as the flames rose about her. I understood that she had refused his love, and that in his rage and spite he was about to burn her as a sorceress. Then, in the flame above the pile, I saw the evil spirit poisoning himself as before like a dragon-fly, and rising and sinking and fluttering in the smoke. While I wondered what this meant, the flames which had concealed the beautiful woman, parted in the midst, and disclosed to me a sight so horrible as to thrill me from head to foot, and for an instant to turn me into stone. Chained to the stake there stood, not the fair woman I had seen there a moment before, but a dreadful monster—a woman still, but a woman with three heads, and three bodies linked in one. Every one of her long arms ended, not in a hand, but in a claw like that of a bird of prey. Her hair was like the hair of the Gorgon Medusa; and her faces were inexpressibly loathsome to look upon. She seemed with all her dreadful heads and limbs to writhe in the flames, and yet not to be consumed by them. She gathered them in to herself; her claws caught them and drew them down; her three-formed body appeared to soak the fire

up into itself as though it had been air. The sight appalled me. I covered my face and dared look at it no more.

“When at length I turned my eyes again on the wall, the picture that had so terrified me was gone, and instead of it I saw the enchanter flying through the world, pursued by the evil spirit and that dreadful woman. Through all the world they seemed to go. The scenes changed with marvellous rapidity. Now the picture represented all the richness and gorgeous colouring of the torrid zone; now the ice-fields of the North; then a pine forest; then a wild sea-shore; but always the same three figures; always the same dreadful three-formed woman pursuing the enchanter, and the evil spirit hovering beside the woman.

“At last this succession of pictures terminated, and I saw a desolate region, in the midst of which sat the woman, with the enchanter beside her, his head lying on her lap. Either the sight of her must have become familiar to him with time, and so less horrible, or she had overcome his repugnance by some spell. At least, I saw that they were mated at last, and their offspring lay around them about their feet. These were lions—monsters with human faces, and jaws dripping with blood. They roved to and fro, lashing their tails. The sight of them was

horrible. Then, too, this last picture faded and sank as the others had done. And through it came out again the letters I had seen before—‘This is the History of our Planet;’ only they seemed to me a little different, but in what way I am not quite sure. The horror of the whole thing was too strong upon me to look closely. And I awoke, repeating to myself again and again, ‘How could one woman become three?’ ”

The man and woman with one soul, essentially dual, luminous, and glowing, between them; the woman forced from her proper place beside the man by the sorceries of priestcraft; depraved as to her intuitions under a régime of fire and force, and a base presentment of existence; and finally, her simplicity and innocence gone, become a trinity of demons, giving birth to a brood of ruthless carnivora,—truly the history of our planet, ever since the time when, making sense all, man first worshipped the outer and seeming, and made the lower self the rule of life, and blood, not love, the way of salvation. I could not doubt that the vision was but another mode of impressing on me the theme already descanted on in “England and Islam,” with the design yet more vividly to warn the world of the coming deluge of blood through which it must pass ere man learns to give proper heed to his intuitions,

and recognises the superiority of mercy above sacrifice as the agent of redemption. It was a striking illustration of the message shortly afterwards received by me in writing from our "genii"—

"We mean you to lay bare the secrets of the world's sacrificial system. This is the work we have for you to do. We are all ready to help." And I recognised it as the end to which every line I had ever written was directed; every truth I had ever discovered tended.

To the same end also were the following, which were similarly given. It will be observed that there is a continuity of design between the various portions of the communication, though given on different occasions. In the first the denial of the current orthodoxy in respect to the nature of Jesus cuts the ground from under the sacerdotal doctrine of vicarious atonement, and makes room for the exhibition of the parental element as preponderating in the divine character.

The vision represented a number of grey-headed men discoursing together on the profoundest subjects. They talked long and earnestly, and evidently for the benefit of the dreamer and myself; but she was too much exhausted to retain more than the following fragments. The question being asked by one of

the elders, "What do you mean by Almighty God?" it was replied by another—

"God comprehends all things, but is no person in the sense in which we understand person. Divinity is the substance of all things. It throws off rings which become individualised as spirits." And in answer to another question it was said—

"The Jews are undoubtedly right regarding the nature of Jesus. To conceive of God as incarnate, or having a son in the way supposed among Christians, is a blasphemy against the divine essence."

The doctrine, nevertheless, which, under the name of the Trinity, has formed an essential element in the world's religions from the earliest times, found recognition from them in the following suggestive sentence, similarly uttered to the Seeress—

"Let all the young people in the world resemble the second person of the Holy Trinity."

This was evidently to the Seeress intended as a thesis whereon a disquisition was about to be made. But her trance was accidentally cut short at the moment, and the rest was lost.

The following, which was similarly imparted on the succeeding night, is the second of the visions referred to. I will entitle it

The Vision of the Lesson of Perfection.

"I was in a large room, and there were in it seven persons, all men, sitting at one long table ; and each of them had before him a scroll, some having also books ; and all but one were grey-headed and bent with age, and this was a youth of twenty, without hair on his face. When I first became aware of my presence in the room, one of the aged men, who had his finger on a place in the book before him, was saying to the others, 'This spirit, who is of our order, writes in this book, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."' How shall we understand this word perfection?' And another of the old men, looking up, answered, 'It must be wisdom, for wisdom is the height of perfection.' And another of the old men said, 'That cannot be ; for no creature can be wise as God is wise. Where is he among us who could have designed the universe ? That which is part cannot contain the whole. To bid a creature, therefore, be wise as God is wise, would be a mockery.'

"Then another old man said, 'It must be truth. For truth only appears to me to be perfection.' And the one who sat next him said, 'Truth also is partial ; for where is he among us who shall see as God sees ?'

"And the next said, 'It must surely be

justice ; for this is the whole of righteousness.' And another said, ' Not so ; for justice comprehends vengeance, and vengeance is the Lord's alone.'

"Then the young man stood up with an open book in his hand, and said, ' I have here another writing of one who also heard these words. Let us see whether his rendering of them can help us towards the knowledge we seek.' And he turned over the leaves, and found a place, and read aloud, ' Be ye merciful as your Father in Heaven is merciful.' And all of them closed their books and fixed their eyes upon me."

Even the Seeress's husband, though one of the least imaginative of Englishmen, was not exempt from the operation of the same influences. For a vision was given to him in which the church in which he was ministering had become a tavern, while the prayer-book in his hands became refuse, to be flung away in disgust as containing doctrines derogatory to the divine character.

CHAPTER VI.

THE AMPLIFICATION.

IN this and the following chapter will be given an account of experiences more varied in scope, and received in connexion with circles including persons additional to those already indicated. In all cases, however, the experiences are those obtained by myself and private friends, under circumstances in which nothing was wanting to produce the fullest conviction of their genuineness. With regard to the character of those utterances which bear upon the "new revelation," it will be seen that, brief and fragmentary as they mostly are, they are wholly harmonious, both with each other and with all that had been set forth in "England and Islam." For they illustrate the truth of the doctrine that the object of revelation is always one and the same—namely, the redemption of the world from the dominion of the lower planes of sense, by means of a new demonstration of the soul's reality and existence; by a fresh exhibition of its nature; and by instruction regarding the means of its culture. If it be true, as is prognosticated, that

the world is about to be ushered into a new epoch in the development of its consciousness by means of a spiritual outpouring such as has ever accompanied the corresponding crises of the past, it would seem that nothing can be more probable than that it should be heralded and introduced as here shown,—namely, by the arrival and apparition of individual unembodied souls and spirits, in numbers exceeding any previous experience.

The appeal is not merely to the eye or ear, or any special sense. In every communication recorded or received, whatever the manner of its delivery or mode in which the medium was used, was invariably presented the phenomenon, which will be recognised by all who are familiar with the subject, known as the *afflatus*, or passage over the hands as of a cool and gentle air, followed by a palpable withdrawing of force from the sitters. Without this nothing could occur, no matter how long we sat or how strong our desire for intercourse. The fanning of the hands, the shiver passing through the whole frame, and the sensible subtraction from the system of the vital energy in order to be converted by the influences operating into the forces necessary for the production of the phenomena, and the rapid exhaustion of the sitters, and incapacity for exertion until the waste has been repaired, were, for us,

evidences impossible to be withstood, apart from the actual results, of the distinctness and reality of the agents.

It is mainly owing to the exhausting nature of the process that the communications we received are so brief and fragmentary. So few persons follow the mode of life necessary to enable them to hold converse with spirits of the order we mostly cared to entertain, that our circles were necessarily restricted to a very small number, and the amount of force contributed by each was as necessarily too great for the process to be long sustained without serious injury. Whether or not the force in question was taken from me in larger proportions than is usual, I cannot say. But of this I assert positively, that having all my life been accustomed to exertion, intellectual and physical, of the most exhausting kind, I know of nothing, from the pulling in a boat-race, the working of a fire-engine, or the digging in a gold-field under a tropical sun, to reading against time for a degree, or writing against time for the press, that is comparable to it. For it is not fatigue merely, but actual withdrawal, as palpably as by bleeding, of the essential vital energy of the system, called in the nomenclature of Occultism the Astral Fluid, on the hypothesis that it is the universal medium of force. Not alone to the individual suffering such nervous

exhaustion are the fact and symptoms apparent, but the spirits themselves are wont to observe it, and to counsel moderation ; and this occurred to me more than once. "You must renounce mediumship for six months. We take material particles from your brain," was the remark of a spirit with whom I conversed through a "trance-medium," wife of my friend Dr. K——, by whose kindness I have been permitted to have such evidences of the reality of the phenomena of spiritual obsession as has enabled me fully to recognise the truthfulness of the Bible narratives in that respect. And the diagnosis was confirmed by my own Seeress in an access of somnambule clairvoyance, as well as by my own sensations and convictions.

For this reason, and through the pressure of other occupations, it is that, although the intercourse I am now describing extended over a period of three months, the results are not more complete and continuous, but resemble rather the droppings of a shower ere long, we hope, to descend in fuller volume.

On Feb. 18th it was announced through the planchette :—"The worst of the Turkish crisis is yet to come."

Also the following, which had a peculiar interest for the Seeress :—

"We are going to try to help the spirits of

the animals to come to her whom you call Mary. Wait for it." This was given in the country.

A few days afterwards, in London, while sitting at the planchette, instead of moving evenly and smoothly, as was its wont, over the paper, it commenced to tilt and rock in a singular manner, and we sought in vain for the cause. Instead, moreover, of writing, it travelled all over the sheet, making unmeaning marks. Not caring for this, we ceased awhile. On resuming our sitting the writing came as usual, and this was given, in reference to what had just occurred:—

"Do not wonder. It is the spirit of a dog trying to write; the first that has ever tried." We were talking about this message, still keeping our hands in contact with the instrument, when it again wrote—

"He says he not a dog; but we know he is;" thus making the animal express itself as might a child—"Me not a baby!"

Here I made a remark to the effect that it may be in that world, as it so often is in this, that people are not aware to how low a grade they really belong; when my remark was confirmed by the instrument writing, "Just so." "Mary's" delight at receiving such assurance that the animals she loved so dearly survived this life,

and could be compensated hereafter for the cruelties inflicted on them here, was intense. It at once removed one half the load that life had ever been to her, through her sense of the injustice involved in the infliction of suffering upon the unoffending without compensation. It had been in a very great measure to her championship of the animals that the present vigorous opposition to the barbarous practice of vivisection was due. The view that the tormentors of the animals suffer loss by their selfish infliction of pain, and that their victims gain in like proportion by its ministry, was one that seemed to us satisfactorily to meet the demands of justice. The recognition of her in the spirit world as *par excellence* the representative of the animals, was soon after this evinced in a most remarkable manner. I will relate it in its place; for I am giving our experiences as nearly as possible chronologically.

In reply to the question whether the spirits of the animals are the same in kind with those of men, the answer was in the affirmative; and to a question respecting the method of creation generally, the following was written:—

“Divinity is diffused at first. It is individualised in forms, gradually growing stronger, as nebulous light is concentrated in consolidated orbs.”

One of our party being in uncertainty re-

specting some advice that had been given her urging her to convert into a mercenary scheme a project she had intended to be purely beneficent, received a dream in which she beheld a tombstone surrounded by an army of rats, the name on the stone being that of Charles Bravo.

She did not associate the dream with the matter on her mind, but happening in the course of the following day to call on a friend who was in pain, she made some mesmeric passes over her; whereupon the patient, who in her waking state knew nothing of what was in the other's mind, went into a trance and exclaimed with fervour, "Be firm, and do not let yourself be persuaded to do anything in a mercenary spirit; it will spoil your good works."

In the evening we held a sitting, when in answer to an inquiry respecting the meaning of the dream, the planchette wrote—

"Rats are greed; they belong to dead men. You are alive and in the light. Mr. Bravo represents suicide. Beware of greed and of death—moral suicide."

This lady also was, as might have been expected of her, an exquisite "medium." The spirits readily responded to her thoughts, as the following shows:—She was near us, but not taking part in the sitting, while a communication was being given to me promising to give me directions for

my future work, when the message to me was broken off and the words written—

“ We will fetch a friend of yours to advise you.”

As this did not fit in with what had preceded, I expressed my wonder as to its meaning, for we never had anything incoherent or meaningless in our communications. At this the by-sitter smiled, and said she had just asked mentally for some advice for herself respecting a dream she had on the previous night ; a dream extraordinary in itself, and the more so as she was not in the habit of dreaming. It was to the effect that a man called to tell her that her bankers were in danger of failing, and that she ought to withdraw her money. Having perfect faith in the firm in question, she had withstood her visitor, who was a stranger to her. At this he had become exceedingly angry, and even violent, and had gone away declaring that he did not think the bank could last over five days. The advice she had invited was concerning the course she ought to take, when the answer above stated was given, without the knowledge of those who were sitting at the planchette as to what it referred.

For the first four of the five days indicated we sought information through the planchette, as well as out of doors, respecting the solvency of the firm in question, but without avail. On the

evening of the fifth day, on sitting with "Mary," I asked with some degree of urgency, for the time was expiring, for the needed light in the matter, when the instrument wrote—

"We cannot speak to L—— without her hand," indicating her by her Christian name.

Hereupon we at once summoned her to place her hand on the planchette with ours, when it was written—

"Do not be afraid about—(naming the banker in question)—he is all right, but he has been unsteady. It would be wise to open account at a stock company bank. I will try to come in a dream to-night."

The latter remark was given in answer to a question asking who the adviser was. The dream did not occur; but a few days later, the lady in question not having made the change recommended, it was written without any anticipation of further direction—

"Tell L—— that she must really do as I have said."

The following is an account of an incident by which "Mary" was seriously affected, and our communications interrupted for several days. After being exposed one morning out of doors to an occurrence which overwhelmed her with indignation and distress, she returned home; but instead of relieving her feelings by mentioning

the circumstance, she sat brooding over it, though endeavouring the while to pursue her studies. In the evening, while thus engaged, and alone, she became conscious of a presence other than her own in the room, and, raising her eyes, beheld passing slowly along the wall towards the door the figure of a man, apparently a foreigner, wearing a morning robe, and having a countenance at once highly intellectual and evil. His eyes, which were deep-set, were intently fixed on her, almost paralysing her by their gaze. She gathered strength, however, to summon aid, and the figure departed, leaving her in a state of great terror,—so great, that she determined to quit her studies for that evening, and to accompany a friend to a sitting at which a remarkable “trance-medium” was to exhibit his faculty. Even here, though intensely interested in the performance, she was not exempt from the malign influence by which she had just been alarmed at home. The same figure presented itself to her again, and she was forced to retire to another room in charge of some of the party. Of these one was herself a sensitive, and liable to trance lucidity; and on the apparition presenting itself a third time this lady saw it also. She described it exactly as “Mary” had done, agreeing that it somewhat resembled Napoleon Bonaparte, and declared that it was the spirit of some powerful and ambitious

man, who had been a poisoner and a sorcerer, and who now, wishing to take possession of some good sensitive to use as a medium for his own evil purposes, no doubt had designs on "Mary." The experiences of the evening were of a very remarkable kind, and made a strong impression upon all who witnessed them. None of the witnesses could doubt the objective character of the apparition. Had the matter, however, rested on their report, I should not have given it a place here. It is on account of the confirmation of that report received by myself that I record it, as constituting a strong evidence for the reality of at least some recorded apparitions. The figure had been seen and minutely described in exactly the same manner by two persons, and a third was so distinctly conscious of its presence as to be able to look at once in the direction in which the others saw it, and to follow its movements. A week passed before any further communication was received, all our attempts to obtain answers failing, "Mary" being the while like one who had taken poison. At length we received the following. The name in the first instance was written so ill that we asked for a repetition, when it was written with perfect plainness—

"Our chain has been broken by Cæsar Borgia. We can do nothing against him. He has passed ;

we have seen nothing of him for days. We are building walls. He has poisoned her ; he poisons us. Use carbonate of soda."

On referring to the history of the character named, we were struck with the perfect resemblance between it and the description given of the apparition. We presume that the "walls" reared by our spiritual protectors were efficacious, for nothing more was suffered from the quarter in question.

We learnt by subsequent communication that the spirits who exercise guardianship over us are largely dependent upon ourselves for their power to render aid. It is necessary for the affections to be actively disposed towards them, so that they may feel themselves heartily welcome, and even beloved. I conversed, through a trance-medium already named (Mrs. K——), with one who had been so long dead as to have lost the perception of matter. On being interrogated respecting the earth and planets, he said he did not know what I meant by earth and planets. All he saw was groups of spirits round various magnetic centres. This spirit, on being further questioned respecting the nature of God, said we had no terms in which it could be adequately described. The nearest was our word Desire. God was that in and of which all things consist ; and those spirits were the highest who most nearly resembled him.

morally. So it was with our "genii." It had been through a lack of sufficient affectionate desire towards them, and through the too great prevalence of a disposition of independence of their aid, that the visitation which had produced so much distress had been rendered possible. Man, they told us, is free. He must wish for aid ere it can be rendered.

Had we retained any doubt of the possibility of a visible apparition from the dead, the experiences I am about to record would have put it entirely to flight. The incidents were spread over some weeks; but I will narrate them continuously so as to form them into a connected narrative.

One morning I found "Mary" engaged in deciphering a message which had that instant been written through her, and together we read it. It was in an entirely new hand, and had been written, she said, with extraordinary speed and firmness. It was as follows:—

"Be prepared. This placarding is destined to set the country on fire. There will be protests from many of the profession in the public journals charging you with publishing libels. A great storm is about to burst. You are warned." Then followed a signature which we took for C. W. S.

To make the import of this intelligible, I

must state that we were at that very time preparing to carry out a suggestion of "Mary's" to rouse the country against the atrocities of vivisection, by exhibiting in the streets placards containing addresses and representations setting forth the horrors of the practice. We had already done much in the cause, and were determined to leave no effort untried that might serve to redeem civilisation, humanity, and science itself from so foul a reproach as that involved in the recent legalisation of the practice of torturing our weak and defenceless dumb fellow-creatures for our own benefit. We knew, moreover, by long and careful research, the worse than uselessness of it for any purpose connected with therapeutics; and having our sympathies in a state of healthy activity, the knowledge that such deeds were being perpetrated in our midst went far to make life intolerable for us. What but a hell already was the place where, on pretence of finding out how they were made, the strong spirits dissected and burnt alive the weak ones? Such a hell had "science" made the earth. Regarding the message just received as a caution to accept an offer from the Societies to carry out the suggestion on their own responsibility, and delighted to have such a proof of the recognition of our work from such a quarter, we set to work to unravel the mystery of the signature.

Placing our hands on the planchette, we requested the writer to repeat the initials. This he at once did, writing them in such a way as to indicate that what we had taken for a C was but an accidental flourish from the last letter. This letter, after several repetitions, clearly appeared to be an F. I then asked if it was one of our genii. When the word "No" was written. "Is it quite a new spirit?" "Yes." Then came six or seven times, in quick succession, the letters W. F., when, remembering the opposition to vivisection shown by the great surgeon, lately dead, who bore those initials, I inquired—

"Is it the spirit of Sir William Fergusson?" in answer to which the word "Yes" was written rapidly and plainly. The writing, we were assured by one who was familiar with his hand, bore a strong resemblance to that of Sir William, but we have not had an opportunity of making the comparison. Neither did it strike us as a matter of consequence, as it is scarcely possible with such an instrument to preserve the ordinary characteristics of a handwriting.

Having thus established a mode of communication through us with the world he had so lately quitted, Sir William was not backward to avail himself of it. The following is the first of his subsequent messages :—

"She must see Gladstone. I must leave ways

and means to you. Only it is necessary to see him."

On our inquiring why he still concerned himself in the matter, he wrote—

"It will help me to help with this subject." He then moved the planchette to a separate part of the paper so as to have a clear space, and wrote—

"I have something very grave and solemn to tell you. It is this: That we must rise by doing some good work; and this is mine. If I refused it, I should be lowered. I left undone much that I might have done on earth in this respect."

On March 7th he came again, charged us to "strive for total abolition," and insisted on "Mary" seeing Mr. Gladstone. He evidently considered the sufferings of British animals, the degradation of British science, and the extinction of British humanity, to be matters which ought to be nearest the hearts of true British statesmen; and had carried with him to the other world an unabated confidence both in the universality of Mr. Gladstone's sympathies, and the omnipotency of his advocacy.

So great was his urgency on this point, that I at length seriously turned the matter over in my mind, and bethinking me of some mutual acquaintance who might serve as mediator, I asked mentally whether I should seek an introduction

at the hands of the person I was thinking of. We frequently used tests of the kind, and always successfully. On this occasion the answer was—

“Yes; try and get an introduction in St. James’s Square,” the residence of the friend I was thinking of.

“Shall I mention this message of yours?”

“Judge as you find her. I advise not. She may know his hours. I am tired. I have not quite recovered from my illness.”

“What!” we all exclaimed, “do the effects of disease survive the body?”

To this for some moments there was no reply. Then a totally different hand wrote—

“He has gone to rest.” And having written so indistinctly that we were doubtful as to its meaning, the same hand re-wrote the message legibly. An attempt was made to procure the interview so earnestly desired, but it came to nothing.

On the 28th of the same month I was in the chair at a conference between two of the anti-vivisection societies, convened for the purpose of considering the propriety of holding a public meeting; when the selection of a fitting chairman proving difficult, I yielded to a sudden impulse, and expressed to my neighbour, the Rev. Dr. L——, a wish that the spirit of Sir William

Fergusson could materialise itself, and take the chair for us. I had not mentioned this incident; but on the same evening, when a few hours later we sat down to the planchette, he came and wrote—

“I was at your conference this afternoon. For God’s sake do your utmost to put down vivisection. It is peopling our side with fiends. Of all the trees in the garden of death, this is the one which bears the deadliest fruit. In my heart I believe it is the last attempt of the powers of evil to abolish God. Pray let this letter of mine be published.—WM. FERGUSSON.”

In reply to our questions regarding this very unexpected communication, he added—

“I cannot describe to you what takes place here. We have monsters among us loathsome to see. Oh, my friends, hell and devils are realities; but the world mistakes their origin. If you do not put this down, the holiest among you will have no heaven to come to. All will be one vast hell, and God will be blotted out for evermore.”

“Will you help us,” I asked, “to make the best use of the time before Mary goes abroad?”

This was answered in a different hand, that of his “guardian,” saying—

“He says *yes*, but can talk no more. He is tired.”

“And will you influence Mr. Gladstone as he wishes?”

"I will try, but he has a very strong will."

"Are you also disembodied spirits?"

"We are flames; not souls."

"Do the spirits of the dead, then, have human forms while you resemble tongues of fire?"

"Yes."

"How long do you stay by us?"

"We follow you through all changes."

"Have we been incarnate before?"

"Yes."

"In animals?"

"Yes; and herbs and trees."

"And do evil livers descend into tigers, wolves, and pigs?" Here the spirit of Sir William Fergusson came back. He had evidently been listening to our conversation with his guardian. In answer to my last question, he wrote impatiently—

"There are worse things than pigs. I have told you that devils are realities."

We were three in number, and we all felt the troubled presence of Sir William Fergusson's spirit very sensibly. An indescribable solemnity seemed to pervade the room while he was writing the messages above given. "Mary," who was in a highly sensitive state, expressed her fear that she would receive a visit from him in person—so conscious was she of his spiritual presence—and she was half afraid to be left alone. The spirits

themselves, of whom there seemed to have been several present, noticed her illness, and one of them, evidently an inexperienced one, wrote hastily, and scarcely legibly—

“We shall soon see Mary.” Upon this another hand, which we thought to be that of the experienced and considerate surgeon who had been speaking with us, came to the planchette and wrote, evidently with the desire to soften the announcement so abruptly made—

“Some of us think Mary would be more useful here than with you. They hope to see her soon.”

Her anticipations of a disturbed night proved true. After a short sleep she woke, and observed on the wall opposite the fire a shadow as of some one sitting in her armchair. On looking towards the chair, she found it occupied by the figure of an old man, whose face she instantly recognised as that of Sir William Fergusson. His picture was in the shops, and she was familiar with it. He was looking thin and haggard, and seemed distressed. For when he spoke it was in a somewhat querulous tone. His conversation was all of vivisection, principally urging more active measures. One phrase which he used frequently struck her as very singular. He kept saying, “Why don’t you do a little something? I wish you would try to do a little something;”—a remark which, considering that she was doing all in her power,

seemed to her to be uncalled for. Being much exhausted, she fell asleep, and slept for some time. But on waking, he was still there, though not quite so palpable. The fire had burnt down, and there was no shadow visible. She confessed to having been very uncomfortable at finding a strange man in her room, until she recollected that he had been a doctor.

We pondered much the advisability of complying with Sir William's request, and making his letter public. The circumstances were sure, we considered, not to gain sufficient credit to exert the influence desired. And prejudiced as the public, in its ignorance of the subject, is against anything appertaining or allied to "spiritualism," we considered the advice to be of doubtful wisdom. At the same time a message from the dead, and one given under so much solemnity and with so much urgency, was a thing not lightly to be ignored. We resolved, therefore, to consult some one of larger experience in such matters, and were fortunate in finding one well qualified. The judgment of our adviser—a scholar of no mean order, and holding the degree of LL.D.—was that, in the first place, we should injure our cause by mixing it up at that critical moment of its appearance before Parliament with a story of the kind, unsupported by more than the bare statement of

enthusiasts in the cause. And in the second place, that Sir William himself would not have made the request, had he been at the time in a condition to judge calmly. "Young spirits," he said, "are apt to be eager to raise themselves by doing some good work. They are allowed to have an insight into the nature of the existence on which they have just entered, which rouses their indignation against evil, and makes them enthusiastic for good. We must not suppose that the description given in the message respecting the 'other side' fairly represents the condition of things there. He was evidently shown something that exists, in consequence of practices prevailing here. But the notion that evil is so rampant as might be inferred from his account, is altogether inconsistent with all other testimony, as well as with the moral possibilities of the case. No doubt he had been allowed to have a glimpse into one of the 'Hells' which men make for themselves, by their deliberate hardening of their natures, and suppression of their intuitions of right; and in his horror and amazement he has magnified the proportions of the part he has seen."

We acted on this advice, but endeavoured to fulfil the injunction to "do a little something" by working yet harder in the cause. A few days afterwards we saw in the papers a memoir of Sir

William, stating that his favourite phrase, when about to make any unusual effort in any cause he had at heart, was that he should "try to do a little something" in the matter. It was a colloquialism of his; and "Mary" was delighted to receive what to her was an absolute confirmation of the "objective reality" of her apparition.

The account thus given us of the after condition of the torturers of their animal brethren, received the following confirmation from an independent source. I related our experiences to a clergyman whom I had always known, a man of large humanity, high intelligence, and no ordinary sobriety of judgment, a fellow of his college, moreover, and a hard-working parish minister. And I learnt from him in return that he had himself conversed through a trance-medium, with whom he was well acquainted, with a spirit purporting to be that of a deceased vivisector; and who had declared that he was in horrible agony on account of his deeds in the flesh; but that so far from repenting, his only wish was to inflict fresh tortures, and to make others like himself. He hated coming, he said, to make this confession, but was compelled to do so. It was part of his punishment, and he could not refuse.

"Mary's" interest in this cause had some two or three years before manifested itself in a vision

which she recounted to me at the time of its occurrence, but to which, as we had not then been enlightened respecting the spiritual nature of existence, we did not attach any peculiar significance. It was as follows. I will entitle it

The Vision of the City of Blood.

"I found myself in a narrow street of vast length, upon either hand an unbroken line of high straight houses, the walls and doors of which resembled those of a prison. The atmosphere around me was darkened and dense, and the time seemed to be that of twilight; in the narrow slit of sky visible far overhead between the two lines of roofs, I could discern neither sunlight nor moon, nor colour of any kind. Under foot, between the paving-stones of the street, the grass was springing. Nowhere was the least sign of human life; the place seemed utterly deserted. I stood alone in the midst of a great desolation and silence. Silence? No! As I listened there came to my ears from all sides a sound of moaning, now and then rising to a shriek of unmistakable agony, then sinking again into a feeble wail. Some of these cries were human, some were those of animals, but all were expressive of the intensest physical suffering. Looking steadfastly towards one of the houses from which the most heartrending

of these terrible sounds came, I perceived a stream of blood slowly oozing out beneath the door and trickling down into the street, staining the tufts of grass red as it wound its way towards me. I glanced up, and saw that the glass in the closed and barred windows of the house was splashed and obscured with the same horrible dye. 'They are murdering some one here!' I cried, and flew towards the door. Then for the first time I perceived that the door had no lock nor handle on the outside, but could be opened only from within. It had, indeed, the form and appearance of a door, but in every other respect it was as solid and impassable as the walls themselves. In vain I searched for bell or knocker, or some means of making my entrance into the house. I found only a scroll fastened over the porch with nails, upon which I read the words,— '*This is the Laboratory of a Vivisector.*' As I read, the cries and wailing burst forth again with redoubled vigour, as though some new victim had been added to the rest, and a sound as of struggling made itself audible within. I beat madly against the door with my hands, and screamed for help; but in vain. My dress was reddened with the blood upon the doorstep. I looked down at it with horror, and turned and fled. As I passed on, fresh cries and a sound of sobbing caused me to arrest my steps. Again I looked up at the houses, and perceived that upon

the door of every one was attached a scroll similar to that I had already seen. Upon one was inscribed the words,—‘*Here is a husband murdering his wife ;*’ upon another, ‘*Here is a mother beating her baby to death ;*’ upon a third, ‘*This is a slaughter-house.*’ Every door was impassable ; every window was barred ; and interference from without was impossible. In vain I lifted up my voice and cried for help. The street was silent and desolate as a graveyard ; the only thing that moved about me was the oozing blood that came creeping out from beneath the doors of these awful dwellings. Wild with horror, I fled along the street, seeking some outlet, the cries and moans pursuing me as I ran. At length the street abruptly ended in a high dead wall, the top of which was not discernible ; it seemed to be limitless in height. Upon this wall was written in great black letters,—‘*There is no way out.*’ Overwhelmed with despair and anguish, I fell upon the stones of the street, repeating aloud,—‘*There is no way out !*’ ”

I was profoundly impressed by the relation of this vision, and not long afterwards an extension of it was given to myself. It was as follows :—

It seemed to me that, at the moment when the despair of the Seeress culminated, I joined her ; and seeing with her that there was neither chance of rescue for our fellows nor of escape for ourselves by any ordinary method, I pointed upward, and

cried, "We will ascend to heaven, and save ourselves first, and perchance afterwards we may save these poor wretches. Come, then, take fast hold of me, and together we will scale the heavens. There is no blood there!"

"No blood there!" was the agonised response. "Only look, and you will see that the very skies are encarnadined with the blood shed by priests in honour of the sanguinary deity there enthroned! Oh, folly! folly! to think to escape the deluge of blood by quitting earth for heaven! No, no; there is no hope. God and man are made in the same image. Both alike are carnivorous, and for both alike is blood the daintiest food."

So I looked, and seeing that what she said was true, was about to desist from my attempt, and settle down in blank despair; but ere I had done so a luminous gleam from the gory panoply overhead flashed upon me. "There must be light! It cannot be all blood where that came from," I cried; and I cast another and more piercing glance at the sky. Then to my delight I saw that what we had taken for the substance of the firmament was not the heavens themselves, but a veil drawn over them; and not only was its fabric thin, but there were rents in it, which even as I gazed became larger, and disclosed through their openings patches of clearest blue and gleams of purest white. "See! see!" I cried,

"the heavens are not all blood. What of blood we see above us has been placed there by man. We have but to insist on rising, and we shall force our way through, and behold the whole sky beyond clear and pure, and find as we near the throne that God is no carnivorous monster, but the source of all justice and mercy. Come, let us ascend to where he sits enthroned, and there seek the means to rescue our poor mother earth from this deluge of blood."

As I spoke, we passed the veil of blood, and found that as we passed, it vanished, rolled up like a scroll, and was no more seen. And the vision departed, leaving us mounting higher and higher in the clear blue of the empyrean.

Note.—While sitting in St. James's Park this afternoon, August 17th, and correcting these sheets, I was made vividly conscious that I was not alone in my perusal. On coming to the passage containing my reasons for deferring the publication of Sir W. F.'s letter, it occurred to me to desire some token of his approbation. At that instant it seemed to me that the presence of which I had been conscious, suddenly flung itself upon me, and covered me with an embrace that enveloped and suffused my whole being. Its substance was sufficiently dense to obscure the objects before me, and to induce me to turn towards a person sitting near me to ascertain whether he also perceived it, though knowing that could not be unless he were likewise sensitive. The contact lasted sufficiently long to impress on my mind the conviction that my visitant was no other than Sir W. F. himself, together with these words,—“You have done the best. Mr. Hugo” [the late rector of West Hackney] “is with me. The idea of the placards was his. Prevented by death from carrying it out, he inspired Marv with it.”

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONTINUATION.

THE apparition of Sir William Fergusson occurred on the night of the Wednesday before Easter. The Seeress was to leave town on the following evening with me on a visit to her mother; but our departure was delayed through an occurrence which, while in itself singular in the extreme, was no less remarkable for the unexpected light it threw both on an obscure part of the Bible-history, and on the spiritual significance of certain animal forms. When "Mary" next woke after her final interview with the shade of Sir William Fergusson, it was broad day. While thinking over the experiences of the night, she saw before her in a vision a collection of dragons, serpents, scorpions, lobsters, and other creeping things, large and small; and heard a voice say, "Keep him from touching these. If he touch the flesh of these, you must not suffer him to come near you." Her first thought had been that the vision was in some way a continuation of her previous visitation, of which her mind was still full.

She told me of this vision in the course of the day, and drew for me some of the claws of the animals; for so vivid had been her sight that she had every detail perfectly impressed on her mind. But through some interruption to our conversation, she omitted to tell me of the prohibition. She had moreover no apprehension of any of the animals shown coming in my way, so that I might be tempted to eat of them.

In the evening, however, owing to the presence of a visitor who desired something different to the diet usual in the house, a lobster appeared on the table. At this "Mary" was somewhat dismayed, for it gave rise to the suggestion that her vision might be prophetic, and have an unanticipated significance. Even now she did not tell me of the positive prohibition, but imagined it was intended as a test; and that *if* I partook, she was not to go on her journey with me. Consequently, after a general remark from her, intended as a dissuasion, against the eating of anything that had to be put to so cruel a death as is reputed of the lobster, I, regarding it as fish, and "cold-blooded," and, therefore, in the absence of a sufficiency of perfectly insensitive food, allowable, partook of it, but not liking it, did no more than taste it. Shortly after this "Mary" rose and quitted the room, saying she should not be able to go that evening.

After venting her disappointment alone—for she had been eagerly looking forward to her holiday—she returned and said that she saw now that she had been wrong in not having told me the whole vision ; but that she had mistaken the meaning of the words uttered, and that, as she now perceived, they were not a test, but a positive prohibition. And we then sat down to consult our genii through the planchette concerning the occurrence, deeming it likely that the vision had been of their sending.

We both, as usual, placed our hands on the instrument ; but after waiting for some time, there was no response. I then withdrew my hand in order to reduce the amount of the light in the room ; but sat down again without doing so on finding that the writing had begun. On replacing my hand, it ceased. I withdrew it, and it went on again. And so again the third time. Thereupon I withdrew it altogether. It then wrote—

“Let him go. We can do nothing with him now.”

“For how long is this? Can we go to-morrow?” we asked. To which it wrote—

“If he purge himself to-night you may go ; but he may ask nothing of us for seven days.”

“What is the meaning of this prohibition?”

“The spirits who hold intercourse with you

belong to an order which can have no dealings with eaters of reptiles, whether of sea or land. For all things which move upon the belly are cursed for the sake of the evil one, whose seal is set on all serpents, dragons, and scorpions, such as we showed you."

"What purge should be used? Will a *tamar indien* do?"

"No; vegetable oil, castor-oil. If he take the purge you may go with him to-morrow."

I complied with their injunction, and we asked next morning some further questions respecting this strange affair. Among other queries, "Mary" asked whether they endorsed the whole of the Levitical code, for we had recognised and found a passage corresponding to the above. To this they replied, "No, else you would have been destroyed already." And they gave chapter and verse of a passage enjoining instant destruction for some breach of the ceremonial law, of the existence of which we previously had no knowledge. "Is it right to eat flesh?" was then asked; to which it was replied—

"We do not say it is right; and, even, for you it would be unlawful to eat flesh."

To the question whether I might now put my hand on, an answer was given in the affirmative by rapping.

It was the morning of Good Friday. Placing

my hand on the planchette, I begged the spirit to tell us the precise truth respecting the events for which the season was celebrated. What were the facts of the Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension? And we awaited in grave eagerness what we fully expected would be the first authentic information respecting these great problems.

Presently the planchette moved under our pressure, which we made considerably greater than usual, in order to obtain a lasting impression. It wrote three lines, and then stopped, signifying by a tap that the message was finished. Hastening to see what was written, we found it to be this:—

“We are not of a high order. We know no more than you. He who sent us has withdrawn.” I was still “unclean,” and the high spirit who had been communicating with us dared not break his caste by contact with me; rather, however, than balk my desire for intercourse, he had beckoned some bystanding spirits of a lower grade, who were not subject to the same restrictions, and charged them with the reply. These, however, could tell us nothing. The writing of the last message was totally unlike that of the previous ones. We have had nothing like it before or since.

A question respecting the chance of the editor of a certain paper publishing Sir W. Fergusson’s

letter—for we had not then come to a decision—elicited the following :—

“ We have but restricted power over the wills of men. Try your best. He wishes it.”

The following questions were asked and answers given during my period of retirement :—

“ Why must we hold in abhorrence creatures who go on their bellies and crawl in sea or on land ?”

“ They are the receptacles of unclean spirits.”

“ Please explain.”

“ These spirits cannot exist in the pure elements, save to engender mischief and trouble, such as blight, fever, storm, hurricane, and the like. Wherefore the Lord, for the sake of his creatures, has given up to them certain forms which they may inhabit, that they may be shut up in them, and that the world may be saved from the destruction they would otherwise bring on it.”

“ Then it must be wrong to kill these creatures, for they are thereby let loose to work mischief ?”

“ Not so ; for they are evil beasts doing injury to all things about them. And, moreover, the vitality of the unclean spirit, being given off to that of the animal energy of the beast he inhabits, perishes in great part with it ; so that by its death he is partly consumed, and returns to the elements by so much weaker than before. It

is good, therefore, that all such evil beasts should be destroyed. Whoso cherishes them, cherishes evil spirits."

We gathered from this reply that immortality is by no means a matter of course for all. That those who care to preserve their souls must tend and cultivate them; otherwise they shrink away and expire, though not until many opportunities have been afforded for repentance.

We then asked—

"Why then does not the 'Lord' destroy these evil spirits?"

"It is the nature of them to burn out and expend themselves."

"Of what animals in particular do you speak?"

"The worst of these evil spirits dwell in serpents, in adders, in scorpions, and their kind. Others in creeping things. Others, less pernicious, in the races which rend and devour; such as the lion, the jackal, and their kind. Others, yet less potent, in the swine and their kind. But these last are redeemable."

"What do you mean by redeemable?"

"I mean that to kill such creatures is not a merit, but an offence."

"How do you divide the evil spirits, and is their difference of degree or of kind?"

"Of kind. The worst are poisonous spirits. Of such is the brood of Apollyon, the falsifier of

all things. Others are selfish spirits. These are encased in horny exteriors, their only soft parts being internal. Such are lobsters and their kind: They are 'of the brood of Belial. Others are cruel spirits, as the tiger, the wolf, and the cat. These are the brood of Saturn, the father of priestcraft. They are redeemable hereafter. Others are impure spirits, eaters of dung and uncleanness. Such are swine, dogs, and the like. They are redeemable here. To slay them, save for crime's sake, is unlawful. These are of the offspring of Balaam. Many among men are also under his dominion. Such are the most common. Others are foul spirits, against nature, cursed of God and detestable, suckers of blood, begotten of foulness. They are the brood of Beel Zebub. Such are lice and creeping things, to destroy which is a duty and a good work; for they shall neither be redeemed here nor hereafter, but are vile as serpents and scorpions. Such as these abounded in ancient times, when the earth was full of monstrous reptiles, offspring of Abaddon and of Belial. But their forces are weakened, and their might decreased. Adonai reigns and shall reign. Amen."

The above was received on Easter morning. On the expiration of my prescribed term, they wrote—

"We want to give Caro some advice. It is

that he should not wear next his flesh garments of wool, but of linen. This is an ancient law—the law which we gave to the priests. Look in the Scriptures. It is because of cleanliness. Let him wear drawers next his thighs, therefore. We will permit the vest and the coverings for the feet, because of your infirmity, so that you wash them every third day in summer, and every sixth day in winter. But we prefer silk or linen. It is a law of cleanliness.”

This message showed their perfect acquaintance with me on both planes. For not only was it true that I never wore the articles in question at all,—a fact known, of course, to myself alone of those present; but the concession to my “infirmity,” and with it the change of person, were made in instantaneous answer to the thought that passed through my mind as I followed the message, to the effect that I was afraid of taking cold by exchanging wool for linen.

In answer to my question, whether they had given these laws to the Hebrews, or whether the latter had inherited them from the Egyptians, they wrote, “The genii of all the nations had these laws.” And to my question whether I had been right in asserting the interior identity of the ancient religions, they wrote, “It is truly so.” In answer to a question respecting the meaning of their phrase, “The evil one,” and

who were Beel Zebub, Abaddon, &c., they gave this enigmatical reply—

“You are seeking to know the origin of evil. Know that this cannot be told you until Mary is ready for her mission. She must first die and be spiritually raised from the dead, then she shall know all things. But the time is not yet. In the meantime, seek the kingdom of God and the law of a perfect life. Follow the rules we give you both. They are of rigid necessity. And prepare for us a writing-table of cedar-wood. We will give you directions to-morrow. Buy the drawers first.”

I complied with their injunction respecting the linen clothing, but refrained from mentioning it. They showed their knowledge of my movements, however, by writing at our next sitting, “You have done well.” Interpreting the previous message as a caution against pressing at present for information respecting the mysteries of the spiritual world, we forbore to seek further in that direction, leaving it to them to choose their own time for enlightening us. What we were most anxious for was an authoritative statement regarding the leading tenets of the current religion.

They were as good as their word respecting the writing-table, giving us at two sittings minute directions for its construction, and showing

"Mary," moreover, in a waking vision a pattern of it so distinctly that she was enabled to make a perfect drawing from it. There was much that was symbolical about it, and their minuteness reminded us of the directions for the Hebrew Tabernacle. It was to be in the form of a cross; and one direction was to have in the centre a plate of metal or fireproof stone, able to bear an intense heat, which no one was to approach, "lest," they said, "we suffer by the contact." Of the need of such a caution for our own sakes we had already had notice, as I have before mentioned. The table was to contain no bone or ivory or animal produce, and no base metal. It was, moreover, to be provided with a pen, so as to make a permanent record.

From this, and their frequent reference to a "mission," we were led to believe that they entertained a serious desire to institute some order corresponding to the ancient schools of the prophets, for the future continuous enlightenment of the world.

Of the importance they attach to the quality of our food, and the disposition of our sentiments, we had repeated proofs. To the question whether shrimps and prawns came under the same ban as reptiles (it was when we were about to cease from intercourse for a time), they wrote—

"When communicating with us do not eat

either ; but now that you do not wish to hold intercourse with us, you may eat them. But they are not pure meat. Eat, however, but not of lobster." "Man's perfect diet," they wrote, "is grain, the juice of fruits, and the oil of nuts."

Everything seemed to be known to them. One day we had been to call on Mr. Burns, the spiritualist publisher, and in the course of the conversation he had spoken of the difficulty spirits have in communicating with persons dwelling in the denser parts of London, owing to the absorption of people in selfish and sordid aims, and the absence of light, spiritual and physical. In the evening they wrote—

"Alas, alas ! what James Burns said to you is indeed true. We can do but little in the atmosphere of Babylon. It is too dense to see, and we make constant mistakes through the darkness." They added that they had sent us to him, and directed him to speak as he had spoken. They had made their first and only mistake with us that day, omitting the word *which* in a message.

The following supplied a confirmation of the Bible history, in regard to the practice of divination. They wrote—

"We do not want Mary to know what we have to say. Be prepared to go southward late in the spring. Mary's life is menaced, whether

by accident or disease we cannot tell. Seek a divination."

On consulting our "prophetess," we received the following from a spirit through her :—

"I am Terese. Mary is to be cared for; and the divination is this—her health will fail, and she will need rest, mind and body."

Our communications never exhibited the defects, either in completeness or want of knowledge, which ordinarily characterise spirit-messages. And this, we were assured, was due to our own care in observing the requisite conditions. Almost every experience was a crucial test. Here is one which answers the description. The wife of a friend long dead, who was studying painting abroad, hearing that we were having communications of the kind, wrote to ask me to obtain, if possible, some instructions for her from her husband's spirit. I kept the request in my mind, encouraging the wish that the relative in question would come to me; and when the time for a sitting came, I simply told my friends that I wished to ask some questions mentally for a friend at a distance. No hint was given of the nature of the information I wanted. We had scarcely taken our seats when answers were given by taps to all my questions, completely according with what I wished, and indicating in the most unmistakable manner the

peculiar characteristics of the person expected, and with whom I had been well acquainted; while in reply to the chief interrogatory, also asked in silence, was rapped out the following, much to the surprise of the others, on account of its difference in character from the answers ordinarily received—

“Let her study the modulating of colour in the works of Titian, taking some one face and going over the same several times. Do this first, and then ask for more advice.”

His message delivered, the spirit who had given it has never returned, though repeatedly invoked, perhaps because his advice had not been found acceptable.

The absolute independence of the communications of anything that was in our own minds was shown one day while we were using a new planchette. After sitting for some time and wondering why it remained immovable, it wrote, apparently with extreme difficulty, “This planchette is unmagnetised.” And at another time, when we were sitting on opposite sides of the table, “You are badly placed,” meaning that it was necessary for the force from both to combine by our sitting side by side.

One day they wrote for me, “We have nothing to say to-night. We are gathering force to direct your future.”

"Meaning the work of the new revelation?"
I inquired.

"Yes; and your own life. No more now."

I had been wishing that they would call me by some name, as they had others of our circle. Three days later I received the following:—

"This is to Caro, the Beloved, Philemon. Finish your Novel, but it must have a new title. Not the one you have now. We are all ready to help; we can, and we will make it succeed." Here I remarked that they must then give me the new title; for the fact was I was exceedingly pleased with the title of the tale I had on hand. This tale I had during the last five years made three several attempts to complete; but in vain, owing to my consciousness of a jar between the story and the title. It had never occurred to me to alter the title. I wished once more to rewrite the story, but I had almost despaired of doing it to my mind, and had long since laid the work aside. The title they gave me—a Latin one, of which they supplied a perfect idiomatic translation before I had hit upon it—and the instructions they gave for the completion of the story, showed that they had known my own design far better than I knew it. They even added the name of a publisher whom I was to consult. It was that of one then unknown to any of us, and implied their cognition of Swedenborg.

One day a pet guinea-pig was on the table when we were communicating, and it was evident that they did not object to the contact. Remark- ing this, I said it might answer to get a large dog for them to take force from, and so save our own. To this they instantly replied, "No, no dogs." I had forgotten that the dog is "unclean" in their sight. It then occurred to me to inquire whether in the ancient mysteries the sacred cattle were used for this purpose; when they wrote—

"Of course. And that the Brahmins know. That, too, the Egyptians know. Is it not a crime to slay Apis the sacred, the undying soul?" Their habit of writing of the past as present struck me as characteristic of the Hebrews.

They demonstrated their clairvoyant powers by accurately telling us the contents of a sealed packet, unknown to all present. But they could not supply the information wanted respecting the person referred to in it. "We must," they wrote, "consult the guardian genius of the lady concerned; and we must find him." They wrote also the signature in it. We were not aware that it referred to a lady at all, as it afterwards proved to do.

The following prescription and diagnosis, given for the benefit of one on whose account we consulted them, seemed to us to indicate the pro-

foundest acquaintance both with the person in question and with the nature generally of disease. The message was not signed, and we could only conjecture its source. We thought that both Sir William Fergusson and a "guardian" were concerned in it. "The symptoms were those of phthisis." The term "terebenthine" was at first so indistinctly written that, not being acquainted with it, we had to get them to write it three times.

"Get one of the terebenthine oils. Pour a little in the hollow of the hand every night before going to bed, and anoint the upper half of the body. Sprinkle some also on the pillow so as to inhale it while sleeping.

"Terebenthine oils; such as balsam of Peru, or oil of cassia, or one of the essential oils of cloves, or bergamot, or flower of orange, or the aromatic oil of thyme, or balsam of Mexico, or copailu.

"There is a disease known to medical men in which the patient bleeds for want of the necessary dermous protection. This disease is *purpura hæmorrhagica*. There is a spiritual disease as rare, in which the spirit bleeds for want of proper covering. The pain is very great, since the smallest spiritual or mental trouble or anxiety causes a bruise, a sore, a wound, an extravasation of blood. The spirit in her is unclothed; it is, as it were, naked."

We frequently, during the progress of the phenomena, discussed the hypothesis of "unconscious cerebration" which has of late come to be the favourite one advanced in explanation of any phenomenon that appears to imply an immaterial agency. Nothing, it appeared to us, could be more absurd than to predicate such a cause as in operation where not only was the "cerebration" not unconscious, but where it was consciously of a character opposite to that of the results occurring. Indeed, our usual practice while communicating, for instance, through the planchette, was to talk together on various subjects for the express purpose of noting the independence of the result in regard to what was in our minds. No matter how our thoughts were occupied, so long as we left the instrument uninfluenced it pursued its way from one side of the paper to the other, and sometimes would go back of itself in order to commence a new line, and even move to another part of the paper to obtain more space when a long message was contemplated, and all the time maintain the characteristics of the handwriting throughout the whole time that any particular influence was using it. The change when a fresh influence was at work was most marked; and so familiar did we at length become with the different spirits, that we could at once recognise a familiar hand and

detect a new one. It is difficult to make the statement strong enough to convey the facts as they were, to one who has had no experience of them. A brief experience of the things which were of daily occurrence with us, would suffice to convince the most sceptical. The presence, however, of a hardened sceptic is intolerable to them. Here is one of their utterances in illustration of their moral sensitiveness. "Do not dispute. Your strength must harmonise together for us to be able to communicate with you." On another occasion, when the communicant, who was herself the subject of the admonition, was sitting alone at the planchette, they wrote—

"Before we can communicate with you, you must put yourself in harmony with us by repairing your fault of yesterday. You have been angry without cause." Her own impression was strongly the other way. On another occasion, of which also I was witness, two of the party who had between them a yet unadjusted difference involving some bitterness, sat at the table together, when the message they received was, "You have hurt me—both of you;" upon which they abruptly broke off their sitting for resumption at a happier moment.

Of course, the higher the natural endowments and acquired attainments of the subject, the higher the sphere from which the influence com-

municating would be attracted. So far from intellectual gifts being contemned or repudiated, the spirits themselves, we were assured, are subjected to a course of training to enable them to comprehend the nature and laws of the existence to which they belong; so that in this respect also is the correspondence between the two worlds complete. But it is not because they despise the wisdom of those who are "wise after the flesh" that they so rarely manifest themselves to them; but because such wisdom is rarely found in combination with the affectional condition approved by them.

Being always serious ourselves in the matter, and holding consultation only for high ends, we were thereby rendered inaccessible to the tricky and merely physical manifestations which have brought so much discredit on the practice. It must not be supposed, however, that even the loftier spirits are devoid of a certain humour, or are given to mistaking dulness for seriousness. On one occasion we asked for assistance in a matter which was giving us much perplexity. A musical box had just been playing "The Campbells are coming," and on propounding our request for assistance, they wrote, "We do not see any Campbells coming to you." The only occasion on which we were visited by a lower set of influences was when we sat as an experiment

with some friends who, themselves spiritualists, wished to witness our phenomena. But even then, though not sitting in a serious mood, we received nothing that was objectionable, as very many do, but seemed to have had sent us a class of impish and rudimentary yet harmless sprites, who exhibited their powers by being exceedingly frolicsome. For, after drawing some rude representations of flowers, they pressed upon the planchette with such force as to tear the paper to pieces, and then lifted the table from the floor, and drove it stumping so heavily about the room that we feared the effects, both for its own sake and our neighbours'. They also laid the table slowly down on its side, our fingers merely touching it so as to maintain the magnetic current. They made several attempts to raise it to its original position, lifting it some inches from the ground, but failed to raise it completely, the power seeming to be insufficient. After writing that they were hungry, and wanted supper, they scampered off, leaving the atmosphere sensibly clearer by their departure. This was the only occasion on which the manifestations assumed a playful aspect, and it was the only one on which we sat without serious purpose. It seems that just as it takes many kinds of people to make up this world, so it takes many kinds of spirits to make up the other.

Instances which I can well credit have been related to me of serious annoyance being occasioned by opening relations with spirits of a malignant kind. Evil communications with that sphere, when once established, are no less difficult of rupture than the like here. The proverb, "birds of a feather," is true of both worlds. The caution against pursuing spiritual intercourse in any save the most serious and earnest spirit, and for the highest ends, cannot be too carefully observed.

It may be worth noting, that the friends who sat with us on this occasion had for a considerable period been abandoned by the influences with which they had been wont to hold intercourse. But their sitting with us broke the spell, and thenceforth, to their great satisfaction, their spirit friends returned to remain by them; and many and most remarkable were the phenomena they exhibited to me. That these visitants were in all cases departed human spirits, and not, as with us, those of an "elementary" or "angelic" character, I ascribe to their failure to follow the mode of life prescribed to such end, chiefly in respect of diet.

As the time approached for the dispersion of our circle, it became a question in which direction lay the balance of duty. We were evidently on a track which would lead to the solution of all

the questions for want of light respecting which the world is so full of confusion and evil; and it might be that all personal considerations should be sacrificed to a further pursuit of the knowledge we were so strangely acquiring. Our kind guides seemed themselves to share our sense of difficulty. They wrote without their usual strength and freedom. In answer to one question, addressing the Seeress and myself, they said, "We can do nothing for either of you if you separate." To another, "Our power over human will is restricted. For both your sakes it would be wiser not to part. But we can only counsel. You are free. You must be led by reason and consideration for others."

Still divided between conflicting duties, I pressed for something more definite. "Mary's" destination was Paris. On asking whether I should go there, they wrote, "Do you wish to know? . . . GO."

It so happened that during the writing of this message "Mary's" little daughter entered the room, and for the first time placed her hand on the planchette; and at this moment it quitted the line it was writing and travelled to another part of the paper, and then wrote, in a large and firm hand, the word "Go." Thinking this implied an objection to the child's presence, we dismissed her; and expressed to each other our surprise at

their disliking contact with a pure-fed child such as she was. Hereupon they resumed their communication, and with unwonted vigour wrote—

“You misunderstand us entirely. The child gave us force and courage to say to you—Caro—the best for you spiritually—Go !

“We said spiritually. If you go with our Seeress to Paris, we will send to you men who will spread before you stores which you and she only are able to sift—ore full of gold, oysters rich with pearls.” On asking further, they added, “We have told you all that is needful for the present.”

Their determination to associate us together in their communications was evinced by their refusing to write for me with any other medium, save only to give such answers as, “You are not to write to-day. Mary is not here.” On parting they said, “We will give her messages for you.”

“Can we communicate together by means of the planchette?” I asked, thinking that some system of spiritual telegraphy might be contrived.

“No. But she will see us in visions far better than we can tell her in writing.”

“Have you any final instructions?”

“Only this. You are right in forecasting great tribulation.” (This she had done in a trance.)

“For whom, and of what nature?”

"It is Mary's flight into the wilderness and persecution by Apollyon of which we speak."

"Can she escape it?"

"Yes, if she give up the mission for which she was born."

"What is that mission?"

"You shall know in time."

Thus the intercourse with the spiritual world, which, including the period occupied by the production of "*England and Islam*," had continued for five months, without a single occurrence to suggest doubt or distrust, came to a close. And here it was my intention that this narrative also should close, as it seemed to me that only evil could come of withholding from the public aught that might secure heed for what had been shown me respecting the present crisis. I have found, however, difficulties in the way of publication which require time to overcome. Hence I have determined to keep my manuscript open, in order to make such additions to it as events may render advisable. If, therefore, it prove that my book extend further than this point, save only for the final chapter, it will consist of matter at present wholly in the future, and of a nature of which at present I have no conception.

May 10, 1877.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EXTENSION.

Near Paris, July 13.

IT was inevitable that, as summer approached, I should watch with mixed feelings for the fulfilment of the predictions which had been so frequent, and couched in terms so singular. For while their accomplishment might involve misfortune and disaster, their failure would cast serious doubts on the trustworthiness of our guides, and the value of our experiences. Thrice had the Seeress been warned of severe illness "in the spring, or later;" and thrice had I been desired to be prepared to "go southward," or "to France," at the same date. There, it was declared, I was "to meet Spinoza's guardian," who would "communicate with me by inspiration;" and there was "Mary" to undergo what we interpreted as signifying spiritual as well as physical trials. Truly, if the power of foretelling the future be the crucial test of a revelation, we had predictions ample and definite enough to settle the question regarding that given to us.

The closing month of spring—May—was

within ten days of its end when word reached me that the life on which we had been led to believe so much depended, was so seriously menaced that it seemed probable I might be too late to see its owner again unless I repaired instantly to France. This it was impossible for me to do, save at a sacrifice of duty I hesitated to make. In my dilemma I determined to consult the spirits through such mediums as were available. These I was so fortunate as to find among my friends, in two different and independent quarters. In one it was written for me by the spirit of a dead brother of the medium—

“‘Mary’ is exceedingly ill, but she is not to join us yet. You can help her by writing to her and keeping up her spirits, and by stimulating hope and faith. Do not go until summoned by your guardian. The crisis is passing.”

This proved true, for the next day brought word confirming it in every way.

The other quarter consulted by me presented some features of a kind differing from anything I have yet recorded. The principal “familiar” of the wife of my friend already mentioned, Dr. K——, is a “ministering spirit” of the circle known as that of “Terese,” who had already proved, so far as we could obtain verification, of great use to my sick Seeress. On consulting her in the present emergency, she stated, through

her medium, that she had been engaged in tending the spirits of the victims of the war in the East, but had returned voluntarily to look after "Mary" in her illness. On coming to speak with me, she said through her medium that she had just left "Mary" sleeping soundly, and doing well; and that as she could not herself stay away from the scene of the war, she had left another spirit in charge of her, who would be of great use, "if allowed." My previous opportunities of testing her accuracy had been such as to give me confidence in her promises. Among these were various diagnoses of the states, mental and physical, of persons known to me, but wholly unknown to the medium, and indicating their independence of any knowledge possessed by me by being far in advance of what I knew at the time. Dr. K—— had himself been profoundly sceptical until convinced, through his wife's instrumentality, that further incredulity would be incompatible with rationality. The knowledge of the spirit in question respecting the Seeress, extended even to her history previously to her entering on the earth-life. The particulars she gave constituted a striking confirmation of the Seeress's own impressions, already referred to as haunting her in childhood. The spirit represented in the strongest terms the necessity of paying the utmost regard to the invalid's health,

physical and spiritual, if she was to accomplish the purpose for which she had been born, in respect either of herself or of her work. And it was added, "Her time is by no means too long for what she has to do."

Declaring that the necessity of her return to the battlefield made it impossible for her to stay by us longer, "Terese," to give her the name claimed by all the Order, enabled the medium to see a number of the souls of the newly slain, ranged as so many children in rows, and habited in white, and weeping bitterly. On her departure, the medium, still continuing under trance, was taken possession of by a male spirit, who, making her seize a pencil and paper, wrote through her in vehement haste, "Wake her instantly, or she will follow Terese to the war, when her ears will for days be full of the howlings of the newly-dead spirits, who cannot bear the sudden chill of the spiritual state; and her eyes will be full of figures, horrible, like raving maniacs. Open the window for air, and recall her instantly."

We had great difficulty in waking her, for she was eager to go; and already she declared she could see groups of the spirits of the slain, each surrounded by a number of ministering angels, and weeping bitterly.

My information proved correct in all respects; and when, at the beginning of this month, I

found myself at liberty to quit England on a visit to my Seeress and her family, in their pleasant abode in the neighbourhood of Paris, I found that not only in respect of their prognostics of physical trials, but also of spiritual ones, our "genii" had been true prophets. I learnt this also : That to quit the region of sense for that of spirit is not of itself to escape from temptation and conflict ; that still, as of old, is there "war in heaven ;" and that "Apollyon, the falsifier of all things," has not yet exhausted the armoury of weapons wherewith to attempt the reduction of the fortress of the soul ; yet that by faithfulness and steadfastness he can be overcome. To speak more specifically of the experiences here referred to is not at present permitted me. Those who have been able to follow me thus far, will have no difficulty in taking my word for it that events in all respects justified the prediction ; and that for us who were witnesses thereof, fresh and resistless proof was afforded of the soundness of the judgment we had formed respecting what had occurred, and of the importance attached to our work by the denizens, bad as well as good, of the spiritual spheres. The interval of two and a half months which had passed since our last communication, while sufficiently long to allow the seeds of doubt and distrust to manifest their vitality in a quarter where least to be expected,

had not been long enough to suffer them to grow into an impassable barrier between ourselves and our guides. That these on their part had kept their word respecting their refusal to communicate with us while separated, had not been due to any omission on our part to seek their aid. "Mary" had repeatedly sought, with the utmost earnestness, for some sign of their presence, but no response was vouchsafed. And when at length we were reunited, it was not on the first, or even the second, attempt to communicate with them that they found us sufficiently harmonised to afford them access. But at length our perseverance was rewarded. As of old, the chill air of their presence fanned our hands. The shiver passed through our frames; we felt the "virtue" going out of us, and they wrote. We had placed both the old and the new "planchette" on the table, the latter being the one made after their special directions; but, scarcely anticipating the presence of the higher spirits, we were using the old one. Herein our surmise was justified. They indicated their order by writing, in reply to a question—

"Yes; but the new writing-table is reserved for the genii."

On the next occasion these presented themselves, and to our supreme satisfaction wrote what proved to be an epitome and confirmation of all

that together we had done and learnt and hoped. We had made no specific request, but left them to greet us as they would, and this is what they said to us:—

“Teach the doctrine of the Universal Soul, and the Immortality of all creatures. Knowledge of this is what the world most needs, and this is the key-note of your joint mission. On this you must build; it is the key-stone of the arch. The perfect life is not attainable for man alone. The whole world must be redeemed under the new gospel you are to teach.”

The next communication referred to an attempt “Mary” had made to enlist the sympathies of a young French scientist, of high talent and promise, on behalf of her own generous view of existence, and especially of man’s relations to the animals. The notion of owing any duty beyond the limits of one’s own immediate class or kind, had proved to be wholly new to him, and was received accordingly with utter incredulity and contempt, to her great distress. Sitting at the planchette in the evening (the new one), the following was written by our genii:—

“This is to our Sea of Bitterness, Mary, and Caro. She has done well, but she shall save him yet. We have named him Heart of Stone; but she may grave on it. If she do not, none ever will.”

They had said that they could communicate

with me better by imparting visions to the Seeress than in writing. They had also told me that I was to go to France to meet Spinoza's guardian, who would communicate with me by inspiration. I had taken with me the MS. of this book, in order to give it a final revision under the eye of the one who had been so closely associated with me in the history it records. Soon after my arrival, I found myself strongly impressed with thoughts relating to the teaching of Spinoza, especially in its relation to that of Jesus. Opening my mind freely to the reception of any light that might come, I was shown clearly what agreement was between them, so far as they went together, and the nature and causes of their failure wholly to coincide and reach the same goal. What was given me was a repetition and extension of what I had before seen and said. And I can have no doubt that the ideas were really impressed on me from without; and that although the spirit of the great thinker himself had soared above the earth-sphere beyond possibility of return, his "guardian," who could be no other than one of those angels of whom it is said that they always behold the face of the Father, and who are free to pass and repass the spheres, had indeed, and by express desire of his charge, come to hold with me the promised converse, and enable me to

correct and perfect the doctrine he had with such infinite patience and skill elaborated on earth. With such perfect ease and readiness were the thoughts presented to me, and with such absolute conviction of their truth as comes only when the appeal is made to the consciousness directly, and without the intervention of reasoning; that it was as if a window had been set open in my mind through which they flowed without let or hindrance. Thus it was that our "genii" redeemed their pledge that I was to "go to France in the spring, or later, to meet the guardian of Spinoza, who would communicate with me by inspiration." And thus it was I received the following

Message from the Spirit of Spinoza.

As representative of the intellectual side only of that divine dualism which Jesus represented in perfection, the dualism of masculine and feminine, energy and love, Spinoza rising, like Aristotle, on one wing only, the masculine, for that reason failed to attain the fulness of the results achieved by Jesus, or even by Plato. The object of love must be personal; and only where personality is perfect is there freedom of will. Seeking the nature of existence by means of the intellect only, Spinoza was forced to content himself with a God that is not wholly free, in that he is not wholly a person. This

was because the power of the affections was wanting in him to co-operate with that of the understanding. To know God wholly, man must know him in his manifestation of himself in humanity, and, indeed, in all the existence he has put forth from himself, under both sides of its dualism. God to be known, must be seen in woman as well as in man. Ignorant of woman, Spinoza failed to know God. He thus repeated, though on another plane, precisely that which has been the error of the Church and of the modern world. It is impossible on the single wing of the intellect to attain the elevation at which the personality of the divine existence becomes discernible as a necessary truth.

Personality implies freedom. Spinoza's failure to recognise the freedom of the creature proceeded inevitably from his failure to recognise fully the personality of the Creator. And this, again, arose through the defect in him of the emotional element. The highest truth, that which is reserved for love alone to reveal, or discern, was thus missed by Spinoza. Saturated though he was by the idea of God, it was still with a God who was not free; not a person, not a God of love. And he who aspired to full knowledge was by this defect himself debarred of those qualities essential to perfection, full freedom, full personality. Although a microcosm of the infinite

macrocosm, and containing in himself in varying proportions all that appertains to the whole of which he is the epitome in small, man can recognise only in either that which he discerns in the other. It was through his suffusion with boundless love, not for humanity in itself, but for the perfection of which humanity was but the fleshly limitation, that Jesus was able to reach the full stature at once of God and humanity, and by virtue of the love that is more than knowledge to attain to all knowledge. For him God was a Person, and will free; and by virtue of his will, his power, and his love, he was Parent.

As is the Parent, so is the offspring. Knowing that freedom is the essence of will, and that therefore man and God are alike, in their respective degrees, free, Jesus was no preacher of universal salvation. To resemble his divine Parent, man must be free to fall as well as to rise—free to damn as well as to save himself. Only that scheme of existence is perfect in which all are free, as its author himself is free. The mistake is to suppose that God damns any one. The earliest lesson learnt on passing to “the other side” of the river of death is this, as has been declared to us by one lately gone over, and whose utterance is recorded in this book,—“Hell and devils are realities, but the world mistakes their origin.” Their origin is this—

Man creates them for himself in the process of damning himself. And he does this because, being free, and equally balanced between good and evil, soul and sense, light and darkness, the whole and the part, he prefers the evil to the good, the darkness to the light, sense to the soul, the smaller self of the individual to the greater self of the whole. A scheme of existence in which all must finally be saved, in spite of themselves, would, for lack of freedom, be a less perfect scheme than that which actually exists. Though the soul is in its nature indestructible, the individual is not therefore necessarily immortal; for the soul is a loan and not a gift. It is a flame which, tended and fostered, burns up into God; but which, rejected or ignored, burns out and becomes extinct in respect of its possessor, but only after many trials and opportunities of recovery, when the individual perishes, and the soul returns to its divine element.

“Pessimism,” or the system of philosophy which regards God as the will that creates, without the love that redeems, represents the divorce in man of the two essential halves of his own and of all existence. It is the male without the female, the positive without the negative, the acid without the alkali, repulsion without attraction, energy without space in which to exist and create. It is negation, contradiction, absurdity.

Few, if any, are they who, being in the flesh, can attain the full perfection of the spirit while failing to avail themselves of the means afforded by the fleshly affections. Sex is a divine ordinance of which the ends are very far from being exhausted by the reproduction of the species, or the gratification of the physical appetites. Only by those who fully appreciate the doctrine of correspondence between the spiritual and material planes, can the mystery here indicated be fully discerned. It is to the lack of such appreciation that the moderate failure of Spinoza, and the disastrous one of his latest and most grotesque parody, Schopenhauer, were due. Knowing not in the sense the love that is love, they failed to attain it in the spirit. It is less to defect of head than of heart that false philosophy, whether in religion or science, is due. But where Spinoza was simply deficient in force, Schopenhauer was positively morbid. The inference from this is that something essential is wanting to our knowledge of the character and history of Jesus. Could he have known, as he did know, the love that is of the spirit, without first having known that which is of the flesh? Was he not wholly man? And is not the history assigned to him that rather of a phantom? What if further disclosures show that the man Jesus failed to coincide with the preconceived Christ-idea in respects wholly un-

suspected by those who have exalted tradition above intuition?

July 17.—Although I am adding to this book that which I am from day to day receiving, intending, so soon as a convenient time shall come, to send it to be printed, and am wholly dependent on the influences which have hitherto controlled me for that which is to be set down, I find myself under no manner of apprehension lest that which it may yet contain prove in any way inferior to aught that has foregone. In this confidence I have been singularly sustained by the event of the night just past, an account of which, in order to enable it fully to be appreciated, I must preface by the following statement. In the vision, of which an account is then given, it will be seen how our “genii” once more vindicated their declaration that they could communicate with me in visions through their Seeress better than in writing.

In writing the account given in this book of the manner in which various portions of “England and Islam” were imparted, I have omitted all mention of one of the most important revelations made to me. This was the passage at pages 425—9, describing the nature and reason of St. Paul’s failure to represent a perfect Christianity. That which I have said on this subject was given me in a waking vision not less palpable than any

other I received, and one in which the very personality of the Apostle himself was vividly portrayed. More than once it had occurred to me that I ought in this book to refer particularly to so important a light on the origin of the system which Christendom has accepted in place of the religion of Jesus, but had not yet come to a determination to rectify my omission, owing chiefly to my hesitation to expand it to greater dimensions. I had never informed any one of the incident of the vision of Paul and his doctrine, or of my hesitation about detailing it. And my coadjutor, the Seeress, was wholly ignorant, not only of this part of my book's history, and of my doubt whether or not to refer to it here, but of the very existence in "England and Islam" of the passage in question; for it had passed through the press without the proof being submitted to her, and she had been too much occupied with her own work to give more than portions of the book another reading, and these naturally were the passages which especially engaged her sympathies.

Under these circumstances, and knowing, moreover, that she had retired last evening with her mind intensely preoccupied by matters of the deepest personal interest, my surprise this morning was extreme when I was informed that she had received in the past night a vision in

which a version wholly new to her had been given her respecting Paul and his position in the early Church, and influence on Christianity ; and one that, moreover, while it took her wholly by surprise, bore for her the appearance of being perfectly true. Recognising the substantial identity of the account which she then proceeded to give me with that contained in "England and Islam," I begged her to write down all that she had retained of her vision, adding that I would afterwards show her the corresponding passage in my book. The following is the result ; and her reading of its counterpart was productive of a surprise in no degree inferior to my own. The fact, and its attendant circumstances, have amply sufficed to demonstrate to us anew that "the same spirit" who from the first has impelled and controlled my work is still operative in us ; and that it is the fixed determination of the presiding influences of the planet to make the downfall of the world's sacrificial system the keystone of the edifice and keynote of the music of the regeneration to come, wherein life will no longer represent a struggle for existence, but love will be the fulfilling of all laws ; and Jesus, not Paul, be recognised as the founder of Christianity. The Seeress shall, in her own person, relate what I will entitle

The Vision of the Apostles.

“In the vision which was given to me last night, it was represented to me that the common view of Paul’s character and position with regard to the primitive Church is a totally false one; and the persons who made the communication which I am about to relate appeared to me to have been personally acquainted with Paul, and to be thoroughly familiar with the events occurring at the time of his apostleship. They told me, with evident indignation, that the Christian Church of to-day entirely misunderstood the relationship really existing between the Apostles whom Christ had instructed and elected as his missionaries, and the converted Hebrew sacerdotalist. ‘It is amazing,’ they said, ‘that your Church can read in the writings extant concerning our relations with Paul the account of the mistrust, suspicion, and disfavour with which we always regarded him, and not see that he was never one with us. The very leader and chief of our circle withstood him to the face again and again, as though he had been an enemy of the Church; and on one occasion he was forced to fly from the brethren by night and by stratagem, so great and so bitter was the indignation his view of the faith aroused among us who had been the Lord’s friends, and who knew

the truth as Paul never saw it. For he imported into that pure and simple rule of life a mass of Levitical and Rabbinical usages and beliefs which we had shaken from us as the dust from our feet; he sunk the realities of the Gospel of Jesus under an overwhelming weight of hard sayings and sacerdotal misrepresentations; he, who had never known the Master as he was, took upon himself to distort his image into that of a strange God whom we had not known; nor could we recognise in his garbled version of the beautiful and willing martyrdom of the man whom we had so dearly loved, a single trait of his character, or the least resemblance to the doctrine he had taught us. What we had seen and known as the pure and perfect love of a ready death, bravely borne for conscience' sake, Paul presented to us in a new and unlovely guise as the sacrifice of a victim to appease the anger of the God whom Jesus called his Father and ours. Out of that which had been for us a simple rule of life, a simple purging of the old faith, Paul erected the strange and elaborate system which is called "*the scheme of the Atonement.*" For us and for Christ there had been no "scheme;" God was reconciled to man by love, and not by sacrifice. But Paul would have a "new religion," and a creed hard to understand; and he left to the world a Christianity of his own which we knew not, but which is yours

to-day. And in this he did us greater evil and detriment than if he had persecuted and slain us all physically. For by his false conversion he deceived the world and drowned the truth by a flood of strange doctrines. For this we were all against him, and never acknowledged his apostleship, being persuaded that he knew not Christ nor the faith which Christ taught. Had he been content with the truth, we would never have set our faces against him; for he had many gifts, among which his eloquence was not the least. But through his fatal perversion of the faith, and through his fatal love of metaphysical doctrines and of Rabbinical subtleties, he falsified that which was the glory of the Church, and brought into the world the monstrous doctrines of the "Christianity" which is preached in your churches to-day.'

"I was further told, that on the night before Paul's escape in the basket let down from the wall of Damascus, a violent altercation had taken place between him and the 'brethren,' in the course of which Paul had maintained that the only chance for the final triumph of the Gospel lay in its erection into a 'system,' and one that must of necessity be sacrificial. We then challenged him upon the point, but he insisted that he saw further into the matter than we did, and that his special mission lay in the elabora-

tion of the plan he had conceived with regard to Christ's position as a mediator between God and man.

"The foregoing was entirely spontaneous and unexpected. I had not previously given any attention to the subject; nor was I aware of the existence in 'England and Islam' of a passage identical in purport with the substance of the vision I have related.

"I may add, that the personages I beheld in my vision bore no resemblance to any of the numerous representations of the Apostles made by painters; but I was far from being in a sufficiently lucid condition to obtain an impression of their appearance so vivid and distinct as to enable me, as usually is the case, to make a drawing of them. Neither have I been able, with anything like my accustomed accuracy, to reproduce their words. The tone and substance, however, are faithfully rendered. The tone throughout was that of strong indignation, mingled with regret, against Paul; and of scorn at the folly of Christendom in accepting so gross and palpable a perversion of the teaching of Jesus and nature of God as that involved in the sacerdotal doctrine of vicarious atonement."

July 22.—Yesterday afternoon I was reading aloud for final correction the earlier portion of

my manuscript of this book, and on coming to the passage describing my vision of the soul of a tree, "Mary," who was sitting near me, was touched on the hand, and impressed to say that spirits were present and listening, and that they intended that evening to impart something to us respecting the subject I was treating, when she had carried out some instructions they had given her. These instructions proved to be of a more ceremonial kind than any we had before put in practice; and the occasion proved to be the commencement of a new phase in our experiences. When the time for sitting came, the Seeress was impelled to discard the planchette in favour of a pencil to be held in her hand, but which, though held by her, was not to be consciously directed by her. For, as with many "mediums," a feeling of distrust is apt to arise from the habit the spirits have of first putting the ideas they wish to impart into the medium's mind. It is true that this is no other than what is known as inspiration; but "Mary" was anxious, for her own satisfaction, to make the occasion a crucial one by depriving it even of this pretext for mistrust. Meanwhile, at her request, I seated myself beside her, and placed one of my hands on her head. On the usual phenomenon of the cool afflatus presenting itself, the impulse to write became strong, but was resisted by the

Seeress on the ground that the words to be written had been simultaneously presented to her mind; and she wished, if possible, to be unconscious respecting them. Her wish was presently granted in a remarkable manner, and one that seemed specially contrived to impress us afresh with a sense of the reality and continuity of our experiences, both past and present. For the Seeress was no sooner compelled to commence writing than she fell into a profound state of coma, in which she was wholly unconscious of everything external except my voice, to which she responded readily. The first part of the following communication was written by her in this state. The second was taken down by me as spoken by her. It will be seen that while they refer to the question of the Tree as a symbol of existence, they recognise and supplement the communication received at Easter, and recorded in Chapter VII., which had struck us as so remarkable respecting the origin of evil and the spiritual significance of various orders of animals. Beyond the subject of the Tree, the communication referred to matters quite other than those uppermost in our minds. As the Seeress retired for the night without fully returning to consciousness, it was not until the following morning that she was made aware of what had been delivered through her, when she was no less

gratified than myself at the fulness of the confirmation and the value of the addition vouchsafed. To me it was especially satisfactory to find the waking inspirations, in which the method of creation and the nature of existence had been given to me for "England and Islam," thus exactly repeated for one whose own mind was, through the slumber of the organism, completely in abeyance and incapable of originating or influencing the communication. The following is the portion written by the Seeress herself while entranced. I will call it

*The Vision of the Tree, and concerning the
Origin of Evil.*

"I speak of the Tree and of its meaning. Of this the Hindoos understand more than you, for they represent their gods with many arms. This is because they recognise the fact that the type of all existence is a Tree, and that God's universal symbol is that of the vegetable kingdom. It is for this reason that the Tree was planted in the midst of the garden, forasmuch as it was and is the type of all existence, the centre from which radiates the whole of creation. Let the insight of the Hindoos instruct you on this matter.

"You have demanded also the origin of Evil. This is a great subject, and we would have with-

held it from you longer, but that it seems to us now that you are in need of it. Understand, then, that evil is the result of creation. For creation is the projection of Spirit into Matter ; and with this projection came the first germ of evil. We would have you know that there is no such thing as purely spiritual evil, but that evil is the result of the materialisation of spirit. If you examine carefully all we have said concerning the various forms of evil, you will see that every one is the result of the limitations of matter. Falsehood is the limitation of the faculty of perception ; selfishness is the result of the limitation of the power to perceive that the whole universe is but the larger Self ; and so of all the rest. It is, then, true that God created evil ; but yet it is true that God is Spirit, and being Spirit, is incapable of evil. Evil is then, purely and solely, the result of the materialisation of God. This is a great mystery. We can but indicate it to-night."

Here the pencil fell from the Seeress's hand, and she remained for some time utterly insensible, having passed from coma into sleep. Having been assisted to a couch, she after a little while re-entered the trance-condition, and called to me to come and hear about the wonderful things she was seeing. I was still writing them down when she woke and asked in surprise why I was

writing—for the room was darkened—and she was incredulous on being told it was what she herself had just been saying. Of neither message had she the slightest knowledge.

While the communication last given is in language provided by the Influences themselves, the following is the Seeress's own account of what they showed to her. We call it

The Vision of Creation.

“I see a lake, vast and deep and bright. I am not certain whether it is lake or sea. It has no borders that I can perceive. Its waters are so clear I could see the pebbles shining at the bottom, if it had one. It is overspread by a flood of nebulous light, evenly diffused in all parts; and now, as I look, the light has become concentrated into flowers, and between them are spaces of darkness caused by the withdrawal of the light into the flowers. It is a vast floating garden of flowers, and in the midst of the garden is a Tree. The tree spreads out its arms everywhere. The garden is creation, the Tree is God. And the Tree seems in some way to be the flowers, and the flowers belong to the Tree. I cannot discern the material of the Tree; it evades me as I look. It is not matter; it is the substance of matter, the divinity underlying it. God is not light, but that of which light itself is the mani-

festation. He willed it to be. Light is the result of his will. He said, Let light be ; and it was. Matter is the intensification of Idea. All things are made of God's thought. He is Spirit, and the substance of things. I see two forces ever in operation. They are the centrifugal and the centripetal. And they are one ; yes, one and the same, for I see the force rebound back to God. Creation is ever being projected from God as from a luminous centre ; it is always being drawn back again also. Some parts refuse to return ; they go into outer space ; they are lost. Let me see,—can it be that they pass beyond the sphere of the Divine attraction ? Yes ; I see that it is so, and oh ! they are lost. The spirit is withdrawn ; it is as if it were sucked out of them, and they wander away into darkness and expend themselves. The rest, who approach God, develop the spirit in them, becoming more and more like God. He is the richer for them. They continue to exist. They return, but do not become lost in him.

“ I thought I was describing orbs in space, projected from a central sun around which they circled ; but, looking closer, I see them as individuals. They have become persons. It must be that the method of creation is the same for all.

“ God existed prior to creation ; there was a time when he did not create ; it was his Sabbath

of rest. Such Sabbaths recur,—when there is no material universe. This is when the Divine mind ceases from thinking. For God to think is to create. Matter itself is a result of the Divine thought; it was first produced by the intensification of Idea. It appears to me that water was its first form. Spirit is Divinity itself. God is dual. I see, on looking closer, that through his duality he produces creation. Evil is caused by creation, or the projection of Spirit into matter—that is, it is Spirit which, by being projected far enough from the Divine centre, becomes matter. Perception is one; the senses are specialised modes of perception. God is perception itself. He is universal percipience. He is both that which sees and that which is seen. If we all could see all, hear all, touch all, and so forth, there would be no evil, for evil comes of the limitation of perception. Such limitation was necessary, if God was to produce aught other than God. Aught other than God must be less than God. Without evil, therefore, God would have remained alone. All things are God, according to the measure of the Spirit in them. And now I see that the nearest of all to God is a woman. I am too tired to see more at present."

July 23.—Intense as had been the Seeress's pleasure at finding such high recognition of and exercise for her faculty as implied in the fore-

going, it was far exceeded by the delight of the vision presented to her last night, which, as will be seen by the following account written by herself, made by its interest and beauty an impression beyond all previous experience. It consisted in the exhibition to her of a pictorial representation of the discovery I had made by the long and toilsome process described in the early part of this book—namely, the substantial truth and identity of the world's religions. It seems to me impossible to compare this vision with what I have said on the subject in "England and Islam," especially at p. 334, without coming to the conclusion that both are the product of "the same spirit." We have named it

The Vision of the World's Religions.

"I found myself—accompanied by a guide, who seemed to me a young man of Eastern habit and appearance, and the same who had spoken last in the 'Vision of Perfection'—passing through long vistas of trees, which, as we advanced, continually changed in aspect. Thus we threaded avenues of English oaks and elms, the foliage of which gave way as we passed to that of warmer and moister climates; and we saw overhead the hanging masses of broad-leaved palms, and enormous trees whose names I do not know, spreading their fingered leaves over us like great

green hands in a manner that frightened me. Here also I saw huge grasses, which rose over my shoulders, and through which I had to beat my way at times as through a sea; ferns of colossal proportions—every possible variety and mode of tree-life, every conceivable shade of green, from the densest blue-green to the faintest and clearest yellow. One wood in particular I stood to admire. It seemed as though every leaf of its trees were of gold, so intensely yellow was the tint of the foliage. In these forests and thickets I saw the shrines of numerous gods, such as the Hindoos worship. We came upon them now and then in open spaces; they seemed uncouth and rudely painted, but all were profusely adorned with gems, chiefly turquoises, and all had many arms and hands, in which they held lotus flowers, sprays of palm, and coloured berries. Passing by these strange figures, we came to a darker part of our course, where the character of the trees changed, and the air seemed colder. I perceived that a shadow had fallen over the way; and looking upward I saw we were passing beneath a great roof of dark, indigo-coloured pines, which seemed here and there positively black in their density and depth. Intermingled with them were firs, whose great, straight stems were covered with lichen and mosses of beautiful variety and form, looking

strangely like green ice-crystals. Presently we came to a little, broken-down, rude kind of chapel in the midst of the wood. It was built of stone; and masses of stone, shapeless and moss-grown, were lying scattered about on the ground outside. At a little rough-hewn altar within it stood a Christian priest blessing the sacred elements. Overhead the great dark sprays of the larches and cone-laden firs swept the roof of the little chapel, and I sat down to rest on one of the stones, and looked upwards awhile at the foliage. Then, turning my gaze towards the earth again, I saw a vast circle of stones, moss-grown, like that on which I sat, ranged in a circle such as that of Stonehenge. It occupied a little open space in the midst of the forest; and the grass and the climbing plants of the place had fastened on the crevices of the stones. One stone, larger and taller than the rest, stood at the juncture of the circle, in a place of honour, as though it had stood for a symbol of divinity. I looked at my guide and said: 'Here, at least, is an idol whose semblance belongs to another type than that of the Hindoos.' He smiled, and turned from me to the Christian priest at the altar. 'Priest,' said he aloud, 'why do your people receive from sacerdotal hands the bread only, while you yourselves receive both bread and

wine?’ And the priest answered, ‘We receive no more than they; for though under another form, the people are partakers with us of the sacred wine with its particle. The blood is the life of the flesh, and of it the flesh is formed; without it the flesh could not consist. The communion is the same.’ Then again the young man turned to me, and waved his hand towards the stone before me. And as I looked, it opened from its summit to its base; and I saw within that its strata had the form of a tree, and that every tiny minute crystal of which it was formed—gobules so fine that grains of sand would have been coarse in comparison with them—that every atom composing its mass was stamped with this same tree-image, and bore the shape of the ice-crystals, of the ferns, and of the colossal palm-leaves I had seen. ‘Before these stones were,’ said the young man, ‘the Tree of Life stood in the midst of the universe.’ Again we passed on, leaving behind the chapel, and the circle of stones, and the pines, and the firs; and the foliage around us grew more stunted and home-like. We travelled quickly; but now and then, through breaks and openings in the woods, I saw solitary oaks standing in the midst of green spaces, and beneath them kings giving judgment to their people, and lawgivers administering laws. And at last we came to a

forest of such enormous trees that they made me tremble to look at them. Their stems were so huge that they seemed to me unearthly: they rose hundreds of feet from the ground before they burst out at length, far, far above us, into colossal masses of vast-leaved foliage. I cannot sufficiently record the impression of awe, and even of fear, with which the sight of these monster trees inspired me. There seemed to me something pitiless and phantom-like in the bare severity of their enormous trunks, without break or branch, stretching up into the distance overhead, and there at length giving birth to a sea of dark waving plumes, the rustle of which reached my ears like the sound of tossing waves. Passing beneath these vast trees we came to others of smaller growth, but of still the same type—straight-stemmed, with branching foliage at their summit. Here we stood to rest, and as we paused I became aware that the trees around me were losing their colour and by imperceptible degrees becoming stone. In nothing was their position or their form altered, only a cold grey hue overspread them, and the intervening spaces between their stems became filled up as though by a cloud which gradually grew substantial. I raised my eyes, and lo! overhead were the arches of a vast cathedral, spanning the sky, and closing it from my sight. The tree-stems had

become tall columns of grey stone ; their plumed tops were the carven architraves and branching spines of Gothic sculpture. The incense rolled in great dense clouds to their outstretching arms, and broke against them, and hung in floating, fragrant wreaths about their carven sprays. I looked downward towards the altar ; it was covered with flowers and plants and garlands, and in the midst of these stood a great golden crucifix. I looked about for my guide to ask him a question, but I could not find him ; a vast crowd of worshippers surrounded me ; the priest before the altar raised the pyx and the paten in his hands ; the people fell upon their knees and bent their heads like a great field of corn over which a strong wind passes. I knelt with the rest, and adored with them in silence."

July 24. — We passed yesterday afternoon among the lovely woods of St. Cloud, discoursing chiefly over the vision of the preceding evening. Exquisite as was the scene around us, now in its richest beauty, and keenly alive as was the Seeress to its beauty, it served, by the contrast, but to heighten the impression that had been made on her. Point after point of truth and beauty now recurred to her memory, showing that the relation already written is but a meagre sketch of that which was beheld, so that I had hope of being able to render a yet fuller and

richer account than has been given. But it was not to be. Further revelations were in store, the pressure of which made the hope impossible of realisation. Only the signification left by the vision on the Seeress's mind can now be added. It was this :—That the divine idea of creation, at first expressed in the Tree, after a long series of evolutions, at length attained its full development and perfection in Humanity ; and of both Tree and Man the Cross was the reunion. In that is represented God and Man become one. We spoke, among other things, of the light that had been thrown for us on the function of the prophetess. Though associated with the prophet in so many of the elder revelations, the woman has never been represented as fulfilling a part which for its importance was to be compared with that exercised by the present representative of the class. Could it be that the utterances of an Isaiah, and other prophets similarly associated, were really, in great measure, delivered through the women with whom they were allied, and that the men took all the credit to themselves ? As an enthusiastic advocate of the rights of her sex, our Seeress more than suspected that herein she had hit upon a new and flagrant instance of man's chronic injustice to woman.

As evening approached, the Seeress experienced an access of that impulse to spiritual intercourse which we have learnt to recognise as a sign that

our guides desire to speak with us. She accordingly prepared for the occasion, repeating the ceremonial of the previous evening, with some additions. The process involved a bath, anointing with fragrant oil, brushing out the hair and allowing it to hang loosely down, and covering herself with a thin and gauzy robe of white, which was fastened with gems of various kinds, the opal being strictly excepted, we presume on account of the malign influence with which it is credited. The night was one of exquisite beauty; and as, thus lightly arrayed, and with bared feet and fair hair streaming behind, the slender form stood by the open window, bathed in the soft light of a moon wanting but two days of its full, and attended closely by the king of the planets, in his fullest lustre, and at a respectful distance by Mars and Saturn; while far below lay the city, so fair to the sense, so foul to the spirit; and within the darkened chamber rose wreaths of burning incense,—the scene lacked nothing to give it a character appertaining to spheres angelic rather than human. Our minds were not specially preoccupied by any subject as that on which we desired illumination. We felt that the work was not our own, and that they who led us would best judge what was best. Hence we merely enumerated some half dozen points—the origin of evil, the nature, history, and mission of Jesus, the motive of creation and

method of redemption—as those on which light would be welcome. On the table lay materials for writing; and at the Seeress's request I seated myself thereat in order to fulfil the function of scribe; for she was impelled to utter aloud that which was about to be delivered through her. This was a new feature, and one which we regarded as significant of a new development of her powers. Presently, extending an arm upwards, and placing a hand over her eyes, she spoke with the halting utterance of one repeating what with some difficulty was heard from afar. Looking at her, I perceived that the *afflatus* had descended, and the spirit was upon her. As usual with those in a comatose state, she was insensible to all external influences, save only to the voice of myself as the one with whom she was in *rapport*. This was her first deliverance on that evening. I call it

The Vision of the Error of Paul.

“At this moment I hear a surge of waters. Out of the midst of them a voice seems to speak to me. This is what it says:—

“‘Many years before Paul wrote, there arose a sect called the Manichæans. The founder of that sect, like the founder of the Epicureans, was inspired by us; but they, like the Epicureans, understood not Sin. The founder of the Mani-

chæans, whom we call Felix, saw this, that evil was the result of creation; but his disciples understood that all matter was evil. In this alone they erred. And Paul, following his reason, but uninspired, perceived only the doctrine of the disciples. It is true, then, as the founder of the Manichæans saw, that evil is the result of creation, but not that matter is evil. He who among you possesses the most vivid imagination, can project upon the retina palpable rings of his thought. Thus it is with Deity. I have said already that Matter is the intensification of Idea, and that evil is the result of materialisation. You have asked me, why then did God create? I perceive that God created by force of will; and that, willing, he imparted to every thought the power of will which, but for the limitation, could not have existed. He, then, is so much the richer by the will of the thought which he projects.' ”

Here the speaker ceased, and I looked towards her, intending to express the feeling akin to that of disappointment which the communication, remarkable and important as it was, had excited in me. For it was not, I felt, for a message of that description that the scene before me had been prepared.

On looking towards her, however, I found that she had quitted her erect position, and was

kneeling in a rapt attitude, and praying, with her arms extended towards the skies. To whom or for what she was praying, I knew not. Had I known, I should have been spared a period of severe uneasiness. For, as I learnt on the following day, she had, under the entrancing beauty of the night, and an access of spiritual exaltation, yielded to a sudden and uncontrollable impulse, to pray that she might be taken to the stars, and shown all the glory of the universe. My uneasiness arose from my impression that she had been taken unawares, and that therefore our guides could not be trusted for refraining from rash enterprises. But, as appeared from the sequel, that which occurred was only in compliance with her own request—a request with which possibly they had inspired her. For presently she rose, and after gazing upwards in ecstasy, she lowered her eyes and clasped her arms round her head to shut out the view, uttering the while in tones of wonder, mingled with moans and cries of anguish, the following tokens of the intolerable splendour of the vision she had courted, and which, when it came, proved more than she could bear. We call it

The Vision of God and the Universe.

“ Oh, I see masses, masses of stars ! It makes me giddy to look at them. O, my God, what

masses ! Millions and millions ! WHEELS of planets ! O, my God, my God, why didst thou create ? It was by Will, all Will, that thou didst it. Oh ! what might, what might of Will ! Oh, what gulfs ! what gulfs ! Millions and millions of miles broad and deep ! Hold me !—hold me up ! I shall sink—I shall sink into the gulfs. I am sick and giddy, as on a billowy sea. I am on a sea, an ocean—the ocean of infinite space. Oh, what depths ! what depths ! I sink—I fail ! I cannot, cannot bear it !”

Observing here that she was becoming unsteady, and swaying to and fro as one on ship-board, I approached close, in order to catch her in case she fell. This presently happened, and I placed her in a chair, from which, however, she presently slid to the floor, where she insisted on remaining during the rest of her trance. But so wholly independent were her spirit's sensations of her bodily position, that this change afforded no relief from the feeling of rising and sinking by which the soul's passage across the gulfs of space was accompanied ; and during the rest of the vision, and through the night, and far on into the next day, she endured all the miseries of a rough sea voyage.

The intensity of the body's distress, however, effected no abatement of the spirit's ecstasy ; and the paroxysms of wonder, fear, and adoration

alternated continuously with those of the physical malady. So unrestrained were her expressions of anguish and apprehension at the sights presented to her, that it became necessary to close the windows, to prevent an alarm out of doors ; and mingled with her exclamations to the very end were descriptions of what she felt and saw—things, persons, and scenes, so novel and unanticipated—described so vividly and graphically as to leave no doubt either of their reality or that of the journey she was making to the centre of her own and of all consciousness. She declared repeatedly that her soul had quitted her body, and was being borne through the universe by invisible guides, herself also being invisible. It appeared as if it were through the occasional failure of her own faith that she experienced the sensation of falling which was so distressing to her. Her exclamations continued :—

“I shall never come back. I have left my body for ever. I am dying ; I believe I am dead. Impossible to return from such a distance ! Oh, what colossal forms ! They are the angels of the planets. Every planet has its angel standing erect above it. And what beauty !—what marvellous beauty ! I see Raphael. I see the Angel of the Earth. He has six wings. He is a god—the god of our planet. I see my genius, who called himself A. Z. ; but his name

is Salathiel. Oh, how surpassingly beautiful he is! My genius is a male, and his colour is ruby. Yours, Caro, is a female, and sapphire. They are friends—they are the same—not two, but one; and for that reason they have associated us together, and speak of themselves sometimes as *I*, sometimes as *We*. It is the Angel of the Earth himself that is your genius and mine, Caro. He it was who inspired you, who spoke to you. And they call me *Bitterness*. And I see sorrow—oh, what unending sorrow do I behold! Sorrow, always sorrow, but never without love. I shall always have love. How dim is this sphere! Oh, save me—save me! It is my demon that I am approaching. It is Paris—Paris himself, once of Troy, now of the city that bears his name. He is floating recumbent. He turns his face towards me. How beautiful and dark he is! Oh, he has goat's horns—he has goat's horns! Save me, save me from him! Ah, he sees me not. I forgot, I am invisible. Now I have passed him."

So great was the Seeress's terror at the sight of this figure, that I endeavoured to reassure her by reminding her that she was in charge of great and good angels, who would not let her come to harm at the hands of any demon, be he who he might. Of the grounds of her terror I had too good cause to be aware; for she had several

times of late suffered from visitations for which we had been sorely troubled to account. I am not permitted to specify the particulars further than to say that, on coupling this incident in her vision with the previous occurrences referred to, I find the strongest grounds for believing that the passages in "*England and Islam*" (pp. 253, 257-8, 260-2, and 341), in which I was made to speak of Paris and Helen of Troy as being at this day the presiding evil genii of the French capital, is no allegory, but a literal fact. But that portion also of my book had escaped the Seeress's notice; and hers was a wholly separate suggestion. There were circumstances connected with the experiences referred to strongly calculated to show that certain tales ordinarily referred to mythology, of demoniacal visitation, do not misrepresent the actual fact. Paris lost sight of, and his sphere left behind, she continued:—

"I am entering a brighter region now. What glorious form of womanhood is that, so queenly, so serene, and endowed with all wisdom? It is Pallas Athene,—a real personage in the spiritual world! And yonder is one of whom I have no need to ask. I am passing through the circle of the Olympians. It is Aphrodite, mother of love and beauty. Oh, Aphrodite, spirit of the waters, firstborn of God, how could I adore thee! And men on earth now deem the gods and goddesses

of Greece mere fables! And I behold them living and moving in strength and beauty before me! I see also the genii of all the nations dwelling serenely in heavenly circles. What crowds and crowds of gods from India and Egypt! Who are those with the giant muscles? They are Odin and Thor, and their fellow-gods of Scandinavia. Not dead and lost for ever; only withdrawn from the world whereon they sought in vain to stamp their images for ever.

“Oh, the dazzling, dazzling brightness! Hide me, hide me from it! I cannot, cannot bear it! It is agony supreme to look upon. Oh God! oh God! thou art slaying me with thy light. It is the throne itself, the great white throne of God that I behold! Oh, what light! what light! It is like an emerald? a sapphire? No; a diamond. In its midst stands Deity erect, his right hand raised aloft, and from him pours the light of light. Forth from his right hand streams the universe, projected by the omnipotent repulsion of his will. Back to his left, which is depressed and set backwards, returns the universe, drawn by the attraction of his love. Repulsion and attraction, will and love, right and left, these are the forces, centrifugal and centripetal, male and female, whereby God creates and redeems. Adonai! O Adonai! Lord God of life, made of the substance of light, how

beautiful art thou in thine everlasting youth! with thy glowing golden locks, how adorable! And I had thought of God as elderly and venerable! As if the Eternal could grow old! And now not as man only do I behold thee! For now thou art to me as woman. Lo, thou art both. One, and Two also. And thereby dost thou produce creation. Oh God, oh God! why didst thou create this stupendous existence? Surely, surely, it had been better in love to have restrained thy will. It was by will that thou createdst, by will alone, not by love, was it not? —was it not? I cannot see clearly. A cloud has come between.

“I see thee now as woman. Maria is next beside thee. Thou art Maria. Maria is God. Oh Maria! God as woman! Thee, thee I adore! Maria-Aphrodite! Mother! Mother-God!

“They are returning with me now, I think. But I shall never get back. What strange forms! how huge they are! All angels and archangels. Human in form, yet some with eagles’ heads. All the planets are inhabited! how innumerable is the variety of forms! Oh! universe of existence, how stupendous is existence! Oh! take me not near the sun; I cannot bear its heat. Already do I feel myself burning. Here is Jupiter! It has nine moons!”

“Are you sure?” I cried. “Look again.”

"Yes; nine—some are exceedingly small. And oh, how red it is! It has so much iron. And what enormous men and women! There is evil there, too. For evil is wherever are matter and limitation. But the people of Jupiter are far better than we on earth. They know much more; they are much wiser. There is less of evil in their planet. Ah! and they have another sense, too. What is it? No; I cannot describe it."

"Is it like that of the migratory birds?" I inquired.

"No; I cannot tell what it is. It differs from any of the others. We have nothing like it?"

"Come, you are nearing earth now."

"No, no. I cannot get back yet. I shall never get back. I believe I am dead. It is only my body you are holding. It has grown cold for want of me. Yet I must be approaching; it is growing shallower. We are passing out of the depths. Yet I can never wholly return—never—never!"

Her apprehension was not without justification, for several hours passed ere her consciousness was once more wholly replaced in her body.

It is impossible for any one, who did not witness the intensely dramatic action and tone with which these ejaculations were uttered, to form anything like an adequate conception of the sense of reality they inspired. Following every

step with eager sympathy, I seemed myself to behold and experience all that was being described almost as vividly as if I had really accompanied her flight. Hence I found it scarcely possible to doubt that the Seeress was in the right, when she declared her conviction that what she had been permitted to behold was no illusion, but the reality itself of the universe. My acquaintance with the zodiacal planisphere, moreover, gave me a peculiar facility for following her progress. For as she passed from one ring to another of the concentric spheres of existence, and from one spiritual constellation to another of national deities, to arrive at length at the supreme and central force-point of all, and find that to be GOD, I could recognise the identical scheme which had been shown to the seers of old, John, Ezekiel, Hermes, and those still earlier of Chaldea and Hindostan, to whom were given the primitive revelations. And I observed this also, which gives for me its supreme value to this vision. I had already, in "England and Islam," been impelled to characterise the sitter on the throne in the apocalyptic vision as the divine Two-in-One, though John had not thus declared him. John's zodiacal revelation, while essentially identical with those of his predecessors, had been a further development upon theirs. For he saw God as love, while they had seen him only as will, wisdom, or force. But of the further constitution of the divine

nature he said nought, for the time was not yet come for it to be divulged to the world. Perhaps it was not yet come for it to be disclosed even to him. It is difficult to believe that while telling so much of that which had been shown to him, he would not have told more had he been shown more. This, then, as I understand it, is the significance of the new revelation of the zodiac made through our Seeress. It is a further disclosure to man of the divine nature, and an intimation that henceforth God is to be recognised in his duality on all planes of existence, as he never yet has been recognised, in order that by knowing God and knowing himself, man may now carry on the development of the earth's consciousness to its last and crowning stage. Thus proving himself in spirit and flesh alike made "in the image of God, male and female," he will realise the full accomplishment of the work of the sixth day of creation on its highest plane, and so become ready for the final Sabbath of perfection and rest.

The Seeress describes the attitude and expression of Adonai as indicating the absolute calmness and repose of the power without effort, which is conceivable of the infinite alone. Though bearing distinctly the aspect of humanity, it was impossible, she felt, to represent the form in definite outline, and she declares that it seems like a sacrilege to attempt thus to reduce it. The

fact is not without significance that, after neither vision in which she had beheld deity associated with or under the form of a woman, did she retain any recollection of having done so. This part of the revelation was not to but through her.

July 26.—The greater part of the day following the receipt of this vision was passed by the Seeress in her bed, where her sufferings from the continued sense of the heaving and sinking of her transit were still very severe, for all surrounding objects continued to rock and sway as with one recently off a stormy voyage. It was late on the second day when she presented herself, and then it required all her power to receive her wonted lesson from her instructor in the sciences. Of renewed communication that evening we had no thought, her nervous system being far too much shaken, and her force reduced, to allow of further exhaustion without danger. I was happy to find, on conversing with her on the subject of her vision, that she had a perfect recollection of nearly the whole of it, and was able even to amplify my account and supply sundry details. Her lesson over, she was still further lowered, and this by reason not only of the intellectual exertion, but of the nature of the subject. For it had been a lesson in physiology; and her instructor had insisted on detailing a number of experiments he was engaged in making upon rabbits, and guinea-pigs, and other living

creatures—experiments consisting in tying the passage between the kidneys and bladder in order to produce blood-poisoning through the diversion of the secretions from their proper course; varnishing their bodies in order to produce another form of poisoning—namely, that which arises from the suppression of the cutaneous evaporation, and ends in a lingering death by asphyxia; together with other favourite barbarities of the vivisection class, all of which have been hundreds of times repeated, and are wholly useless for any purpose of therapeutics—a purpose, indeed, condemned as “sentimental” by the ruthless worshippers of the god Knowledge. Her teacher had, moreover, in answer to a question, admitted the impossibility of arguing from the animal to the human economy.

Having already embittered her relations with other of her teachers by her energetic remonstrances on this behalf, the Seeress had endured in silence a recital that to her was simply agonising; but her demeanour showed what she had suffered, and that she was yet further unfitted for a renewal of spirit communion. Hence we had on parting for the night no anticipation whatever of that which was about to take place.

I had slept for about two hours, when I awoke to find my door open, and a strong and fragrant odour pervading the room. Hastily arraying myself, I repaired to the apartment dedicated to

the celebration of our mysteries, where I found standing beside the table the Seeress, semi-conscious, and arrayed as on the previous occasion, while the table presented evidence of the manner in which she had been occupied; for it was covered with sheets of paper, of which several were filled with writing. Pointing to these, she said that she had summoned me in order that I might place them in safety until the morning, and then give her something to restore her to life, as she was chilled to ice, especially in the region of the head; a symptom I recognised at once as indicating an access of trance-lucidity. When at length, by the administration of food and warmth, she was restored to full consciousness, I learnt, in reply to my remonstrances, that the impulse to communicate had seized her during a brief glance she had taken at the moon ere retiring, with a force she could not resist, and that she had mechanically obeyed it. She added, that of the nature of the communication received she had no conception, except that it referred to the sea, the saline odour and moisture of which she had felt as palpably as if she had been on the shore, where, indeed, it proved she had been in spirit. On the following morning we eagerly perused together the message that had been so strangely delivered, when I had no doubt that it had been in order to avail themselves of the moon's full that our genii had insisted on thus using the

Seeress at such a time. How far their communication merits to be regarded as belonging to the category of what the Pentateuch terms "the precious things put forth by the moon," must be gathered from its contents. For ourselves it was a wholly new, authoritative, and inestimably valuable

Revelation concerning the Immaculate Conception.

"I stand upon the sea-shore. The moon overhead is at the full. A soft and warm breath, like that of the summer wind, blows in my face. The aroma of it is salt with the breath of the sea. O Sea! O Moon! from you I shall gather what I seek! You shall recount to me the story of the Immaculate Conception of Maria, whose symbols ye are!

"Allegory of stupendous significance! with which the Church of God has so long been familiar, but which yet never penetrated its understanding, like the holy fire which enveloped the sacred Bush, but which, nevertheless, the Bush withstood and resisted.

"Yet has there been one who comprehended and who interpreted aright the parable of the Immaculate Conception, and he found it through US, by the light of his own intense love, for he was the disciple of love, and his name is still—the Beloved;—John, the Seer of the Apocalypse. For he, in the vision of the woman clothed with the sun, set forth the true significance of the

Immaculate Conception. For the Immaculate Conception is none other than the prophecy of the means whereby the universe shall at last be redeemed. Maria—the sea of limitless space—Maria the Virgin, born herself immaculate and without spot, of the womb of the Ages, shall in the fulness of time bring forth the perfect man, who shall redeem the race. He is not one man, but ten thousand times ten thousand, the Son of Man, who shall overcome the limitations of Matter, and the Evil which is the result of the materialisation of Spirit. His Mother is Spirit, his Father is Spirit, yet he is himself incarnate; and how then shall he overcome evil, and restore Matter to the condition of Spirit? By force of Love. It is Love which is the centripetal power of the universe; it is by Love that all creation returns to the bosom of God. The force which projected all things is Will, and Will is the centrifugal power of the universe. Will alone could not overcome the evil which results from the limitations of Matter; but it shall be overcome in the end by Sympathy, which is the knowledge of God in others—the recognition of the omnipresent Self. This is Love. And it is with the children of the Spirit, the servants of Love, that the dragon of Matter makes war.

“Now, whether or not the world be strong enough to bear this yet, we know not. This is not the first time we have revealed these things

to men. An ancient heresy, cursed by the Church, arose out of a true inspiration ; for the disciples are ever weaker than the Master, and they have not his spiritual discernment. I speak of the Gnostics. To the Master of the Gnostics we revealed the truth of the Immaculate Conception. We told him that Immanuel should be the God-Man who, transcending the limitations of Matter, should efface the evil of materialisation by the force of Love, and should see and hear and speak and feel as though he were pure Spirit, and had annihilated the boundaries of Matter. This, then, he taught ; but they who heard his teaching, applying his words only to the individual Jesus, affirmed that Jesus had had no material body, but that he was an emanation of a spiritual nature ; an Æon who, without substance or true being in the flesh, had borne a phantom part in the world of men. Beware lest in like manner ye also are misread. It is so hard for men to be spiritual. It is as hard for us to declare ourselves without mystery. The Church knows not the source of its dogmas. We marvel also at the blindness of the hearers, who indeed hear, but who have not eyes to see. We speak in vain,—ye discern not spiritual things. Ye are so materialised that ye perceive only the material. The Spirit comes and goes ; ye hear the sound of its voice ; but ye cannot tell whither it goeth nor whence it cometh. All that is true is spi-

ritual. No dogma of the Church is true that seems to bear a physical meaning. For Matter shall cease, and all that is of it, but the Word of the Lord shall remain for ever. And how shall it remain except it be purely spiritual; since, when Matter ceases, it would then be no longer comprehensible? I tell you again, and of a truth, —no dogma is real that is not spiritual. If it be true, and yet seem to you to have a material signification, know that you have not solved it. It is a mystery: seek its interpretation. That which is true, is for Spirit alone."

Thus at length was it made fully manifest to me that the scheme of the earth's redemption by a Virgin-born Saviour, which, known to the earliest ages and contained in the earliest Bible—the Bible of the zodiacal planisphere—has constituted the foundation and controlled the superstructure of the earth's religions, was originally a revelation from the spiritual world as a part of the plan of creation; and by its very nature incapable of the material rendering assigned to it by the Churches. Inheriting the knowledge of the dogma, but ignorant alike of its source and its significance, these had, by its degradation to the physical plane and restriction to an individual, made it the agent not of salvation but of destruction; inasmuch as it is upon the doctrine of a divine and immaculately-born victim that the world's sacrificial system—at once conse-

quence, cause, and evidence of its utter materialisation—has been erected and sustained; while by its implied repudiation, as intrinsically impure, of the physical functions of Sex, the human affections have been degraded and trampled under foot.

Those who with intelligence and sympathy have followed me thus far, will be able to comprehend and appreciate the profundity of the gratification with which I read and re-read this deliverance. Here was the seal set to that from which I myself, after declaring it in "*England and Islam*" (p. 468—9), had almost recoiled, notwithstanding the attestation received, as possibly transcending the limits of my commission; and half fearing lest perchance my intuition had been overpowered or obscured by prepossession or reason. I have already, when treating of the subject in this book, described it as one on which I was desirous of further light (p. 94). And now such light has come, in no dim and flickering rays, but in a full and sudden burst of complete illumination that leaves nothing to be desired; and the supremest dogma of the world's Churches, pagan as well as Christian, has at length found its true interpretation, to be henceforth no longer a curse but a blessing to mankind.

Not otherwise is it with the other utterances, however vast their import, of which "*England and Islam*" was made the vehicle. Of that which was said there, whether concerning the nature and

relations of spirit and matter; the system, method, and motive of creation; the correspondence of the creative and redemptive forces with those of repulsion and attraction, centrifugal and centripetal, will and love, male and female; the meaning and object of religion; the relations of God and man; the nature and place of the true Self; the error of Paul; the significance of the Apocalypse; and the utter falseness of that whole sacrificial system which, reared on the sacerdotal perversion of the nature of existence, has in the past been the world's greatest bane, is in the present its direst menace, and in the future its sole enemy;—all has now been reiterated and confirmed, with a fulness and distinctness that leave nothing to be desired, by the Tutelary Angel himself of the Planet.

Well might we have deemed our work over and done when thus recognised and crowned. But had such been our belief the following vision, which was received by the Seeress on the night of July 29th, would have removed it. It was accompanied, however, by the strongest impression that for the present the communications are wholly or nearly over. I give it in her own words, entitling it—

A Vision of the Secret of Youth.

“I saw myself seated at a table writing in a great white book; but what I wrote I knew not.

At my right hand sat Caro, and it seemed to me that another, whom I could not see, stood behind me and guided my pen. All about me was light and of a white colour. My dress was white, the walls of the room appeared argentine, the letters of the words I wrote were themselves traced in silver. I said, 'If I write so much I shall grow old.' And some one answered, 'Not while the sun stands in the centre of all things.'"

According to frequent Scripture wont, this vision was in token of its importance thrice repeated; and though accompanied by the impression I have described, it clearly constituted an imperative injunction to hold ourselves at the disposal of our guides in readiness for further communications. As the time of our separation was at hand, and our plans for the future were undetermined, it remained, and at the time of this present writing still remains, uncertain how, when, or where the communications may be resumed. It can scarcely be doubted, however, that if only we still maintain that faithfulness to our intuition of the best, so aptly described in the foregoing vision as keeping the sun in the centre, the requisite facilities will not be wanting in due time.

A few days later I quitted France, the communications still continuing, though with less frequency, and consisting chiefly of directions and cautions for our own guidance. They were

interspersed, however, with sundry utterances of a more general character, with a selection from which I will conclude this narrative.

On the evening of August 6th, "Mary," being entranced, beheld her genius standing beside her, "splendid, colossal, and beautiful." Under his inspiration, she delivered a long series of utterances—admonitory, prophetic, and exegetic—among which were the following. It will be seen that they not only confirm and amplify the communications already received, but that they exhibit in a striking manner the purpose our guides had in view when they impelled their Seeress that was to be, on a course of scientific study. It is only by supplementing imagination with knowledge, the subjective vision with the objective fact, that the correspondence of the material to the spiritual world can be revealed. That which is here disclosed may be regarded as but a specimen and an instalment of the treasures in store.

"The music of the spheres," she commenced, "is a fact! a tremendous fact! It opens upon me so fully and richly, and the subject is such a vast one, that I could speak volumes about it; but I must not touch it now. I wish I could have music, though. The spirits could do so much better with music, especially that of the organ, which has neither strings nor metal, but uses the air itself. That is why the organ is used in churches. The wind represents the

spirit. They prefer melody, too, to harmony. Melody produces such exquisite order among the particles of air. Any interruption, like the barking of dogs which I hear, disturbs the order and breaks up the image, as the throwing of a stone into water destroys its reflection of the heavens.

"You wish," she continued, "to know the meaning of the dream concerning the Bird, and the Treasure in the house without shutters. We mistook it. It referred to that which must be, which must come, no matter what you say or suppress. It was not so much a warning or an admonition as a prophecy. . . .

"I perceive that all the Christs of the world are precisely those over whom the veil of Matter is thinnest. This is why the painters and poets of all times have always represented the saints, and especially Jesus, with the aureole. It is the spirit shining through the veil of flesh. This is why the face of Moses and of Stephen shone. . . .

"There is a verse in the Apocalypse which stands thus:—'And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth; and they shall have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and over the waters to turn them into blood.' This signifies that the world is on the brink of a terrible convulsion, as you have

already foretold. . . . The prophet is said to occasion that which he predicts. The Dragon is always Materialism. . . . With us the veil of Matter is thin. Hence our spirits are accessible to the angels; they get at us readily. The part of the veil around you is rent by Love; with me, by Courage. You are Latitude and I am Longitude; and yet the Sun is in the centre for both of us. It is so curious! I wish you could see it. The sun is in the centre of the two lines which cross each other, and comprise all the world—the lines of expansion and of aspiration. . . .

“If you have any question to ask, ask it now, before the power grows weak.” (In reply to further questions about the dream)—“Publish all as proposed, taking what caution you can; but the dream was a prophecy, and must be fulfilled.”

“Concerning the Resurrection, Ascension, and other Christian dogmas. What the spirits said about the Immaculate Conception is true of all these. All are of spiritual significance. Materialism is a mere veil. Whatever is true is true for Spirit. Matter has no part in it whatever. This, and a great deal else which we are beginning to know, was seen in part by all those different orders of the Catholic Church which have been separated off by her into monastic grades. These were the Franciscans, Benedictines, Dominicans, Carmelites, and others. They were bodies of

philosophers, and their doctrines were veiled under allegories ; always adapted to the Christian faith, which faith they held in a spiritual sense. And the Church knew it, and gave to the vulgar the fable instead of the truth. Was this wise, was it right—knowing so much, to withhold so much ? Having the truth, but refusing to impart it, the Church of the Middle Ages at last lost the truth. It is twilight now in the Church. The sun is above it, not in its centre. . . .

“ It seems to me that Pius the Ninth is specially preserved to see the beginning of the coming changes. . . .

“ It is shown to me that the Catholic Church has the whole of the truth in a parable ; but the truth is wholly spiritual, and the Church has materialised it. I see the rays from the sun streaming down upon her, but as they pass into and across the atmosphere which envelops her, each ray becomes encased in a sheath of matter, so that the sheath only is apparent, and the true impalpable ray within it is concealed. It is like the cylinder-axis of a nerve—the true nerve—which, passing from the inner substance of the spinal marrow into the periphery, becomes then—and only then—encased in a sheath of medullary matter, and an exterior membrane of connective tissue ; so that beneath these the true axis is hidden, and the volume of

the nervous cord increased by a foreign substance. . . . The Church has all the truth; but the priesthood has materialised it.

"I perceive a great war in Europe. There are multitudes of soldiers in white uniforms, and some in red. All Europe seems at war. I see Paris again. Poor Paris; he is in a terrible state of mind, waving his arms frantically and lamenting. He has lost his city again! There is with him a figure, that of a woman, and fair, but of whom I cannot see. I am not afraid of him now. . . .

"All France is doomed! It will be partitioned.

"But when is this to be? Years hence, perhaps. A prophet can never judge of time. Even Jesus did not know the time of the fulfilment of his predictions. The Hebrew prophets generally thought their prophecies on the eve of realisation. 'Of the day and the hour knoweth no man, not even the Son, but the Father only.' . . .

"In spite of all the Catholic Church holds on without end. She has a new dogma, the divinity of the Blessed Virgin. . . . They will have Matter. . . . The sects call it 'blasphemous,' not comprehending its inner truth and spiritual meaning. The spirits are full of humour, and they are merry over their confusion and alarm. I see Dr. — writing a book

about the number of the 'Beast'—666. He says the new dogma is the 'filling up of the cup.' Spiritually, of course, the Church is quite right; but he does not understand it. I cannot tell whether the Church is on the verge of the new dogma, or far off. . . .

"It is strange that John the Seer should have understood and beheld all this so plainly so long ago. I wish you could see it as I do. It seems to me as though I stood in the midst of a vast system, and saw around me Past, Present, and Future, all as one. That is why it is impossible to prophesy precisely with regard to time. I know what is past, what is future, but not the *when*. . . .

"Many whom I know are about our orbit; but I can distinguish perfectly only such as are in the spirit. Those who are too materialised for the spirit to shine through them, do not reveal themselves to me. They appear dark; they are in an outer circle. I see women chiefly."

The following are the dreams referred to in the foregoing utterance. The Seeress was anxious to make an addition to our circle, which, however desirable on some accounts, might have proved the introduction of an unmanageable element. I was in doubt, moreover, how far it was prudent to publish at present all that I then contemplated

publishing. Hence in the evening of the night on which these dreams were given, we had parted, impressing on each other the necessity for seeking at once further light. It will be seen that each case was separately provided for in the visions imparted. They were given to the Seeress on the night of August 2nd. We have called them

The Visions of the Bird and of the Treasure.

“I dreamt that I had a beautiful bird in a cage, and that the cage was placed on a table in a room in which there was a savage-looking cat. I took the bird out of his cage and put him on the table. Instantly the cat sprang upon him, and seized him in her mouth. I threw myself upon her, and strove to wrest away her prey, loading her with reproaches, and bewailing the fate of my beautiful bird. Then suddenly some one said to me, ‘You have only yourself to blame for this misfortune. While the bird remained in his cage he was safe. Why should you have taken him out before the eyes of the cat?’

“A second time I dreamt. I was shown a house built in the midst of a forest. It was night, and all the rooms were brilliantly lighted by lamps. But the strange thing was that the house had no shutters outside its windows, and the windows reached to the ground. In one of

the rooms sat an old man counting money and jewels on a table before him. I stood in the spirit beside him, and presently heard outside the windows the sound of footsteps, and of men's voices talking together in hushed tones. Then a face peered in at the lighted room, and I became aware that there were many persons assembled without in the darkness watching the old man and his treasure. He also heard them, and rose from his seat in alarm, clutching his gold and his jewels, and endeavouring to hide them. 'Who are they?' I asked of him. He answered, with a face white with terror, 'They are robbers and assassins. This forest is their haunt. They will murder me, and seize my treasure.' 'If this be so,' said I, 'why did you build your house in the midst of this forest, and why are there no shutters to the windows? Are you mad or a fool that you do not know every one can see from without into your lighted rooms?' He looked at me with stupid despair. 'I never thought of the shutters,' said he. As we stood talking, the robbers outside congregated in great numbers, and the old man fled from the room in which he had been sitting to another. But this also was brightly illuminated within, and the windows were shutterless. The robbers without followed on his track, and so pursued him from room to room all round the house.

Nowhere had he any shelter. Then came the sound of gouge and mallet and saw, and I knew they were breaking into the house, and that before long the owner would have met the death he had invited by his folly, and his treasure would pass into the hands of the robbers."

CHAPTER IX.

THE RECAPITULATION, DEDICATION, AND TERMINATION.

TO the "New Revelation" has now been added the record of the "miracles" by which revelations are wont to be accompanied and attested. But though a New Revelation, it contains no new gospel, but is a confirmation, reinforcement, continuation, simplification, combination, and development of that which was the substance of all former gospels, even the doctrine of salvation by the culture of the soul and worship of perfection, relieved of all accretions, perversions, and degradations, and restated in its original proper simplicity.

Alike in substance, in method, and in occasion, the New Revelation lacks nothing to make its correspondence with the old complete.

For, with all others, it teaches that the soul is the one indestructible entity, and point of identity between the individualised part and the Universal Whole; that it is by the infusion into it of the soul that the world is redeemed from its lower planes; that the full manifestation of the

soul is at once the method and token of redemption; and that such manifestation is wont to be made whenever, through neglect of the soul and immersement in sense, the world's misery has culminated in despair.

Exhibiting the world's religious history in a light wholly new to the modern age, the New Revelation further shows that the course of development of the consciousness has ever been the same for races and for individuals; and that a complete correspondence subsists between the spiritual and physical planes of existence. It thus exhibits the essential identity subsisting interiorly between the religions of India, Egypt, Persia, Greece, Judea, and Christendom, and also between the experiences of all individuals who, by virtue of their sedulous endeavour to rise from the outer and phenomenal spheres of the consciousness to the inner and real, have succeeded in reaching the central sun and true Self, at once of the individual and universal, thereby attaining demonstration of the substantial identity of creation with God, and thence of various parts of the creation with each other as parts and whole of the same universal Self.

As regards the method of redemption, also, the New Revelation is in precise correspondence with the old. Setting forth, even as do they, the evils suffered by the world during the cycle

known as the historical period, as due to no inherent defect, either of constitution or of circumstance, but to a temporary and remediable lapse from normal health through the misconduct of life, and, primarily, through disobedience to the laws of Purity,—the New Revelation, like its predecessors, insists on a return to purity as the condition and means of recovery; and, combining herein the teaching of them all, it declares that man must be made clean outwardly in respect of his flesh by the washing of water, as specially insisted on by Moses; that he must be made clean inwardly in respect of his organism, as insisted on by Pythagoras, Zoroaster, Buddha, and Mohammed, as likewise by Moses, by the abjuration of a diet of blood and of all poisonous infusions whatsoever, and by the return to his natural sustenance—at once food and medicine—the grains and herbs, the juices of fruits, and vegetable oils; for so only will he deposit tissues possessed of perfect soundness, and have an organism capable of attaining its full development in respect of all the faculties of humanity, and build up his body to be a pure temple and abode of the soul.

And he must be made clean also, as insisted on, not alone, but above all others, by Jesus, by the washing of regeneration, or new birth of the spirit, through the purification of the mind and

affections from whatever may hinder the full development in him of the soul, and his restoration to perfect spiritual health. Thus repudiating as a blasphemy against the character of the Divine Existence, the doctrines, at once sacerdotal and scientific, of the inherent depravity of Nature and of salvation by vicarious sacrifice, the New Revelation accords with the old in setting forth, not the repudiation or renunciation of the lower and lesser Self; but its subordination to the higher and larger, by its suffusion with the soul under an impulse of sympathy at once towards God and the world, as the true method of restoration. It thus re-establishes the parental character of the Deity in accordance with his manifestation of himself in the creation of which Humanity is the climax and crown.

In thus once more exhibiting to the world the divine character of all Existence, the New Revelation can hardly fail to excite the bitter animosity ever evinced by Sacerdotalism towards Pantheism. Recognising at length God as its Parent, Earth finds no place for sacrificing priest or atoning victim, and no need of mediatorial intervention. Hence the fate of all those, of whom Socrates was not the first nor Jesus the last, who, by clearing the road to the intuition of God, and demonstrating the doctrine of universal

identity, tore away the veil of blood which, by priesthoods as representative of man's lower nature, had been interposed between the world and its soul. The annals of ecclesiasticism show that, under the régime miscalled Catholic and Christian, the greatest and best of thinkers and doers—that band of pure Pantheists of which, in the world's dark ages, the chief exponents were an "Angelic Doctor," a Galileo, a Vanini, a Bruno—were compelled to prevarication or suppression, or consigned to dungeon or stake. It will be much that has been gained if, by the larger logic of the dawning era, religious orthodoxy find itself deprived of its favourite weapon, the denunciation of Atheism, against those who, recognising God as the All, venture in plain terms on the assertion. It is through the pretext that, by depriving Deity of Personality, Pantheism virtually abolishes him, that Sacerdotalism has been enabled so long to maintain its disastrous sway. Henceforth, by the application of the doctrines of Correspondence and Heredity to all planes alike of Existence, the doctrine of the Divine Personality will be accepted as the inevitable corollary to that of human personality. Discerned in the first instance by the restored intuition as a necessary truth, it is now made known by actual revelation, that the characteristics of the Spirit in Matter are but

limitations of those of the Spirit in itself; and hence that the personality of man, and of his fellows the animals, is but a mode and degree of the personality of God. In this restored recognition of the Parenthood of Deity—that is, of the truth of Pantheism—the world's sacrificial system, whether under the guise of sacerdotal Christianity or materialistic philosophy, or of any of those orthodoxies, political or social, in which the sacrifice of the inner nature to the outer, of the higher nature to the lower, of the right to the expedient, is made the condition of success and honour, has received the wound which, however long it may linger, will prove its death-blow.

From repeating and reinforcing the ancient teaching respecting the existence and culture of the soul as the essential constituent of the world and agent of its redemption, the New Revelation proceeds to set forth the nature of the soul, and the identity of the universal and individual in respect of all qualities, properties and attributes, saving only that of actual infinity; together with the necessity of according equal recognition to each aspect and relation of the Divine Existence shared by the individual—namely, to its unity, its duality, its trinity, and so forth to its infinite multiplicity. And it shows that to omit from recognition in the conduct of life aught that appertains to it as a portion of the Divine Exist-

ence, is to distort and dwarf ourselves, and render us a defective expression of the divine perfection. Especially does it claim recognition for the doctrine of the duality, on the ground that, by the undue prominence accorded to that of the trinity, it has been fatally obscured, to the hindering of the full manifestation in the flesh of that perfected soul, the fullest expressions of which have ever been recognised by the world as its Saviours and Christs.

To such a manifestation afresh the New Revelation points as that of a new Sungod about to rise on the world to redeem it from the present winter solstice of the soul. For in point of occasion and timeliness, no less than in method and substance, does the New Revelation correspond with the old. Like them also, it has a purpose at once immediate and remote, and exhibits the physical order of existence as ever in correspondence with the spiritual.

Now as ever is the world's extremity the soul's opportunity. Never more truly than of the present could it be said that now is the hour and power of darkness, when, openly denying the soul as non-existent, and renouncing the authority of the conscience or any sense of perfection, the world's sense-worshipping orthodoxies are more than ever exalting the lower nature, and more than ever insisting on a régime of blood as the

way of salvation, on all planes of being alike. For now has man relegated himself entirely to the abyss, and seeking to build up civilisation on the sole basis of the body and sense, has suffered "Antichrist" and the "Beast" to reign supreme. They who hitherto have borne rule are spirits projected so far into matter as to have lost the consciousness that they are spirits, and become wholly incapable of ministering to the needs of both sides of man's nature. Hence it is that the world is becoming more and more one vast scene of selfishness, hypocrisy, violence, and fraud; that the rule of love has yielded wholly to that of the struggle for existence; and that—his higher nature renounced—man has voluntarily, even eagerly, ranged himself on the side of the carnivora, and, like them, rends and devours his prey. Right has given place to might, and sacrifice is accounted better than mercy, provided the victim be another. Even Secularism itself can no longer suppress the apprehension that the world's heart must have become more wicked than ever to harmonise with the prevailing régime of bloodshed and torture.

In this headlong descent to Avernus our own land is no laggard. Though spiritual heir to Israel, and so long witness for the soul to the nations, England, as represented by her national legislature, now makes each step a downward

one. By sanctioning for the first time in her history, at the bidding of a conscienceless science, the deliberate infliction of torture, and this on the most innocent and helpless of her children, for the benefit of the strong, she proves that she has at length touched bottom,—for hell itself has no lower depth. While the foremost and most capable of her sons, representative at once of her Church and her State, manifests his utter deprivation of spiritual vision by allying himself on the one hand with the chief priests and Pharisees of a sacrificial orthodoxy, and on the other hand with the would-be destroyers of her national Church, and vehemently propounding anew the blasphemy of Caiaphas and the mob, proclaims it expedient that one nation be put to death for the rest. The signs may be small, but the signification is vast. I have shown that *possession* is not a thing of the past.

While the soul, thus ignored or betrayed at home, is hounded to crucifixion as on a new Calvary, abroad is the Empire of the North, under possession by the demon of darkness, bent upon hewing asunder the bands which link the earth's dark races to their spiritual lords and redeemers, the "Kings of the East;" and thrusting itself between them as a wall of ice, seeks to bring back a new glacial period. Meanwhile, those who are skilled in the lore of the East,

know that the world's soul and sun has really been born anew, though still in its cradle; and for these, the prevalence of the influences which impel Russia, and the acquiescence of England in the world's threatened materialisation, mean the massacre of the divine child together with the host of other innocents, as of old, by the kings and priests of the world's orthodoxies.

Seeing, then, that upon the issue of the cataclysm already initiated, hangs the spiritual life or death of the world for a "thousand years" to come; seeing, also, that by virtue of the correspondence by divine ordination subsisting between the spiritual and the material planes of existence, every winter solstice, spiritual as well physical, has hitherto been made the season for a new birth and manifestation of the redeeming sun-god, it becomes for those who, having their spiritual as well as their intellectual eyes open, are able to comprehend as well as to catalogue the facts of the world, more than possible, more than probable, even certain, that unless the universe has suffered subversion of its ancient constitution, there will be in some kind essentially the same in substance, however differing in form, precisely such an outpouring of the spirit and manifestation of the soul as have ever, under like conditions, been the herald and agent of the

world's salvation. That they by whom the depth of the world's degradation and despair is discernible should be so few, is a proof, not that the flood of evil is not at its height, but that the period of spiritual darkness is at its densest. Losing the sense of perfection, men have come to accept that which is for that which ought to be, and which, but for their own folly, might be; and having thus no standard of perfection towards which to aspire, have become incapable of amendment in the one direction in which amendment is to be found. For that which is now termed civilisation consists but in the exaltation of the seeming, the external, the evanescent, the finite, to the contempt and negation of the real, the internal, the permanent, and the infinite. It is a whitening, not a cleansing, of the sepulchre; a decorating, not a vitalising, of the corpse.

Not for the extension and perpetuation of any system such as now prevails, has the Empire of the East been committed to Britain; and not for any interests merely material will the approaching warfare be waged. Neither will England achieve the high destiny which awaits her until she has passed through a tribulation such as she has never yet known, a tribulation of which the physical manifestation will be but a reflection of the spiritual reality. Only after she has passed through the flood of a bloody

baptism of soul as well as of body, and rising instead of descending by the ladder of her many errors, has become wholly regenerate, will she attain the full measure of the spirit wherewith, when vitalised herself, she will re-vitalise her children, nay, her progenitors, of the Orient. For them as well as for herself will the accomplishment of this be the consummation of the long anticipated *KALKI* of all the world's Apocalypses. Poor indeed were the outlook for the world were that which it now has and is, all for which the conflict is waged. In drawing the sword against Russia, England, even though she know it not, will be drawing the sword on behalf of the world's Sun and Soul, against the "dragon" and "beast" of the "pit" of Materialism. Thus contending, suffering, triumphing, will she herself become to the world the manifestation of the Christ about to be.

That a period of gestation was in process, pointing to precisely such a new birth as has been indicated of the world's spiritual sun, has now for a whole generation been more than suspected by those who with enlightened vision have watched the rise and progress of the faith and practice misknown as "Spiritualism." In all parts of Christendom, upon tens of thousands of those who, faithful to their first love, the ideal of the soul's intuitions, and sedulously cultivating

the largest and highest self, have kept themselves unspotted from the world's cruel orthodoxies, have, unsought and unexpected, descended in advance the influences charged with the preparation of the "way of the Lord" for that coming which, however watched for, however called—whether Advent or Avatâra—will as of old, when it comes, be "as a thief in the night." The "signs and wonders" recorded in this book, manifold and marvellous though they be, differ nothing in kind from those familiar to multitudes, who making no outward demonstration, but nursing their souls in silence and confidence, know by actual and repeated experience the utter falsehood and rottenness of the prevailing creeds and systems, social, scientific, political, and religious alike; and confidently anticipate the early dawning of a new Christian Year on a loftier plane of its consciousness than earth has yet attained. As by these the Coming will not be unexpected, so to these will the arrival of its herald in the shape of a New Revelation be an occasion, not of scoffing but of supreme gratulation. To these, therefore, is this Introduction, Supplement, and Complement to "England and Islam" especially dedicated.

THE END.

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