

BRIEF SKETCHES

OF

THE LIFE

OF

Victoria Woodhull

(MRS. JOHN BIDDULPH MARTIN).









## HERMES TRISMEGISTUS.

*As Seleucus narrates, Hermes described the principles that rank as wholes in two myriads of books; or, as we are informed by Manetho, he perfectly unfolded these principles in three myriads six thousand five hundred and twenty-five Volumes. \* \* \* \* Our ancestors dedicated the inventions of their wisdom to this deity, inscribing all their own writings with the name of Hermes.—IAMBLICUS.*



## Hermes Trismegistus.

---

STILL through Egypt's desert places  
Flows the lordly Nile ;  
From its banks the great stone faces,  
Gaze with patient smile ;  
Still the pyramids imperious  
Pierce the cloudless skies,  
And the Sphinx stares with mysterious,  
Solemn, stony eyes.

But where are the old Egyptian  
Demigods and kings ?  
Nothing left but an inscription  
Graven on stones and rings.  
Where are Helius and Hephæstus,  
Gods of eldest eld ?  
Where is Hermes Trismegistus,  
Who their secrets held ?

Where are now the many hundred  
Thousand books he wrote ?  
By the Thaumaturgists plundered,  
Lost in lands remote ;  
In oblivion sunk for ever,  
As when o'er the land  
Blows a storm-wind, in the river  
Sinks the scattered sand.

Something unsubstantial, ghostly,  
Seems this Theurgist,  
In deep meditation mostly  
Wrapped, as in a mist.  
Vague, phantasmal, and unreal,  
To our thought he seems,  
Walking in a world ideal,  
In the land of dreams.

Was he one, or many, merging  
Name and fame in one,  
Like a stream, to which converging  
Many streamlets run ?  
Till, with gathered power proceeding,  
Ampler sweep it takes,  
Downward the sweet waters leading  
From unnumbered lakes.

By the Nile I see him wandering,  
Pausing now and then,  
On the mystic union pondering  
Between gods and men ;  
Half-believing, wholly feeling,  
With supreme delight,  
How the gods, themselves concealing,  
Lift men to their height.

Or in Thebes, the hundred-gated,  
In the thoroughfare  
Breathing, as if consecrated,  
A diviner air ;  
And amid discordant noises,  
In the jostling throng,  
Hearing far, celestial voices  
Of Olympian song.

Who shall call his dreams fallacious ?  
Who has searched or sought  
All the unexplored and spacious  
Universe of thought ?  
Who, in his own skill confiding,  
Shall with rule and line  
Mark the border-land dividing  
Human and divine ?

Trismegistus ! three times greatest !  
How thy name sublime  
Has descended to this latest  
Progeny of time !  
Happy they whose written pages  
Perish with their lives,  
If amid the crumbling ages  
Still their name survives !

Thine, O priest of Egypt, lately  
Found I in the vast,  
Weed-encumbered, sombre, stately  
Graveyard of the Past ;  
And a presence moved before me  
On that gloomy shore,  
As a waft of wind, that o'er me  
Breathed and was no more.

—LONGFELLOW.



# BRIEF SKETCHES

OF

THE LIFE

OF

# Victoria Woodhull

(MRS. JOHN BIDDULPH MARTIN).





"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil."—*Jeremiah xiii. 23.*

"The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge."—*Jeremiah xxxi. 29.*

"Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart.....that I may discern between good and bad."—*1 Kings iii. 9.*

"Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified."—*Romans viii. 29.*

"I admonish thee, whosoever thou art that desirest to dive into the inmost parts of nature, if that thou seekest thou findest not with *thee*, thou wilt NEVER FIND IT WITHOUT THEE. If thou knowest not the excellency of thine own house, why dost thou seek after the excellency of other things? O man, know thyself; in thee is the treasure of treasures."—*Arabian Alchemist.*



# The Epiphany.

January 6th, 1893.

SITTING in the British Museum on this which the Church of England calls the Epiphany or Manifestation to the Gentiles, I am impressed to write of that New Epiphany and that modern Manifestation which I feel to be imminent.

To-day the Chaldæan Magi came, started from their homes in the far East to a lowly cot in Palestine, where they presented their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to one who seemed scarcely destined to revolutionise the religious thought and practice of the world. But so it was. Throughout Europe, beyond the Isles of the sea, to the great American continent, faith in that unlikely Messiah was spread until it comes that, at the beginning of the opening year, we have an account of laying the foundation-stone of a cathedral in New York, beside which the cathedrals and minsters of the old country will show as pigmies.

And in the shifting of the scene from East to West the old lines have not been abandoned. It is still the Virgin Mother—virgin in mind and spirit, while mother in body—who is to “have the pre-eminence.”

Other women have paved the way for the Annus Dominæ—the year of our lady. It is not necessary to mention their names. They must decrease while she will increase. The gestation period is over. *The new birth began in 1893. The travail pains are past; the nativity passes into the Epiphany.*

NIKH—Victoria! The name is prophetic. Already it is on the lips of the vanguard. Soon it will echo all along the line.

Ἐν τούτῳ νίκα.

By this sign conquer. Such the phrase  
Which turns to gain a seeming loss;  
When, in the antique pagan days,  
The eagle quailed before the cross.

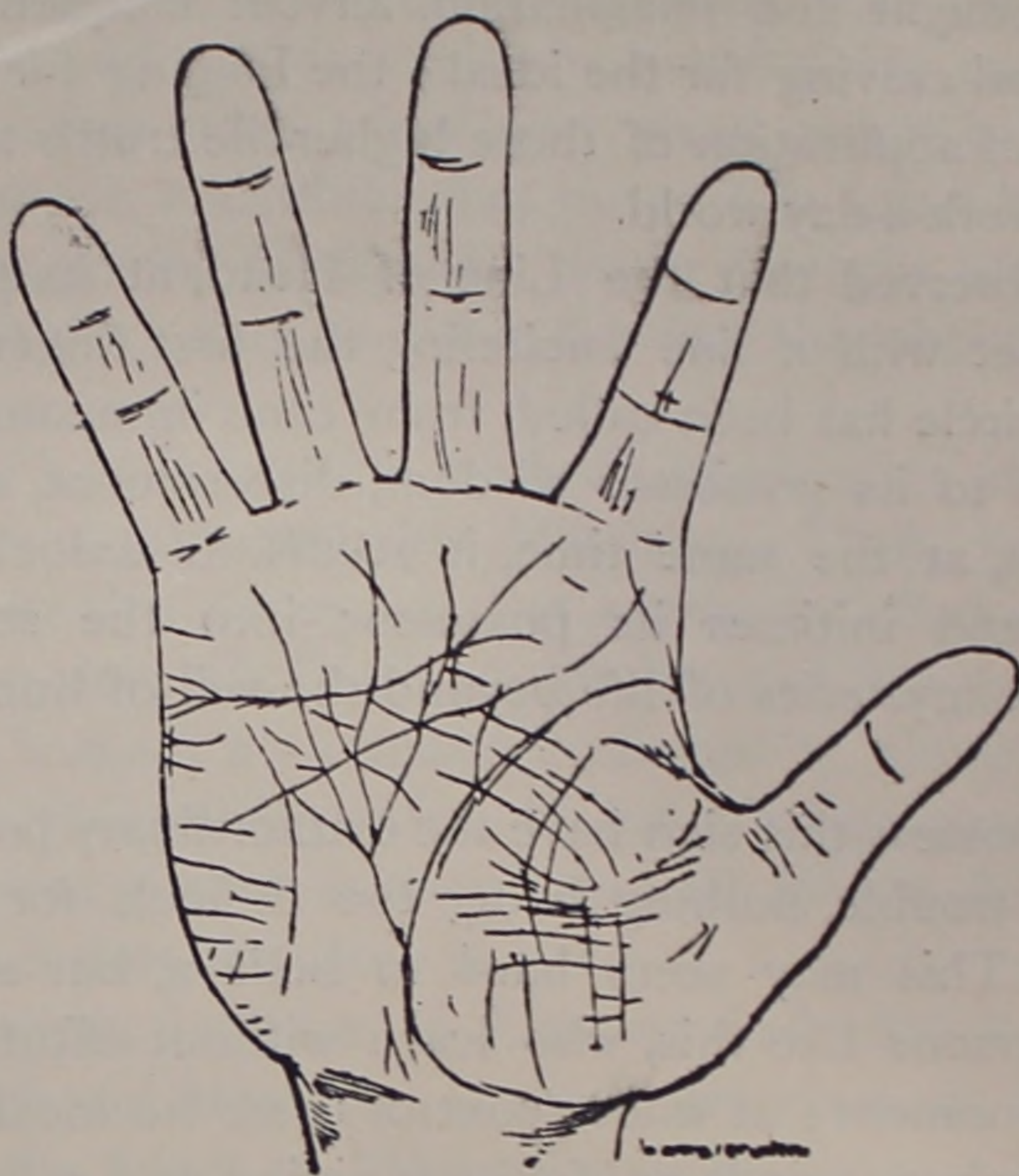
Once more behold the wondrous change  
The flag floats white o'er boundless lands,  
And still, 'mid mystic signs and strange,  
The ancient legend NIKH stands.

Victoria, see us bending low  
While dawns the crucial Ninety-three,  
“The royal banners, forward go”  
To hail thy bright Epiphany.









## The Hand of Mrs. Victoria Woodhull Martin.

---

A PALMIST, meeting from thirty to forty persons a day, will naturally see many curious and startling hands ; many clever ones—many indicating talent for some particular career—many with power ; but it would be hard to find a hand more extraordinary than this.

The whole nature is so many-sided—Art, Literature, Commerce—all well marked, all so equal in power, all so crowned with success. Look, for instance, at the Line of Head ; it is independent of all the other lines ; it rises high on the mount of Jupiter (first finger), and sweeps across the hand, having power and strength to the very last. Its



purpose is high ; its ambition strong and firm ; it is resolute, undaunted, and determined.

It finds an even balance between the mounts of Mars and Luna, thus giving a hold on the two great worlds of life—on the one (Mars) practical common sense and martial vigour ; on the other (Luna) the brilliancy of thought and imagination, fervent eloquence, enthusiasm, and the perpetual craving for the ideal ; the longing for the higher life, and the practical application of those higher-life truths to the every-day actions of this work-a-day world.

It will be observed that the Line of Head, at its point of rising, comes in contact with a line encircling the first finger, the finger of Jupiter. The circle has been called, from time immemorial, Solomon's Ring, and gives to its possessor wisdom, discernment, and marvellous intuition ; whilst, at the same time, it seems to unlock the doors of things occult, and initiates its possessor into the secrets of clairvoyance, and the mysteries of life beyond the veil of human doubt and unbelief.

Those who possess this sign have the extraordinary power of learning almost without trouble, nothing being too difficult for their minds to grasp at once. This may seem hard to believe, but such is the fact that there are persons like this, who learn without effort ; who acquire knowledge in a moment ; at whose control there lie inexhaustible stores of thought, and whose minds are for ever giving and reflecting the half-forgotten truths of some far-distant age.

Such persons have generally some strange destiny to complete, some work left unfulfilled by some previous race, and are as unconquerable as the truths whereof they speak.

They are like sudden stars on the horizon of humanity ; they attract the world by their leadership ; and, passing on to a higher sphere, they leave behind a world purified and made better by their presence.

The Line of Heart is long and very distinct upon the hand. It will be observed that its branches run on and touch the large Mount of Jupiter which has such power. In this manner it takes the qualities of this mount into the life, and carries them to the end.

These qualities are :—The power of leadership—the control of others—the great ambition to make all their work a success ; and the never-satisfied longing for something higher—the pride of conquering difficulties, and the never-flagging energy that knows no rest.

From the breadth and formation of the Mount, we get the softer qualities expressed. The love of helping others—the self-denial and self-sacrifice—the veneration for the aged, and the earnest cultivation of



religion—that is, as it were, the furnace of life in which the thoughts of the soul are moulded and fashioned.

Thus the Line of Heart starts ; it suffers keenly and deeply, but it never turns from its high purpose ; it goes on gathering strength from its trials, and is stronger at the end than at the beginning.

There is weak action of the heart indicated, which will, I fear, cause illness before the end. This could be avoided by ease and rest, but this nature will never rest ; it has been given energy and ambition for some great purpose, and while that purpose is unaccomplished it will work and labour, asking for life only that it may give life to others, only praying that the work may be finished before the labourer can work no more.

The Line of Life is strongly marked ; at about 15 years of age some decided change is told, probably Marriage. There is great responsibility attached to this change, and it seems to affect the whole after-life ; this change does not last long, trouble and disappointment are the result. There is again an important change at about thirty, and this seems to be the real starting point of the great purpose of the heart ; from that orb great success is shown, but all for the furtherance of the work that by this time lies close at hand.

Now, looking to the Line of Fate, we find that it appears on the hand with power and strength ; it sends branches up to almost every finger ; one to the finger of Mercury giving success in business, and of another to the third, giving dramatic power and success in a public life ; while the third branch is the great line of Destiny itself, and by its termination it foretells a great future, and ambition gratified before the end of life.

There is a complete change of climate marked on this line, and also on the Line of Life ; it denotes that two countries will hold the affections, but that the land in which the great work of the heart commenced will be the land destined to see its ultimate perfection.

There will be power and fame offered to these hands ; money will come from almost every clime in the furtherance of the work in which they will be engaged.

There will be a high position of dignity and importance offered ; there will be position and power given, but with tremendous responsibility.

These hands will govern and care for millions ; their influence is extended far and wide, and before the end is reached there comes a struggle, greater than all the battles of the past, a struggle with grave issues at stake, a battle for a great purpose.

It is long ; there is incessant travelling and fatigue ; it is victorious ;



—the highest point in life is gained ; glory and honour come from all sides ; the very enemies of life are humbled ; they come to kiss the hands they once despised ; they come too late ! the hands that led to victory are clasped in death. The end is given at about seventy, the end of life ; a history that will yet be written in the annals of nations ; a life devoted to the people's good ; a life that, passing away, will leave behind—

“Footprints on the Sands of Time.”

**CHEIRO, the Palmist.**

106, NEW BOND ST., LONDON, W.

*30th September, 1892.*



# SKETCHES

OF

## Victoria C. Woodhull's Life.

---

THE following is taken from the *Toronto Mail*, Canada, which was published twenty-one years ago:—

Victoria Claflin Woodhull; a young woman, whose career has been as singular as any heroine's in a romance; whose ability is of a rare, and whose character of the rarest, type; whose personal sufferings are of themselves a whole drama of pathos; whose name (through the malice of some and the ignorance of others) has caught a shadow in strange contrast with the whiteness of her life; whose position as a representative of her sex in the greatest reform of modern times, renders her an object of peculiar interest to her fellow citizens. In Homer, Ohio, in a picturesque cottage, white-painted and high-peaked, with a porch running round it and a flower garden in front, this daughter, the seventh of ten children of Roxana and Buckman Claflin, was born September 23rd, 1838. As this was the year when Queen Victoria was crowned, the new-born babe was immediately christened as the Queen's namesake; her parents little dreaming that their daughter would one day aspire to a higher seat than the English throne. The Queen, with that early matronly predilection which her subsequent life has done so much to illustrate, foresaw that many glad mothers, who were to bring babies into the world during the coronation year, would name them after the chief lady of the earth; and accordingly she ordained a gift to all her little namesakes of Anno Domini 1838.

Mrs. Woodhull, who was a candidate for the Presidency of the United States, should defer her visit to receive that gift till after her election, when she will have a beautiful opportunity to invite her elder sister in sovereignty, the mother of our mother country—to visit her fairest daughter, the Republic of the West. Victoria's school-days comprised, all told, fewer than three years—stretching, with broken intervals, between her eighth



and eleventh. The aptest learner of her class, she was the pet alike of scholars and teacher. Called "The Little Queen" (not only from her name, but her demeanour), she bore herself with mimic royalty, like one born to command. Fresh and beautiful, her countenance being famed throughout the neighbourhood for its striking spirituality, modest yet energetic, and restive from the overfulness of an inward energy, such as quickened the young blood of Joan of Arc, she was a child of genius. The little old head on the little shoulders was often bent over her school book at the midnight hour. She acquired her studies, performed her work, and lived her life by the help (as she believes) of Heavenly spirits. From her childhood till now, her anticipation of the other world has been more vivid than her realisation of this. She has entertained angels, and not unawares. The gracious guests have been her constant companions. They abide with her night and day. They dictate her life with daily revelation; and, like St. Paul, she is "not disobedient to the Heavenly vision." She goes and comes at their behest. Her enterprises are not the coinage of her own brain, but of their divine invention. Her writings and speeches are the products, not only of their indwelling in her soul, but of their absolute control of her brain and tongue.

Like a good Greek of the olden time, she does nothing without consulting her oracles. Never, as she avers, have they deceived her; nor ever will she neglect their decrees. One-third of the human life is passed in sleep; and in her case a goodly fragment of this third is spent in trance. Seldom a day goes by but she enters into this fairy land, or, rather, spirit realm. She is a religious devotee—her simple theology being an absorbing faith in God and the angels. Moreover, I may as well mention here, as later, that every characteristic utterance which she gives to the world is dictated while under spirit influence, and most often in a totally unconscious state. The words that fall from her lips are gathered by the swift pen of her sister Tennessee, and published almost verbatim as she gets and gives them. To take an illustration, after her recent nomination to the presidency of "The Victoria League," she sent to that committee a letter marked by superior dignity and moral weight. It was a composition which she had dictated while so outwardly oblivious to the dictation that, when she ended and awoke, she had no memory at all of what she had just done. The product of that strange and weird mood was a beautiful piece of English, not unworthy of Macaulay; and, to prove what I say, I adduce the following eloquent passage, which (I repeat) was published without change as it fell from her unconscious lips:—"I ought not to pass unnoticed," she says, "your courteous and graceful allusion to what you deem the



favouring omen of my name. It is true that a Victoria rules the great rival nation opposite to us on the other shore of the Atlantic, and it might grace the amity just sealed between the two nations, and be a security of peace, if a twin sisterhood of Victoria were to preside over the two nations. It is true, also, that in its clear etymology the name signifies Victory ! and the victory for the right is what we are bent on securing. It is again true, also, that to some minds there is a consonant harmony between the idea and the word, so that its euphonious utterance seems, to their imaginations, to be itself a genius of success. However this may be, I have sometimes imagined that there is, perhaps, something providential and prophetic in the fact that my parents were prompted to confer on me a name which forbids the very thought of failure ; and as the great Napoleon believed in the star of his destiny, you will, at least, excuse me, and charge it to the credulity of the woman, if I also believe in the fatality of triumph as somehow inhering in my name." This (she says) she derives from the spirit world. One of her texts is : " I will lift up mine eyes to the hills whence cometh my help—my help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth." She reminded me of the old engraving of St. Gregory, dictating his homilies under the outspread wing of the Holy Dove. It has been so from childhood. So that her school studies were, literally, a daily miracle. She would glance at a page and know it by heart. The tough little mysteries which bother the bewildered brains of the county-school dullards were always to her as vivid as the sunshine, and when sent on errands she believes she has been lifted over the ground by her angelic helpers—"lest she should dash her foot against a stone." When she had anything to carry, an unseen hand would always carry it for her. All this may seem an illusion to everybody else, but will never be other than a reality to her. Let me cite some details of these spiritual phenomena, curious in themselves, and illustrating the forces that impel her career.

" My spiritual vision," she says, " dates back as early as my third year." In Victoria's birthplace, a young woman, about twenty-five years of age, who had been Victoria's nurse, suddenly died. On the day of her death, Victoria was picked up by the departing spirit and borne off into the spirit world. To this day Mrs. Woodhull describes vividly her childish sensations as she felt herself gliding through the air—like St. Catherine winged away by the angels. Her mother testifies that, while this scene was enacting to her child's inner consciousness, her little body lay as if dead for three hours. Two of her sisters, who had died in childhood, were constantly with her. She would talk to them as a girl tattles to dolls. They were her most fascinating play-



mates, and she never cared for any others while she had their invisible society. In her tenth year, one day, while sitting by the side of a cradle rocking a sick babe to sleep, she says that two angels came, and, gently pushing her away, began to fan the child with their white hands until its face grew fresh and rosy. Her mother then suddenly entered the chamber, and beheld in amazement the little nurse lying in a trance on the floor, her face turned upward towards the ceiling, and the pining babe apparently in the bloom of youth.

The chief among her spiritual visitants, and one who has been a majestic guardian to her from the earliest years of her remembrance, she describes as a matured man, of stately figure, clad in a Greek tunic, solemn and graceful in his aspect, strong in his influence. For many years, notwithstanding an almost daily visit to her vision, he withheld his name, nor would her most importunate questionings induce him to utter it. But he always promised that in due time he would reveal his identity. Meanwhile, he prophesied to her that she would rise to great distinction; that she would publish and conduct a journal; and that, finally, to crown her career, she would become the ruler of her people. At last, after patiently waiting on this spirit guide for twenty years, one day, in 1868, during a temporary sojourn at Pittsburg, and while she was sitting at a marble table, he suddenly appeared to her, and wrote on the table in English letters the name "Demosthenes." At first the writing was indistinct, but grew to such a lustre that the brightness filled the room. The apparition, familiar as it had been before, now affrighted her to trembling. The stately and commanding spirit told her to journey to New York, where she would find at 17, Great James Street a house in readiness for her, equipped in all things to her use and taste. She unhesitatingly obeyed, although she never before had heard of Great James Street, nor until that revelatory moment had entertained an intention of taking such a residence. On entering the house, it fulfilled in reality the picture which she saw of it in her vision—the self-same hall, stairways, rooms, and furniture. Entering with some bewilderment into the library, she reached out her hand by chance, and, without knowing what she did, took up a book which, on idly looking at its title, she saw, to her blood-chilling astonishment, to be "The Orations of Demosthenes." From that time onwards the Greek statesman has been more palpably than in her earlier years her prophetic monitor, mapping out the life which she must follow, as a chart for a ship sailing the sea. She believes him to be her familiar spirit—the author of her public policy, and the inspirer of her published words.

Without intruding my own opinion as to the authenticity of this inspiration, I have often thought that, if Demosthenes could arise and



speak English, he could hardly excel the fierce light and heat of some of the sentences which I have heard from this singular woman in her glowing hours. Previous to this there had occurred the remarkable incident which more than ever confirmed her faith in the guardianship of spirits. One day, during the severe illness of her son, she left him to visit her parents, and, on her return, was startled with the news that the boy had died two hours before. "No!" she exclaimed, "I will not permit his death." And with frantic energy she stripped her bosom naked, caught up his lifeless form, pressed it to her own, and sitting thus, flesh to flesh, glided insensibly into a trance, in which she remained seven hours, at the end of which time she awoke; a perspiration started from his clammy skin, and the child that had been thought dead was brought back again to life—and lives to this day. It is her belief that the spirit of Jesus Christ brooded over the lifeless form, and re-wrought the miracle of Lazarus for a sorrowing woman's sake. The malice of enemies, together with her bold opinion on social questions, has combined to give her reputation a stain. But no slander ever fell on any human soul with greater injustice. A more unsullied woman does not walk the earth. She carries in her very face the fair legend of a character kept pure by a sacred fire within. She is one of those aspiring devotees who tread the earth merely as a stepping-stone to Heaven, and whose chief ambition is finally to present herself at the supreme tribunal "spotless, and without wrinkle or blemish, or any such thing." Knowing her as well as I do, I cannot hear an accusation against her without recalling Tennyson's line of King Arthur—

"Is thy white blamelessness accounted blame?"

Fulfilling a previous prophecy, and following a celestial mandate, in 1869 she founded a bank and published a journal. These two events took the town by storm. When the doors of her office in Broad Street were first thrown open to the public, several thousand visitors came in a flock on the first day to see the "lady brokers," as they were called. The daily press interviewed them; the weekly wits satirised them; the comic sheets caricatured them; but, like a couple of fresh dolphins, breasting the sea side by side, they showed themselves native to the element, and cleft gracefully every threatening wave that broke over their heads. The breakers could not dash the brokers. Indomitable in their energy, the sisters won the good graces of Commodore Vanderbilt—who of all the lower animals prefers the horse, and of all higher virtues admires pluck. Both with and without Commodore Vanderbilt's help, Mrs. Woodhull has more than once shown the pluck that has the rein of the stock market as the Commodore holds his horse. Her



journal, as one seeks it week by week, is generally a willow basket full of audacious manuscripts, stunning the reader with a medley of politics, finance, and a new version of the Bible. In 1870, following the English plan of self-nomination, Mrs. Woodhull announced herself as a candidate for the Presidency—mainly for the purpose of drawing public attention to the claims of women to political equality with man. She accompanied this announcement with a series of papers in the *Herald* on politics and finance, which have since been collected in a volume entitled “The Principles of Government.” She has lately received a more formal nomination to that high office by “The Victoria League,” an organisation which, being somewhat Jacobinical in its secrecy, is popularly supposed, though not definitely known, to be presided over by Commodore Vanderbilt, who is also similarly imagined to be the golden corner-stone of the business house of Woodhull, Claflin, & Co. Should she be elected to the high seat to which she aspires (an event concerning which I make no prophecy), I am at least sure that she would excel any queen now on any throne in her native faculty to govern others.

One night in December, 1869, when she lay in deep sleep, her Greek guardian came to her, and, sitting transfigured by her couch, wrote on a scroll (so that she could not only see the words, but immediately dictated them to her watchful amanuensis) the memorable document now known in history as “The Memorial of Victoria C. Woodhull”—a petition addressed to Congress, claiming under the fourteenth amendment the right of women, as of other citizens of the United States, to vote in “the States wherein they reside”—asking, moreover, that the State of New York, of which she was a citizen, should be restrained, by Federal authority, from preventing the exercise of this constitutional right. The document was shown to a number of friends, including one eminent judge, who ridiculed its logic and conclusions. But the lady herself, from whose sleeping, and yet un-sleeping, brain the strange document had sprung like Minerva from the head of Jove, simply answered that her antique instructor, having never misled her before, was guiding her aright then. Nothing doubting, but much wondering, she took the novel demand to Washington, where, after a few days of laughing from the shallow-minded, and of neglect from the indifferent, it suddenly burst upon the Federal Capital like a storm, and then spanned like a rainbow. She went before the Judiciary Committee, and delivered an argument in support of her claim to the franchise under the new amendments, which some who heard it pronounced as one of the ablest efforts which they have ever heard on any subject. She caught the listening ears of Senator Carpenter,



General Butler, Judge Woodward, George W. Julien, General Ashley, Judge Loughridge, and other able statesmen in Congress, and harnessed these gentlemen as steeds to her chariot. Such was the force of her appeal that the whole city rushed together to hear it, like the Athenians to the market-place when Demosthenes stood in his own and not a borrowed clay.

A great audience, one of the finest ever gathered in the capital, assembled to hear her defend her thesis in the first public speech of her life. At the moment of rising, her face was observed to be very pale, and she appeared about to faint. On being afterwards questioned as to the cause of her emotion, she replied that, during the first prolonged moment, she remembered an early prediction of her guardian-spirit, until then forgotten, that she would one day speak in public, and that her first discourse would be pronounced in the capital of her country. The sudden fulfilment of this prophecy smote her so violently that for a moment she was stunned into apparent unconsciousness. But she recovered herself, and passed through the ordeal with great success, which is better luck than happened to the real Demosthenes, for Plutarch mentions that his maiden speech was a failure, and that he was laughed at by the people. Assisted by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Paulina Wright Davis, Isabella Beecher Hooker, Susan B. Anthony, and other staunch and able women, whom she swiftly persuaded into accepting this construction of the Constitution, she succeeded, after her petition was denied by a majority of the Judiciary Committee, in obtaining a minority report in its favour, signed jointly by General Benjamin F. Butler, of Massachusetts, and Judge Loughridge, of Iowa. To have clutched this report from General Butler—as if it were the scalp from the ablest head in the House of Representatives—was a sufficient trophy to entitle the brave lady to an enrolment in the political history of her country.

Her personal appearance defies portrayal whether by photograph or by pen. She is above medium stature, lithe and elastic, free and graceful. Her side face, looked at over her left shoulder, is of perfect aquiline outline, as classic as ever went into a Roman marble, and resembles the mask of Shakespeare, taken after death. Her countenance is variable, dependent on her moods. Her soul comes into it and goes out of it, giving her the look of a superior and almost saintly intelligence. When under a strong spiritual influence, a strange and mystical light irradiates from her face, reminding the beholder of the Hebrew Lawgiver who gave to men what he received from God, and whose face, during the transfer, shone. Tennyson, as with the hand of a gold-beater, has beautifully gilded the same



expression in his stanza of St. Stephen the Martyr, in the article of death :—

“ And looking upward, full of grace,  
He prayed, and from a happy place  
God’s glory smote him on the face.”

In conversation, until she is somewhat warmed with earnestness, she halts, as if her mind were elsewhere ; but the moment she brings all her faculties to her lips for the full utterance of her message, whether it be of persuasion or of indignation, and particularly when under spiritual control, she is a very orator for eloquence—pouring forth her sentences like a mountain stream, sweeping everything that frets its flood. Her hair, when left to itself, is as long as those tresses of Hortense in which her son, Louis Napoleon, used to play hide-and-seek. “ Difficulties,” says Emerson, “ exist to be surmounted.” This might be the motto of her life. In her lexicon (which is still of youth) there is no such word as “ fail.” Prescient of the grandeur of her destiny, she goes forth with a resistless energy to accomplish it. Believing thoroughly in herself (or rather not in herself, but in her spiritual aids), she allows no one else to doubt either her or them. In her case the old miracle is enacted anew—the faith which removes mountains. A soul set on edge is a conquering weapon in the battle of life. Such, and of Damascus temper, is hers.

In making an epitome of her views, I may say that she is a downright Democrat. Springing from the old German families of the Hummels and Moyers, whose ancestors were of royal blood, Mrs. Woodhull stands in birth the equal of the highest-born. While the power of her subtle mind places her on a level with the most intellectual levers that move the earth, Mr. Claflin himself comes from one of the oldest and most aristocratic houses in England. In thus speaking of her views, I will add to them another fundamental article of her creed, which an incident will best illustrate. Once a sick woman, who had been given up by the physicians, and had received from a Catholic priest extreme unction in expectation of death, was put into the care of Mrs. Woodhull, who attempted to lure her back to life. This zealous woman, unwilling to be baffled, stood over her patient day and night, neither sleeping nor eating for ten days and nights, at the end of which time she was gladdened not only at witnessing the sick woman’s recovery, but at finding that her own body, instead of weariness and exhaustion from the double lack of sleep and food, was more fresh and bright than at the beginning. Her face, during this discipline, grew uncommonly fair and ethereal, her flesh wore a look of transparency ; and the ordinary earthiness of mortal nature began to disappear from



her physical frame, and its place to be supplied with what she fancied were the foretokens of a spiritual body. These phenomena were so vivid to her own consciousness and to the observation of her friends that she was led to speculate profoundly on the transformation from our mortal to our immortal state, deducing the idea that the time will come when the living human body, instead of ending death by dissolution in the grave, will be gradually refined away until it is entirely sloughed off, and the soul only, and not the flesh, remain. It is in this way that she fulfils to her daring hope the prophecy that "the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Engrossed in business affairs, she would nevertheless at any moment rather die than live—such is her infinite estimate of the outer world over this. But she disdains all common-place parleyings with the spirit realm, such as are had in ordinary spirit manifestations. On the other hand, she is passionately eager to see the spirits face to face—to summon them at her will, and commune with them at her pleasure. Twice (as she unshakingly believes) she has seen a vision of Jesus Christ—honoured thus doubly over St. Paul, who saw his Master but once, and then was overcome by the sight. The Sermon on the Mount fills her eyes with tears. The exulting exclamations of the Psalmist are familiar outbursts of devotion. For two years as a talisman against any temptation towards untruthfulness (which, with her, is the unpardonable sin) she wore, stitched into the sleeve of every one of her dresses, the second verse of the 120th Psalm, namely, "Deliver my soul, O Lord, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue." Speaking the truth punctiliously, whether in great things or small, she rigorously exacts the same of others; so that a deceit practised upon her enkindles her soul to a flame of fire: and she has acquired a clairvoyant or intuitive power to detect a lie in the moment of its utterance, and to smite the liar in his act of guilt. She believes that intellectual power has its fountains in spiritual inspiration. And once, when I put to her the searching question, "What is the greatest truth that has ever been expressed in words?" she thrilled me with the sudden answer: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

As showing that her early clairvoyant power still abides, I will mention a fresh instance. An eminent judge in Pennsylvania, in whose court-house I had once lectured, called lately to see me. On my enquiring after his family, he told me that a strange event had just happened in it. "Three months ago," said he, "while I was in New York, Mrs. Woodhull said to me, with a rush of feeling, 'Judge, I foresee that you will lose two of your children within six weeks.'" This announcement, he said, wounded him as a tragic sort of trifling with life and death.



"But," I asked, "did anything follow the prophecy?" "Yes," he replied, "fulfilment: I lost two children within six weeks." The Judge, who is a Methodist, thinks that Victoria the clairvoyant is like "Anna the Prophetess." Let me say that I know of no person against whom there are more prejudices, nor anyone who more quickly disarms them. This strange faculty is the most powerful of her powers. She shoots a word like a sudden sunbeam through the thickest mist of people's doubts and accusations, and clears the sky in a moment. Questioned by some committee or delegation who have come to her with idle tales against a busy life, I have seen her swiftly gather together all the stones which they have cast, put them like the miner's quartz into the furnace, melt them with fierce and fervent heat, bring out of them the purest gold, stamp thereon her image and superscription as if she were sovereign of the realms, and then (as the marvel of it all) receive the sworn allegiance of the whole company on the spot. At one of her public meetings, when the chair (as she hoped) would be occupied by Lucretia Mott, this venerable woman had been persuaded to decline the responsibility, but afterwards stepped forward on the platform and lovingly kissed the young speaker in the presence of the multitude. To see her is to respect her—to know her is to vindicate her. She has faults, but were she without the same traits which produce these she would not possess the magnificent energies which make her a heroine of history. In conclusion, amid all the rush of her active life, she believes with Wordsworth that—

"The Gods approve the depth, and not  
The tumult of the Soul."

So, whether buffeted by criticism, or defamed by slander, she carries herself in that religious peace which through all turbulence is "a measureless content." When apparently about to be struck down, she gathers unseen strength, and goes forward conquering and to conquer.



## Victoria Woodhull : A Memory.

---

BY A CHURCH OF ENGLAND CLERGYMAN.

“ She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and in her tongue is the law of kindness.”  
—*Prov. xxxi. 26.*

EVERY seven years—so the wise tell us—the material structure of our being is completely changed. Every atom of flesh, blood, and bone is renewed ; we are, so to say, “disintegrated,” and then “precipitated” afresh. If this is the case—and it is more than likely—do the impressions made from without perish with the fleshly tablet on which they were written ? or is it true, as De Quincey says, that the human brain is “a mighty palimpsest” from which nothing is obliterated—only covered up and written over with subsequent impressions ; but so that the older impressions may be at any time evoked by what has been so aptly termed the master-spell of memory ? It is twice seven years since—I know not on what pretext—I called on Victoria Woodhull and her sister. The memory of that event is fresh, though the details are for the moment obliterated by the lapse of time. I have forgotten what we talked about, just as I have ceased to remember the occasion of my visit ; but I have no doubt that both will be recalled by-and-by through an act of *anamnesis*, as Plato calls it,—of “recollection.”

What I do recollect is that the merely physical beauty of the lady, of which beauty I had heard so much, was even eclipsed by the higher charm of her conversation, and that I mentally anathematised the din of the traffic in that Bloomsbury thoroughfare which rendered it so difficult for me to follow the thread of our discourse. It is often these trifling accessories that linger on the mental retina to the exclusion of more important objects. I cannot recollect what we talked about, but



I recollect it was very difficult to talk at all. Then followed a brief period of social intercourse. I used to meet Victoria Woodhull at dinner parties (I call her so rather than Mrs. Woodhull—we do not speak of Mr. Shakespeare !); I am even reminded that she came to my home, won the friendship of my wife, and played with my little children, now grown to be men and women and giving me grandchildren to supply their place. But this social phase has faded considerably. It has to be recalled bit by bit, as the scholar recovers from the palimpsest, letter by letter, the valuable text lying down below the “trivial, fond records” that have been superscribed upon it.

Then comes the epoch of the St. James’s Hall lecture on “The Human Body, the Temple of God.” I have that lecture by me in a volume which I carefully put aside unread for the moment, because I am, in this brief memoir, recording only my own impressions. Here no effort of *anamnesis* is necessary. The whole incident stands before “my mind’s eye” like a picture. It was an epoch in my existence to hear a woman speak in public on those usually tabooed topics—why tabooed I never could understand—and I had never heard a woman speak at all as this woman spoke. I see that vast hall packed from floor to ceiling with eager listeners, many of whom may have come to scoff, but they stopped to applaud. I see a slight woman, who looked even more *petite* by comparison with her colossal surroundings, stepping nervously on to that platform, Bible in hand, and I hear her speaking as one inspired during hours which seemed as minutes. How well I recollect her exposition of the old Paradise-legend in the Genesis and the new Paradise-vision in the Apocalypse! It came to me, as it must have come to a thousand others, in the light of a revelation. Again all physical attraction was merged in the mental charm. I cannot recall any details of dress or what not. But the boldness of that woman’s intuition and the perfect incisiveness of her fluent eloquence have lingered by me through those twice seven years, and survive the effacements of that twofold period of “disintegration.”

Then the vision faded; again I know not how. This alone I recall. I heard that Victoria Woodhull and her sister had made wealthy marriages and retired into privacy. The incident of that St. James’s Hall lecture remained only as a memory, but a fadeless memory.

Perhaps I thought, with more or less harshness, that the whole plan so ably and eloquently projected had expended itself in talk like so many others. Its originator had said her say, and there left matters. I do not know that I criticised thus. I have forgotten if I did, but it might have been so. Subsequently I listened to other women who dared to speak out—to Annie Besant, whose powers I foresaw from



the first ; to Anna Kingsford, the young Hypatia whose personal charms perhaps went far to outweigh some little acerbity of manner. I sat at the feet of H. P. Blavatsky, and would not say that I gained nothing by that discipleship ; but none of these latter experiences overlaid or obliterated the memory of those hours in St. James's Hall. That, however, survived only as a "memory." The oracle was dumb. "Slowly all things right themselves." The long years have come and gone, but that memory, it seems, is not the mere shadow of a shade.

Victoria Woodhull, in her mature womanhood, resolves to fulfil the promise of her earlier prime. She accepts the maxim of good old Bishop Cumberland, that "it is better to wear out than to rust out."

After long retirement she girds on her armour again and prepares for the bloodless battle. Once more I have seen her in her sequestered home. She is about to go on a lecturing tour, on fabulous terms, at the invitation of the great country where, for the truth's sake, she was more than once cast into prison. She may yet be the first woman President of the United States. That is not to my present purpose. I am thinking of her as the brave, wise woman, on whose lip, as the old proverb-monger wrote, is the law of kindness. Say, rather, who was, and is, herself the embodied Gospel of kindness ; a Gospel to that great sisterhood of hers for whom ignorance has been too long made to stand as the false synonym for innocence.

How many a woman's blighted life might have blossomed into happy wifhood and motherhood had she only known what this bold, good woman would have taught her ! Of course, her boldness was traduced as prurience. Where was ever the Church whose seed was other than the martyr's blood ? If they said of the Master that He had a devil, must they not, to be consistent with their stern and scholastic logic, credit with *diablerie* the disciple who puts aside with firm but gentle hand the petty conventionalities of so-called "society," and speaks as only a woman may dare to speak to women, but whose womanly intuitions have a message for men also ; a message which, spoken as she can and will speak it, they "cannot choose but hear" ? As such a living memory do I, a man, welcome back to public life and womanly ministry one who must ever be associated in my mind with that day, "to be much remembered" in my own experience, when I first saw and heard her unfold that first page in her Gospel of kindness.

That Gospel in its fulness has yet to be written and preached to all the world.



## The Apostle of Womanhood.

---

THIS is a day of new cults, of new dogmas and new prophets ; the old landmarks are torn up and cast aside, and wherever we look around—whether in science, in faith, or in morals—we find new departures everywhere, new orders of things continually arising and pushing to the front. “The old things pass away, behold ! all things shall become new !”

It is not our purpose, within the short space of this article, to dwell upon these new features in the moral and social aspects of the world ; but we do intend to deal with one phase of the grand upheaval—the great awakening of the social conscience from its death-like trance—one which bears within its bosom the seeds of the greatest and most magnificent possibilities for the regeneration, the social and physical redemption, of the human race.

Not only is the crying need of some new departure in this direction widely felt, but all kinds of empirical nostrums are proposed by a host of spiritual quacks to remedy the rottenness of modern social life, most of them being founded on the sublime idea of the universal Brotherhood of Man.

But the diverse ways in which it is sought to bring about this grand result are either utterly impotent in themselves, dangerous to the well-being of society, or are, by their very essence, capable of being entered into only by the few.

An example of the first of these is the modern Spiritualism, which has been weighed in the balance and found wanting ; no single addition to the moral code, nor any improved method of applying the existent one, having been vouchsafed in all the myriad *séances* which have been held around the inspired mahogany of its followers. Even supposing, for the sake of argument, that the “manifestations” were actually caused



by the spirits of those gone before (a premiss we are by no means prepared to admit), even then they have added no single stone to the cairn of human knowledge, nothing to the sum of human happiness.

Spiritualism—even if true—is only a “Dead Sea fruit.”

The second proposition, that of being “dangerous to the welfare of society,” is well exemplified by modern Socialism, whose followers soon become dissatisfied with even its advanced tenets and proclaim themselves anarchists.

Socialism, then, is a delusion and a snare !

The third and last phase is seen in the new “Theosophy.” We do not propose to discuss either Theosophy or its professors here and now ; but we may say of it that what is true is not new, and what is new is not true ! It is the last and most awful Gospel of Despair !

None of these quack remedies will ever avail to save the body politic, or to elevate the soul of man ; we turn from them all weary, heart-sick, and disappointed, with the haunting doubt arising in our minds—the horrible question hissing in our ears—“Is life worth living ?”

A calm, serene, and silver voice, having within it a thrill of ecstatic triumph, answers us “Yes !”

We turn and see before us the apostle and prophetess of the new faith—the new cult of “Womanhood.”

*This* is her mission—first to free her sisters from the moral serfdom in which they live to-day, and then to teach them a new and sublime interpretation of Christian morality which shall first regenerate themselves, and next—*through them*—shall purify and elevate all mankind.

This grand system is founded—as all *true* systems are—on the everlasting principles of eternal truth as contained in natural religion. And, as truth cannot oppose truth, therefore we find that nowhere is it in opposition to, but in the fullest harmony with, the divinely-revealed religion of the Bible.

Its keystone is the dogma that “the human body is the temple of God,” and its prophet and apostle is Victoria Woodhull Martin, a woman who has suffered a real martyrdom for her opinions and persistent courage in declaring them.

Every single one of her teachings has been misrepresented throughout the civilised world ; doctrines of which she has always had the greatest horror have been attributed to her, while falsehoods and slanders of the most fiendish malignity and cruelty have been sown broadcast. The grossest charges of immorality were brought against her and triumphantly disproved.

She has, from first to last, been mulcted in sums amounting to more



than a quarter of a million of her money ; she and her sister were even thrown into prison in America through the malignity of their persecutors. They were *acquitted without being called upon for any defence*, so palpable was the injustice of the charges.

This lady, now for fourteen years the devoted wife of Mr. J. Bid-dulph Martin, the Lombard Street banker, was formerly well-known to both hemispheres as "Victoria Woodhull," and her sister (the wife of Sir Francis Cook, Bart., Marquis of Montserrat, of Doughty House, Richmond Hill) as "Tennie C. Claflin."

Shattered in health, reduced in pocket, almost heart-broken, she came to England, with the instinct of a wounded deer, to hide in solitude. Victoria Woodhull found the heart and the home of a great-souled English gentleman open to receive her, and afford her a haven of rest and peace.

But now, having recovered her old energy, her Divine mission presses on her once more, and urges her to resume her public labours for the welfare of humanity.

There has been a perfect revulsion of feeling in the United States with regard to this injured lady, who at one time enjoyed such a wealth of popularity that she was actually nominated as a candidate for the Presidency of the Republic by the "Equal Rights Party"—a nomination supported by 509 delegates, representing twenty-six States and four territories.

There is no doubt—judging from the utterances of the American papers—that her tour through the States will be one long triumphant "progress," more like the return of a long-exiled queen to her devoted subjects than anything else under the sun.

The Americans feel—and say that they feel—that they have done the purest-minded and most philanthropic woman whom God ever made, an incalculable and irreparable wrong, and they mean to atone for it by their welcome back. And when the impulsive, warm-hearted Americans do make the *amende honorable*, they do it in no half-hearted way. Americans are "thorough," or they are nothing at all. But Mrs. Martin, for herself personally, cares for none of these things ; she is too high-souled for that. Of course, it is always more pleasant to hear cheers than to be hooted at ; but she will accept the ovations awaiting her, not as a personal tribute, but as homage to her mission. She will hail them simply as signs that her countrymen and countrywomen are at least prepared to throw off the chains in which they have hitherto been bound, and to take to their inmost hearts the life-giving message of the naked truth which she brings, as an apostle, to their shores.

This, and this alone, will repay her for the exhausting effort which



she is about to make, and for the long years of suffering under which her vigorous vitality was all but crushed.

A divine pity and forgiveness for her countrymen and countrywomen fills the whole soul of this tender, brave-hearted woman, and she believes, nay, she feels, that the long-delayed harvest of her tears and prayers is about to be abundantly reaped, and they will enter into the "glorious and perfect freedom of the Kingdom of God."

As Mrs. Martin will, in the course of a very few months, dominate public interest on the other side of the Atlantic, and excite a reflected one of more or less intensity on this side, and as, so to speak, a new generation has arisen since she vacated the arena of debate, a very brief outline of her history and a short exposition of *real* doctrines becomes now advisable.

We need scarcely say that the sisters are Americans—of the German-American type—everyone knows that much; but it will be news to many that some of the bluest blood in Britain flows in their veins.

They are the daughters of Mr. Claflin, of Sandersfield, in the State of Massachusetts, who was the grandson of Thomas Hamilton, an officer in the king's navy, who settled in the then colony; and, after the Revolution, became the first Senator from Massachusetts. Thomas Hamilton was a *direct descendant in a straight line* of Lord Hamilton and the Princess Mary, daughter of King James II., from which couple also descend the Dukes of Hamilton. James II. descended from King Robert I. (Robert Bruce), of Scotland.

Therefore, it is evident Victoria C. Martin shares the blood, not only of the ducal houses of Hamilton and Sutherland, but of the royal line of Stuart and the Bruce; and is, by consequence, entitled to quarter the ancient royal arms of England upon her shield, in addition to those just mentioned. Her husband, Mr. J. Biddulph Martin, is the great-grandson of Michael Biddulph, the brother-in-law of Washington.

The "Father of his country" married Martha Dandridge, and Michael Biddulph wedded her sister Penelope.

At all events, the warmth of the reception by the American nation will not be likely to be lessened by the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Martin are the representatives of America's first President.

So much, then, for Mrs. Martin's origin. As to her appearance, that is simply impossible to describe. Ask a painter to reproduce faithfully for you the flash of sunlight in a translucent dew-drop, or a sculptor to render you in marble the aërial effect of the fleecy clouds of June, or a musician to give you an exact repetition, in all its liquid



melody and purity of tone, of the song of a nightingale ; and when they can do those things, then, and not *until* then, will it be possible for pen to describe or pencil delineate Victoria Woodhull Martin.

She is beautiful beyond dispute, but it is a mystic beauty which, when you come away from her presence, leaves you in doubt as to where it lies.

It is *there*—whether or not you can detect it with your bodily eye—you feel its presence, the presence of a beautiful soul gleaming through the mortal clay which enshrines it, but cannot present its manifestation. A figure above medium height, graceful in its free movements, and queenly in its pose.

Eyes that *look* ; and, looking, *read* ; magnetic, earnest, candid eyes. Mystical eyes, which—whatever their passing change of expression according to the feeling of the moment—have ever in their depths a far-off look which tells of mysterious experiences too sacred for utterance, of knowledge and “illumination” too divine to pass the portals of the lips.

Such a look one well might bear who had gazed within the opened gates of pearl, and carried thence a holy memory which should never die nor fade away.

The balance of the head and every gesture convey the idea of latent “power,” not the sense of vulgar material power which is borne in upon one’s consciousness by the stately bearing of some of the great ones of the earth.

It is something far different from this, it is not of the earth earthy.

In her presence you at once instinctively recognise a perfectly true nature ; one which hides nothing, because it has nothing to conceal.

It is like gazing into the depths of a clear mountain lake, where the eye of the observer gradually loses its power of discerning in proportion as the depth increases, and fails to see the bottom. There is no cloudy or muddy water ; but the gazer feels that, however deeply his eye may pierce them, yet that there is still something more beyond his ken.

To few men is given the wondrous power of vision to see all ; but those who possess this power to the fullest extent would find nothing there but a sublime purity.

Like some of the prophetesses of old, Mrs. Victoria Woodhull Martin has the power of instantly detecting falsehood, no matter how carefully disguised or wrapped up in fragments of truth. Her unerring instinct pounces at once on the joint in the armour, and the most plausible liar would feel himself quailing and obliged to own his deception ; for she seems to hold in her hand the touchstone of truth.

A mouth that expresses ineffable sweetness and tenderness, with a



rare capacity for enjoying all that is truly exquisite in the realms of sound, sight, or sensation.

She has a very highly-strung nervous organisation, like that of a racehorse, with a terrible capacity for suffering through its very tenderness. Feelings sensitive as a child, often deeply wounded, but betraying no sign; combined with a power of passionate indignation which could, on occasion, culminate in a whirlwind.

A chin whose modelling shows a firmness and unshakeable resolution which is simply unalterable, a courage which nothing can daunt and no consequences deter, together with a magnetic atmosphere surrounding her which proclaims her individuality, are some of the chief characteristics of this last and greatest High Priestess of Nature.

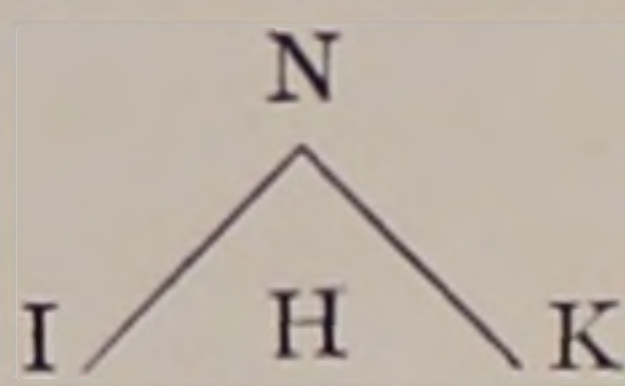
That she has a mission from on High, that she has a new message to mankind, which she has not yet herself fully received or understood, is as certain as that she herself exists.

But, whether the new gospel—never even hinted at hitherto in any of her writings or speeches—will be communicated to the world, or whether it will be (for a period, at all events) reserved as esoteric truth to be confided only to the chosen few, to the initiated souls who are now and for all time emancipated and partakers of “the Kingdom,” time alone can tell. She herself knows not yet.

We shall now conclude this brief notice by a few lines descriptive of the prophetess from an occultist point of view, which were written by “Tantria-delta,” an initiate of the Hermetic Lodge at Alexandria.

ROSLYN D'ONSTON.

### “VICTORIA VITRIX.”



A wheel of fire ; a never-setting sun ;  
 A lava flood which shall for ever run ;  
 A healing balm ; and a devouring sword :  
 These all contrast, and yet they all accord.  
 Who reads this myst'ry right hath surely been  
 Within the radiance of “the living sheen.”



