

AN APOCALYPSE OF LIFE

BY
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I DEDICATE
THIS BOOK TO THE EARNEST THOUGHT OF THE
WORLD, AS MY HUMBLE OFFERING TO THE
STORE OF ITS CONSECRATED WEALTH.
MAY IT BE RECEIVED IN THE
SAME SPIRIT IN WHICH IT
HAS BEEN SENT FORTH
ON ITS MISSION.

THE AUTHOR.

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INTRODUCTION.

I do not deem it wise for an author to anticipate too much the plan and contents of a book in the introduction to it. The volume should speak for itself, and reveal itself step by step. For this reason I shall have little to say in this preface. I ought to say that I have not written the book as a systematic treatise based on any special theory as to the subject-matters involved, nor have I strained and warped my thought to make it fit any theory. The book is a growth; or I might say, it was impelled out of my mind, or through my mind, into forms of expression, by some impulse, power or incentive I could not resist. It was born out of heart-yearnings and soul-longings. My thought seemed to have reached a stage where it had to demand more light, or give in to the despair of intellectual death. I have attempted to reflect herein such light as I feel I have focused in my own mind, illuminating in a rational and optimistic manner the Purpose, Dignity and Destiny of that wondrous entity termed *Human Life*, and the processes of its unfoldment and elevation towards that Ideal, our reason teaches us was designed for it. I use the word "Life" as a term inclusive of the whole human entity.

To believe that this wondrous Life with all its powers and attributes will be at last a waste, a final dust-heap, and that there is no conservation of that vast energy known as Personality, is to my reason not only absurd but horrible.—Such a conception mars, yea condemns, the economy of the Universe.

Again, to believe that the Power and Purpose back of and

shaping human Life will not finally, through the processes inherent in and evolving Personality and Selfhood, emancipate it from all the limitations and negations of what we term "Sin" or "Evil" is to proclaim a libel on "the power that makes for righteousness."

Having been warned by others' experience that learning is accounted a weariness to the flesh, I have sought to avoid as much as possible the didactic and analytic style, by casting the book in the form somewhat of a celestial romance or narrative, in which not only the experiences and environments, but the very personality, of the characters promulgate the truths sought to be taught.

While I have avoided adopting any theory or constructive system in writing this book, there is one great basal truth upon which it rests as the foundation and which as a cap-stone binds all together into a unity, and that is the truth of a higher spiritualism, which necessarily classes man as a spiritual entity with spiritual powers and attributes of being, and a spiritual destiny resulting therefrom that links him with the Infinite Spirit, and eventually places him in perfect spiritual environments and conditions consonant with his nature.

The purpose underlying this book, and which guided its production, is the highest and most sacred that can enter into human thought, aspiration or imagination; and (without mentioning certain occurrences connected with the conception and inception of this book) I feel constrained to say that this high purpose enters into, impulses, inspires and consecrates every line and sentence and page and character and emotion and thought written, portrayed, and delineated therein.

As pertinent to that all-absorbing purpose which I have followed in the undertaking of this volume, I am reminded of, and cheered by, the words of that author, scientist and thinker, John Tyndall, who said, "That science (the investigation of the phenomena and environments of the mere

material world) had no exclusive claim on the human intellect. The inexorable advance of man's understanding in the path of knowledge, and those unquenchable claims of his moral and emotional nature are imperative." And these words: "The world embraces not only a Newton, but a Shakspeare—not only a Boyle, but a Raphael—not only a Kant, but a Beethoven—not only a Darwin, but a Carlyle. Not in each, but in all, of these is human nature whole.—And if unsatisfied with them all, the human mind, with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home, will still turn to the mystery from which it has emerged, seeking to fashion it as to give unity to thought and faith, * * * * then casting aside all restrictions of materialism, I would affirm this to be a field for the noblest exercise of what, in contrast with the knowing faculties, may be called the creative faculties of man."

So I would say to all who read this book, that if they wish to properly appreciate that purpose, and the thoughts, truths, sentiments and experiences recorded herein, they must, "with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home," imagine themselves amid the conditions, scenes and transcendent beauties of that ideal realm and state unfolded herein; they must "cast aside all the restrictions of materialism," and mentally transport themselves out of these enveloping limitations; they must, in imagination, snap the cords of gravity, feel themselves without the boundary and horizon of this time and space, and behold the workings of their supreme will accomplishing through its innate power the dictates of its own volitions. They must consider truth, and behold the drama acted upon the stage of this material sphere's theater and man's Life and Dignity and Destiny as unfolded in this plot and play of the Almighty's conceiving—from the high vantage ground of the Divine Love, Purpose and Reason, from which point of view we have tried to cast our longing vision. We must look across this time-world-scene from that

glowing promontory of light, which juts out from the auditory of the eternal.

He, who in the material looks only at the material, can ne'er see aught but the material.

"Unless above himself he can erect himself, how small a thing is man."

If, as the yearnings of faith and of the human heart teach us, as the inspirations of rational life imply, as the bases of all religions recognize, and as the conclusions of all philosophic truth tend to affirm, there be that Perfected Life and that "Home of Psyche" into which the unbound soul fieth at death as the sparks into the star-lit canopy, then why may we not with joy, "casting aside all the restrictions of materialism," seek to fashion that Life and Home so "as to give (verity, form and) unity to thought and faith?"

Why should that state which is far higher than this material-temporality, and which should be to us the most transcendent, the grandest, the most important and the most real of all things in the universe, remain to us an undefined abstraction, an unimagined futurity and an unfelt and unreal reality? Why should we so live and act as to belie our faith and hope in our Eternal Life? Do we not by our manner of life proclaim that we live but for death?

* * * * *

If in writing this book I can make Real and Life-like what is beyond the end; if I can in clearer vision bring immortality to light, and portray that Home of our Life as real and intense, impulsed with love and varied joy, and teeming with all sweet companionships; if I can demolish in any mind the foul domination of gross materialism, which is subjugating the generations of men, and debasing their aspirations and psychic powers into beastly instincts of greed, avarice and fleshly satiety,—degrading the mind and intelligence into mere material service and physical gratification; if I can rout from any heart and life the blighting phantoms

of soul-haunting superstitions, which like broods of vaporous darkness have been let in upon the too-much deluded inhabitants of earth, chasing away and obscuring that convoy of light and love from the bosom of the blessed Father of us all; if I can dispel any shadows from the mind, and cast any burdens off of the heart, and drive away any sorrow and despair from the life; if wise Ariel can illumine your mind with his glow of light and knowledge, and make plain to you the Divine Mind unfolding Itself in us, and working through us ever upward towards Itself—and if he can teach you the divine purpose of our dual existence in matter; if Meoön's deep emotions can inspire you with calm and holy reverence; if Benedictus can unfold to you the final, all-conquering and all-saving power of the Good and incite you to some noble activity; if Ristos' example can teach you that fearful, though sublime purpose and necessity, that Personality and Selfhood can be wrought out and attained only through sin and its struggles, and so impress upon you the ineffable glory and dignity of those, who, travailing up therefrom, have been sealed unto the Good, and so rendered impregnable to evil and its negations; if Clareese's sweet passion can portray to you the spotless sanctity and purity of love, and banish from your heart and life all foul and blemished emotions of a debased and depraved sensuality; if Assurance's life and exaltation can unfold to your perception the sublime vistas and abodes of conscious-Personal-Being disenthralled of the clogs and limitations of matter and material environments—and by his experience in Plutone's realm teach you man's supreme duty to so overcome the limitations, powers, perversions and tendencies of evil in his nature that its allurements cannot even so much as tempt or influence him;—and finally and greatest of all: If the pure "Thought-Forms" of our real, living, loving Christ, which were addressed to the beatific minds in the "sphere of the Temple," can inspire us to the attainment of that Eternal Perfect Life which was declared

to be the portion, privilege and consummation of each pure and loving soul,—and which He taught was His pure, sweet, simple gospel proclaimed aforetime to the children of men ; —if these or some of these ends can be accomplished, then this book will not have been written in vain !

PROLOGUE.

I know an old chair that four generations have handed down.

The great-grandsire made that chair.

The worker sat in that chair.

The chair never worked.

The worker is gone ! The old chair remains. Did the worker die ?

I know a spreading evergreen. Under this evergreen long ago lovers made love. The evergreen never loved.

The lovers are gone !

The evergreen remains.

Did the lovers die ?

I know an old stone that lies within a churchyard's green.

For long years the echoes of worshippers have rolled back from this stone.

The stone never worshipped.

The worshippers are gone !

The old stone remains.

Did the worshippers die ?

I know a gnarled oak within the college grounds.

Thousands of thinkers thought under that oak.

The oak never thought.

The thinkers are gone !

The oak remains.

Did the thinkers die ?

If the worker and the lovers and the worshippers and the thinkers are dead, then the chair and the evergreen and the stone and the oak are greater than they.

After a while the chair and the evergreen and the stone and the oak will dissolve, and each will go back into the ash and the acids and the gases and the energy from which they first came—and nothing will be lost!

For it is eternally established in the natural order that nothing should be lost.

But the worker and his power, the lovers and their love, the worshippers and their worship, the thinkers and their thought (if they and these are dead), had no ash, nor acids, nor gases, nor material energy into which they could be resolved and conserved so that nothing should be lost.

The worker and his power, the lover and his love, the worshipper and his worship, the thinker and his thought, are personal, and even if there were the ash and acids and gases of power and love and worship and thought, as impersonal elements and energies, into which the worker and lover and worshipper and thinker could be resolved, they would become impersonal and so be lost, for the impersonal is the negation and annihilation of the personal.

So if the worker who planned, and the lover who loved, and the worshipper who worshipped, and the thinker who thought, each died with the dissolution of the material body they are annihilated, for they have no correlatives in material nature in which they could be conserved, as are the elements and compounds of their material bodies,—so that nothing should be lost.

Therefore, the chair and the evergreen and the stone and the oak which nature conserves are greater than the worker and the lover and the worshipper and the thinker.

This is a lie! And to show this was this book written. Herein behold the destiny, the dignity and the divinity of man's true estate revealed in

AN APOCALYPSE OF LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT AND WHERE?

"HAST thou come to remain with us, or wilt thou soon depart to other realms?"

Thus spoke, or communicated to me a voice, which roused me to a conscious perception of a realm, state, or sphere, which I can never fully depict in written or spoken thought.

I say a "voice spoke" to me, but it was not a voice speaking in the sense of a material phenomenon of speech. It was a communication of thought, a communing of intelligence, but I perceived it was not by media of material means or organs.

The intelligence that addressed itself to my mind communicated more like a flash of light, or as by impingement on the mind's perception of some clear vision or percept, than as by a continuity of articulate sounds.

In turn, I was conscious that my intelligence instantaneously received the impingement of the thought addressed to me, in a similar manner as the eye would perceive the zig-zag lightning darting athwart the clouds in darkness.

The experience of this Faculty of Mind, to perceive

thought in its own pure form, was sublime beyond degree. It was to me new, startling, grand. I had always conceived of thought as communicable or as expressible only in written or sound-spoken words or symbols. Here in a new realm of being, in an instant, was presented to me a faculty of thought beyond all my former conception. I beheld intelligence "speaking" to intelligence, communing the one with the other, somewhat like the material phenomenon of the instantaneous flashes of sparks from the positive and negative poles of the electric current. Idea, emotion, thought, mingled and merged as the colored rays in the prism, flashing forth into the pure white light of intellection.

And yet the communication was the same in the effect as would be the continuous sound of the speaking voice, only the thought transfusion or expression was instantaneous and more perfect in every way.

I go into this detail here concerning the mode of communication between intelligences in this realm of pure thought, where I afterward learned I was, because in the progress of this book I shall often express myself about the communion and intercourse of these intelligences in the usual terms, as for-instance, so and so was "said" or "spoken."

Still the reader must bear in mind that while there was no spoken sound in the material sense of the word, in the communication or expression of thought, there was in the highest degree the perfection of sound in the mental effect produced.

The sciences of this earth teach us the difference between sound and this mental phenomenon of sound as I experienced it in this realm. They teach that even in earth's material environments what is called sound is only a sensation; that without the intelligence to receive, interpret, or perceive, it, sound would be impossible. They teach that hearing is a

mental state produced by external vibrations of air, which affect the auditory nerve.

This affection is conveyed by the nerve into the sensorium, and there causes an excitement of the sensory, or brain substance. Our consciousness of this sensorial excitement is the mental perception of sound. So we are taught that, so far as our consciousness is concerned, sound is a physical conception, or mental perception.

But I never realized this truth so clearly and fully as when, on that ushering in of myself into that, to me, untried and inconceived realm of pure being, I perceived sound in its purity, unobstructed by the impediment of sense or material media.

I for the first time fully realized the pure perception of the idea.

There is no living man who can realize my mental elation on this first dawning to my mind of "Being," of "Thought," in their own pure state, which was produced on me when that Intelligence flashed into my Intelligence the interrogation: "Hast thou come to remain with us, or wilt thou soon depart to other realms?"

My amazement was both overwhelming and sublime! I felt that my elation of intellect and of being had scaled a height never imagined by me!

Of my continuity of existence, of the variety of my *me*, I could have no doubt. One effort of my will focussed before me my whole existence. I saw my past, not by a process of slow and successive memories, but more as the impinging of a landscape upon the clear vision. I recalled the fact that I had just retired to my bed for sleep and rest after the day's toil and the evening's conviviality. I must have fallen asleep, for I knew not the moment nor the means of my transformation into the state of supreme being in which I there was. From whence I had come I well knew; how or whither I knew not, and could not then conceive.

CHAPTER II.

I: OR THE FIRST DAWNING OF REAL LIFE!

"I KNOW not whether I shall remain, or whether depart. What am I? Where am I?"

I spoke. I say "spoke," but how? The thrill of unutterable exaltation that bounded through me, as I "spoke" must be left untold! My mind thought, and the etherial effluvium of pure being flashed, as in a ray of thought, into communion with my companion Intelligence. And as I addressed myself in thought to my companion I was conscious that he received and knew my thought. At the same time I knew that I "spoke" to him, for, I was fully conscious that I had perfectly expressed my thought. I was also as fully conscious that my companion had received my communication. My faculty of communication was so perfect and admirable, so far above the dull and blunted utterance of a material organ that I could scarcely force myself to its realization. But I heard my voice, knew it, was conscious of it. It was not my guttural, halting, harsh, discordant "voice" of yesterday. It seemed that my thought was of itself "voice," clear, sweet, resonant, musical, harmonious; that it blended into, and flowed with, the thought, as though the thought had in itself the living rhythm of the soul. My "voice" was different from that of my companion; like my identity it was distinctively myself. I recognized it, I knew it, as much so as I knew myself.

I was also positively cognizant of the possession of every faculty of perfect, exalted being. There was no film, nor

mist, nor darkness, nor weakness, nor depression. There was only a sort of consternation caused by the overwhelming wonders about me. Every faculty of my being seemed to be resplendent, buoyant, clear, majestic, apparently illimitable. Every complement, component, adjunct and function of pure being I felt to be mine. I was myself exalted to Parnassian heights, magnified, vivified, purified, unchained; every bond loosened, every weight cast aside. I felt no heaviness or incumbrance as though bound down to some gross solidity. The cords of gravity seemed to have been snapped.

I felt myself to be Thought without the limitations of sense; Reason without the formality of logic; Judgment without the scotch of a premise; Will without the antecedent of sense, or the environment of a physical infirmity. I felt that I was Emotion without the concomitant of pain or fear, or the gloom of sorrow, or the blush of shame, or the rancor of evil or hate. My every impulse seemed pure and holy; it seemed that Love was supreme and over all, and I felt its infinity.

I seemed to be Vision illimitable, without the boundary of horizon, or the curtain of night; for my being appeared to be of pure light, and this light was everywhere. There was no opaqueness, but only definitiveness, of objects and forms.

I felt that my Being was Sound and Music without the jar or impediment of any discordant sense.

I was Form; my intellectual Self appeared in perfected form; Beauty was everywhere and I was a part of it.

I was pure Thought, and thought was All and all-inclusive.

I felt no gnawings of flesh, no hunger, nor thirst, nor weakness, nor disability.

However, I did not come to this full realization of myself until afterwards, when my first onset of bewilderment and excess of splendor had passed away.

Nor did I for some time fully know my powers, or my

environments. These I shall describe further on. My first consciousness was of one awakened out of sleep, in whose mind still revels and abounds the ecstatic vision of a realistic dream; or as one blind, who having been suddenly endowed with vision, sees men as trees walking.

I felt the power of a strength and force that was almost boundless. My stature, form and mould, though all immaterial, were Myself, perfected in every detail, distinctively myself, with all imperfections and grossness cast aside. My substance was defined, featured, individualized, etheralized, like that of other beings whom I will describe hereafter.

CHAPTER III.

MY COMPANION.

THE communication which had been addressed to me by my strange companion was my introduction into this sphere or state of almost infinite elation. The communication from him directed my attention to him first of all. To understand this wonderful Intelligence and Life was the means of getting acquainted with that state and condition and their environments, in which I found myself.

His form and mien were indicative of a higher order of life and being than any I had ever conceived of. That I had been accosted by an Intellectual Being, a Living Entity, I could not doubt. At the same time I realized that this Being was of an order outside of anything in my former knowledge or experience.

There stood before me Form. Of this I could not be mistaken. He was of majestic form. Form embodying Beauty, Symmetry, Perfection of lineament and stature. And in this form there was no coarseness, nothing perishable. Its sub

stance reminded me of the attenuated, wavy Aurora-Borealis, yet compacted and defined in form ; or of a brighter glow of light, limited, and encased, within light, as when angling rays fall athwart some polished, reflecting surface, and from thence reach the eye :—so this Form was bounded by light, surrounded by light, yet was brighter than all.

While this Being was thus bright as the light, yet the form itself was impenetrable to my vision. It was robed in its Individuality. Within that Personality was the realm of its own secrets and sacred solitudes. This Being of Light had his "Holy of Holies." But there was no material opaqueness in that form. It was Intelligence garmented in its own Individuality. For there were Personality and Individuality. The prism of my vision could not analyze and dissect the pure ray of that Individuality. Within it were imaged the Infinities, the Microcosm of the Macrocosm.

The shades of variegated, attenuated brightness wove about this Being the most delicate, encasing habiliments. That form which was beneath and within may have been more beautiful than the exquisite outward array, but I saw it not. That which met my gaze about and around the Form, closely enveloping it, were the delicate, evanescent hues of a kind of dissolving, changing light or effluvium, as definite in shape and texture as the Form itself.

The revelation which impressed me most powerfully about this Form was the impersonation of Purity and Holiness, which seemed to take life and shape there. Here appeared individualized a bevy of the Beatitudes.

There was nothing unclean there. I beheld Virtue's model wedded to perfect Grace ; a poem and a statue both living and loving.

There was no weakness indicated there, nor any grossness. There was the Form of strength and power without the marks or indicia of any grossness, or sensuality as of flesh. There was the etherealized, celestial stature defined, featured, func-

tioned ; a veritable, yet immaterial Substance, swaying, moving, pulsating, throbbing with an elastic, psychical, spiritual life.

What next impressed me most deeply was the great intelligence which radiated about, and crowned, this Being. This presence overpowered me. I realized that here was Intelligence disenthralled, unchained, with the Eternities beneath it. It crowned the stature of this Form. It was the climax. It was the head, the brow, the all-perceptive eye. I realized that here was Mind with nothing to bound and limit it but God.

Above this consecrated Intellect there was only the Infinite Father.

At that time I thought I saw before me a perfect Man freed from the environments and limitations of perishable matter. The face, countenance, form, person, impressed me as being those of some Man purified, rendered celestial and eternal, transfigured !

While there was not any gross matter which suggested decay and death, yet there was undoubtedly Substance. Of this I could have no doubt. The whole Man suggested substance. There was lineature, there was stature, there was definitiveness. There was also color, or rather colors, which blended into a perfect harmony of life-likeness. But all seemed to be ethereal. As ethereal, but at the same time as powerful, as the lightning ; substance as light as air, but as mighty as the storm ; as evanescent as the ether, which bridges space, but as grand as the sun, which rides upon it ; to mortal eye, as invisible, but just as real and actual, as the magnetism which grasps the steel. All the parts and functions of this Being seemed to me to be, as it were, Faculties of pure Being, which had been defined and located in this spiritual Entity.

The head bespoke Intellect, Reason and Will ; the perceptive faculties were defined and localized as in place of the

material senses and organs; the face and countenance suggested Beneficence and Holiness; the form Power and Beauty; and all, perfectness of Being.

The "voice" which had "spoken" to me reminded me of perfect sound, etherealized into pure thought!

Upon the lofty brow there dwelt thought without a trace of care. The countenance expressed great strength of character, and upon the benignant face there was no frown. The all-perceptive eye was large and round, and beautifully open: in color brown, revealing a calm serenity of soul.

From his first look I knew he was a kindred soul.

When I replied, "I know not whether I shall remain, or whether depart: what am I, where am I?" he embraced me in affection, and said, "Thou art my brother, and thou art in the Home of Psyche. Stay with me and learn who I am, what you are, and where is your true Home."

I gladly and almost intuitively assented, for I knew not what else to do. I felt intoxicated with some unknown power or force. I felt somewhat like one who rushes, after long confinement, from a thick darkness into the blazing sunlight; or who, having been long shackled, is suddenly unloosed, and rising attempts to run. I felt bewilderment from excess.

I leaned upon my companion and felt strength. I looked into his face and received comfort.

He asked me so tenderly: "Brother, for such I call you, will you tell me from what sphere you have arisen to this, and whether you were translated to this without death, or came up by way of death's dark valley? I, who came up from earth, would judge that you also have come up from its material death."

"In that I am of earth you have judged rightly. Whether death hath my body in its icy grasp I know not. As far as my experience goes, I must have escaped the cruel and merciless jaws of that grim monster. On, what is to me, last

evening I passed the happy hours in conversation and laughter, in pleasant conviviality, as was always my wont. In vigor and health I lay down to invite my night's refreshing sleep and rest. Unconsciousness, either of sleep or death, stole sweetly over me, enveloping me in perfect rest. More than this I knew not until your thought addressed to me ushered me into this strange life. Where I am, or what I should know, or do, I await your pleasure to impart to me."

He replied: "I will teach you, and show to you, whatever I can, that you may wish. I will be to you a brother while you remain here, and may you be blessed. I feel that you are of God and Good, or else you would not have straightway found this realm, when you were loosed from earth."

CHAPTER IV.

THE HOME OF PSYCHE—HOW IT FIRST APPEARED TO ME— THE ABODE OF PERFECTED LIFE—THE HIGHER REALM.

WHETHER human Minds, as embodied in my readers, will conceive of what I relate herein as reasonable, or whether they can conceive of any possibility of reality about it, I know not. This is for them to judge of. It is my privilege to write what is written herein, and theirs to pass such judgment upon it as they see fit.

Yet I can but think and hope that this narrative—so strange and inexplicable to the writer in the events and in their occurrence—will open up to them what I conceived and learned to be the GRAND STATE AND POSSIBILITIES OF ACTUAL, FINAL INTELLECTUAL EXISTENCE; OF PURE, PSYCHICAL LIFE IN ITS POSITION OF ABSOLUTE INDEPENDENCE OF, AND SUPREMACY OVER, MATTER.

I trust that my readers will pardon me, when relating this

wonderful experience of mine, if now and then I digress somewhat to draw analogies between what I experienced in this realm and certain facts and phenomena of earth and of life upon it.

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After I became sufficiently composed in my new and strange position to begin to observe about me, I saw phenomena and things sublime, which I cannot now relate, and describe, except with awe, wonder, reverence and admiration.

It is difficult to describe to minds on earth these sublime manifestations and realities without depicting them somewhat in language applicable to the material surroundings of the earth. But I shall express in language as best I can what was clearly and graphically apparent to my thought.

It appeared that the sphere or realm in which I was, was Substance, Reality, though not of any material character such as had been known to me in my experience. Nor had I ever had any conception or idea of such a substantial, though non-material, Reality, as I here observed.

This sphere possessed the qualities that corresponded to the ideas of state and permanence of condition or stability, but not like the qualities of solidity and hardness of the material earth. It was a substance so far as to render it a perfect state and condition for psychical existence. But there was an absence of what we know as impenetrability. I discovered that its very body was open to the mind that willed to penetrate into it and pass through it; then, it was as though it were not. It was not a globe of earth, of mud, of desert, or hard and unyielding stone. It possessed the conditions of stability in so far as the mind's idea was concerned, but its pure substance yielded always in obedience to the will. I afterwards learned that it was pure "Substantive-Force." There was not the ugly, impenetrable density of the earth; nor was there lugubrious opaqueness. There was a mild

translucent cast over and through the vastness of this sphere, that reminded me of the glow and glimmer of some immense precious stone, always scintillating innumerable colors of every exquisite shade and tint.

There were ethereal Currents which sped hither and thither, rippling, flowing, singing; sweet, ever-refreshing, laving the emerald banks. I nowhere saw any mud or slime or marsh. There was nothing stagnant or unclean.

These attenuated ethereal currents seemed to dissolve or float down from the encircling firmament in a kind of soft, all but imperceptible, effusion like dainty trills of music, that sweetened, gladdened, and refreshed everything; and then they gathered, and flowed, and meandered, and ascended and descended, in mirthful, happy channels always emitting, sweetness, music and light. These currents were not only crystal in clearness and purity, but possessed every shade and delicate hue that could give forth superadded beauty.

As they rippled they sparkled, and threw up little waves with an evanescent glow that scintillated in all the colors of the kaleidoscope. The depths served to mirror the beauties above. I experienced an emotion as of deliciousness, or better, of refreshing hilarity, the instant I perceived one of these currents. I perceived one of them when I first observed my surroundings, and I inquired of my companion what it was, and what it was for. He replied, "This is a Fountain of Life. There are vast numbers of them throughout the Home of Psyche. Their effluvium surrounds us, and penetrates us, and imparts and sustains perpetual life and joy. Then they furnish to the mind these most exquisite forms and ideas of beauty. They are typical of Beauty and Purity. Also they diffuse and give off this delicious fragrance and sweetness of emotion that you perceive, which always so delights and intoxicates the mind. They impart to us both Beauty and Joy."

I replied: "I am conscious not only of this beauty and of this joy, but I experience a most exquisite fragrance and taste as if eating and enjoying a delicious viand. How is this?"

He replied: "There is no eating or drinking here in a material, earthly sense; nor the presence of decaying food in our bodies; but the effusion and diffusion of the celestial effluvia in and through us impart to our faculties pleasures and delights similar to, though far surpassing, those we experienced in gratifying our earthly senses and appetites.

"In our translation to this supreme state of existence, we lose none of the pure, pleasurable experiences of former life, but retain them, freed from all the uncleanness, impurity and decay of the fleshly existence. We do not eat, and digest, any gross, material food, throwing off from our bodies the filthy, poisonous residue, as on earth; but we have the exquisite delights which arise from the gratification of the desires and taste; and there are always the refreshing, exhilarating effects pervading us here, only in a far higher degree, that came from replenishing the body with life-giving food. And so of the other pleasurable sensations of our former existence. We retain all here except the evil and impure; that is, we have psychical delights that correspond with those sensibilities and tastes of the body, only far surpassing them."

And as he spoke I perceived the truth of what he said to me. For there stole over, through and into me such emotions and experiences of deliciousness, beauty, joy, and freshness as cannot be described. The sensations formerly experienced by me on earth cannot be compared to these emotions which filled me with delight.

I also became aware of such an awakening, vivification, of life, strength, force and buoyancy within my being, as I had never before imagined.

There took possession of my faculties that supreme elation

and exultation that I have before attempted to describe. I realized within me a vast expansion of power. It seemed that all forms and sentiments of beauty, all the delicacies of emotion, all the loveliness and refinements of pure joy, and all the elements of strength, power, and invincible force, became a part of myself.

I asked my companion if the effluvium of this Fountain of Life, of these ethereal currents, alone produced the effects which he clearly saw I experienced. He answered: "O, no, not that alone. Surrounding you and filling this vast system and boundless abode, are the Divine Effluvia, or spiritual, ethereal Essences; and these become to the mind and being an almost infinite accretion, conveying constantly to every faculty and emotion of psychical life new-born powers, varying potentialities, forms of beauty and mutations of joy. After you have remained with us a while you will begin to comprehend what I tell you. Everything here is Life and Mind and Beauty and Emotion and Joy and Love and Purity and Holiness, and you are fed by them; you become a part of them; they enter into you. All is of God.

You will remain yourself, but you will be of God. The GREAT MIND and SPIRIT are here manifested to, and in, us in all the sublime reality to which we can possibly attain in our conception. The fullest measure of all will be meted out to us as we can bear it!"

I could not reply. When he ceased, my mind could not essay to break the sublime and hallowed silence which followed his blessed thoughts. I looked upon him. Would that I could even faintly depict the grandeur, the glory that seemed to cling as a mantle about that Soul!

He was majestic!

CHAPTER V.

THE HOME OF PSYCHE (*continued*).

The Powers of Pure Life and Mind Begin to be Made Known.

THE Contour and the Environments of this "Home of Psyche" were of a character to excite in the mind inspiring emotions of Order, System, Grandeur and Sublimity, as well as those of Beauty, Joy, Form, Color, etc. There were all forms of beauty and grandeur that Art could conceive. There was the modest landscape; and here the vast stretch of plain that forever receded into the infinite. What emotions of vastness and infinitude crept over me as I gazed across these limitless stretches, the perceptive vision passing ever on and on as the mind willed. Then from another point of view I saw forms that reminded me of pert hillocks that seemed ready to hide their gleeful heads; and I saw mountains of pure form, high, mighty and awful, raising their dizzy heads higher and higher and farther into the illimitable abyss of space!

And there were also bottomless precipices and steeps that sank sheer down, as though walling in the dismal depths of some hidden chaos. Through these landscapes and across these vast plains and adown the firmament there played, sparkled, scintillated and meandered "rivulets" and "rivers" of those beautifully tinted currents, giving freshness, fragrance, beauty and variety to every scene.

And over these precipices these tinted currents sometimes leaped, rushed, and roared, in immense cascades, falling to interminable distances, and resolving into a kind of ethereal

chaos, which took on all forms of rare and grotesque beauty, and all shades and hues of modest and brilliant coloring. Every form and shade conceivable hovered, or glided, or rose, or leaped, or posed from out the depths of those cascades! These vaporous beings were the ever-changing embodiment of all exquisite forms and colors and seemed to be somewhat life-endowed, and appeared to emerge from out unknown or forgotten realms, to delight and astonish me! Such gorgeous, panoramic mutations!

These ethereal currents leaped from such heights and down to such depths and distances, that in their swift-speeding velocity they reminded me of what I had seen on earth of the rush of waters through steel or iron pipes, leaping down vast depths with immense fall and pressure, and plunging out below with such force that the liquid streams would become as solid rungs or bars of steel, or as thousands upon thousands of finest strands of wire, stretched to utmost tension.*

So the immeasurable forces of these plunging, rushing ethereal currents leaping into spacious abysses became like some resistless tornado speeding amongst these forceful currents; raging as cyclonic winds amongst rungs of steel and tensioned wires; and every sound and strain and moan and wail and dirge and anthem and epic and lyric that thought and emotion could ever know, feel, enjoy, or conjure up, issued, vibrated, howled and sped from out the vast spacial mouths of these cascades! I had heard music before, but I had never heard grandeur and sublimity; yet here they be-

* Hydraulic science teaches that water falling through pipes a distance of 300 feet is under such pressure and rushes out with such force that it becomes as the most solid body, and the most powerful blow from a bar of steel will not affect it.

However, these "thereal currents" were not fluid or liquid, as we know on earth, but were beautiful, grand, ideal manifestations of "substantive forces."

came incarnate in sound, and sang, and moaned, and wailed, unto me! Yea, they became deft-fingered musicians, and swept the gamut of every scale and instrument of sound and melody. As we listened my companion said: "You see the elements here are all tensed and tuned to the scale and rhythm of divine music. You will learn that one of the wonderful things about this sublime sphere is that while there is nothing conscious here except Mind, yet all the elements and forces seem possessed of certain life and function. Everything is endowed to minister unto Mind. Mind is supreme over all, yet appears to impart such of its powers to the inanimate as is necessary for the inanimate to minister unto it! Such has the Supreme Mind ordained."

Something analogous to this wonderful Power of Mind I had known on earth. As when the inspired soul of the Musician, having created or conceived the sublimest harmony within itself, creates the inanimate instrument with which to embody and express that melody to other minds. As when the human Genius of Art, having evolved within himself most beauteous forms, chisels the marble or paints the canvas into likeness with his thought. As when the Scientist, having formulated and conceived within his mind the ideas and laws of the immeasurable forces, constructs the engine, or bridles the lightning, to subject them to the service of Mind.

The Melody, the Art, the Force, were in the mind, before the strings were tensed, or the canvas stretched, or the engine forged. Thus man creates his thought into form, in like manner as God hath imaged His thought in the Universe. Everything is the expression of Mind and Law, and Law is but the Order of Thought.

One drop of soft-flowing water seems to have no force; place it in the center of an iron ball, heat that ball sufficiently to vaporize that drop of water, the tiny drop bursts the ball asunder. Why? Because Law, the thought of the in-

finite Mind, hath ordained that heat shall change water into steam—a vapor lighter than air; and that water when changed into steam shall expand its volume. And hence the *power of a Law* which governs a drop of water and a whiff of steam will rend asunder a sphere of steel. It is that same Law which draws the iron steed across the continents of earth, speeding everywhere, overcoming space, distributing to all the garnered treasures of the world; with resistless force, and the speed of the winds, drawing the vast cargoes, as the child his toys; bridging the unfathomed ocean, and riding the billowed sea!

However, I noticed this vast difference in the power of Mind in this celestial sphere, and what it is on earth. I saw that in this sphere, in this pure Home of Psyche, the Mind creates the inanimate agency in the forms of its pure thought, and then endows it to do its bidding! On earth the soul of the Musician conceived the Melody, then created the instrument by which to express it, and then it must master the instrument, and through it body forth the sound. In the Home of Psyche the soul conceives the Divine Harmony, endows the elements with its inspiration, then sits entranced, and listens to its own melody floating from ether, flowing and vibrating from elements which do the soul's bidding!

This grand power of disenthralled Mind overwhelmed me, and filled me with praise. With what joy and exultation I would sit and listen to orchestral cascades, or drink in the grand diapasons of the vibrating ether, all attuned to my soul, and giving forth the harmony I wished! My will seemed endowed to execute its own volitions.

This power of Mind pertained not only to Music, Sound, but to Form, Art, Beauty, and to everything.

Beauty in some form or phase, in some color or sound, pertained to everything, AS THE MIND DESIRED. There was no ugliness; there was no decay.

There were what we might term etherial "Fauna" and

"Flora," and they wore every phase and grace of perennial freshness. They took form and shape and color in, and seemed to issue out of, the enveloping effluvia. They bore no fruit, but only form, fragrance and beauty. Their fruits were form and color. They did not die, nor decay, but they passed away; one beauty succeeding another; each one delighting more than its predecessor:

Beautiful gardens moved and flitted like mirages in the distance; or spread out in quiet, blissful repose about one's feet. Some lovely Arcadia would oft and anon bedeck the circumambient ether. In Form and Color there was monotony nowhere.

Emotions, as of vast forest-depths would at times possess me, into whose semi-lugubrious shades of solitude I loved to glide. And as that emotion would pass away satisfied, behold I would find myself bordered about with exquisite little beds of bewitching "flowers;" and the ether around me would be dancing most merrily to some entrancing music, and the celestial light would glimmer and scintillate, as though it, too, was happy.

The "flowers," that is, the exquisite colors and forms, were not confined as on earth to grow from out the solidity beneath, but also bordered and fringed and bedecked the overhanging firmament, reminding me of cirrous-clouds impregnated with prisms light, ever hurrying and scurrying and changing; all freshened and vitalized and variegated, into every form of symmetry and beauty!

I said there were no impenetrable rocks, no density, no muddy, marshy, dusty earth. This was true. But at the same time there was vastness, and conglomeration of substantive-forces, that conveyed ideas of immensity and extension! But to me there was no weight or heaviness. I experienced no cable of gravity. Everything was on a stupendous scale. There was no stale, sickly mediocrity anywhere, nor in anything.

Everything revealed to me plainly that I was in a system of spheres higher, far higher, in the Universal scale than that known to me in the sphere of matter.

CHAPTER VI.

THE HOME OF PSYCHE (*concluded*).

THERE was no eating or drinking, nor was there anything to eat or drink. There were no pangs of hunger or thirst. There was no toiling of the life away for bread and raiment; neither were there any fleshly infirmities, nor any of the uncleanness of the flesh. The Ethereal Substance did not subsist upon that which decays and becomes unclean. In food and raiment we were as the lilies of the field, we toiled not, neither did we spin, yet Solomon in all his glory was not fed, and arrayed, as we.

The psychic form did not possess those organs and functions which pertained to the material body such as were necessary for the purposes of subsistence upon the elements of gross matter. We lived by the influence and effusion of the divine effluvia which enveloped and penetrated all. We absorbed these impregnated elements somewhat as the fleshly body did the luminiferous ether that enveloped it, or as the flower drank in the sweet-scented ozone.

In all the vast throngs of beings, which I saw, no one there was sick or infirm, or impaired in any faculty of the psychic being. There was no disease. My companion informed me that if any one came there with any affliction or imperfection in any faculty or function of being, it instantly passed away, and gave place to beauty and perfect wholeness. All ills there succumbed to the beatitudes of existence.

There was no labor expended for that which perished.

Hence, I saw no dusty, begrimed, weary forms, tired out by toil, and unclean from contact with decaying things. Everywhere was the incorruptible. There were no vile odors ; no wearing away of the body ; no unclean organs or functions, as of mortal, fleshly existence, which suggested and foretold death !

Life in its highest, purest element reigned supreme. Life merged into consciousness, intellect and substantive-forces. Life there, as did everything else, appeared illimitable, and all was the embodiment of purity.

There was no monotony of scene or of environment. The Infinite was manifested in *VARIETY* as well as in extent.

The melody of this sphere was, I imagined, as when the stars sang together. The home of music and harmony was here, and the very elements were the masters.

I could not describe the beauty and grandeur of the firmament, which spread out in every direction into infinitude.

The Universal Mechanism and Macrocosm were round about me in transcendent view, like actors playing their *rôle* upon the stage.

We needed no darkness to make visible the sublime beauties of the stars !

Seeing my attention drawn to this sublime panorama, my companion remarked : " Here is vast distance, yet to the disenthralled mind it is no obstacle. Distance and space serve their purpose as sublime Idea, but not as a hindrance.

" There is grandeur in the vast vistas that lengthen out on and on towards those swift-rushing constellations, which seem to hie away upon the utmost confines of the universe. Yet no time separates us from them ! In an instant we can be there ! "

This remarkable power of liberated, pure thought, I afterwards realized, when I experienced that in Mind, Time and Space were a Unity, an Idea, and not a limitation.

Once my companion made this remarkable utterance to me: "Time and Space are but the state, or condition, of existence of spirit; they are Infinites within, and not limitations without, the soul."

It is my purpose now, however, to relate only how the surroundings and appearances impressed me when I was transported somehow into this sublime realm. I was looking from a, to me, unknown point of view, and to describe as I saw is my purpose now, and afterward to relate what I learned.

I saw no animals there, nor beasts, nor insects, nor creeping things. There was nothing to become subject to suffering, pain and death. Even the "foliage," "flowers" and "forests" were ethereal substance like everything else, which changed like a gorgeous panorama, but did not decay; there were incessant mutations, but not death!

My mind took clearer and more perfect cognizance of all things than ever before in my life. There were two phenomena to which I had always been accustomed that were absent here. These were opaqueness and impenetrability of objects to the mind. Here the mind penetrated everything, passed through everything, without let or hindrance. Everything was open to the power and perception of pure mind.

In explanation of this power or function my companion said: "You, who have been always clogged by, and associated with, the gross elements of material nature, can hardly comprehend that to pure Mind, to Absolute Thought and Spirit, matter is as a non-entity. The Mind penetrates matter as space does. Matter cannot by its relative position displace thought and mind any more than it can displace so much space. They are different elements, and they never conflict. Mind passes through, penetrates and envelopes matter as magnetism, the solid bar of steel; as space, the opaque spheres."

This statement would have been remarkable and incomprehensible to me had it not been demonstrated as it was in my own experience.

At this point my companion also stated, with the earnestness and solemnity of one unfolding a new Revelation : " You must know that our pure Psychic Being here is without inertia, localization or extension,—for these qualities appertain only to matter, from which you have been liberated. Pure mind cannot be bounded or chained by temporal or spacial relations."

CHAPTER VII.

NEW EXPERIENCES.

My companion, after our first exchange of greeting upon my dawning consciousness there, proposed my introduction to a company of fellow Minds gathered near us. I gladly assented, for I was impatient to know all possible to me in my most wonderful surroundings.

My companion said : " Come, we will be there." Upon the thought, instantaneously, I found myself in this company. Strange experience to me !—I was there, but I did not walk ; I was conscious of change of place, and change of object, but was not conscious of any exertion. I felt no clog nor weight.

It was self-evident to me that I was not subject to the laws of gravity, nor to the relations and limitations of Time and Space. I did not fly or glide. It seemed that simply upon my volition anywhere was here or here was anywhere. My supreme will seemed to execute its own volitions.

Upon the realization of this wonderful experience, in consternation I asked my companion to explain it to me. Upon my inquiry this august company, in which we then were,

turned their attention to me. A grave, benignant Mind addressed me. Previous to this my only intercourse had been briefly with my first companion. This my second acquaintance impressed me differently from my first. There was a distinct Personality, and different Individuality. The face was of a graver cast, though the form was not so majestic. The person was less dignified, though more kindly, in appearance. The head and countenance indicated more of love and emotion, and less of intellectuality. There was more of sweetness and less of light in that Personality. He communicated to me in such helpful emotion: "Brother, judging by your inquiry this instant addressed to Brother Ariel, you have only now become one of us."

I saw that all present were interested in me, so, addressing myself to all, I narrated to them my strange experience and mysterious arrival there, as I had detailed it to my first companion, whom I had just heard addressed by the name of Ariel. As I spoke of having been an inhabitant of the planet Earth, I noticed that a number smiled with joy and drew nearer to me, as though they were meeting an old friend. Others looked with more inquiring intentness. As soon as I had finished speaking, many of them embraced me, and welcomed me most lovingly, exclaiming that Earth had once been their home, where they had dwelt when associated with the material.

All greeted me most cordially. I was introduced¹ to many from various spheres and states.

There was this unity among them all, they were Personalities, moral Beings, appearing to be endowed with the same faculties and attributes of mind and being. All possessed similar concomitants of mind. Of course there was difference in degree, and this difference in degree constituted each individuality.

¹ It was not so much a formal introduction, but a brotherly presentation and greeting.

One faculty or emotion seemed to predominate in all, and that was love. I saw that each regarded all as brothers.

When I had ceased speaking, those companions from my planet exclaimed: "Thou art here because thou hast died. Thou hast been made free!" I replied: "Of this I do not know; but I do know that this most wonderful life, which I now experience for the first time, has possessed me," and then I quickly suggested: "Can we not go to Earth, and there know why and how I came here?"

At this inquiry from me all seemed astonished, and somewhat amused. Then some one answered: "Why, Brother, no. We can *be at* Earth or elsewhere when we desire, but we cannot commune with matter. We cannot again experience matter, nor again become associated with it."

"How is this?" I replied. "I do not understand you." And as I made this inquiry, I felt strong emotions moving my very soul. I felt as one who has bidden farewell forever to a dear, loved one. My whole being was confused and agitated. I bowed my head—shall I say in sorrow? They all divined at once my melancholy consternation, and on the instant one of them, oh, so gently, so sweetly, addressed me at my side. That "voice" in its effect was indescribable. It seemed that that Soul, in that "voice" and influence, had bound itself unto mine, and had imparted to me its strength, its love, its hope, its brightness, and its joy. The thoughts were:

"Do not be sad, nor confounded. Know us, and know that we love you. Wait, we will explain to you what has seemed to cause you this sadness, and when you know, you will be the happiest of us all. Brother Ariel, you are so wise; and you are from Earth. You know the strange thoughts and emotions that now possess our brother, newly come. Explain to him that which now beclouds and saddens him, that he may be always happy."

I do not know how else to explain the effect wrought upon

me by the influence of this "speaker," than to describe it by something we are somewhat acquainted with on earth. The reader has doubtless experienced, or observed, that instantaneous, vivifying, brightening, joy-imparting effect produced when one lover sweetly, yea so tenderly, looks at another. Not a word is spoken; there is no articulate sound uttered by one to the other; but in that look, askance, it may be, two souls speak volumes, yea, more than myriad folios can contain; they rush together, and mingle, in the infinity of Love. In that look there dwells the component of the ethereal realms; there is the descending of the Infinite into the finite; of the eternal into the temporal.

Thus was the influence of my sweet comforter who so gently addressed me at my side; not as human lover, but as immortal transfusion of Soul to Soul; thus that Soul—being diffused, effused itself into and through my thoughts, emotions and being, enrapturing all. I then knew that Love was there. Was there Woman? Was there a sex of mind, of spirit in these psychic realms, as there was in the physical state on earth?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE AND MIND INCARNATE IN MATTER MADE PLAIN: STRANGE REVELATIONS.—THE PURPOSES OF PURE LIFE BEGIN TO UNFOLD.

UPON the request so made to Ariel by my sweet comforter, he addressed me:

"You ask pathetically if you can't be at Earth, and there know why you are hither. To answer you this question I must needs explain much to you. But I will first give you a direct answer, and then, if you desire it, I will explain to you afterward."

I thanked him, and begged him to do so. He then continued: "You may not yet understand your present self and organization sufficiently to know that we can at an instant be at Earth, or anywhere else we may will. But this is true, as I have before intimated to you. Doubtless you noticed that after we first met, and then beheld this company of our brothers, and desired to be here, we were here instantly, upon the volition. Just so quickly can we be anywhere we will to be. But should you this instant be at Earth you could not re-enter into an experience of it, nor could you even perceive your own dead body, if that be its condition."

I replied: "I can't comprehend your meaning. I know I am myself. I am fully conscious of myself and of my continued existence. I know it was I who yesternight on Earth ate of food; but just now it seems I sat about the hearth, and talked, and laughed, and then lay down to sleep, as I told you. I see it all so plainly. I see the chair in which I sat. I see the clock on the mantel. I see my dearly loved ones. I see you and others here. I am talking to you. I perceive your thoughts addressed to me, and I behold your forms. Then why do you say to me who am conscious of all this, that, should we be at Earth this instant, I could recognize nothing of my former material surroundings? Nay, not even my poor dead body, if this be its condition?"

To this Ariel answered: "This may now be meaningless to you, but in answer I must tell you that pure Mind and Spirit cannot again experience (except in forms of thought and memory) material forms and compounds, in which the mind was formerly admixed. You may comprehend, and study, matter in all its substantial analyses, in its ultimate parts, in its essences and in its laws; but you cannot experience it as formulated, organic aggregations and organizations: to do this you must again become a part of it.

"You might study your body in its elements as an organic compound of so much oxygen and other gases, as so much

ash ; but you cannot even perceive its organism and its form, and its color, and its expression.

" You, having lived admixed with matter, were by your dual existence a part of matter ; and through the organs and senses of a material body your pure Self, your Mind, was enabled to perceive sensations arising from material affections.

" These sensations, of whatever kind, arose from affections or motions in the sensory or brain, and there the mind took cognizance of them. These sensations, which your mind perceived, were only the signs, symbols, or translations of material phenomena into the forms to be recognized, and interpreted, by thought. Without the media of the body and its organs and senses, the mind could never have received the sensations, which by it were translated into thought ; and, therefore, could not have had cognition of the material sphere and of its phenomena. God's material spheres of this universe could never have been known, and realized, by minds created by Him, unless minds have been created admixed with matter.

" Some of these brothers, who are here with us, never were admixed with matter, as you and I were, and notwithstanding my utmost endeavor, I have never been able to assist them to a conception of the qualities of matter. There is Brother Meoön from the sphere Orion, who was created pure Mind, just as you perceive him now, he can speak for himself as proof of what I have just told you."

Brother Meoön, who had up to this time been silent and thoughtful, bending his benign intentness upon me all the while thought to me : " What Brother Ariel has taught you is indeed true. So often have I with all my power listened to him as he in the eloquence of pure thought discoursed to me and others about the material things, beauties and phenomena, as he expressed it, of your and his former abode, Earth. With all the power of my thought I have questioned him, and with all the power of his thought he has answered me ;

but I have never yet been able to conceive of what he teaches. So often have I felt in spite of myself, O, that the great, creative Spirit had seen fit to have given me for a time at least a 'dual existence,' as Brother Ariel expresses it, so that I too could know what is 'matter' and what is 'earth,' what is 'hardness' and what is 'weight,' what is 'cold' and what is 'heat,' what is 'eating' and what is 'drinking,' what is 'weariness' and what is 'sorrow,' what is 'pain' and what is 'suffering,' what is 'sleep' and what is 'death'! All these things and thousands more I know not, nor can I conceive, nor ever will!"

Thus Brother Meoön thought, and as I perceived his communication, I was constrained to respond: "Why, Brother Meoön, judging by this almost complaint which you make, I feel somewhat inclined to believe that you nearly know what sorrow is at least."

Then Ariel continued: "Now, Brother," (they all called me Brother, for they yet knew not my name), "you perceive this testimony from Brother Meoön, and I could have thousands to so testify to the fact that pure spirit, which has never been admixed with matter, cannot comprehend gross matter and its material phenomena. You and I, in the wisdom of our blessed Father, were impinged upon matter, connected with, and associated in, it, in such a wonderful way that we were mysteriously enabled to comprehend it, experience it, feel it, and know it: and then to interpret, and translate, it into the forms of pure thought."

"Then our existence was of a dual nature, of spirit or mind or substantive-force and matter mysteriously conjoined?" I inquired.

"Yes, that is wherein our nature differed from that of these always pure, psychic Beings here. If you remember, early in the researches of philosophy, this wonderful truth of our being was announced. The learned Plato, so revered here, and beloved, taught this truth. He affirmed that we

were a substance of mind and a body of matter,—two counterparts entirely different and distinct in every quality and essential; one material, and the other non-material substance, and in that sphere the one dependent upon the other.

“For a long æon the world wrangled over whether anything should or could be denoted substance except the gross matter, which, as we here know, is distinct in its nature from pure substance. These celestial and ethereal realms,—these innumerable, pure, psychic forms,—infinite in variety and extent and forces, comprise the highest and grandest forms of substance, vastly removed from the corruptible and perishable grossness of the material spheres. Matter in its natural state is deadness, inertia. It has no power or force in and of itself. It would forever have remained inert and dead if the substantive-forces of the ethereal elements, the powers of the Immanent Mind, had not been mysteriously diffused into it. It was at first formless, motionless, structureless, forceless. The scientific thought of the world was a unit on this view, even before I took my departure hence. Yet we see that while the natural state of matter was deadness, inertia, now there is no single particle of matter at rest. There was a mighty ethereal, initial impulse, that thrilled through the dry bones of the material, infusing and awakening multiple life and forces, and fitting the grosser spheres for the habitation of etheriel Mind, the pure substance, which the Creative One intended should be impinged into them.

“Later on in the earth’s history, other great thinkers, and then the Blessed Christ, messenger to Earth, taught distinctly the doctrine of a pure spiritual Substance, indwelling in the gross material, and He taught that that gross ‘flesh and blood of the material form could not inherit these psychic realms.

“Then the thought of the world was so carried away with the doctrine of the actuality and persistence of the psychic

Substance or Reality, that there arose Minds who taught that no material things were real, but were only the Ideas or Imaginings or Creatures of Mind. Such Minds as Descartes, Berkeley, Kant, Jacobi, Fichte and others were thus carried away. Hume demolished their Ideal-Monism. Then came August Comte, who, fearing the chaotic state of Metaphysics brought about by Hume's battle with Idealism, went to the other extreme and taught the doctrine of Positivism, that nothing was real but the material and its demonstrable phenomena. Following in his track came the school of the Materialists in the nineteenth century.

"To us here, in these upper realms, who once thought on earth, the tenets of materialism seem entirely without philosophical foundation. I will prove this more at length in my discourse in the Temple, which occasion will soon arrive. But looked at and studied, even from a standpoint of physiology, from a study of the actions and functions of the bodily senses themselves, the materialistic teaching that the gray matter in the head, called the brain, was the thinking power, or mind, or *ego*, in man, was entirely untenable, and plainly so.—However I am afraid, my brothers, that this discussion, so removed from your pure contemplation here, will not interest you."

"Yes," "yes," "go on," "go on," exclaimed a number. "We will it. We will it."

"Then for a little while I will teach on; for I set out to explain to our brother, newly come here, why he could not again be at Earth and see, and know, his dead body, which remained behind him; and these thoughts are necessary to teach him the reasons.

"The human organism possessed organs for the reception of the light-force or motion, and others for the reception of the sound-force or motion, and others to receive and enjoy the effluvia of material substances, called there taste and smell; and another called feeling which perceived the quality

of tactability in matter. These material organs and senses were all connected with, and had their centers in, the brain matter, the highest form and gradation of organized matter.

"To explain the action of these senses we will take the eye for an example. The eye received the light-force; and in the mirror or retina of the eye were pictured external objects. But these pictured objects in the eye's mirror were not what the ethereal mind-force dealt with, because if you leave the eye intact, but cut the nerve which connects it with the brain matter, the picture still remains upon the retina, but the mind could not and does not perceive the picture.

"If the eye is removed entirely, only the optic nerve being left unimpaired, and then this nerve is excited, this excitement is conveyed into the sensory or brain center, and there a sensation is produced, which corresponds to a perception of sight or form.

"Now there were some thinkers on Earth, who held that we perceived immediately the external object, as the tree itself or the object itself. Others held that it was the picture in the eye, or the light-force that came in contact with the retina.

"But the truth was that it was none of these which the mind perceived, but it was the inner or brain-sensory, excited in various ways by external, material phenomena, producing forms of motion therein, which the mind immediately perceived.

"In that sphere as in this, there is the self-subject, or ego, which sees, perceives and thinks; and there is the object, or non-ego, which is perceived. There is thought and thought-object. These fundamental propositions were the basis of all philosophy and thought.

"Now with thinkers the point to be arrived at was, wherein and how did the non-ego come into relation with the ego, or pure mind, and what constituted to the mind the non-ego. Whenever this relation between the ego and the non-ego took

place we had as the result a sensation and a perception. In the case of sight, or perception of the objective through and by means of the organ of sight, we saw just now that this sensation or visual perception occurred when the inner sensory was excited through, and by means of the organ of sight; and that a sensation of sight took place when the optic nerve was touched, excited or interfered with, though the eye itself was removed. From these facts the conclusion was drawn that to the ego the non-ego, in the case of sight-perception, was not the outside object, nor the eye, nor the retinal picture in the eye, but the excited sensory or inner brain itself, whose molecular tremors and motions, caused by the objective disturbance, became the media in, and through which, the conscious ego received and perceived the sublimated influences of the material, which motions the consciousness metamorphosed into sensations, and thence translated into the forms of thought.

"In proof that the immediate perception of sight was something within the brain, or rather was the excited sensory itself, I remember a test which to me was conclusive; a simple experiment, but convincing.

"We put two pieces of paper, one yellow and one blue, in the two compartments of the stereoscope. (Many of you here do not know what this means.) (Here Ariel explained to them in thought-forms what it was.) Now, on looking through the lenses, we perceived not yellow, nor blue, but green. We at once inquired, Where is this green? It cannot be in either eye, for in one must be yellow and in the other blue; the retinal picture in one must be yellow and in the other blue. So the affection of one optic nerve must be that produced by a yellow ray, and the other that by a blue ray. Hence it was physically certain that the percept of green, which the ego was conscious of, must have been in the inner sensory.

"The optic nerve, and by it the sensory, excited by the

objective colors of the yellow and blue, became in a state of molecular tremors, such as could have been produced only by a single green ray, or by the combined disturbances of these different rays ; wherein the conscious ego perceived the color of green. This percept of a green ray was not a physical material realty outside of the inner sensory ; and therefore the ego could not have perceived it as such, outside thereof. Hence the non-ego, which in this case was a green ray, must have been only a state of molecular tremor or motion in the brain itself, and therefore it was the brain itself which to the mind was a non-ego.

“ The brain, which is matter, could not be both subject and object at the same instant ; for it could not occupy two states or conditions at the same time. Therefore if the brain was the non-ego, as we have shown, it could not at the same instant have been the ego also.

“ The truth is, proof can be multiplied upon proof to show that it was not external objects outside of the brain which conscious I perceived, but it was only the changes or motions produced in the brain by these objects, which conscious I became cognizant of. For it was a teaching of physiology, that ‘ external agencies can give rise to no kind of sensation, which cannot also be produced by internal causes, exciting changes in the condition of our sensorium,’ as is conclusively proven in all the phenomena of dreaming.

“ So that the non-ego, which conscious I perceived in all the material realm, was the immediate motion in the molecular matter in which conscious I was mysteriously impinged ; which was its only medium of communication with the material.

“ Thus it was only through motion, the resultant of substantive forces coming in contact with the material things, that the mind became acquainted with material phenomena and relations. This motion which the mind perceived was itself immaterial, but wonderfully served as the medium of meta-

morphosis and translation from the material entity into the psychic idea.

"The succession of conscious activity involved in the perception of these successive motions was, by some thinkers, termed "States of Consciousness;" and these states, they affirmed, comprised the sum-total of our sentient existence. In answer to this position we inquired, what, and wherein, was the Supreme Personal Subject, One and Ever-present—that perceived, unified, collated and reasoned upon, these disconnected, successive states? How could successive states of motion, or of consciousness, if you please, in the excited sensory, a material organ,—unify, and collate, and recall, as occasion demanded, the diverse and long-passed states that had gone before? If there was no Supreme, Conscious-One-Subject, how could there have been Individuality, Personality and Character?

"Hence we were forced to conclude on strict physiological reasoning that the materialistic doctrine which taught that the material brain matter in the head was the thinking power, the subject, the real ego, was untenable.

"There were also simple experiments connected with the sense of hearing which upheld and strengthened the physiological reasoning relied on in the conclusions reached from the experiment in the sense of sight, just cited."

Ariel, absorbed in the deep trend of reasoning he was engaged in, had addressed this learned argument apparently to the whole company assembled there. He then bent his gaze on me and continued his thought:

"It was necessary for me to go through this reasoning, my brother, to show you that it was only in this way, by this mysterious, wonderful union of mind with certain forms of highly organized matter, wonderfully and fearfully wrought together, that your conscious self, your ego, was ever enabled to perceive and experience the phenomena of the material realm.

"Your dissolution with these grosser elements has now taken place, and you can no more do these things. Our conscious experiences of our former material sphere will be, and remain, for all æons, only that part of it which we received by aid of our senses and organs, and which we have conserved into ourselves by converting and translating it into forms of pure thought and consciousness.

"If by sloth and narrowness of experience we acquired only a little, only that little will we ever have. If by diligence of thought and expansion of life we have acquired much, a vast deal, then that vast treasure we will ever possess. God placed us in matter to subdue it unto thought and consciousness, and to transform the experiences derived from our relations in it into forms of pure character; and that which we translated into these became eternal; for in the crucible of thought and character there is no wasting precipitation. With all the vividness of actual presence, and present cognition, we will forever retain all, everything, every jot and tittle, of what took place in the life and experience of our incarnate selves in our yonder home. Every word and every thought, every look and every face, every smile and every frown, every feature and every form, every landscape and every plain, every color and every sound, every voice and every song, every conception and every perception, every emotion and every sensation,—all, all with living perennial freshness will remain ours forever. Yea, if we have changed the Macrocosm into the Microcosm, and in our minds have garnered the universe of its material harvest, all will be ours forever, and that without any decay or diminution.

"But, my brother, while this is true, it is also true, as I have told you, that our ethereal mind cannot be at Earth and again experience the on-going processes and mutations of material nature. Our disembodiment has taken place; the attenuated link that bound us to the *materia* has been

broken ; that fleshly counterpart that rendered us subject to the laws and conditions that acted upon, and controlled, the material, has rent asunder, and has gone back into the common stock and elements of the material world.

" And, my brother, well 'tis that 'tis so. For if we, though in this most exalted and beatified State and Home of the Soul, could be at Earth, and being there could see, and hear, and know, the always woes and sorrows of that groaning sphere ; could feel the miseries and know the faithlessness of the ones we cherish ; we ourselves would so travail in pain and sympathizing suffering that a second death, did God not prevent, would fall upon our souls !

" Wherefore, I taught you that should we be at Earth this instant, you could not know your dead body, nor know why you are hither.

" In this argument to you I do not mean to teach you that we may not study the material elements, learn their laws and forces, and unravel them to our minds' content, in the endless æons here. That which our thought has garnered from the material sphere is the seed which will increase and mature into the full-ripe harvest."

" Then, Brother Ariel, you mean to teach the cheering, helpful thought, that what we learned about matter and its laws while we were associated in it, will make us able to carry on in our interchange of thought with our brothers assembled from other spheres, our crucial, clear investigations, until we arrive at a perfect knowledge of matter and its laws ?"

" Yes, that is what I mean. The material is the lowest sphere in creation.

" Mind can comprehend the elements and forms and phenomena thereof only by direct association and experience in it. Mind thus converts the gross elements, and God's thoughts which have been expressed in them, into the forms of our thought. While we cannot again associate in matter,

we can study it, and arrive at its perfect knowledge. Having its elements, we deduce fully its laws, combinations and results."

"Then, do you mean to teach me that underlying and directing the material manifestations of Earth and its phenomena there were mind and purpose?"

"Of course so. Beneath matter and force, those so-called ultimates of physical science, were the abiding power and guidance of Mind and Purpose. These gave unity, wholeness and completeness to all the material processes and carried these processes ever onward to intelligent consummation. We cannot even interpret Nature aside from underlying Purpose. In all our investigations of Nature we were compelled to assume not only the mere persistence of force, but the greater, deeper fact of that uniformity of purpose which could only find a basis in Mind. For the mere persistence of force unguided would, as soon, and as often, work towards destruction and ultimate chaos, as towards processes of higher development and uniformity. Such force would persist as much in reverting the accomplishments of one of its impulses as it did in partially perfecting the process of that impulse. The tide of persistence that brought to the shore of being and development one process or form, would in its ebb carry it back into the waves of chaos, without even a chance of such process taking root on the shore of permanence. Under the operation of such a force one process accomplished would more often be utterly destroyed than carried over to a form and stage of higher development; for under the doctrine of chances (and chance must be where there is no mind or purpose) that one chance for a higher development to follow in keeping with that uniformity and nature of the form-being thus far developed, would be as *one* against unnumbered trillions!

"And when we come to consider the countless forms of being and phenomena that exist, and persist, in perfect uni-

formity and in keeping with their uniform environments, we are compelled to conclude that the ratio of chances, for purposeless forces to have happened to produce this almost infinite equation of accomplished results, would have been in the problem of chances as 0 to Infinity! Think of any scientist presuming to explain the contents of Earth's enveloping Cosmos, including life, intelligence and even Man's Self-Consciousness from the bare premise of the persistence of force, and the premises having neither a 'major' nor a 'minor' of Mind or consciousness. I tell thee it is illogical! It is unthinkable! It is impossible! The very statement is a *reductio absurdum*. It is ——"

"Stop, Ariel, stop, enough; don't waste your thought further with me. How could any mind do otherwise than accept your conclusions? But—Ariel—you see—that is—I want to know this,—when I think of all those woes and trials and sufferings and despairings and partings and evil and sin, and finally that death; when I think of all these things that racked and tormented us on earth, I ask myself, why were we not placed in a world of happiness and joy and eternal life and brightness and purity, like these intelligences about us here from Sirius and Orion and other celestial spheres as I see here? Why were we thus on earth circumstanced, Ariel? Why did our good God thus serve us?"

What earnestness and intentness and sympathy and attention I noted among all this resplendent throng about us as I thus interrogated Ariel! How they seemed suffused with all pity and tenderness!

How can I ever forget Ariel's reply, as he answered thus: "It is not strange, my brother, that such inquiries should well forth from your mind. I think I can joyfully allay them. Have you never conceived the truth that all the mere physical infirmities, the bodily pains, and that death, of our earthly existence were only the concomitants and incidents of the material? This is true. Matter is a temporal, limited,

circumscribed thing. In its very nature it is a travailing element, a shifting, disintegrating organism in all its forms. Our material selves were a part and parcel thereof. Even our Earth is a cooling planet that sooner or later must pass back into formless void. It itself was sent forth for a purpose. We—the Self-Conscious Personality that we now are—were that Purpose. We were given being in matter, that out of matter might be conserved that Purpose. The grand Purpose of the material creation could not have been attained by the Supreme Mind without us. When our old Earth shall have been rolled back into its former niche, where and what will be the net result born of all its groanings and travailings and bringings-forth? We. Those sufferings and labors and travailings and woes, as you term them, which we endured in common with our Mother Earth and all her children in the flesh, were not in themselves evils. Why? Because they were necessary to bring us forth. For otherwise, we—the free, personal Will and Character that we find ourselves—could not have been. Is it not conclusive and self-evident to you, that that character which is stronger than adversity must have come out of, and triumphed over, adversity? That that character which is more powerful than all evil, must have done battle with evil and vanquished it forever? That that character and personality to whom sin is no longer even a temptation, much less a hindrance, must have had their ‘wager of battle’ with all the hosts of sin,—such as lusts, and revenge, and hate, and falsehood, and pride, and corrupt passions, and selfishness, and self-indulgence, and cruelty, and hard-heartedness, and avarice, and greed,—and have not only vanquished, but annihilated, them, so that they cannot even draw a sword upon the battlefield of the Soul? That that will, the supreme arbiter in our personal kingdom, in order to dictate its perfect decrees to our active Self-Consciousness and commit no more error in its supreme rulings, but be forever in harmony with the Supreme Will

from which it came, must have had many contests to decide, many causes of right and wrong to sit upon; many varying interests of our inner selves to adjudge; many sacrifices of evil to good to decree; and many of all but self-exterminating judgments to enforce?

"But, you ask, why was there any Sin? I answer, we were free moral beings, therefore there was sin. Sin was no creation of some positive power without the soul, sent upon us as outside warring furies to torment us to destruction. Without freedom of our personal will there could have been neither moral nor immoral act, but only the impersonal activities of some automaton. And, therefore, there could have been no character.

"Sin was not a positive power in human nature, but developed there into a tendency. So far as we on earth knew, this tendency to sin may have been first induced through ignorance in our remote ancestors and from thence passed on in their posterity into voluntary transgression. But what we did know was this, that as the result of the transgression of the order of our moral development and perfect growth, there arose a tendency, a propensity, to sin in the human soul. As consequences of this violation of our moral order,—which violation was sin,—there came wrong action, evil in all its phases, suffering, trials.

"Man then no longer warred, as the beasts of the fields, with only his physical environment for the survival and sustenance of his physical being; but we see the scene of his struggles transferred to his moral nature, to his spiritual environments. The spiritual war with sin and evil began. Here then dawned a new purpose in man's destiny. What? That he was placed in material environments not only to subdue matter and convert it into the eternal forms of thought and character, but, he became in the environments of sin, that he might subdue it also, and in so doing develop in himself a character, a will, forever stronger than all the

tendencies and powers of sin and disobedience, imaged like unto that Supreme Character and Will which are the perfection of all things !

"Thus, my brother, by contact with sin and overcoming it, and thus only, could sin and evil become to us forever as though it were not. Thus only do we become the 'spirits of the just made perfect,' and so become sealed unto God's image !

"God might have placed us in other spheres—in realms of light and joy and ease, as many of these radiant ones about us here were placed—but had He so done, we, like hosts of them, would not yet perhaps have waged our battle with sin and disobedience, and come out stronger than all, —forever victorious.

"Sin arose when we violated those laws of our moral being, which were necessary to the perfect development of our character in accordance with God's plan. And yet, strange paradox ! sin was a necessary concomitant of the development of our moral being ! This violation brought upon us suffering and tribulation of soul and mental anguish. These led us to know the evil of sin and that state of moral imperfection in which we were ; and also spurred us on to self-mastery and discipline, in order that, becoming master of all our powers and desires and tendencies and passions, we would guide them in obedience to those laws by which we could become perfected in righteousness. Thus suffering taught us of sin ; and the attainment of our perfect Selfhood gave us mastery of sin.

"We hated when we should have loved ; we learned the blighting curse of hate—and the fearful wrong done our brother and our own nature ; therefore, we loved.

"We were unkind when we should have been kind ; we learned to be kind.

"We were impure when we should have been pure ; we saw the foul blot ; therefore we willed to be pure.

"We spoke a lie when we should have been truthful; we contemned ourselves as a liar, low, mean, debased,—therefore, we willed to be truthful.

"We were cruel when we should have been gentle and tender; we saw the pain and suffering produced by our cruelty, and we execrated ourselves who caused it; therefore we willed to be gentle and tender.

"And thus through all the relations of our earthly life, this great purpose that set us agoing wisely ordained that by our very sin itself we should be perfected, and by means of our struggles with sin should attain that absolute self-hood designed for us.

"He made us free that we might attain personality and character. The way to personality and character lay through struggles with sin.

"Thus through the adversities and tribulations and limitations of the flesh, we learned and experienced those negative counterparts of material nature,—pain, sorrow, want, sadness, despair, darkness, weariness, age, decay, death,—that otherwise we never could have known; and knowing these, we can the more feel and enjoy the unutterable thrill of this perfect happiness which is the true state of the finally developed spirit!

"As weaklings we fell into sin and knew and experienced those negations of our true spiritual selves,—hate, lust, impurity, cruelty, lying, theft, murder, slander, avarice, selfishness, and all that foul brood,—and knowing these and feeling the degradation, debasement and remorse of soul and the consequent suffering and woes that cursed us, we engaged in that spiritual struggle and travail of life by which we overcame these forces and tendencies of evil; and having experienced these and overcome them, we may the more glory and exult in that sublime Selfhood and Personality which, by virtue of God's moral order working in and with us, we have attained to in our Character!

"Thus, my brother, in thyself as a type behold the ultimate purpose of yon groaning Earth-Sphere. That there might be Personal Character imaged in Divine Character; that there might be Personal Love throbbing to Divine Love; that there might be Personal Will responsive to Divine Will;—was that mysterious union of spirit with matter, that strange paradox of Selfhood attained and perfected through sin, ordained."

CHAPTER IX.

STRANGE REVELATIONS (*concluded*).

WITH such attention and astonishment, as can be imagined better than described, I received these strange, illuminating thoughts of Ariel. For some time I made no reply. My mind was in a state of perturbation. His learned thought had been to me somewhat like a transfiguration of the universe. In my astonished silence all concurred. Each mind had withdrawn into the unapproachable shrine of its own personality.

The first whose thought flashed into the horizon of our minds was *Ristos*, from the celestial sphere Sirius. Like Meoön, he too had been denied the fleshly habiliments of matter. His sphere had always been one far removed from the material. He hailed from celestial Sirius, a sphere of absolute purity of intellectuality. *Ristos* once described its form and substance to me in mathematical formulæ.

Celestial Orion, the sphere from which Meoön hailed, was of form and state more of the emotional. In earthly phraseology we might say, there was more of sweetness and ecstasy there, and not so much of clearness and light.

As I remarked, Ristos' was the first mind that flashed in thought after our silent monologue :

"Ariel, you lived once on the sphere Earth ; the states of being and of condition there, you once expressed to us, were such as impenetrability, heaviness, coldness, heat, and such strange things. Now, that I may get some idea of these mysterious things or states, I wish you would inform me if 'impenetrability' (that is one of the categories you mentioned, I believe,) is like the major or the minor premise of a syllogism?"

This remark amused me to such an extent that, notwithstanding the consternation and solemnity of my mind at this time, I had to laugh most heartily, and Ariel and others of Earth joined in with me.

This "laugh," for such an emotion it was, seemed to open my nature to my surroundings, and I was filled with an intense delight. My mystic depression and awe largely passed away, and I felt cheered, as though a fountain of mirth was bubbling within me.

Ariel replied: "Why, dear Ristos, you know no more concerning my old home and its affairs than when I first knew you, and taught you about it, though I have tried to teach you much. I take more interest in Sirius, your home, it seems, than you do in mine ; for I am sure that I would not make such a blunder about one of your 'categories' as you did about 'impenetrability.'"

"It seems it must be so, Ariel, that you rise by force of the universal Order into that perfect knowledge of pure intelligence and reason, which are the states and conditions of my sphere ; but this Order resists, yea, renders impossible, my descent into that state and condition of the material, which is the lowest sphere or order of this universal activity that our Infinite Father has bodied forth. However, I will ask you another question, but not to amuse you, only to gain one conception of your past sphere.

"Once you thought to us of a 'vast mount' by the shore of what you termed a 'sea,' and I think you remarked that to compute its weight or heaviness would require the aid of the—did you say quaternions?—that system which we of Sirius know as the poesy of pure mathematics. Tell me if the 'weight' or 'heaviness' of this substance, which you termed a 'mount' by the side of a 'sea,' is like a problem of geometrical progression, or a deduction of metaphysics?"

"No," replied Arfel, "such conceptions do not in the least correspond. But, to give you an idea, I will ask you to recall the geometrical theorem that the square described on the hypotenuse of a right-angle triangle is equal to the sum of the squares described on the other two sides. Well, imagine the 'earth' to be that 'triangle' and the 'mount' the 'square,' and——"

"I see that, I see that," replied Ristos; "but there you are describing pure form, and that has no such state or condition as 'heaviness' or 'weight.' I can understand, see, and know, what we mean when we think of the 'weight' of argument in a discourse; or I comprehend what we imply when we denote the 'heaviness' of a syllogism, but 'heaviness' and 'weight' of an 'Earth,' or a 'mount,' I cannot."

And Meoön inclined his head and gave his assent to Ristos' thoughts, and added:

"Once Ariel thought to me that one who had never heard 'sound' could never be made to conceive, or comprehend, the nature or the sweets of music."

Ariel replied: "What Meoön suggests is an apt illustration of the inability of you, who have always been pure intelligence, to imagine the states and conditions of the material sphere. It is impossible for you to conceive what is altogether outside of the range and nature of your qualities and faculties, and what is altogether impossible for you to experience. The qualities and states of matter are as inconceiv-

able to you, as was sound to the creature of earth, who had been born deaf ; or as was color to the one who had been born blind, who said that he always thought that the color of purple was like the sound of a trumpet."

CHAPTER X.

AFFINITY-LOVE—CLAREESE OF THE PLEIADES—LOVE IS LIFE'S HOME.

I SPOKE, some pages back, of one in that company to whom Ariel presented me, who conveyed such sweet emotions to me, and who gave me such ineffable comfort, when I was almost in grief and consternation.

In all that company this soul more than any other seemed to knit, transfuse, itself into mine. The contact with this person was more than contact of mind with mind. For I did not experience the same emotion in my association with Ariel, Meoön and Ristos. So irresistible was the attraction felt by me toward this person that I said to Ariel :

"Who was the one who conveyed such soft, delicious emotions to me when I first came with you here, and who clasped me so tenderly, and comforted me so ? Who, so beautiful and radiant, is now aside there with Ristos ?"

Ariel replied : "Oh, that is dear Clareese from the Seven-Sistered Pleiades, or the Sphere of Love. Her nature is full of tenderness and attractiveness. The elements of herself and of her sphere are those of the purest Passion and Emotion. These elements and qualities predominate in her sphere, just as gravity, grossness, impenetrability, etc., predominate in the material sphere.

"You will meet with pure, passionate natures anywhere in the realm of mind, but with none who possess such natures

in the same beauteous, attractive degree, as those created and nurtured in the Sphere of Love, the sweet Pleiades."

"Then do you mean to tell me, Ariel, that in the already happy realm of Mind, in every aspect already so exalted and delightful, there is superadded the fairer and more exquisite quality, the sex of mind and spirit, termed beauteous woman. If I mistake not, when you spake of Clareese you used the word denoting the gender of woman."

"Why most assuredly we have beauteous 'woman,' who is here that fairer sex and quality of Soul, in like manner as she was the fairer creation in yon physical realm.

"No other form of being in this psychic state could personify, and illustrate, and embody, the delicate, exquisite qualities and attributes of her nature.

"Here she is the complement, the counterpart, the affinity of Man. She calls into exercise those qualities of our natures, those desires and faculties, which furnish to us our most supreme delights. There is, it is true, an intense devotion of all brothers to each other; but toward the fairer, sweeter mind, which we still so aptly term 'woman' there is that fineness, that delicacy, that blissfulness, of affection and sentiment, that cannot be called into exercise by the psychical influence of man.

"In other words, without the complement of woman's influence and her peculiar affinitiveness for man, our full measure of life and joy would not be rounded up. And likewise are we fashioned for her completer joy—and all for God."

I replied: "I see the force and beauty of what you say. I will ask you further to explain to me, whether there is here that love and relation between minds endowed with the qualities constituting different sexes, which existed on Earth between man and woman in the relation of husband and wife?"

"There is, if any difference, a purer and more perfect love,

but there is not the same relation as that of marriage. There is instead a purer relation, known as the relation of affinity."

"I do not know, Ariel, what you mean by this term."

"I mean that there exists in certain two minds endowed with those qualities constituting opposite sex a force or quality which finds its perfect, indispensable complement or counterpart in the other. The one attracts the other, and finds its satisfaction and perfect delight only in the other. It is a specific, wonderful attraction, that might be compared, by way of illustration, to what we used to term personal magnetism. But this is only an imperfect, gross illustration, for this Affinite Force is that spiritual charm, that psychical enchantment and attraction which are induced by those delicate, individual qualities and forces of soul, which flow in unison, and transfuse in union, with their psychic counterpart in another individual soul; which find their counterpart nowhere else except in that other soul; the one being perfected in glorious delight only in union with the other. This Soul-Unity we call 'Affinity.' It is a superabundant provision by the Father of all Love for the more exquisite delight of His beatified children.

"It is not marriage, nor giving in marriage, but is a beneficent provision for our more perfect life and joy. True, our highest delight is in this perpetual, adorable praise to God and in our labors of love for His children, but our most acceptable worship of our Father bursts forth when we, His children, live in an ecstasy of pure delight! Our joy is His praise, and the happy soul sings sweetest!"

"This provision is indeed beneficent, dear Ariel. May I ask you further if this relation of Affinity corresponds to what we knew as the 'family relation' on earth?"

"I will try to answer you:—This love growing out of Affinity between two certain souls produces a higher species of happiness than the earthly marriage relation. There is

delight always, never dulled, nor eclipsed, by earthly sorrows and afflictions. Children are not here born of this union of happy souls, as in the marital relation on earth. But God, the Infinite Parent, in His own wisdom creates beings in this vast realm of psychical existence, and these, new-born from the bosom of His own power, or risen here from other spheres of His own creation, He commits to His elder children as sweet gifts of love, that they may be nurtured in love and wisdom, and may receive and give that sweet affection, which is the glory of this sublime life. God thus disposeth, and dispenseth, love in its every variety and shade of emotion, from that which wells forth in our acts of worship to Him, down to that form which comes from the exercise of our tender care for others. In all these ways God fills the rounded measure of our every joy."

"I thank you, dear Ariel, for such opening up to me of the varied beauties of this perfect life.

"I desire to learn from you this, however :—Suppose those of our Earth come hither disenthralled by death as we have done, who there had formed the ties of wedded love ; would those, when both are exalted here, be thus reunited ?"

"Most assuredly so, if each soul found in the other love's counterpart ; and if such union gave to them wished-for and needed joys. If they had truly loved, the one the other, that love would be eternal here !

"God loves a happy heart, and wills that all His children should be so ; for from a joyous heart comes sweetest praise.

"Here the relation of earth's spouses will be not so much of formal marriage as of love and affinity ; for out of these alone can happiness arise, and it is these alone that are binding here. The wife of earth, if you and she were bound by sacred love, will be your soul's affinity here ; and she alone can fill its meed of joy.

"The child of your love on earth will here remain your

child, and this relation will give to you and them the increased emotions of all forms of love, and thus augment the joys of all.

“Each is God’s child, and to love His children is but loving Him; and thus with every throb of sweet emotion in this blessed life, we worship Him!”

These thoughts, thus imparted by Ariel, enraptured me, and sank deep into my soul. He flooded my mind with welcome light. He pictured to me a blessed Home, and not simply a happy abode of Mind. Here there was not only a Temple, but here was a Home with all the ties that bind one to the varied beauties, loves and hopes of existence.

How in the depth of my soul I thanked Ariel, and praised God, whose infinite presence, I had fully realized, enveloped all this blissful realm!

I say I thanked Ariel from the depths of my soul.—Why? He had imparted to me truths which like golden chains linked to myself those of my love on earth.

At this time I thought, judging by what had passed before my mind, that I must have taken my final departure from earth, and if so what of those remaining who were the loved of my life? Were they lost to me, or I to them?

The words of Ariel told me all, and knowing these things I felt assured, and thanked him.

CHAPTER XI.

MY INTRODUCTION TO CLAREESE—LANGUAGE—PURE THOUGHT-FORMS.

“DEAR Ariel, may I know Clareese?”

“With pleasure, I will present you to her. But what is your name that I may do so?”

I replied: "Ariel, my name is * * * * or was yonder. Do we have the same names here as yonder in our former home? And then, I had not thought before this to ask you, do we have the same 'language' here? It must be that we have, for I have understood every communication of thought here from the first."

"If your name yonder was * * * * then here it would be *Assurance*.* A blessed name you have here! Here we all have one and the same 'language' (if we may use that earthly term), and that is the universal language of thought. Words are but things, signs, and symbols, and are not thoughts. Enveloped in yonder material sphere we used words as thought's vehicle to reach and penetrate the fleshly entablature, which vaulted in the mind, and bounded its aspiring reaches. Words could never convey thought and emotion in their primal beauty and freshness.† But here, mind knows, and perceives, thought. Every intent of the mind finds full and direct expression in its own sovereign volition; and so the mind receives each inspiration from the mind of others.

"On earth words were to thought, as was the body to the mind. Here thought and mind are both free and unbound. Here thought is to the mind as was yonder light to the visual perception; we see it and know it, on account of its own manifest irradiation. Thought flashes into thought, as light into light, and in that scintillation flows veritable knowledge. Words were to thought but as clumsy, ill-fitting garments. Here mind is to mind as face to face, and each perceives and recognizes each feature and play of the other's countenance.

* This word is nearer the name-idea as expressed in thought-form than any other word in our spoken language which I can employ.

† "Speech is but broken light upon the depth
Of the Unspoken; even your loved words
Float in the larger meaning of your voice
As something dimmer."—*George Eliot*.

"In these psychic realms, the mode of expression of thought, like these environments of the mind, are both transfigured into perfect form and fitness.

"On earth language in itself is neither thought nor knowledge. Beauty is beauty, thought is thought, and love is love, in and of themselves, and they will ever remain so, whether you embody their ideal in Italy's sonatas or in Germany's gutturals. The axioms and principles of mathematics, eternal as the celestial spheres of God, existed in pure truth, in self-existent thought, æons before Euclid wrote or Homer sang. The object and idea must exist prior to the name and terms by which they are designated.

"Even on earth, what we knew as intuitional thought was to the mind independent of language.

"Thought on earth consisted in constructing an ideal whole, according to a definite plan formulated by the will. Thought was there independent of language when the relations of this ideal whole were presented in the mind's consciousness as objects of attention. The Consciousness there perceived truth in imaged thought-forms, stripped of the impediment of language.

"The mind, in evolving the unknown quantities of Algebraic science; in arriving at its pure abstract truths; in formulating and constructing its mechanical ideals, as in designing machinery and in varied inventiveness, did not require the use of language.

"Apart from language we could also generalize with reference to the objects of our thought.

"So here we have—not what we knew on earth as language, but—pure thought-forms, that flash from mind to mind, each and all bearing the identity of the mind that sent them forth to the communing mind; each and all embodying the ethereal 'voice,' and personality and stamp of the mind from which they came.

"Thought and truth in themselves have, and are dependent

upon, no language. They were bound and bridled and harnessed, in human language, to serve the purposes of, and minister to, the beings of material earth ; just as were harnessed the electric currents of the ether, or magnetism's invisible powers.

" So you, who were known yonder in fleshly name as * * * will here be known in thought's pure form as ' Assurance,' and by this form your identity will be perfectly known to all ; this is but your earthly name, which is, like yourself, transfigured.

" Thus I will know you, and present you to Clareese. Come, we will be by her, that you may know her, as you desire."

On the instant Ariel presented * me to her. She saluted me most cordially, so that I was conscious of her sincere regard for me. Her salutation was not a cold formality, nor was it an assumed respect. She met me graciously and queenly, and said :

" It delights me to welcome you here, and to wish you that happiness which abounds here for us all. I trust now that you feel no tinge of sorrow nor of consternation, in this your new and higher sphere, for I perceive that you have ascended from the material."

I replied : " I avow to you, that such welcome as you have given me would content me here, even though I had been overwhelmed with awe and consternation in this, to me, untried and glorious abode. I am very happy here, but the strangeness, the indescribable beauty, the all-pervading love and brightness, quite overcome me ; and would indeed do so, but for the fact that I meet with kindred intelligences, who give me quiet and assurance. The love and attributes of the great God manifested here seem more than I can comprehend."

* I use the word " presented," but it was not a formal introduction, but a kind and cordial making known, or bringing together.

"I tell thee, Assurance, that, in all the illimitable æons, which cycle in one unending eternity about thee here, thou canst never begin to sound the fathomless goodness, blessedness, and beauty of our Father. These glories He tempers; to the new-born soul, and from now hence He will open them to your expanding vision, as you can bear them."

"Of what you tell me, Clareese, I have no doubt; such thoughts overwhelm me with love, joy and grandeur. I learn that you are from Pleiades' sphere of love."

"That is true; in that beauteous sphere, I was created Intelligence."

"You may have heard, Clareese, that, in my former sphere, we had a pretty, romantic myth about the constellation, which we there termed Pleiades, as follows:—

"Atlas and Pleione were the parents of seven daughters, whose names were Alcyone, Maia, Electra, Merope, Calona, Sterope, and Taggeta. These daughters were loved for seven years by Orion, from whose solicitations they were at length released by the interposition of Jupiter, who transformed them to the stars, where they became a cluster in the neck of the constellation Taurus. Only six of these stars were visible to these ancient dwellers of earth, who originated this myth, and they supposed that the seventh concealed herself out of shame for having bestowed her love on a mere mortal Sysiphus, while her sisters were the favorites of divine personages."

"O! this is such a beautiful and poetic myth! You then had poetry on earth, and there must have been divine love there also; judging by this sweet story."

"Yes. God gave us mortals both of these foretastes of Himself."

"And did beings mate there, and live enwrapped in love's unity?"

"Yes, our Holy Books taught us that in the beginning God created them, male and female, and commanded that

they twain should be one. And in obedience to this injunction there came bliss to man. And this love has always been man's earnest of what I now see, know and feel in this beatified realm."

"Why, Assurance, having this love, you of earth should never have doubted what here you see, and know.* Love is of Eternity; Eternity is its home, To have this is to have all. He who is possessed by it, is, like it, eternal. Love reaches over every boundary, passes beyond time, overcomes death, for it is like to God! Yea, God is love, and that which is of God's nature abideth forever.

"But come, dear Assurance, tell me of your loves of earth. How sweet is love there? and how do they, who love, choose the one the other? And tell me of earthly sorrows and woes. Tell me the sweet tales and tales of woe of your former home."

As best I could, I told Clareese of earthly bliss; of marriage, and its joys and cares. I told her how the sweets of child-life came to bless the happy unity of love. I told her of the growth of age; of changes wrought by flight of years; how prattling childhood ripened into thought and care; how manhood's strength declined into decay; how beauty faded, and how passion lost its glow. I told her of sorrows, partings, and of pain; of sin and evil and their ceaseless woe; and then how death at last did triumph over all, and back to earth's cold bosom, crushed each beauteous form.

And as I told her thus of earth's unending tragedy, and recounted how each joy had its counterpart of sorrow, and each pleasure that of pain; and how human life at last must yield each treasure unto death, I noticed how her fair-formed being heaved; and how her eye in pity seemed to melt; and how her face, brighter than the light, bespoke a tender prayer to God. And then she bent her gaze on me, a gaze all wrought into purified passion, and clasping me in her pure affection, she said: *

* The reader will bear in mind, that while I use the words "said,"

"Should we, whose lives have always been of sweetness, joy and light, forever blessed in these adored realms of mind, should we, or not, thank God, that into earth's gross and perturbed depths of woe, we cannot go, to comfort, and inspire the suffering, burdened, saddened souls enthralled there? Should we, who are spirits, feel blessed that unto us it is not given to put on earthly form, and mingle there, to comfort those who feel despair, and lift them up in hope to God? My soul cries out, O! that I could! How willingly would I go! But God has ordered otherwise, and in His will I live and shall be happy."

And then uplifting her pleading face she cried: "Dear God and Father, this is not sorrow or repining that I feel, but pity, that sympathizing emotion of yearning love. For us, Thou hast ordained but joy; and if earth's woes were spread in vision about us, or if we could enter their murky depths, sad pity would engloom each joy in sorrow, and eclipse Thy light, that brightens all."

Then again bending her gaze upon me, she said:—"And you are from this earth? and you have seen and known, yea, even felt and suffered, all these pangs and pains, experienced woe, and tasted of despair and death? Then this I know, that here your God will sweeten every joy for you beyond compare. As from those depths you came, so you shall rise to grander heights! Those burdens laid aside, this bounding ether will evermore exalt you.

"Rejoiced I am that you are here! And as the cycling æons of this endless joy roll round thee, may its brightness in everglowing light illuminate thy life."

Having bestowed on me this sublime and fervid benediction, and invocation to God on my behalf, she drew nearer to me and said:

"spoken," etc., with reference to communications between minds here, for the purpose of this narrative, yet the communication was not by articulate sounds or spoken language. See Chap. I.

"Did you on earth ever love?"

"Yes, Clareese, I did, and here in this exalted sphere I love."

"Whom?"

"Her; who still loves me below, and for whose coming I will await."

She replied tenderly: "Then your soul hath linked itself to its Affinity? Then you were in heaven even there? For in love is in Heaven. But, so sad! A heaven which there hath its dewy morn, and then its sultry, tired noon, and then the fading, going down, into the night!" And then she added, after a pause: "And you will be happy waiting here for her who is to come?"

"Yes, I feel so, I know so; can you not assure me that I shall be so?"

She replied with a glow of passionate fervor: "Yes—I trust so—if she remain true to your love, and giveth not her troth to another—of which you may learn from minds that ascend here—yes—and I will be so happy waiting with you."

CHAPTER XII.

CLAREESE—MEOON OF ORION—RISTOS OF SIRIUS— CLAREESE'S PROMISE.

How would it be possible for me to write a description of Clareese so that my readers could arrive at some conception of her.

At the first glance, I saw that she was of a different order, type, degree, or sex, if I may apply that word in these realms of soul, from Meoön and Ristos. This difference appeared in the exquisite softness and attenuation of her surrounding halo, or investiture; or, as we would say on

earth, in her garments. This soft and many-tinted halo assumed a mold and roundness and delicate symmetry that indicated beauty, purity, fineness, and love, with more eloquence than any words could convey. When I first saw her thus invested, I intuitively thought of the lily, the daisy, the violet, and other sweet-scented flower-poetesses of earth, that had given to us so much poetic imagery about purity, modesty, love, and passion. Certain combinations of form and color give us on earth our most perfect intuitions of certain virtues and beatitudes. Thus did even the folds and gentle moldings and graceful curves and delicate lines and the blended hues and tints that encircled the purified form of Clareese inspire me, and speak to me.

If this external halo, which her will wove about herself * was so indescribably beautiful, what shall I say of that perfect divinely conceived Form, that dwelt therein? What can I say of that face, so mild, so soft, and pure, so ethereal, that a star's ray might trace a furrow there; so clear, so like the light crystallized with the pink of life upon it; and on whose surface played the gleams of joy?

What of that forehead so gently raised and sloped; so carved and curved as to inspire a poem on perfect form and mold? And what of her head all crowned with an aurora of wavy, golden tint, soft glowing in the ethereal light, life-like and wavy as the unspun India silk?

What of her eyes of hazel hue (those gentle gleamings of her inner soul) milder than twilight stars; mellow with passion's revery; just full and large enough to cast on you a flood of pure passion's glow; or at their will throw round you charms of love, or pity's tenderness? And those eyes fringed with a kind of graceful lash of darkened light, that at their

* The elements here were all ethereal substance, and immaterial, and altogether subject and responsive to the will. Each being surrounded himself or herself with such halo or nimbus as each desired.

pleasure seemed to close in dreamy sleep, and then as softly open, revealing the beauteous dawn.

What of her cheeks and mouth, divinely etched in pink-like tint; in form and contour rounded, chiseled, matched? Such ideal beauty there, that perfect Art, herself so jealous of all charms, would bow, and homage do. Those cheeks, that mouth, that seemed, the former ready to receive, the last impatient to bestow, the kiss of love!

Perfection was typed in every feature. To describe her, and she is but an example of millions formed and loved of God, would be to paint in feature, color, and in mold, incarnate beauty and most perfect form, and then to fill them both with living, yearning, glowing love!

Standing apart near me and somewhat removed from the larger Company were, besides Clareese, Meoön and Ristos; the latter two were communing in attentive aspect. I scanned them. In general appearance they reminded me of Ariel, whom I have already described. Their forms were taller, more majestic than that of Clareese, but lacked the charms of her delicate and more ethereal beauty. Broader they were, and the texture of their forms showed more of, what we would term on earth, manhood's strength and character. Their features indicated will and power; their heads, force and intellect: here sat majesty. And all combined personified God's grandest work. Clareese, while not so tall, nor broad, nor knit in texture of strength, in substantive-form, was more fit impersonation of God's finer work,—of beauty, form, color, emotion, passion, love!

She could not be compared to the sun, but to the beauteous, mellowed light, which beamed therefrom at dawn; nor to the storm, but to the rainbow painted on the storm. She was not like the coarse knit steel, but the ethereal current that attracts and controls it. She could not be compared to a Samson, but to the gentle Delilah that could have shorn him of his locks. The one betokened power, the other sen-

timent ; the one intellect, the other emotion ; the one prose, the other poetry ; the one an oration, the other a song ; the one a canvas, the other the beauty on the canvas.

Thus had God apportioned among His children the qualities which He would have them possess. Those of the one order perfecting, making complete, those of the other : each more beauteous by contrast with the other.

And this eternal law and purpose of God was what I saw so fitly executed in the three beings who stood near me—Clareese, Meoön and Ristos !

Ristos had more of gayety in his character ; Meoön more of the grave ; Ristos was more intellectual, and yet had more of lightsome joy ; Meoön was more calm, sedate, and loved God's silent solitudes ; Ristos loved music and metaphysics ; Meoön loved prayer and contemplation.

To speak from a human point of view, one would say, that Ristos was fairer, had more of grace and manly beauty ; that Meoön was more stately and had more of moral strength of character. Ristos might be likened to an Apollo ; Meoön to a Hercules.

As Clareese and I withdrew a little apart to ourselves I noticed that Ristos and Meoön were conversing about—her. She noted the same. Seeing this I remarked :

“ Clareese, I have told you all about myself and that gross sphere from which I came. You would not think it amiss in me to ask you to recount to me your past ; to tell me of your loves ; and of yourself ; and also to describe to me your sphere, your beautiful Pleiades, from which you hail.”

“ To do this for you will be my pleasure, indeed to do all for you that would be acceptable to God, will delight me ; My soul is so drawn to you ! But let me comply with your request by and by, not now. Will this not please you ?

“ At that time, we, by our special will and desire, and at our leisure, will sweetly glide through that vastness of space

which intervenes between us and Pleiades, and as we glide on billowed ether, borne on and up by God's immensity, I will then tell you all that you may wish.

"My sphere and its vast beauties you yourself shall see. But these things not now, for in yon Holy Temple of Knowledge we must first go with this unnumbered host adoring God, and there His Presence meet.

"Also the great and good Ariel hath set this occasion to discourse to us, about your earth. O! how I long to know more about it for your sake!

"Do you know that in these realms of mind we yearn always for knowledge? and for each wish there comes a sweet and copious draught. We never tire; and knowledge ever wells up like a full-flowing fountain; and of it we shall drink, and drink, and drink forever.

"To learn of Earth we must go hear Ariel and worship God, and feel His presence! Come! To the Temple!"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TEMPLE OF KNOWLEDGE—THE WORSHIP—LIFE GROWS GRANDER!

As Clareese said "Come," "To the Temple," on the instant thought our volition was accomplished in our change from where we were to the Temple.

On the instant of our change, I noticed that Meoön "came" also, but Ristos did not. He remained in quietude, with his stately head and form slightly drooping, as a flower somewhat crushed. His mobile, joyous countenance had for some reason become austere. Why was this change in his demeanor? Was it because Clareese had left his side, and seemingly preferred to be with me? Could it be that he

loved her, was enraptured by her, and he thought she preferred my company? At this time I did not know. I knew he then appeared strange, and changed somewhat from his former aspect. He did not come into the Temple with us. I did not see him there until he astounded me by asking that strange question of Ariel during the service.

As we departed he fixed his gaze on us, and, as it appeared to me, stared cynically.

* * * * *

The Temple, at which we were, was not made with hands, but seemed eternal in the heavens. This sphere was termed "The Sphere of the Temple," and it seemed almost infinite in immensity. Ariel once said to me: "That while, in human thought, we could not conceive of an infinite universe as having a center, yet that, as a truth, this Holy Sphere was the center of the vast *Cosmos*; that in it were concentrated that Divine Fountain and Source of all forms, substances, forces, and powers; that while God, the great Creative Cause, was Immanent throughout the infinite vastness, yet in the 'Sphere of the Holy Temple' was His Immediate Manifestation. Here His glory circumscribed, focalized itself to the adoring vision of His loving children, as I would behold it in the Temple.

"Here was God's immediate presence; throughout the Universe was His mediate presence. God is not afar-off from any created child; every tangible, visible force and power that act upon and in every particle of matter; that throb and pulsate in the fluctuating elements and firmaments; that well up in every being; all these are but the mediate ceaseless flow and flux of the eternal will and power of God."

"Then, Ariel," I asked, "do you mean to tell me that the exquisite flower, earth's greensward, the sweet singing birds, the vegetable life welling up in the vast forest, the dallying winds, the mighty storm, the swift-flowing power of the elec-

tric and magnetic currents, the teeming variety of sentient existences, the hidden sources of thought and consciousness, all these powers and forces and thousands more that might be mentioned that operate in the environments of earthly life, and elsewhere, are but varying manifestations of the thought, will and power of God? "

"Yes; to answer your interrogation affirmatively is to speak the truth. In matter operates law, expressing itself in varied forms and producing all phenomena of material spheres. This law so operating is God's thought projected into matter, under the forms of force and order, as man projects his thought into the work of his hand. Underneath all matter and force is *purpose*.

"If the minds of earth would but see and think, they could commune with God in every manifestation and phenomenon that surround them; and in their consciences they could realize His sacred power and immanent presence. He is not afar off from them, but He sustains and upholds them really and truly in every throb and pulsation of the life-current. They need not wait to go to some distant sphere from them to know, and feel, and commune with Him. He even wells up in their consciousness.

"While all this is true of other Spheres, yet on this Holy Sphere of the Temple, He draweth nearer unto those who have put on His likeness. His sublime power and glory are here immediately shadowed forth. From this central source, as a mighty fountain, emanates, and radiates, His Infinite Will."

* * * * *

The Holy Temple, into which Clareese and I went, was in size and dimensions so vast that it contained all the unnumbered hosts that constantly entered there. It appeared from within to be illimitable. It seemed to forever recede on and on, as the vast concourse of the celestial spheres flowed into it. Yet, from without, one clearly saw the vast

extended boundary of Holy Light, that seemed to fix its limits. It appeared to be, not a pile of stone or granite, or stately wood; but rather, a vast elliptical globe of quiet, silent, holy light—billowed above the globe into gleaming clouds of what appeared as solidified light, beautified into every perfect form; shaped, turreted, steepled, and multi-formed, like the snow-white crags and peaks of a vast, gleaming mountain!

The central and highest dome of the Temple was always lost to view, forever ascending towards that Holy Presence which no man can see and live. I was told that no intelligence in all that unnumbered throng had ever beheld the climax of that dome.

It stood there dividing the infinities in silent, sacred grandeur. And on towards its summit the resplendent light grew brighter and brighter, until it broke and flashed into flames of indescribable glow,—a brightness compared to which our earthly sun appeared in my memory as but a star in twilight shade. And yet this celestial glow was not painful, or bewildering, to the mind's pure conception; but filled it always with every element necessary to its ever-increasing life and power. It was not a light as of a material sun to the material senses, hot, piercing, blinding, and depressing, but a divine glory; the pure effulgence of sublime spirit; the exceeding brightness and glowing of the Infinity of knowledge, thought, and mind, which emanated from the Infinite Personality, who was enthroned and concentrated there.

"Bright effluence of bright essence increate,
Before the sun, before the Heavens, Thou wert!"

This vast dome was open or hollow within, and looking up from within one saw,—not that "Light" which no man can see and live, but—the tender Smile of the Father's love! I saw Love! On earth I had been taught to consider love

as an emotion or state, the manifestations of which in outward acts only could be seen. But in this Temple I saw Love itself ! It was transformed, made visible in a Smile ! and its Form and attitude were as seen in bestowing a blessing ; and as these hosts looked up this dome toward God, and saw love smiling and bending in tender benediction over them, there gently fell into every soul and mind, like the soft downward gliding of a sacred Harmony whispering words of love, these tender thoughts :

" I am your God. I am your Father. I am your Saviour. Ye are my children. Ye are my beloved ones. I have created you and cherished you.

" Be ye pure as I am pure.

" Be ye holy as I am holy.

" Be ye blessed, as I am blessed,

" Be ye happy, as I am happy.

" Be ye light as I am light.

" For that I and my children may be one.

" Love ye one another, even as I love you.

" My Light, my Blessing, my Holiness, my Love, rest upon you and be and abide in you forever. I your God have said it."

Sweetly, tenderly, like affection's blessing from a mother's lips, this benediction fell.

After it, there burst forth from every soul and from the eternal elements, vast billows and orchestras of divine harmony—Melody so grand and varied that, by way of comparison and illustration, I imagined I listened to a mighty sea transformed into perfect sound and music ; and that sea unbound by any shore, unbroken by any reef or rock to mar its tone ; whose every crest and wave and tiny drop were gamuts and scales and chords and notes and tones and sweet-trilling voices, all attuned ; and anon this sea was raging in a storm that rolled up from its depths, and welled out from its billows, and clashed out from its waves, songs of exultation, pæons of praise and anthems of prayer ; well-

ing forth in deep diapason ; tintillating in rapturous trills ; rising and falling in gamut, tone and scale unheard by me before ! And then there seemed to float vibrations, solemn and low, as though rolling from an endless cable, battling with storms, that undulated and heaved in the depth of this sea. Such tones ! How could mortal man ever conceive of them ? And then this sea appeared to calm itself to sleep, murmuring a lullaby of love—so soft, so sweet ! it seemed that a zephyr's breath would mar its tone ! The starlight glittered over it, and where each ray twinkled on each tiny drop upon its surface, there rose a dulcet note, each note the other's chord and counterpart, sounding and floating as from afar.

Infinitude appeared transfigured into a vast orchestra of praise, which thundered, and sang, and murmured, and chanted, every tone and note the Master wished.

Flute notes floated in symphonic ether ; harp strings quivered in resonant air ; cymbals clashed, and dulcimers danced ! The vast domes, and turrets, and peaks of the mighty Temple seemed to be bellowsed, and piped, and keyed, and then filled with some compressed, ethereal force or rhythmic substance ; and the very elements and recesses and vistas of the Temple seemed tensed as with myriad strings and chords of pulsating, vibrating ether ; and there appeared to be every design and form and substance out of which perfect melody could issue. And upon all these the inspired elements seemed to play and finger ; and through them and within them the rhythmic substance vibrated, and flew, and danced, and glided, and sped, and crept, and hovered. The incarnate music flowed, and leaped, and shouted, and chanted, and reverberated, and echoed, and drew near, and glided far away—until the vast realm seemed a universe of music ! Or rather that God Himself, the great Creator and Master of all Art, was revealing to us His nature in divine harmony !

There was joy everywhere. Every tongue was tune, and

every mouth was music. And as I sit and attempt to describe, in cold and formal words, this sublime *Te Deum*, that filled the Temple, my pen grates harshly upon my ear, and out of my soul wells up the prayer :—

“ O thoughts ineffable ! O visions bless’d !
 Though worthless our conceptions all of Thee,
 Yet shall thy shadowed image fill our breast,
 And waft its homage to Thy Deity.
 God ! thus alone my lowly thoughts can soar ;
 Thus seek Thy presence ;—Being wise and good !
 ‘Midst Thy vast works admire, obey, adore ;
 And when this tongue is eloquent no more,
 The soul shall speak in tears of gratitude ! ”

* * * * *

That part of the Holy Service being over, wherein God’s blessing is received, and His praise and worship offered, then takes place a “ Discourse of Knowledge,” delivered by some mind who delights in imparting knowledge to other minds.

Here are minds congregated from various and varied states and spheres. At each service some mind imparts its knowledge to the assembled brothers.

God has provided ceaseless activity for His children. He has given them faculties of thought, and he has provided a universe both infinite and eternal for the exercise, enjoyment, and satisfaction, of these faculties.

Thought is as necessary to the mind, as food is to the material body, or light to the eye, or sound to the ear, or joy to the heart.

There is the body and there is food.
 There is the eye and there is light.
 There is the ear and there is sound.
 There is the heart and there is joy.
 There is the mind and there is the universe.
 There is the soul and there is God !

So in this "Home of Psyche" there was no stagnation, nor inaction. Mind communicated to mind a ceaseless, unlimited variety of knowledge.

The didactic portion of the service was often in the form of dialogue, instead of an unbroken, formal discourse. I realized at once the importance and efficacy of this form of imparting knowledge. It enlists intensest interest among the hearers, and brings out in clear perspicuity the various thoughts of the teacher and hearers.

This was the occasion of Ariel's address to the assembled minds on subjects connected with the material planet, Earth, whereon he had been created, and had lived. Ariel departed from earth after the commencement of the last quarter of the nineteenth century from the advent of Christ into this sphere. On earth he had been a very learned man, and must have been a man who earnestly sought for truth and righteousness, for he was among the pure and good celestial minds. So he found and loved God, and God took him.

Ariel's discourse, which follows, may appear to some as long and tedious, but its delivery in the Temple of Knowledge appeared but as quick-gleaming flashes of pure thought-forms; and we, who received it, were hardly conscious of what we know here on Earth as the passage of wearisome time. Every mind seemed to scintillate in interest to the irradiation of Ariel's thought. My experience as I beheld, and listened, cannot be comprehended by my readers. I write out this discourse as it is fixed in my mind, as nearly exact as I can express it in language.

Those who care so little as not to study it, can omit it in this book.

During the discourse Ariel referred to the writings or authority of many of earth's thinkers, with whom he evidently was familiar. Some of these references I have traced, and give them in foot-notes.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW WE ON EARTH ARRIVED AT THE TRUTH OF ETERNAL LIFE—ARIEL'S DISCOURSE—CONCERNING SPIRITUAL TRUTH ATTAINED BY MINDS ON EARTH.

ARIEL arose, elevated in the midst of this vast concourse of eager minds, and in thought-forms, said :—

"On earth I was, intellectually, what was known as a philosopher. I sought for God's Light and Truth through all the manifestations made of Himself; through his material phenomena, as well as through the higher revelations, the spiritual perception and the divine reason. I was a philosopher in the sense that I was a lover of, and seeker after, wisdom. I studied all phases of truth, in its relation to, and connection with, material elements, sentient life and human consciousness.

"Before proceeding on any special line of thought connected with the earth and its various life, I would be pleased if some mind would suggest to me what subject-matter of earth, or of the thought of mind admixed with matter, would be most acceptable and profitable on this occasion."

On the instant a grand and learned mind, whom I understood was from the Celestial Sphere, Sirius, said :—

"Dear Ariel, I think I express the desire of many in requesting that you instruct us with this topic of thought in view :—

"Did the investigation by the human mind, of matter and its elements, and the higher forces, deduce, or arrive at, any great spiritual or religious truths pointing to God and these

celestial realms and forces, and this Eternal Life, outside of any special revelation of such truths ! ”

“ Thank you, dear and learned brother, for your suggestion. If there be no objection by this vast assemblage, I will direct my thought in the way pointed out by you.

“ As you are already well aware, God has expressed His thought in an infinite variety of manifestations, from Pure Ego, Pure Mind, Pure Emotion, on down through ethereal substances, then through an indefinite variety of super-attenuated substances, then through attenuated substances, on to the gaseous, that potentiality of matter ; then from the gaseous to the liquid, and from the liquid to the solid gross matter.

“ You, who were created Pure Mind, can no more conceive of matter in the forms of matter, than, as we used to say on earth, a deaf man can conceive of music in the forms of sound. If I, who was created admixed with matter, who was impinged into it, and thereby was enabled to convert matter into the forms of thought and idea, if I, thus experienced, can express to you in forms-of-thought the relations and phenomena of matter as leading up to spiritual truth, then I will have accomplished all that I can do. We, whom God created in that grossest sphere, having triumphed over that, ascend to higher spheres, where our minds disenthralled may enjoy their true and perfect relations. But you, who were created pure mind by God, cannot descend now into material organism, unless for some divine purpose, as our elder Brother, Christ, was empowered to do ; for all God’s plan and work doth upward tend forever higher towards Himself.

“ To those, who, like myself, inhabited earth, my thought will be real and tangible, for they can see and comprehend, the thing-in-itself about which I speak ; but to you of higher spheres, my thought will have only such form and meaning as the spiritual idea bears to the material object. While you cannot conceive of the material as experienced knowl-

edge, yet from its existence and nature, Philosophy, Science and Logic have deduced certain pure psychical or spiritual truths, which you all can see and appreciate. Thus near to it you can approach ; and I can say to you that, all that matter is worth in this universe is what it furnishes in the terms and forms of spiritual truth, thought and character, to these upper realms of mind and spirit. Otherwise the realms of matter are as so much wasted dross in God's Universe.

" During my existence on earth the thinking minds there were divided into two schools or classes, intellectually speaking, to-wit :—

" Those who received nothing as truth except such as was arrived at, or demonstrated by processes of reason and scientific investigation ; or logical deductions therefrom. And those who admitted truth thus obtained, but also went still further and held that there was also on earth truth which came by revelation, outside and irrespective of processes of reason, and which could not be attained through processes of reason. Between these two classes there was constant conflict and much uncharitable bitterness.

" If instead of their continual warfare they had stopped and considered their differences in calm reason, and cast up their books, they would have found that they were substantially agreed upon certain fundamental truths, which were the bases of all rational thought and spiritual life ; and whether they arrived at such truths through revelation, or as a final deduction of reason from the highest teachings of science and philosophy, they should have recognized that they had reached them through and by both methods, and should have clasped hands upon this common ground of agreement, whereon all could stand as upon a rock. This common ground of union, which, I will show you, was established by their scientific and philosophic investigations of life, mind, reason, consciousness, and matter and its phenom-

ena, as well as taught them, as many believed, by revelation made to their spiritual faculties, was these three grand truths—this holy trinity—of truth ! The verity of God, Spirit, and Immortality.

“Now I will show you that these three great, eternal Realities were found by the human minds of the material sphere through the processes of reason, thought and investigation applied to the natural phenomena of this sphere.”

At this point, some mind in the assembly said :—

“Can you explain to us by what Method, through what motives and incentives, were the minds of earth led on and up to the investigation and final realization of these great Verities ?”

Ariel replied :—

“I will explain to you the incentive and the method. In that material sphere we were confronted everywhere with dark, sphynx-like problems, that would not down ; they concerned us, and touched us, at every point of our struggling existence. With consecrated thought we sought to know and solve them. These silent enigmas goaded us on and on. But our minds were pregnant with hope, and ever buoyant with the energy of restless thought. We discovered, and subjugated enigma after enigma, and truth after truth. We formulated our acquired knowledge into Methods and Systems known as Science and Philosophy. By and through these methods, when they were once formulated, we invaded the realms of the unknown darkness with more ease and rapidity.

“The vast domain of acquired thought, which became the rich possession of our minds, rested upon scientific success, already achieved, the result and heritage of the indomitable thought of the world's thinkers, led on by a God ever revealing his truth to men, and always inspiring them and breathing into them the life-breath of His own infinite

thought! For we conceived that the Divine mind was through all addressing itself to us. Our thoughts were but the thinking of His thoughts.

"With laboratory fire, with microscopic and spectroscopic analysis, with the keen scalpel of mathematical accuracy, with the searching and clear-cut processes of the Inductive Method; with all known resources and means, Science probed out, and cut out, and burnt out, and reasoned out, and (shall I say?) conjured out, many of the deeply-hidden mysteries of the material sphere. At the beck of that wonderful scientific wand, nature's secrets came forth clothed in light, from their dark, cavernous depths, and hidden places, and became as ministering angels to man!

"There confronted us the problems relating to the ultimate ideas of human thought and destiny; the problems of the genesis and of finality; of matter; of the material, vital and mental forces; of sociology; of psychical existence; of eternity and infinity; of time and space; of government; of moral laws; of man and his environments, his future life and his infinite relations; of God and religion. These problems, vast and stupendous, rolled, and welled up, within us, and were pondered by us. We thirsted for them unsatisfied; the desire was still unquenched; the heart yearned; and the imagination still inquired for them; until—sometime and somewhere we know not, but—we conceived the hope that our God-given reason would conquer and subdue them; and somewhere and at sometime would make them the victory and heritage of indomitable thought!

"We looked back over the vast conquests of Science and Philosophy in every department of universal thought, and we were constrained to hope, and believe, that no problems of human thought, however difficult—that no field of investigation, however distant and seemingly impenetrable, would be beyond the compass and power of scientific and philosophic research.

"The investigation of nature and its laws led us on to the perception and study of the spiritual verities. Thus did the study of results lead us on to a comprehension of *causes*, yea, of final causes and verities.

"We asked: Is it, as some say, that there are problems outside of the province of scientific investigation? Or as one of the thinkers of earth, Martineau, said: 'Science discloses the Method of the world, but not its cause; Religion (meaning as by revelation) its Cause, but not its method.'"

Here Meoön interrupted and said:—

"Then did you have minds on earth who believed that some truths God bodied forth and some He withheld; and that there was some Holy of Holies of truth, which was forever closed to man's investigation?"

Ariel answered:—

"There were those who held that some of God's truth and thought was 'profane' and some 'sacred'; that His thoughts projected into the elements and forces of nature were 'profane' or not holy; and that projected into the souls and consciences of men through what they termed 'revelation,' or inspired writings known as God's spiritual manifestations was 'sacred'; thus essaying to grade into different degrees of holiness and sacredness, the manifestations God made of His will and power. They considered that that which they classified into the 'sacred' and 'holy' manifestations was outside of the pale of man's scientific research and investigations, to be accepted only as a matter of unquestioning faith.

"In such apprehensions we all know here that they were in ignorance; for it is the perennial source of our employment and delight always to seek for, and enjoy, the infinite manifestations of God's thought and attributes in every form and phase; for all are alike holy! All truth is God's thought.

"So, many of us on earth held that the study of scientific

and philosophic truth carried us irresistibly into the realms of spiritual verities, and even to the study of God's Being; just as every ray of light leadeth up and on to its primal source. The Philosopher and Scientist minister at God's altar, and worship Him as sincerely and acceptably as does he who is sincerely ministrant at the shrine of a sacred Temple.

"Hence we pertinently inquired: Is it true that philosophy with its great battalion syntheses of all known facts will holily strive in vain to scale the embattlements that guard the sacred treasures of truth, those life-giving treasures for which the human heart panteth?

"Is it true that philosophy has no key which will unlock the great gates through which the thought of every human soul would enter? And has philosophy no Samson who can lift these ponderous gates from off their hinges?

"That great thinker and philosopher, known on earth as Lord Bacon, the author of the system of Inductive Philosophy, which regenerated the thought of the world, wisely said on this subject:

"'It is true that a little philosophy inclines the man's Mind to Atheism (meaning away from God), but depths of philosophy brings the man's mind about to religion (meaning back to God). For while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may rest in them and go no further, but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederated and linked together, it must fly to Providence and Deity.'

"We know here plainly that all truth is in some sense correlated, each truth tending ultimately to discover and demonstrate other truth; just as every department of mathematics is correlated, the parts each go to make up the whole, and the whole system is dependent upon each of its parts. So of the great universal departments of truth and thought. The universe of thought, like the Creator, is a unity. The study of one system of God's thought in the

Universe will tend, when carried on by the mind of man, to demonstrate every other system or department of truth.

"Man must, and should, accept much truth by faith, but I believe the time will come in the progress of scientific and philosophic research, when every truth, fact, proposition, accepted, or believed, by man will be reasonably demonstrated by scientific and philosophic methods. In the nature of things it must ultimately needs be so.

"By 'Science' and 'Philosophy,' as formulated systems, is meant the classified, generalized, differentiated results of such investigation. And this investigation as much concerns the great departments of, what we termed on earth, religious or spiritual truth, as it does the other departments of God's universal thought.

"By 'Science' and 'Philosophy,' as methods, is meant the investigation of the universe according to the laws of mind, the subject-thinker, and according to the laws of the universe, the object-thought.

"These methods and these systems are known to us all in our thought here, and we know that they will ultimately be as inclusive as all the departments of universal thought.

"I do not say, nor mean to say, that mind, even in this celestial and immortal state, will ever attain to complete comprehension of infinite truth; this cannot be; but that we will attain to it indefinitely, that is, on and on towards its comprehension, ever nearer and nearer, but still, in the order of things established by God, never throughout eternity attaining absolutely unto it.

"Every truth is a link in the endless chain of God's thoughts, and leadeth ever on and on to more and distant links. Every truth, when considered in itself and in its relations, must be consistent with itself and with every other truth.

"No truth, nor system of truth, whether classed as religious, spiritual, celestial, natural or material, need have any fear of the result of thought and investigation carried on according to

the laws established by God in the nature of things. To investigate truth I always contended but strengthened its efficacy and power, and to investigate error dispels it, and frees the mind from it.

"I often felt, and now I realize it to be so, that true Philosophy and true Religion were in substance one and the same—for the common end and purpose of both are the attainment of truth in thought and of truth in action. Science searches for and obtains facts and truths; Philosophy and Religion generalize and differentiate them into systems and principles, and apply them to the temporal and spiritual life of man.

"These, my celestial brothers, were in general the motives and the methods that led men of earth on to the attainment and realization of the great systems of truth and thought.

"We will now apply our minds to the consideration of the most important part of the discourse as first suggested by my brother, to wit: What great spiritual realities, if any, leading us to the verities of Eternal Life, did we attain to on earth by scientific and philosophic methods?

"In reply I will say, that in my opinion these three: God-Spirit-Immortality:—God as an Infinite Creative Cause and Power, Self-existent, and Self-determined, possessing those attributes which constitute Personality;—Spirit as substantive existence, potentially separate from, independent of, and superior to, the material elements of earth;—and Immortality, as representing the survival of the substantive, spiritual existence after the death of its material counterpart in which it had been incarnated on earth.

"In showing to you how the thoughtful minds of earth reached these momentous conclusions I need not necessarily argue them separately, but may follow them on somewhat side by side; for they are in their nature conjoined and linked together, the great inclusive truth of the existence of God overshadowing and encompassing the other two; and

this we will keep more prominently before our view. It is not my purpose to prove the existence of God, or to attempt it, for here we realize His Being as we do our own ; but to show how we on earth were led to Him, and to a knowledge of this Eternal Life, and how our reason found refuge in Him. It is true that on earth very many of those of my nationality and race admitted and believed the truth of the Being of God, as a verity of faith and revelation ; but there were many that did not so believe ; and others that took no particular pains to form any opinion on the subject. Great intellectual battles were waged on this question of Theism, as it was termed. Many, who perfunctorily professed to believe this truth, had unworthy and narrow conceptions of God, attributing to Him low and narrow passions, as men had ; imagining Him as having somewhat of a human form and a local habitation and abode, where He dwelt, and from whence He sent out His ministering and avenging emissaries. Thus imagining God in a conception of anthropomorphism, weaving about Him a human form and endowing Him with human attributes. These have never attained a rational conception of the 'Mighty One' whom none can comprehend and none explore ; who filleth existence with Himself alone ; embracing all, supporting,—ruling o'er,—Being whom we call God.'

"Many minds on earth were led to a grand conception of God through the study of the material sphere and its phenomena ; and I imagine that nothing would be more interesting to your minds than for me, in recounting to you our attainment in spiritual truth, to quote to you their thoughts and reasonings on these subjects. To show how we arrived at these great truths, it is first necessary to show how we found their basis in matter ; for we had to deal with matter in all our environments and researches. This makes it necessary for me to tell you what we discovered about matter in its last analysis. The minds of earth had two

theories concerning the nature and origin of matter. Some contended that matter was eternal, uncreated and self-existent—an endless chain of causes, of effects and duration, whose links had no beginning and no end. The other theory was that matter was a manufactured, created entity, and that it could not possess self-causation nor endless duration. The men of Science of the latter class, in long and laborious investigations, finally found that in its ultimate composition matter in mass was but an aggregation of minute molecules. These molecules were particles so small as to be invisible to the natural eye. These minute bodies were themselves resolved into what were called atoms, which were infinitesimally minute forms of matter. These atoms were termed units of matter; they were assumed to be indivisible and without extension, like the geometrical point in mathematics. The atom was to matter what the geometrical point is to space. Matter was found to be infinitely small as well as infinitely great. Men of Science found that the smallest conceivable point in earth's space often contained millions of living, formulated creatures, possessing organs and parts, and that these creatures fed upon other millions that existed in this point of space, and so on to the infinitely small.

"Thus these minds resolved matter in its ultimate analysis to this atom; arriving at this *ne plus ultra*, they bowed their heads and said: 'Here must come in an infinite Creative Cause to account for these atoms!'

"One of the greatest men of thought of my day on earth, there known as J. Clerk-Maxwell, now risen here, came to this conclusion about matter in its atomic state, and wrote it to the world:

"Whether or not the conception of a multitude of beings (meaning atoms) existing from all eternity, is in itself self-contradictory, the conception becomes palpably absurd, when we attribute a relation of quantitative equality to all these beings (atoms). We are thus forced to look beyond them to

some common cause or common origin to explain why this singular relation of equality exists. Science is incompetent to reason upon the creation of matter itself out of nothing. We have reached the utmost limit of our thinking faculties when we have admitted that because matter cannot be eternal and self-existent it must have been created.' " *

Continuing, Ariel said :

" Another teaching of our men of science, arrived at by them as necessary truth, is that all these atoms of matter have a perfect uniformity, showing a perfect unity of design.

" It was on this truth that that great astronomer, who discourses to us here so grandly on the courses and laws of the spheres, who was known on Earth as Sir John Frederick William Herschel, based this famous conclusion of his mind :—

" ' Chemical analysis most certainly points to an origin, and effectually destroys the idea of an eternal, self-existent matter, by giving to each of its atoms the essential character at once of a manufactured article and a subordinate agent.' †

" The conclusion of the ancient philosophers of earth that ' The world is a living arithmetic in its development, a realized geometry in its repose ' received abundant illustration from latter-day science.

" I do not intend to enter into a discussion of the argument from the multiform Design in nature as proving the Designer, which of itself ought to be conclusive enough for any inquiring mind. I merely suggest here that we found the whole mechanism of the earth a vast multiplication of design in every detail ; every thing, every force, working in unison towards purpose. We were obliged to conclude

* This quotation given by Ariel, I have found in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* under the heading " Atoms " written by Prof. J. Clerk-Maxwell.

† I found that this quotation by Ariel was in Herschel's *Dissertation on the study of Natural Philosophy*, Sec. 28.

that underlying all matter was Mind embodied in Purpose, as much so, as we were forced to conclude that through all matter was gravitation persistent in force. Matter could no more be interpreted apart from Purpose, than it could apart from gravitation. As I will show you, even the force of gravitation cannot be conceived of apart from Mind.

"To every true thinker the persistence of Purpose was as much an ultimate fact of nature as was the persistence of force. As I will show you, even the persistence of force cannot be conceived of apart from the persistence of Purpose. Mind is the higher force and principle, and Mind and not Matter is the ultimate fact.

"It was on this idea of design and purpose manifested even in minute molecules, that Prof. J. Clerk-Maxwell, from whom I have before quoted to you, said in a lecture delivered before the British Association at Bradford, a city of the country known on Earth as England, which lecture is recorded in *Nature*, vol. viii., p. 441, as I remember it:

"Every molecule throughout the universe bears impressed on it the stamp of a metric system as distinctly as does the Metre of the Archives at Paris, or the double Royal Cubit of the Temple at Karnac. No theory of evolution (evolution was a theory of the development of the forms and organizations or organisms of matter, and was in some respects true) can be formed to account for the similarity of molecules, for evolution necessarily implies continuous change, and the molecule is incapable of growth or decay, of generation or destruction. None of the processes of nature, since the time when nature began, have produced the slightest difference in the properties of any molecule. We are therefore unable to ascribe either the existence of the molecules or the identity of their properties to the operation of any of the causes which we call natural. On the other hand, the exact quality of each molecule to all others of the same kind gives it the essential character of a manufactured

article, and precludes the idea of its being eternal and self-existent.'

"He who wrote these words of truth for the mind of earth is now here with us in this pure realm of mind. He it was who discoursed to us so learnedly on Electricity and Magnetism of Earth and their laws of action, and who applied so successfully the system of Quaternions to their study and development. We are indeed glad that he is here, that he may enlighten us much on these former mysteries of the material sphere; for he was one of the foremost minds of earth in scientific thought."

Looking over his vast audience, Ariel continued:

"It delights me, my brothers, to see the rapt attention with which you receive my dry and heavy thoughts. The cold communications of exact science or philosophy have to many not much sentiment or emotion in them. However, my theme is one so important that it will doubtless command the full attention of every mind, whether from Earth, or from whatever sphere or realm it may have come.

"Herbert Spencer was the Earth's great philosopher of the Nineteenth Century, whose thoughts have gone abroad over the whole civilized world. His conception of matter reduced to its simplest statement was, 'that of co-existent positions which offer resistance, * * * and that matter and motion, as we know them, were differently conditioned manifestations of force.—Thus to explain to you, this great mind conceived of matter only as a function of force, or that it was simply the media of resistance for the material manifestation of force. For on Earth our only way of observing, or knowing, the laws and phenomena of force was in and through its material manifestations. The thought and investigation of this philosopher of Earth led him on and on towards a conception of God. He speaks in words weighted with reverence of the great, Inscrutable Power, whom we here, who abide in this resplendent light, know to be our God and Father. He everywhere

taught in his philosophy that the Reality underlying what we conceived as matter and motion could by no means be identical with matter and motion, but must be something entirely and essentially different. A reality so much higher in its nature than even the highest manifestations of human consciousness, that it transcends consciousness as much as consciousness transcends a plant's functions.

"He says, (I state it substantially) that 'the Power which is manifested throughout the universe is the same energy which wells up in human existences under the form of Consciousness. That this great transcendent Reality is one and the same Ultimate Reality which is manifested to and in us subjectively under the form of consciousness and is manifested objectively in the universal forces and material forms.' And this it is, we may add, which gives unity and design and purpose to all material forms, manifestations and phenomena. For this underlying Reality, judged by its universal manifestation, must be Mind acting always toward Purpose, and culminating in man as an individualized Conscious product therefrom.

He thus correlates Conscious Man with a Universal Conscious Power outside of, and superior to man.

He posits a Universal Conscious Power in the Universe, and deduces man as a conscious product from it.

"He fully and logically implies that a conscious existence as man, could not be a derivative from an unconscious power; and, therefore, that the Power, which is man's parent, must be Conscious Power, which pervades the universe, underlies and impulses the multiple forms of matter, and wells up in man under the form of consciousness.

"Which we know is a statement of self-evident truth.

"And, my brothers of light, such great propositions as these this learned investigator formulated out of the thick envelopment of earth's material gloom, by strict inductive investigation into material phenomena; thus showing that

even in the grossest forms of creation, to the observant mind seeking for truth, God has mingled a ray of His light here and there.

"In this connection I cannot help quoting to you a sublime passage from this same truth-consecrated mind, in which he spake as one inspired:—

"'Thus the consciousness of an Inscrutable Power manifested to us through all phenomena has been growing ever clearer; and must eventually be freed from its imperfections. The certainty that on the one hand such an Inscrutable Power exists, while, on the other hand, its nature transcends intuition and is beyond imagination, is the certainty towards which intelligence has from the first been progressing. To this conclusion science inevitably arrives as it reaches its confines. And satisfying as it does the demands of the most rigorous logic at the same time that it gives the religious sentiment the widest possible sphere of action, it is the conclusion we are bound to accept without reserve or qualification.'

"With what unison and harmony, my brothers, does this sublime passage from Spencer, the philosopher of Earth, chime in with the psalmodic refrain of the poet David, our greatly beloved brother here, the sweet psalmist of Earth, whose conception of our God was of that Infinite One whose 'Greatness is Unsearchable,' Who inhabiteth Eternity, and Who is Spirit!

"Coming back again to the special subject of matter, that eminent scientist, Faraday, says that 'Matter is the merely passive or statical condition for the action of force (just as we would say, my brothers, that these ethereal substances and elements are the perfected conditions for the action of mind and spirit), and that the most fundamental condition or characteristic of matter, perhaps its only true indication, is Inertia.' * This is now a dictum of science.

* This passage substantially quoted by Ariel, I find in "Correlation and Conservation of Forces," p. 368.

"To many of you here the term 'Inertia' is meaningless, for the reason that your existence and thought have known only these Substantive Forces and Mind and Spirit and their ceaselessly active states and conditions. This term inertia means deadness or absolute rest, immobility; it means that matter-in-itself, in its primal state, without the action of force to put it in motion, would forever remain dead and immovable; and also that matter once put in motion would forever move on in the same direction, unless intercepted by force and put at rest. Matter is a passivity which receives a force in order to change it.

"All that can be affirmed of matter is that it is the recipient of impulse and of energy. Matter in itself is the negative, the negation, of force, which is a positive reality. *Remove the positive force and you have deadness.* For instance, the organized human body when bereft of the life-force, the physic counterpart or substance, becomes but a passive aggregation of material elements, which then speedily decomposes and passes into the inorganic elements from which it came. This we call on Earth Death.

"Now reasoning on matter from the idea of motion:—in these celestial spheres you are acquainted with the idea of motion in the beautiful, rhythmic movements and precessions of the ethereal bodies, elements and substantive forces, and also with motion as a volition of our wills, for we glide in ecstatic motion as we desire, when traversing, in inquiring thought, or in joyful errand, the domains of the vast Cosmos:—but the idea of motion in relation to matter necessarily implies an entity which is moved by force. Matter by virtue of its extension in space and of its inertia in statical condition can intercept force, transform force into energy, and transmit energy.

"Thus on Earth, the various forms of energy, such as heat, the phenomena there known as earthly light (not our celestial light, for there we had no conception of it), electricity,

another form of force, and also magnetism—these were only transformations or different manifestations of that immaterial Substance, known as Force, resulting directly or indirectly from the interception of force by inert matter ; and all the phenomena of that material sphere result from the action of this Positive Substantive-Force upon matter. These truths concerning matter, my brothers, are the conclusions reached by the earnest thinkers and investigators of Earth. In order that you may formulate into perfect forms of thought the spiritual truths thus attained, and established by the indomitable thought of man on Earth from the existence and phenomena of matter as an isolated entity, I will state them in the following propositions :

“ *First.*—That science—as the formulated thought of mind—must and does admit that it is self-contradictory to suppose that matter is eternal and self-existent.

“ *Second.*—That the thought of man, after analyzing and investigating matter in all its varieties and phases from mass to molecules and from molecules to atoms, must then and there affirm that these final, uniform, primal elements and potentialities of matter are not self-created, and must be ascribed to some common cause or common origin outside of and above matter.

“ *Third.*—Deduced from these truths arose the inevitable conclusion in the minds of these thinkers of Earth, that there must have been a Creator of matter in its beginning.

“ *Fourth.*—These minds also discovered that matter was inert, powerless, forceless, and therefore that they must look outside of and above matter to account for the all-pervading phenomena of Force.”

* * * * *

At this point some mind inquired : “ Ariel, were there, in truth, minds on Earth who attempted to ascribe to matter—a thing or substance of successive events and stages in time—an eternal and uncreated duration ? ”

Ariel replied: "Yes, some were so presumptuous as to do so. They gave to matter what they disaffirmed of mind.

"They said that every particle of matter had a self-determining power. That it always existed and would always exist.

"They based their so-called philosophy upon a chain of material causes and effects reaching back without a beginning and forward without an ending.

"They affirmed neither first cause nor *last* cause. They denied any necessity for, or efficacy of, a first cause.

"Yet, if they would but see it, their system of thought would force them to this dilemma: That nothing caused something, or something caused itself. To illustrate: 'I see a ball moving through space, and we say something moved that ball; if we go back to trace the cause we will have to say that something moved that something that moved the ball; and so on back for ten thousand somethings; still we find need of something to move the last in the series of causes, or else to affirm that it moved itself. If we are forced by the laws of thought to admit that it did not move itself, then we must affirm that something or nothing moved it. To affirm that nothing moved something is absurd, and we are forced to admit that it was something that moved it. Something then moved the first something, and that is what we know as God!'"

Here Meoön said: "If this progression of cause and effect—this something moving something—was finite, you have undoubtedly proved your point; but if they allege the progression is infinite, how can you ever get back to the first something?"

"The laws of thought and logic are obliged to make this answer: If we cannot reach back to the first something in this series of material causes, then that first something could never have reached down to us! If the first link of this chain is at an infinite distance back, so that we could never travel

back to it, then we must admit that no part of it could ever have reached down to us."

"To suppose that anything made itself is the same as to suppose that it existed before it made itself, which is what we call absurd; for if it *existed before* it made itself, it could not give itself existence which is all that is implied in creating.

"If they affirm that the whole universe exists by a necessary self-existent power, then all the parts of it must possess this self-existent power; but this is contrary to all our experience; for not one creature possesses it—all, we see, are dependent."

Here Meoön asked this question: "What conception did they have on Earth of this Eternity?"

"On Earth there were two ideas of Eternity, expressed by thinkers somewhat as follows: the materialist's conception was of an eternity composed of successive periods—the theistic conception was of an Eternity without succession, such as we here know.

"As the only idea of Eternity, which the material universe suggested to the materialists, was an Eternity of successive periods, it must necessarily follow that when we contemplated the Earth at any one period of its existence, it had then some relation to past periods; that is, it must have finished so many periods at that time. Its past existence, up to the period contemplated, must have been completed, ended; so, many past periods at that time had been finished, and their past existence then completed. If, then, at any past period of existence, the world began to be related to past duration, that period was the commencement of its existence. But if it did not, at any past period, stand related to any past duration, it does not now; but that it does now stand related to past duration, must be admitted; it must, therefore, always have stood in such a relation, which precludes the idea of its being eternal.

"The condensed arguments of the schools of thought on Earth concerning Eternity and Space as showing the impossibility of the eternal existence of matter, I remember to have seen formulated as follows: Unbounded Space and Eternity are ideas so analogous to each other that anything that tends to illustrate the one, equally tends to elucidate the other. Both are infinite. So human minds conceived them. Unbounded Space cannot be all divided into parts; neither can Eternity. If a body of any definite extension were to occupy a part of unbounded Space, unbounded Space would be no less; and if any definite period were taken out of Eternity, Eternity would be no shorter. If two bodies were placed at any supposed distance from each other, the distance could not be infinite, because they would admit of Space beyond them, and also would admit of being brought together, both of which would be impossible, if they were infinitely distant from each other. The same may be said of two imaginary points in Eternity; however distant from each other we might suppose them to be, they would admit of duration beyond them and might be brought together; therefore, they could not have been infinitely distant.

"Unbounded Space has no circumference, nor center; neither has Eternity. Unbounded Space has no zenith, nor nadir; that is, no extreme point above, no extreme point below; so Eternity, considered and abstracted from our idea of limited Time, has no past duration nor future, no successive periods, but one unbeginning and unending Now.

"It would imply a contradiction to say that even God Himself could place two globes in unbounded Space at an infinite distance apart, because if they were *fixed* in Space at all, they would have Space beyond them, and would admit of being brought together, which could not be if their distance were infinite. If it were possible for two globes to be placed at an infinite distance from each other, it would imply a contradiction in terms to say they could be brought together; it would

be the same as to say that they had passed through, and ended, a course that was endless.

"It would be a contradiction in terms to say that a ball could be placed at an infinite distance from our Earth, because, however distant it might be placed, it would admit of space beyond it, and could be made to pass over the whole intermediate space and reach our Earth.

"But suppose it possible for a ball to be placed at an infinite distance from our Earth, and in motion towards the Earth when at its greatest distance, it could never reach the Earth, because the distance is supposed to be endless ; that which is endless cannot be ended. If it were placed at the greatest possible distance from the Earth at the same time in motion towards the Earth, its very motion towards the Earth would leave space behind it, which supposes its distance could not be infinite. Its most early motion towards the the Earth would shorten the distance ; but infinite distance cannot be shortened. If its motion were to be continued, it would actually reach the Earth, so that the distance could not have been infinite. Suppose the ball to actually reach the Earth, and made to travel back the whole route it had passed in coming to the Earth ; the query is, would it ever finish its retrograde journey ? All will admit, that if the distance was finite it might, but if infinite, it would be impossible. The conclusion, then, from these premises is, that no created thing could be made to occupy a place or station at an infinite distance from our Earth, and to assert such a thing would be a contradiction in terms.

"If we apply these principles relative to Unbounded Space to Unbounded Duration they will go to show that our Earth could not have existed from Eternity. If it had been possible for the Earth to have existed from Eternity, it would not have passed down through infinite duration to the present time. That which is endless cannot be ended, but whatever the past age of the world has been, it is, as to such *past* age, now

measured, and the entire round of its past existence is now ended; therefore, it could not have existed from Eternity. Wherever we date the primitive existence of the world, its most early existence, and its successive progress in duration towards the present time, must have been coincident and just as early as the world existed; duration was then changing from the present to the past tense; so that in its most early existence it was related to past time, therefore, could not have existed from Eternity. The very first moment of time that elapsed, made the succeeding time shorter. Duration that is capable of being shortened cannot be infinite. This supposes that the world has had a beginning, and has not stood from eternity, because in its earliest existence, it was related to past time, and the period between that and the present time was capable of being shortened, was actually shortened and at length came to an end. If for the sake of illustration, we suppose the world to take a retrograde journey through all the past period of its duration, all will admit, that if its past duration had been from Eternity, it could never finish its journey back because the length is supposed to be infinite. But if its past duration were finite, it might, without implying any inconsistency, travel the whole of it again.

"The above demonstration concludes with absolute certainty, that the world has not existed from Eternity, but must have been created. Whatever the past age of the Earth has been, its past age has now completely ended, so that nothing of it remains; therefore it could not have been infinite. If the world was made to travel back the entire period of its past existence, it could never finish it, if it had existed from all Eternity.

"Well, but the materialist objects: 'We can have some idea of a body traveling through space, and returning, but we can have none of a body passing through duration and returning.'

“ ‘ Answer. The validity of this objection, as it may relate to the power of God, cannot be admitted, but should it be persisted in, the transition is easy in this case from the past time to the future; for Eternity past is no longer than Eternity future. It is a self-evident truth that the world has traveled, and actually finished its past duration whether finite or infinite. If the past duration of the world is said to be from Eternity, the query now is, could the world ever travel entirely through an eternal *future* duration, so that it might in truth be affirmed, as in the former case, that its future existence is entirely finished? Every candid person will say that it would be impossible. As then it never can be true to affirm, that the world has existed to Eternity, or that it has finished an eternal future existence, it cannot be true to say that it has existed from Eternity, or finished an eternal past existence.’

“ So we are irresistibly forced to conclude that before time was, matter was either not *in esse*, or was asleep; who created it, or who awakened it, is the question. If there be an active principle in matter, this principle must be distinct from it; and then the next question arises, What is the active principle—Matter or Spirit?

“ We will now pass on to consider this active principle in matter, this idea of Force exerted in matter, and see what was the conception of Earth’s thinkers concerning it, and what truths they deduced from it, as leading their minds to the conception of God—Spirit—Immortality,—*Eternal Life!*”

CHAPTER XV.

ARIEL'S DISCOURSE ON THOUGHTS CONNECTED WITH EARTH
(concluded).

"LEAVING now the subject of matter, except as it may incidentally be connected in our discourse, we pass on to the higher thought-sphere of Force, which we have seen was manifested in matter, and will discover the spiritual truths deduced therefrom by these true thinkers of Earth.

"What is this Force? Whence is it, and wherein does it consist? inquired the minds of Earth. As a concretely manifested phenomenon we there saw, it was that which changed matter; which acted upon and moved the multi-formed organisms; which affected the animate and inanimate forms of matter; which held the sublunary planets in balance, and whirled them in their orbit curves;—which generated the tiny blade of grass; which brought up the giant oak: which cabled the material spheres to their central sun.

"We defined Force, in a simple scientific definition, as 'that which originates or tends to originate motion, or changes, or tends to change the state of a body with regard to motion.'

"Our leading thinkers saw, and taught, that Force was not, and could not be, a property of matter. They taught that inert matter could have no innate, spontaneous power, and that it could not change its own state of motion or rest.

"They also affirmed the truth that motion was incapable *per se* of producing motion.

"To have said, as our science taught, that matter was

inert, and at the same time that it could exert Force, would have been to violate the law of non-contradiction to the uttermost.

"This brings us to consider, what was their final conception of Force-in-itself? To what conclusion did their researches lead them? It was irresistibly, that Force was an attribute of Mind and Spirit, and of mind and spirit alone. They arrived at the truth, well and anciently established, that 'Mind was the first cause of motion'; that Force was but mind mysteriously impinged upon matter, and motion was the resultant of their conjunction. The thought of my day, the formulated science of the most modern period, with remarkable unanimity, confirmed the doctrine that: 'all motion is the product of mind; and that though continued, and transformed, and transmitted, through various means, it never commenced except in a volition either of the Supreme Mind, or of a Created Mind.' 'The deep-seated instincts of humanity and the profoundest researches of philosophy alike pointed to mind as the one and only source of power.'

"Our illustrious brother here, known on Earth as Dr. Herschel, from whom I have before quoted to you, taught on Earth, in his 'Familiar Lectures on Science,' that:—'The conception of force as the originator of motion in matter without bodily contact, or the intervention of any intermedium, is essential to the right interpretation of physical phenomena;—its exertion makes itself manifest to our personal consciousness by the peculiar sensation of *effort*,—and it (Force) affords a point of contact, a connecting link between the two great departments of being—between Mind and Matter—the one as its originator, the other as its recipient.'

"We investigated Gravitation, a force to which we are not subject here, which was the vast, attracting, binding force of the material universe; which was all-pervading in its operation; reaching across from atom to atom and sphere to sphere through what appeared to us as the void immensities of space

—holding all as in the grasp of a mighty hand ; our greatest thinkers such as Herschel and Newton, who discovered this force and first announced it to the world, taught the doctrine that ‘the action of this force was mediated by an agent which was *not material*.’

“Such thinkers known on Earth as Faraday, Helmholtz Thompson, Tait, Maxwell, Leibnitz, all taught the absurdity of the conception that matter could exert force at a distance, that atoms could attract one another across a void, and held that this was either absurd or miraculous !

“The great Sir Isaac Newton, so known of Earth, so transcendent in his learning here, once wrote to the learned Bentley concerning his discovery and investigation of the great force manifested in the phenomena of gravitation, as follows :

“‘It is inconceivable that inanimate, brute matter should without the mediation of something else, which is not material, operate upon, and affect, other matter without mutual contact.

“‘That gravity should be innate, inherent, and essential to matter, so that one body can act upon another at a distance, through a vacuum, without the mediation of anything else, by and through which their action and force may be conveyed from one to another, is to me so great an absurdity, that I believe no man, who has in philosophical matters a competent faculty of thinking, can ever fall into it.*

“The result of all the investigation and thought of Earth’s minds led them to the one satisfactory and rational conclusion that all force, all forms of force, manifested in the universe of matter, were only transformations and manifestations of the One Omnipresent Force issuing from the Fountain Head of all Power, the Infinite Energy and Will !—and that all force, physical and vital and molecular, must as ultimate thought

* I find this letter quoted in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* under the title “Attraction,” as given by Ariel in his discourse.

be posited outside of matter, and relate as of necessity to Spirit !

"The united teaching of such thinkers of Earth as Dr. Colin, Dr. Carpenter, Wallace, Murphy, Laycock, Norton, Spencer—and others, was that the 'final disclosure of science was the convertibility and homogeneity of all forms of physical force, and that the one form of force which is the type of all is mind, and that 'Force must be regarded as the direct expression of that mental state which we call Will.'

These thinkers did not teach, nor did they mean to teach, that physical forces could be converted into psychic states, or states of consciousness; for psychic states or feelings are in no sense of the word motion, forces, or transformed forces:—but they taught that the expression of mind through its supreme function, Will, was made manifest in the operation of such of the physical forces as the mind saw fit to employ.

"The very latest investigation tended to this conclusion: that heat, light, chemical action or affinity, magnetism and electricity, were all but varying* manifestations, different degrees of intensity of motion, of that Universal Etheric Energy, which pulses throughout Earth's solar system, feeds the central Sun as a storage battery, and radiates therefrom in diverging currents,—and also that this immaterial, etheric energy is itself but the Immanent Power of the Eternal Mind impulsing the universal body of matter, and expressing itself in all the varied forms of force and phenomena.

"It was perhaps with this thought in his mind that the philosopher, Herbert Spencer of Earth, wrote:

"The force by which we ourselves produce changes, and which serves to symbolize the cause of changes in general, is the final disclosure of analysis.†

* Just as all the different colors and different sounds are but different degrees or intensities of motion transmitted by and through the ether and the air.

† This quotation I find in *First Principles*, p. 235.

"From these authoritative conclusions, we were led to affirm that the Cosmic Forces in action through the realms of matter were the direct action of the Divine Will and Thought immanent in matter.

"From these investigations of Force (omitting for the present a consideration of the Vital Force), we deduced the following truths leading us to the spiritual verities before mentioned :—

First.—"That matter in its natural state, *per se*, is dead and void—is simple inertia and extension.

Second.—"That the phenomena of nature, in its material manifestations, are produced by the action of force upon matter.

Third.—"That all the manifestations and transmutations of force in multiform phenomena, which are apparently different and separate forces, are all derivatives from one type of force.

Fourth.—"That that one type or form of force, which is all-inclusive and all-causative, is Mind, Will, Spirit.

* * * * *

"Thus far in this review I have omitted to present to you the investigation and thought of Earth's thinkers on what we there knew as the Vital Force or Life. This vital force was manifested on Earth in many varieties and forms of living organisms, but I will confine my thought now to the highest type of life-force, that known there as Human life, or the life of man as associated with mind and consciousness. We there on Earth beheld man as a Living, Thinking, Reasoning Entity, existing in and with an animate, material organism, possessing various parts and organs, each part and organ serving certain specified purposes and objects in that material environment.

"Those organs and senses were there the material counterpart of what are here our Psychic Forms and Faculties by which we perceive and conceive immediately all beauties, forms and manifestations of the celestial realm. By and

through the media of the material organs and senses on Earth, our mind and psychic faculties received and perceived the beauties, forms and manifestations of the material realm.

"Our material bodies on Earth were animate, that is, endowed with vital force. Thus endowed, our material organism was vastly elevated above the inanimate elements of mere matter, and became the highest and last gradation of matter, wonderfully prepared for the occupancy and service of the mind.

"The problem that there confronted us was, what was the vital force, called Life? Whence was it? To what truths does it lead us?

"Was it *ab initio* the result, or the cause, of the human organism? And to what final, ultimate, spiritual reality does this phenomenon of the vital force and its accompanying power of intelligence and mind lead us?

"In speaking of the vital force as *human life*, I mean the same thing for the purpose of this argument as to speak of the human being; for the living, acting, human organism was the same thing, physiologically speaking, as the human being; and the same thing, philosophically speaking, as the thinking and reasoning being. In that material sphere they together composed the human entity, and were there immediately associated together. There were three theories to account for human life on the Earth-planet.

First.—"There were some thinkers who taught that primordial life was spontaneously generated, *i. e.*, produced from the non-living matter of Earth by certain chemical action in the far-distant ages of the Earth's history, when, they alleged, the conditions were favorable for the production of such a phenomenon; and that life being thus produced or generated in some simple, primordial state, as protoplasm, afterwards became evolved into more complex forms of life. They taught further that this first form of life, after becoming evolved through the processes of natural selection, etc., into

more complex forms, then by the law of the survival of the fittest, and by action of the law of heredity, was evolved into still higher and more complex forms of living beings; until finally through long æons a creature was produced having a spine, or vertebrae, and then, after other long series of years, a creature was evolved with the features and form and low characteristics of a savage man.

"What was known on Earth as Evolution proper, as taught by that earnest investigator, Chas. Darwin, who originated the system, did not attempt to account for the existence and potency of the vital force on Earth, as manifested in the *first* forms of life with which the evolution process began. The system of Evolution proper, as taught by him, assumed the existence of the vital force in the world, and built upon it.

"The fatally weak and untenable point that the earnest thinkers of Earth saw was this: the assumption that any form of life could be generated from *non-living* matter!

"The calm, clear, modern thought of the world demonstrated that it was absolutely impossible for life, or the vital force in any form, to be spontaneously generated out of non-living matter!

"It never entered the minds of the philosophers of antiquity to doubt that the low forms of life were generated in the matter in which they made their appearance. The proposition that life may and does, in its lower forms, proceed from that which has no life, was held alike by the philosophers, the poets, and the people of the most enlightened nations, some centuries ago, and it remained the accepted doctrine of learned and unlearned Europe through the middle ages down even to the 17th century of the Christian Era.

"But among the thinkers of my day on Earth there was almost perfect unanimity on the proposition, that *all life must be derived from pre-existent life*. The truth of this proposition was demonstrated first by that careful and earnest investigator, known on Earth as Prof. Huxley, and then by

others, by a series of carefully-conducted experiments, which places this truth beyond doubt.

"I remember reading an account of these experiments on Earth in a book known as 'Lay Sermons and Addresses' by Prof. Huxley. And there it seemed to my mind that this truth was as much demonstrated so as any proposition in geometry, and this doctrine laid down as irresistible truth: 'Omne vivum ex vivo.' Prof. Huxley laid it down as a law of nature that 'All life proceeds from life.'

"That eminent scientist of Earth, Sir William Thompson, said of this doctrine, in his inaugural address before the British Association of Science: 'This seems to me as sure a teaching of science as the law of gravitation. I confess to being deeply impressed by the evidence put before us by Prof. Huxley, and am ready to adopt it as an article of scientific faith—true through all space and all time—that life proceeds from life and nothing but life!'

"Biogenesis is now one of the scientific laws of Earth. So life could not have been spontaneously generated on Earth.

Second.—"The second theory that I remember to have known advanced to account for life on the planet, Earth, was, that life was brought there by a meteoric stone or body from some other world or planet, upon which life existed, and being transplanted to Earth even in simple form, it developed and propagated itself until the varied and complex life-forms of Earth appeared.

"This theory had no scientific recognition, and may be passed by with the statement that the intense heat always produced in these meteoric stones or spacial bodies in their passage and friction through Earth's atmosphere would destroy any vestige of life that might be clinging to them in their mad flight through space; and, if this theory could even be admitted, we would be at a loss to account for life on the planet from which it was borne to earth.

Third.—"Then the minds of thinking men finding that life, or vital force, could not be spontaneously generated, and could not be transplanted on Earth from some other planet by a meteoric stone, came to the last theory that could be adduced to account for the mysterious existence of the vital force in that mysterious realm of matter, which was this: that it came from that source of all Life and Force and Power, the Infinite Energy and Will.

"Well did earnest, inquiring thought ask, whence else could it come? Science said positively that life in its beginning could not be self-creating. Science taught us that it was impossible and self-contradictory to assume that matter, or life in matter, was self-existent and eternal. Science taught us that the abyss between inanimate matter and vital force could never be passed by a process of spontaneous generation. And science came to the positive conclusion that life must come from a pre-existent source of life. Yea, from a source outside of and independent of matter. 'Human life is individualized force, the indwelling of a created, but yet dependent, spiritual entity in a vitalized organism,' says one of Earth's earnest thinkers, Dr. Carpenter, in his work, 'Human Physiology.' Life is a force, and we have seen that all force is of Mind, Spirit.

"Thus we were led to this great thought: there was a time when life was not save in God, the Source, and God willed and life was! Nothing short of this satisfied our reason.

"With this great truth in his mind, one of Earth's poets said:

" 'God of the granite and the rose;
Soul of the sparrow and the bee,
The mighty tide of Being flows
Through countless channels, Lord, from Thee.
It leaps to life in grass and flowers,
Through every grade of Being runs,
While from Creation's radiant towers
Its glory flames in stars and suns.'

"There was one great truth which these conclusions of science proved to us: that vital force was the cause, and not the consequence, of our bodily organization; that my individual life-entity in the material sphere did not begin to exist because of my material physical organization, but that my material physical organization began its existence *ab initio* because of the indwelling life-force which produced and sustained it. Death of the material body came when my individualized life-force, my created spiritual entity, was removed from the organic body of matter. So we saw on Earth that death sometimes occurred when the organic body was in the prime of its strength and development by some sudden devitalization of its organic whole, as well as when it was impaired and worn away by disease; and also that life, in its full intellectual vigor, often continued when the body itself was largely worn away, maimed, and wrecked. Hence we reached this great and inspiring conclusion: that our life-entity, our individuality, our Pure Self, could exist independent of our physical, temporal organization—which meant to us Immortality!

"We were assured by our personal consciousness itself—which was our highest source of truth—that the Mind, the concomitant of self-conscious life, was not a material entity which was subject to the laws and conditions of matter; for Mind and its processes could not be weighed, nor measured, as material compounds, nor even conceived of in the terms and laws of matter!

"Therefore, we concluded, if mind could not be made subject in any sense to the first and fundamental laws and conditions of matter, such as gravitation, extent in space, etc., then it could not be made subject to that final law of all material organisms and forms—Death! Hence we reasoned, that Conscious Personality—that thinking, conscious, immaterial I—must be Immortal!

"On scientific and logical principles we here see the force

of this deduction. Science taught, and admitted, my premises, and logic upholds my conclusion.

"Science posited, as of necessity, Force and Life and Mind outside of Matter, and thereby evolved the great conception of Spirit.

"If Life, Mind and Spirit, or either of these realities, existed at any time prior to, and independent of, the material Earth, then these realities, or any one of them, could exist again outside and independent of matter.

"We correctly reasoned that, as Life could not be spontaneously generated from dead matter, and could not have been eternal on Earth, then it must have been derived from some other source of Life; and if so, then there must have been some other source of life from whence it came: therefore, we concluded there must be an existence, or form of life, or a Being, superior to matter and independent of matter! If human life, consciousness and intelligence could not be derivatives of matter and of unconscious forces in their inception, we concluded that under the law of the Conservation of Energy, and by an unassailable parity of reasoning, that human life, consciousness, and intelligence could not pass into, and be absorbed by dead matter and unconscious nonentity, when the material human body loses its organic functions by death. It was to us a self-evident truth that consciousness could no more pass into permanent unconsciousness than could unconsciousness be the source, parent and fount of consciousness, and itself, in other words, pass into consciousness.

"If there was no bridge whereby inanimate matter and unconscious force could cross over the dividing abyss into consciousness, as science teaches, then we concluded there was no bridge whereby the latter could pass into the former. The law of Conservation of Energy denies any and all waste in nature. Self-consciousness, and Personality and Thought, must either be conserved in their own personal identity or

be dissipated in waste and annihilated, for they cannot be resolved into any correlatives; therefore, they must remain themselves: they cannot even pass into impersonality for that would be their negation.

"Science taught, as I have shown you, that all force proceeds from Mind and Spirit, and that Matter is only a passivity upon which it (force) acts. So in a greater sense is matter only the passivity of Life, Mind, Spirit, which latter are the source and originator of all forces. There were on Earth multitudes of forms of what we termed animal-life or existence unaccompanied by reason or self-consciousness. What we have reasoned upon is in reference to that form of life connected with Conscious Intelligence,—Self-conscious Man.

"The Mind, the Intelligence, as associated with Man's Life-Entity are in philosophy considered inseparable, all being components of one individual entity. The same scientific teaching and reasoning, which led us to conclude that the vital force, in man, was not an innate principle in matter itself, in a greater degree led us to conclude also that the Mind, the Intelligence, the Self-consciousness, were not a material entity, which could be measured, weighed, and dissected, and be subject to the law of material death.

"There were those on Earth who held that the material brain-matter was the organ of thought, the reasoning power, or in other words, that the mind and the brain were really one and the same; that there was an absolute identity between them. These thinkers were perhaps led to this conclusion by observing the constant concomitance of the mental and material phenomena. They observed that the mind, the brain, and the nervous system developed together, and that in early life the intellectual development of the human being was attended by a corresponding growth of the brain and nervous system. They noticed that affections took place in the brain and nervous system during the exercise

of the mental faculties, and that there was a concomitance of action and affection in and between them.

"Hence these thinkers concluded that the fact of concomitant variations of the mental processes and the brain was proof of the identity of substance.*

"But this fact of concomitant variations did not warrant their conclusion of identity of substance, but was proof simply of one of two things, either that the mind and the brain were related as cause and effect, or that they were the effects of a common cause. Thus far only could these thinkers logically go in their deductions from the concomitant phenomena of mind and brain.

"It was admitted that the physiology and anatomy of the brain presented no evidence that it was the cause of intelligence. They could not show in the structure of the organ any adaptation to the function of thought. For them to have assumed, then, that the special function of the brain was thought, in the absence of any vital and structural adaptation to such function, was contrary to all the analogies presented by the science of physiology. The fact that the brain exhibited molecular movements during the continuance of intellectual processes could not logically be assumed to be the cause of the latter.

"On this point a great thinker of Earth, Leibnitz, said: 'We are constrained to confess that perception, and whatever depends upon it, are inexplicable upon mechanical principles; that is, by reference to forms and movements.

"'If we could imagine a machine the operation of which would manufacture thoughts, feelings, and perceptions, and could think of it as enlarged in all its proportions, so that we could go into it as into a mill, even then we could find in it nothing but particles jostling each other, and never anything by which perception could be explained.' The physiological

* See Prof. Bain's "Mind and Body" and Prof. Davis' "Treatise on Psychology," as bearing on this part of Ariel's discourse.

process accompanying a sensation is a breaking down of nervous substance, the setting free of a certain amount of potential energy. This process, as such, may be called mechanical, but the feeling, the perception of the sensation, is not mechanical. Feelings, thoughts, are not motions, they are not objective processes, but they are subjective processes; they can be felt, but can never be made visible or tangible in any material sense.

As opposed to the brain theory of mind, there were often found great intellectual power and faculties buoyant, alert, and forceful, in human beings who had weak, frail, bodily organs, and diseased nervous systems; or whose bodies age had crumpled and crushed in its withering grasp. These facts were irreconcilable with the idea that mind and brain were identical, and that the brain was the cause of the mental processes.

So viewed physiologically, the frequent concomitance of action between the brain and the mental processes could not establish the identity of mind and brain, but only proved that for some purpose there was a mysterious relation between them. Here we know that it was only a wonderful connection of the psychical with the material, for the purpose that mind should commune with matter, be subject to its evils, and limitations, and negations, and so convert these into the forms of thought and character.

"But on Earth we had to study these mysterious powers and phenomena from a different point of view than here, where we look upon them as known and experienced truths.

"Our science on Earth taught what was known as the Law of Heredity,—or that like begets like. Now we of Earth, taking this scientific law as our guide, reasoned, that if God or Nature, if we may use that term, endowed man with mere animal or material life and potentiality, the law of heredity would irrevocably bind man to conformity therewith. If there were in man when first planted upon Earth—whether put

there by immediate creative act, or by process of evolution—only material powers and functions, fitted only to desire, and battle with, his physical environments, and devoid of intellectual or spiritual potentiality, or contrary thereto, then the law, of heredity would maintain and strengthen this tendency in his offspring. And this would be so on the principle that the machine could not run counter to the power which compels it.

“But if, in the first progenitor of man, the intellectual faculty or spiritual potentiality had been planted, then the law of heredity would have the imperative effect of transmitting and enlarging this faculty. It would become more and more perfect under the operation of this law. All on Earth were compelled to admit that man had psychical faculties which rendered him capable of indefinite progress in thought and abstract reason, which over-fitted him for his mere physical needs and environments, and that he was endowed with spiritual powers which rendered him capable of the perception and enjoyment of pure spiritual emotions, qualities, and ideas.

“We asked, if man had not the spiritual faculty implanted in his nature, then how could he even conceive of such realities as appertain to the spiritual? If there were no spiritual faculties and potentialities in the human being responsive to beauty, and art, and love, and charity, and benevolence, and duty, and music, and self-sacrifice, and love of truth, and spiritual yearning, and lofty, heaven-born aspirations, then how could man receive, feel, enjoy, yearn for, yea, even die for, these beatific states and qualities?

“If man be not spiritually endowed, how could he conceive of spirit? How love and worship that Eternal Spirit whose home is Eternity? How could a life spanned by matter, its horizon bounded by matter, lift its vision into the Infinite? How could a mere material body yearn to explore the abysses of the stars?

"What and wherein subsisted this power of intellectuality, this faculty of spirituality with which man was endowed above all creatures of Earth? was the question. We reasoned that they could not be in the eye, nor in the ear, nor in the nose, nor in the physical strength, nor in natural and instinctive prowess; for man was excelled in all these senses and instincts by animals, which never possessed any power of thought and progress.

"Just here came in those thinkers on Earth, I mentioned to you, who said that all this spiritual and intellectual galaxy of man's nature originated, and found their basis, in his brain, in that grayish mass of matter which was stored in his cranium! They seemed to forget that there were animals possessing a larger mass of brain-matter than man had. They also lost sight of the facts that the greatest thinkers did not always have the largest mass of brain-matter; and that intellectual and spiritual powers and attainments were not gauged, proportioned, nor measured, by the extension or weight of the brain, nor by the strength or size of the body. In the cases of many of the greatest thinkers their bodies and nervous systems were weak and frail, diseased and wrecked. If thought and intellectual power were mere functions and components of matter in certain organized forms, then they would correspond to, and vary with, the condition of the organism, as do muscular strength and agility, etc.

"This, we know, is not the case. In reply to this assumption that the brain was the mind, the thinking power in man, other thinkers said:—

"Now, let us grant this assumption that man's power of reason, thought, memory, etc., is in his brain, and let us make a deduction therefrom:—

"Science discovered and taught, that once in about every seven years man's whole material body was changed, and renewed, in skin, flesh, tissue, blood, nerves, bone and brain. The old worn-out portions were thrown off, and were replaced

by new substance and parts taken up from the material elements and foods which the body consumed. Now bear in mind that the advocates of the brain-mind theory said that the brain, being the mind, received all its impressions from without, by impressions made on the particles of the brain through the senses, which caused molecular movements and changes in the brain-matter; they asserted that Memory, for instance, was only the retention of these movements and impressions on the brain, impressed thereon as the pictures on the canvas, which the brain referred to as occasion demanded, or as the brain willed. That the power of recollection was only the brain viewing, turning to, the past impressions or physical changes, which external causes had made upon its surface and structure.

"We reasoned: Now suppose a man has lived twice and three times seven years, and these affected portions of the brain matter, wherein these movements took place, and wherein these impressions through the senses were made, have been replaced by new brain-matter formed from the food elements taken into the body, etc., then what has become of those past thoughts and past memories which were committed to these lost and worn-out portions of the brain? If the canvas has been destroyed or replaced by new canvas, where is the picture which was committed to the canvas?

"Here is a man seventy years old, whose brain-matter has been changed ten times or more, and yet he retains in his mind, in vivid and fresh colors, the object-thoughts, feelings and impressions of his long-gone-by childhood. How is it, we asked, that his last brain, formed of different food, etc., changed in structure, altered in mass and form, with all of his subsequent years of life pictured and impressed on and in and over and through his tenth brain, yet it has transferred to it, and impressed on it, and still retains, the object-thoughts, feelings, and impressions in its structural cells or surface, which were made on the first or second brain of the series

fifty and sixty years ago? Yet all this must be true if the brain is the mind.

"Again from another standpoint we reasoned: It is a law of our thought that the same identity of matter cannot with regard to itself be both subject and object at the same time, or cannot itself act upon itself, and itself be acted upon by itself, at the same instant of time. In matter there cannot be an identity of subject acting and object acted upon. Different parts of a body may act upon other parts, but the same identical part cannot act upon itself. If the same identity of matter could be at the same instant both subject and object, matter would be superior to the laws of time and space. And yet this very thing the Mind does; and if the brain is mind, then the brain, which is matter, does it. For mind can think, and at the same instant think upon its own thinking processes. The mind analyzes itself, makes itself both subject and object. It thus absolutely annihilates time and space.

"How often we turn the mind inward, as it were, upon itself, and the mind views itself, studies its own processes and actings. This is what we term reflective thought, the submerging ourselves into the secret, sacred domain of self-consciousness.

"We reasoned that the brain could not do this, for it is matter. The mind does it, and in so doing, it proves itself non-material and not subject to the laws of matter.

"The science of psychology presented to us the mental processes thus: First, the senses; second, sensation; third, perception; fourth, conception, then judgment and reason, then will, then reflective thought or self-consciousness; and above all, unifying all, and individualizing all, sits the pure Ego, the ever-active Subject, the real One in the individual economy.

"Through the senses the external world impresses and affects the brain-matter; in the material phenomena of excitement and motion in the molecular structure of the brain-

matter the mind perceives sensations ; the mind, the thinking power in man, deals with sensations and not with objects in the outside world ; the mind then ascends the scale from dealing with sensations up to pure reason ; and then to still higher planes, wherein exists self-consciousness, the Self contemplating Itself, unifying subject and object, annihilating time and space.

" Thus we studied and contemplated the vast and mysterious processes of man's intellectual self, seeking ever for spiritual, psychical truth and light ; seeking for spirit in the gross material. We earnestly inquired : Can we conceive of the brain secreting thought as the liver secreted ' bile,' as certain materialists of Earth would allege ? We saw how it was natural and logical for an organ of matter, like the liver, to produce, and compound, a material thing such as ' bile,' that could be weighed and measured, and analyzed and dealt with in the terms of matter. But we inquired, how is it possible to conceive of a material thing like the brain organ producing, secreting, something immaterial, which cannot be conceived of in the terms of matter, like thought, feeling, and pure reason ; realities which are not analogous to anything in the material universe ?

" We asked, can that which occupies space produce, and evolve, something which is not bounded by spacial relations ? A thought cannot be conceived of as occupying so many square feet or inches of space or of matter. We cannot think of reason in any relation to space or matter. How could the material brain, which can be measured, and weighed, and dissected into parts, produce a reality which is not subject to the first law of matter ? We asked, is it not true, as that great mind Descartes thought, ' that matter has a natural and an invincible incapacity of thinking ?'

" ' Like must proceed from like,' saith Science. Then thought, conception, judgment, pure reason, will, and all that category of mental phenomena and action, which are imma-

terial, which are outside of, above, and not subject to any of the laws of space and matter, must be derived from, and actuated by, a causal agent which is of their nature immaterial!

"We saw that it was true that objects acting through the media of the senses produced movements and quivers of certain portions of the brain-matter, and that these movements took place during processes of thought. But what sincere thinker could ever conceive how the shaking of a mass of matter, a piece of fleshly marrow (for the brain was of the same substance as the marrow in the human spine) could produce a Thought, a Judgment, a Poem, a grand system of Philosophy, a Science, a beatific Religion? How could the shaking of portions of Shakespeare's brain produce the great tragedy Hamlet; and another shaking evolve Richard The Third; and another Cæsar; and another, Henry The Eighth? How could the shaking and molecular movement of Milton's brain, shut in by a night of material darkness, evolve the divine 'Paradise Lost' and 'Paradise Regained'? How could the multitudinous quivering of a handful of gray matter in the head of Bacon create the Inductive System of Philosophy, which changed and regenerated the thought of the world?

"How could the shaking of the brain of the blessed Christ, incarnated in matter, evolve the sublime 'Sermon on the Mount,' and create a Religion, which, had it been properly interpreted, and applied, would have been more than ever the life and inspiration of the centuries of Earth?

"No, we thought, it cannot be! The quiver of the brain may accompany thought, but it is not thought. The tear flowing from the eye, the heaving breast, the pitiful sigh, all may accompany sorrow in the human heart, but these are not sorrow,—the pang, the feeling, the depths of sorrow lie further back and deeper than these material manifestations.

"Science discovered the correlation and transformation of the material forces, such as heat into light, light and heat into electricity, and thence into magnetism and *vice versa*; but science has never changed any of these forces into life, or thought, or into an act or state of consciousness, nor has it even conceived of the possibility of such a transformation. The forces active in matter are the product of mind; or may be designated as thought projected into matter in the form of law, being only the creatures of mind and will. But the creature can never be changed into the Creator.

"Spirit, mind, could never have conceived of matter except through the medium of matter. Pure spirit was projected into material form and environment in order that it might know matter, and interpret it, and convert it into the terms and forms of pure thought. We know here that this was God's plan. Having accomplished this purpose, the spirit, the Real Self, ascends from those material environments into this celestial state of pure mind and spirit. Spirit is vastly superior to matter and is of that supreme force or power in the universe. Man has his power over matter on Earth—his power to modify, to change, to combine, to subject, it—by reason of the Spirit Entity, which constitutes his true self. Man's power over matter to subject it, and cause it to subserve his purposes, will increase in proportion as his spiritual attainment in knowledge and wisdom increases. It is in this power over matter and in its perpetual progress that man shows his infinite elevation over all animal or mere material existences.

"Thus Christ's great psychic power over matter and material forms and forces while he was on Earth arose from his exalted attainment of spiritual power and being unto which he had reached in these psychic realms before he went on his mission to Earth. This power which he exercised we ignorantly termed there 'supernatural,' not knowing that it arose by reason of that universal order of the lower and

higher elements established by God, which Christ knew, and which he taught us of. The spiritual is nearest God. Flesh and blood cannot enter these upper realms.

"Thus we on Earth arrived at the sublime, inspiring truth of Spirit and of the continued personal life of the human spirit ! Our thought and reason taught us, by the indomitable researches of science and philosophy into God's material realms, that the spirit was the true self, the ego ; that it was in the spirit that our personal identity inhered amidst the various impressions, changes, and disintegration of the organic matter which composed our bodies. We concluded that our true self, the ego, could not be, as materialism asserted, 'a substratum of brain tissue,' but was on the contrary a portion of the true universal spiritual substance (or as the great philosopher, Herbert Spencer, said, it was the welling up in us individualized of the Universal Consciousness) conditioned by those forces which presented themselves to the physiologist in the phenomena of brain, as that it was largely dependent upon them for the form it assumed as a personal life with an individual character in the material realm.*

"The soul being thus a true spiritual Substance, a Self-conscious, Self-determining Personality, which survived the gradual conversion of the portions of living matter, through and in which it first experienced a personal identity, into dead matter,—which process was continually going on through the whole earthly existence,—might it not, we asked, outlive also the more sudden change which passes upon it at death ? As one of our consecrated thinkers once expressed it : 'Among the infinite possibilities of being in this infinitely adapted universe there may well be the *bodies celestial* of which Paul speaks, with such new organisms

* Once Ariel said :—"The Personal-Spirit-Force constituting the true self was individualized about, in, and through the material body and guided, controlled and used it, in a similar manner, by analogy, as the magnetic force did the bar of steel."

wherewith to express themselves to other intelligences, wherewith also to define themselves to themselves, and thus to retain self-consciousness, we, the living agents that we call ourselves, may be clothed upon at death.'

"And this survival of our personal identity, the mortal putting on immortality, was rendered joyously credible 'by the light and research of modern thought in the critical, scientific movement of my age on Earth. So, from these foregoing investigations into life and mind, based upon strict scientific and philosophic grounds, we on Earth with assurance deduced the grand thoughts which may be expressed in the following propositions, which I will formulate for you.

"*First*.—That life, the vital principle, and much more Self-Consciousness, could not be the product of unconscious forces and matter.

"*Second*.—That life and consciousness must of necessity have been derived from pre-existent Self-conscious life, as like from like; and that they were superior to and above matter; and that *ab initio* the vital force in us was not the consequence but the cause of the material organism.

"*Third*.—That since Life and Self-consciousness in some form of Personality must have existed prior to, and independent of, dead matter, these, as represented in our personality, could survive the death and dissolution of the material organism, and exist again independent of matter.

"*Fourth*.—That Mind and its forces were, and must have been, immaterial, and were not subject to the laws of matter, and could not be conceived of in the terms of matter, and therefore must be spirit as opposed to matter.

"*Fifth*.—That Life, Thought, Consciousness, Spirit, led us irresistibly to God as the Father of Spirits, as their Parent and Common Cause.

"*Sixth*.—That our personal consciousness must have proceeded from a conscious Parent and Source, and could

not have come out of, nor could it return into, void unconsciousness.

"And finally we saw that from out all the material phenomena, forms, and forces of earth there was produced, one grand Net Result, Self-conscious Man;—a Being with faculties that o'erleaped the sordid needs, material desires and wants of fleshly life, and soared ever towards these eternal, spiritual realities;—A Being always striving and rising and evermore seeking these psychic realms;—a Being who felt and believed that beneath the abiding spiritual consciousness and yearning within him were that Divine Power and Purpose bearing him ever upwards to his final, sublime consummation, the 'Spirit of the just made perfect';—and we felt and knew that this Divine Power and Purpose, having completed the process that gave us such sublime being, would not give us over to destruction, but in the bosom of His Immortality would receive us Immortal, garnering from that material realm that alone which was Like unto Him!

"Thus, my celestial brothers, I think I have made plain to you that, by the investigation of consecrated minds on earth into the forms, forces and phenomena of the material spheres—we arrived at the following great spiritual truths and realities:

"(a) That of the necessity of creation. That of the necessity of a Creative Power, of a conscious, intelligent, creative First Being—God—in all and above all.

"(b) That of spirit as the Reality of realities—the source of all power and force—Divine Spirit, and human, individualized Spirit.

"(c) That of Immortality, or the continuation of Self-Conscious Life irrespective of matter and material organisms; for that the Spirit, the Self-conscious I, being immaterial, and inconceivable in the terms of matter, was not subject to any of the laws and conditions of matter, and hence could not be subject to its final law, material death.

"And these great spiritual truths were our hope and inspiration on earth, and constituted to us there the sublimity of life.

These three—God, Spirit, Immortality—were the *sine qua non*, the deep-laid foundation, the mooring stones, of religion, or spiritual life on earth. And upon these realities, if they would but see it, not only the believer in revelation, but also the sincere, toiling scientist and investigator of earth, working up through the travailing depths of inductive philosophy, may plant their weary feet as upon a rock.

"Upon these three all-inclusive truths, as upon a constellation of stars, light-gleaming and glorious, God's children on earth to whom He speaks through revelation, and God's children to whom He speaks through reason, may fix their hopeful gaze, and wait, and hope, for the coming of that dawn, for the breaking of that morn of never-ending day, when, to them of earth, as to us here, there shall be no more night."

CHAPTER XVI.

RISTOS' STRANGE INQUIRY—HE CRAVES AN AUDIENCE WITH
CLAREESE ALONE—COULD SIN BE HERE?

JUST as Ariel closed his discourse, and while many of the vast throng in the Temple were departing, Ristos of Sirius approached and asked him this strange question :

"If one, a being on earth, did there unite himself in life and unto death with his affinity, called there his 'wife,' and if that union be one of love, does death below and the entrance by him into this Celestial Sphere (his wife yet unrisen here) absolve him from that love and union, and may he here avow another union of affinity and be holy?"

And, as Ristos asked this strange and startling question, he fixed his intent mind on Clareese and myself, who had remained side by side during Ariel's discourse. Up to this time we had not noticed Ristos' presence in the Temple, as we had left him alone without. And as he fully and clearly enunciated this inquiry, I noticed that Clareese drew closer to me. She raised her eyes of hazel light to mine, and then fixed them in tranquil tenderness on Ariel, awaiting his reply.

Then Ariel replied: "Ristos of Sirius, your inquiry is truly strange; for in this holy sphere we all presume each mind to be true and pure, with truth and love as its only law. If there be one here who left on earth his loved affinity, that soul's most holy desires here would keep him true and tried, forever faithful to his love below, until she come.

"So she of earth would holily keep her troth, awaiting her arising to these pure realms, where her beloved had gone before. Love's law, plighted souls, whether on earth or here, who have felt its sweet power, will never violate. If either should, it is proof that they never loved, but lived only in formal union, sanctioned on earth as a social expedient."

As the vast throng left the Temple, I noticed that Ristos was beside Clareese and myself. On the instant he bowed most gracefully, and extended his finely-shaped hand towards me and said:

"If my brother will pardon me for the interruption of his pleasure, and if you, Clareese, have no objection, I would crave an audience with you alone."

No culture, nor grace of manners, nor fascination's guileless art, could equal the elegant, superb air and bearing of this celestial Apollo, as he thus addressed us, bending his mellowed eyes of intent emotion on Clareese all the while. It seemed that every element and faculty within him had become transformed into beauty, grace, and softness. The harsh and cynical look which I had noticed on his face, as

Clareese and I left him to go to the temple, had disappeared. He seemed like a special creation made to charm, enchant, and captivate whomsoever he chose !

As I looked upon him slightly inclining his perfectly-formed head towards Clareese, as though in the attitude of bestowing a blessing upon her, one hand grasping hers and the other mine, the whole halo of his beauteous light focused in that gaze upon her, I instantly thought to myself : " She doth not inhabit these celestial spheres who can resist such charms and such beauty ! "

I replied to him : " Dear Ristos, while I prize very highly the most enjoyable companionship of her, who has comforted me so much since my advent here, yet I would gladly sacrifice my joy to your wish, if Clareese so desire. "

Clareese answered : " Most happy am I to see you ; can't we all together enjoy the sweets of the companionship of all ? But, if you so desire to converse with me alone, I could not refuse you. "

" I do so desire, for others could have no pleasure in the trend of our private thought. "

Then Clareese addressed me : " Remember your promise that you would glide with me to my home, the Seven-Sistered Pleiades (as your poets termed it), and my promise to you that while soaring thence I would tell you much about myself. I will remind you of the occasion of our departure. " Then she blessed me with a soft look from her eyes of love, and waved me adieu with her pure, pink-white hand of light ; then, turning, she gave this hand to Ristos' proffered clasp, and glided away. As she finished addressing me, Ristos turned his face to me, a face that then seemed in confident repose, and *looked*, he did not appear to look directly at me, but as though he looked through and beyond me into the receding space. Thus confrontingly he stood for an instant, and then averted his face ; and as he did so, I thought I saw a sneer of disdain upon it,

As I noticed this "look," this inquiring thought passed through my mind: "Ristos could not possibly have an evil or impure thought or emotion in this most holy realm? Though that look impressed me as foreboding, or proceeding from evil. But no, how could an unholy sentiment exist in this pure light?"

These two glided on to where I saw a bower of celestial "Flowers," that is, lovely forms and colors of beauty, by which flowed an exquisite current of ethereal substance, odoriferous, and emitting a pale, dreamy light; this current glided into a cascade out of whose depths floated divinest melody. Into this bower, by this current, near this sweet-singing cascade they went, and then I lost sight of them.

What there took place Clareese afterwards related to me.

CHAPTER XVII.

WITHIN MY OWN PERSONALITY I VANISH FROM ALL—REFLECTIONS—ALONE WITH MYSELF—ASSURANCE OF LIFE.

HERE, deeply hidden within the sacred abyss of my own Personality, where no one in this eternal abode can be save God, I will commune with myself, and hold secret, silent monologue.

The wonders, the sublimities, which here fill, and encompass me, do overcome me with awe and reverence!

When, how, can my soul comprehend this state, these sublimities, this infinity, into which I have so mysteriously been cast?

These powers which I have, so varied and apparently limitless, seem to me as yet but forceful dreams of the Infinite that lies beyond, and towards which I will forever tend.

These powers pertaining to myself, environed by these celestial beauties, strengthened alway by this divinely-sustaining effluvia, bounded by naught save God and infinity, to what heights will they bear me? Then what of these vast emotions and blissful sentiments which surge and billow within me? Beauty, love, holiness, joy, passion—all universal—fill me, and surround me like hosts of ministering spirits, all subject to my sovereign will, and doing me perfect and gentle obeisance.

I have spent all of my past life on earth in more or less darkness and doubt. I did not, I could not, know there what here is plain and open to my view, and which so entrances me.

O! that I could have heard, and known, Ariel's discourse on earth, which I have just listened to in the Temple of Knowledge. What light and hope it would have given me while I sojourned there! what force and thought and spiritual truth were there in it! how it would have flooded the material realm with light to me! I never thought that there was so much of the eternal, spiritual verities bodied forth in the material sphere of earth. It is true these verities were thought by many to be given to the world in what was there termed revelation, and were taught so beautifully and forcibly by our blessed Christ; but there were many minds so constituted and endowed, that they could not rid themselves of doubt, and accept with assurance the truths and conclusions so presented to them. They were sincere, earnest seekers after such truth, but they could be convinced of it only by and through the processes of reason and investigation. Would that all such could have fixed in their minds this great discourse of Ariel's!

I used often to wonder that if we earthly creatures should live on after the death of our bodies, how we would live, and how continue our individual, personal existence. I often asked: "What was there left of us to live, after all we could

see of ourselves had perished? If the mouth was forever shut, and the tongue clodded, and the eye rotted, and the ear plugged, and the brain molded, and the hand stiffened, and the feet shackled, by the grim Annihilator, Death, then how was I to be able ever to speak, or to see, or to hear, or to think, or to work, or to move? Woe to me! poor earth-mortal of a dying conglomeration of perishing matter, how could an eternal life be possible to me!"

Poor, blinded creature that I was, to think that the narrow confines of an earth of perishing matter and a body of shifting dust completed the destiny, and filled out the measure of God's infinity and of immortal mind and spirit! Father, why could not I there see and know that: "Thou spirit of my spirit, and my God! Thy light, Thy love, in their bright plenitude filled me with immortal soul, to spring over the abyss of death, and bade it wear the garments of eternal day, and wing its heavenly flight beyond that little sphere even to its source—to Thee, its Author here?"

Why could I not comprehend there concerning myself and what is here so plain and evident, that the material body and its organs were but the physical counterpart of the spiritual body or real self, the former impelled and encompassed by the spiritual substance, for the end that mind might know matter and subject it to the purposes of thought and character? I see now, as Ariel so lucidly taught me, that the material senses of that body furnished to the mind only forms of motion, which the mind perceived under the forms of sensation, such as the sensation of vision, of sound, of feeling, of taste, and of smell; each of these sensations in all their various forms and degrees being the direct result of motion in matter.

Why did I not comprehend on earth that these motions, which alone my mind perceived, were only the resultants, arising from mind, (either of the individual, or of the universal mind expressing itself throughout the universe)

acting by means of force (which itself is of mind), upon and through matter? And that my consciousness did not tangibly perceive matter itself but only the immaterial resultants arising from the force and action of other mind upon and through matter, reaching into contact through my material organism with my pure, perceptive faculties? That thus, there was mind beneath and back of all material forms speaking through matter and expressing itself under and by the forces in matter, unto communing mind, and that thus only could we have known matter?

The sensation arising from the sense of sight, for instance, was produced by the motion of the light-waves, which acted upon and through the eye and its nerves, and brain-center, and these thus affected conveyed this form of motion to the mind, which perceived it as a sensation of vision, and interpreted it into a perception of form and color. Thus the mind became acquainted with the idea of material form and color. Neither the mind nor the material vision or sight-organ came into tangible contact with the material form which was perceived, but only with certain specific forms of motion, which resulted from material objects, when acted upon by the forces of the luminiferous ether. These forms of motion were different according as each object and color were different.

So, of the sense of hearing, by which the mind was acted upon by a different form of motion; the sound waves were a form of motion produced by the action of force upon matter, which could be conveyed to the mind only through the material organ of hearing, and its nerves and brain center; and this form of motion, the vibration of air, the mind converted into the sensation of sound. Different rapidity of vibratory motion produced different sounds, just as different rapidity of the light-motions produced different colors. The mind did not perceive color and sound as objective realities, but as states and conditions of the brain matter excited variously.

by the various objects acting upon the senses, which states and conditions in the brain, the mind interpreted under the forms of sensation.

The action of any external object upon or through any of the material senses produced in the nerve and brain system a molecular excitement or motion, each differing from every other as the object perceived differed, and these forms of motion in the sensory alone, the mind perceived under the forms of sensation, and then converted them into the forms of thought and idea. Thus we were endowed that mind might conceive and subdue the material universe. But here in this ethereal realm of pure thought we have no need of the material senses of hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling, and smelling, which were necessary on earth as channels to convey to the mind the multiform motion arising from the material phenomena and environments which surrounded us there, and which God would have us know and interpret into the forms of thought and character. Instead of these material senses we have here our pure Psychic-Faculties which furnish us with every psychical conception in full and perfect verity. On earth, for instance, we expressed, interpreted, and perceived, the beauties and sweets of music through the material organs by vibrations or motions of the sound-waves, and these combinations of motions, known and perceived there by us, as sensations of sound, the mind converted into the sweet emotions of music. These vibrating motions in the air were not music—they only served to convey in that material realm the divine rhythm and harmony from soul to impulsed soul.

But here I see plainly that we have not the material sense-organ of hearing, but instead our perfect concepts of every emotion, idea and beauty of pure sound and music, immediately conceived by the psychic faculty, without the clog and intervention of a material organ and medium. Music, form, color, beauty are all pure spiritual entities, divine im-

pulsations, with which these ethereal elements and our being here are perfectly endowed; the soul is immediately filled by them; they are of its nature; one seeketh and flieth unto the other, as light melteth into light, and as harmony floweth into harmony!

Instead of the perishing body of matter with its decaying organs conjoined to our pure being, we have here our individualized Psychic Substance—the spirit-entity, with all its perfect faculties, which comprise our true selves.

I now see it was this True Self with its faculties conjoined to the material body with its senses that gave to the latter on earth its personality, its contour of individuality, its countenance and character, its identity, which pertained to it, and inhered in it, through all the mutations, changes, growth and decay, that marked the history of that material body on earth.

Here we see the pure, beatified Person, perfected in identity, stripped of all that perishes and that undergoes change and decay, endowed with every faculty of perfect being in these perfect, psychical realms!

If men would only pause to think and consider on earth they would discover positive assurance of their true spiritual selves. For if they were not endowed with spiritual being and faculties, how could they ever have any conception of a spiritual entity? Such a conception would have been beyond the power of their imagination.

We all knew it to be a truth on earth that if a human body was deprived in its creation of any one of the material senses that it could have no conception of the sensation, which that sense furnished to the mind. He, who never had the sense of hearing, could not be made to comprehend the phenomena of material sound; so, if deprived of any other of the material senses. Hence on earth we could not conceive of a sixth sense, or a sense, which we had never known any being or animal endowed with. No man on earth could

conceive of any additional sense outside of the senses of seeing, hearing, feeling, tasting, and smelling. Neither could we imaginē any other sense.

We learned on earth that the primary intellectual powers of mind were :

First.—Perception by which the mind became acquainted with all things external.

Second.—Memory by which we were enabled to recall things past.

Third.—Consciousness which acquainted us with all things internal.

These three, perception, memory, consciousness, were the primary powers of the mind. Over these three the will had no complete power ; they were in a large sense independent of volition. Perceptions would very often be forced upon the mind contrary to its volition ; matters impressed upon, or stored within, the memory would often be involuntarily thrust, in a vivid manner, before the mind ; and our consciousness of our thoughts and surrounding was felt by all, and did not depend upon any act of our will, but upon the constitution of the mind itself. But in exercising the faculties of recollecting, reflecting, reasoning, judging, and imagining, we found that all these were subject to our will and volition. Now in exercising the faculty of Imagination we could at will transfer the external peculiarities of one animal to the body of another, and thereby create any kind of imaginative monster ; we could compound creatures of strange forms, but the parts of such creatures, the imagination took from forms already known to the mind. The faculty of imagination might range wildly through the material and intellectual world ; yet all philosophers of earth admitted that, although imagination might body forth the forms of things unknown, it was only by analogy to things already known. The human intellect had no creative power. It could not create one new particle of matter ; it could change and

modify, it could convert a fluid into a solid, or a shapeless piece of matter into form and shape; but in the physical world it could not create.

Imagination was to the intellectual world what mechanical ingenuity was to the natural world. In neither could any result be obtained unless the parts and materials were already furnished to be operated upon.

Imagination could do no more with ideas, than mechanical ingenuity could do with metals, wood and stone. The intellectual as well as the mechanical artificer must have his model, his subject, his materials, before him, provided for him. These were truths known and admitted by all on earth.

Then where and how did we, or could we, conceive the grand idea of spirit and spiritual existence, while we were immured in the material sphere?

If we on earth in our material body and environments, were not endowed with spiritual consciousness and faculty, where and how did we discover and comprehend, the idea, the verity, the conception, and the reality of spiritual truth and existence?

If the imagination could conjure up and fashion no idea, no faculty, sense nor form, but something composed of, and analogous to, what was already known to the mind, and if we had no spiritual consciousness, how could our minds arrive at any idea of spirit any more than one born deaf, without the sense of hearing, could arrive at any conception of sound? How could we have comprehended any teaching or revelation concerning the spiritual?

The conclusion should have been to us on earth irresistible that, our deep, solemn consciousness and idea of spirit and spiritual power and truth arose out of the spiritual being and faculties which comprised our Real Self, and which were the unseen, sacred power within us, the Supreme Reality of our existence! And thus we should have had assurance on earth of what I here experience.

As the man born without the sense of hearing could not by any means be made to conceive of such a thing as sound ; as one born blind could not be made to have any idea of colors ;—so we should have known absolutely that one created devoid of spiritual faculty, and endowed only with material powers, could not be made to conceive of, or to imagine, by any process of teaching or instruction—any idea or conception of spirit or spiritual life and verity.

I should have seen and realized on earth that :

“ The chain of being is complete in me ;
 In me is matter's last gradation lost,
 And the next step is spirit—Deity :
 I can command the lightning, and am dust
 A monarch, and a slave ; a worm, a god :
 Whence came I here, and how ? so marvelously
 Constructed and conceived ? Unknown ! this clod
 Lives surely through some higher energy ;
 For from itself alone it could not be !
 Yes : in my spirit doth Thy Spirit shine
 As shines the sunbeam in a drop of dew.”

How plain, how sublime it all is to me here ! What evident and needful purpose in that dual existence which God gave to me on earth ! How fitting it seems that my celestial name here should be “ Assurance,” for it is that expression of this inward state of feeling which gives me such comfort and strength.

Just now I stood within the holy and infinite temple of God. How His Presence flooded me, and how His benediction descended upon, and filled me, when He spake it by the tender “ voice ” of Love ! How unspeakably holy and joyful do I feel, as though God encompasseth me about on every side. What else can this be but God's presence that welleteth up within me !

O ! the ineffable tenderness of that “ voice ” and “ smile ”

of the Father's Love! And how His hallowed effulgence diffused itself over all, as it descended irradiating down the inner dome of that holy temple!

* * * * *

I see in these realms unnumbered intelligences, a mighty host glorified and perfected in being. I have been so overcome by this vast multitude and the grandeur and beauty of my surroundings that I have not fixed my attention upon these beings, to see if I recognize any from earth whom I had known there. There must be many here from my old sphere, some of whom I know, and some who are very dear to me. Strange I had not thought to seek for them ere this! But no, my advent here appears as just now, and I have been so overwhelmed!

I have met Ariel of Earth and many others (these I had never known there) and Meoön of Orion and Ristos of Sirius, and Clareese—yes dear Clareese of the sweet Pleiades! She, my comforter and dear companion here, so radiant, beauteous and fair! She (shall I say?) my celestial Af——? No! that cannot be! Love her? Yes, as God's child; I am so commanded. Woo her as soul of my soul? My Affinity? That in that sweet union and commingling, that touching of joy to joy in ecstasy of holy passion, I may experience those divinest emotions of pure, celestial Love? No! no! That cannot now be; I must await her, my Affinity, my Love, of Earth, who, when disenthralled by death, will fly unto me! I could not fail her when she arrives, and lifts her devoted eyes to mine. Loving her, how could I love another and be true and holy?

True, our earthly vow was, "until death us do part." And many on earth, wise and good, and who even profess to believe in this our future personal life, hold that death ends that sacred troth, and that the vows of love reach not beyond the grave. Thus they make of Love but a fleshly lust, or at most but an attraction of matter to matter for a little while.

But, then, doth love there on earth concern only an attachment of matter to matter, of one organized animal body to another? Is love only as so much gravity binding together in the temporal life two material bodies? Attracting two pieces of organisms?

Let me see, did I love only her hair, or her head, or her feet, or her hands, or her face, or her eyes, or simply all these parts combined into a physical body of vitalized matter? My God! No! I loved her Personality, her soul, her character, her faculties of intellectual being, her gentle, tender emotions and sentiments, her purity, her virtue, her devotion! Was it not these, beaming from her eyes, speaking from her countenance, sweetly gliding in her motion, trilling and singing in her voice, thrilling in her gentle touch, all composing her real, true self, which I loved? Were not these soul-realities her true self? And were they not of God and Eternity?

Then doth death absolve me from these, or divorce her from me?

Dear, lovely Clareese, though thou art entrancingly adorable, and seemest in thy tender sympathy for me that thou mightest love me somewhat, as earnest of a still more fervent passion, yet perhaps She is waiting to come to me, true and steadfast unto the end. I still feel, Sweet One, that when in yon lower vale,

“ We saw and woo’d each other’s eyes
My soul contracted then with thine :
And both burnt in one sacrifice,
By which our marriage grew divine.
Time’s ever ours while we despise
The sensual idol of our clay :
For though the sun do set and rise,
We joy one everlasting day ! ”

Is not this, my soul, my Real Self, hers?

But suppose she should love another, I being dead and

departed ! Suppose she, impatient and lonely in her earthly life, should give herself to another in love's troth, and I should let Clareese also pass from me, and thus lose both !

CHAPTER XVIII.

RECOGNITIONS—STRANGE POWERS OF MIND.

HAVING thus held secret communion with myself, I again, upon my volition, mingled among those Intelligences about me. I passed about in serene quietude, complacently observing those happy existences ; scanning each joyous countenance ; enraptured, satiated.

While thus observing, I perceived, not far away, a Personality, so featured, facultied, and defined, possessing such a cast and glow of countenance, that it appeared familiar to me. I recognized that form and its bearing. I had known that Individuality, and my mind recalled it perfectly. I determined to address him.

I said : " I am sure this is no one else but Amicus, am I not right ? "

" Yes, and thou art Assurance, my dear friend, I knew thy ' voice ' ere I saw thy face ; such joy to meet you here ! How many happy surprises I have ! But how did you know my name here ? "

" Why, Amicus, how did you know mine, you should explain first ? "

" O ! yes, Assurance, I should have thought of that. You knew me and knew my name on earth. In our intuitive experience of one another each remains the same here. The celestial name is to the earthly name exactly as the celestial body is to the earthly body. You know them both here instantly. To speak your celestial name here is simply to

address your old familiar self, the dear one of long ago. Here the celestial name bursts out spontaneously. Everything here takes on the form of idea, spirituality, beauty, love, and emotion. So with the name.

"The names we have here are not so much names, in the ordinary sense of that term on earth; they are more *name-ideas*. Each being, created by God, has his peculiar identity and meaning—and no two identities mean the same thing, just as no two facts or things mean the same thing. Now each one's name-idea here corresponds to his identity, and expresses his identity, and defines it from all others. In that great illumination called being, we are each a different ray, and while we all converge in one unity—the Father—and radiate toward one focus—love—yet each one has his own hue and color, his own differentiating identity. Each individual soul has as much his meaning and purpose in this universe as each sphere or realm. It is the duty and end of the true soul to be true to that divine purpose. It was this peculiar identity in each being which we knew on earth, and we recognize it and its name-idea here.

"The name is here transfigured from that form to this meaning, from that body to this idea. The name-idea follows the person, the identity, as a matter of course. Whenever we know and recognize the person, we know his or her 'name' spontaneously—just as when we beheld light, for instance, on earth, we recognized its quality, its identity of nature, its meaning and purpose, no matter by what names it may have been variously expressed on different parts of earth. The all-defining idea was the same, and always recognized."

"Amicus, you have given me such new and thoughtful meaning on this subject, so interesting to all of us.

"Do you know, Amicus, there was one thing about this blessed immortality here that used to puzzle my mind on earth, and fill me with doubt and despair.

"You remember how we all would wonder and inquire, when some dear one went down into death, how we could ever again meet and recognize that one, even if there should be this immortality? The mother, for instance, passes to immortality here, and leaves her infant boy on earth; she expects to meet her infant boy here again when he cometh thitherward; this boy grows up to manhood on earth, and he becomes the father of children, and when age has whitened his hair, and withered his form, he dies and leaves children there, and they expect to meet their father in this immortality; the lover sees his only beloved, fair and beautiful one, vanish from his embrace into those impenetrable shades betwixt earth and here, and he waits his time, expecting to greet that same radiant one here. Now, Amicus, how can each here again be to the other as they had wished for in this immortality?"

"Assurance, you somewhat imply in your question what is unreal and neither desired, nor expected, by those who hope for immortality. It is unreal that the mother, who has ascended here leaving her babe, should after long earth-years expect her infant boy to remain an infant and thus arise here. Instead of such being desired it would be a calamity. There must take place that growth and development of body and mind culminating in character, personality, and identity on earth. The mother, whose child had left her for some school of instruction and development, would not expect her child to return to her with no progress attained, but instead would desire him to be changed and carried forward to some higher attainment. It matters not how long her child's absence, nor what change for the better has taken place in his nature, he would still remain her child, and in his developed state she would but enjoy him the more. There would be that sweet expectancy, that gladsome surprise at the meeting, that always make recompense for the long absence. So it is here in this immortality. The mother looks forward to the meeting,

not with her infant child, but with her developed, her changed, her improved child—yet he is nevertheless her child. She would meet here that higher, perfected identity, that self-developed, spiritual character, defined and featured in substantive-form; featured and defined in that self-same individuality which adhered in, and gave unity and cast and countenance to, that ever-changing and disintegrating body on earth. She would not see here, and could not desire to see, that perishing, gross, earthly body, but she would see that perfect personality, that personal identity, her real loved one, impulsive, emotional, and intellectual, receiving and returning that fullness and perfectness of recognition and love which we all feel and know here. And so it would be in the other cases mentioned by you. In this state there is not what we know on earth as ‘age,’ but there are degrees of development and stages of wisdom and spiritual attainment. For our loved ones, with whom God has related us more closely by nature, we feel, and receive from them, always, that affection and reverence which are due and fit. And the giving and the receiving make us all happier and happier. After awhile we find that we are all akin, the children of our Spiritual Father, and we love all dearly. But still there must be degrees of love, and phases of affection, and these we experience; and so there is no monotony in love, as there is no sameness anywhere nor in anything.

“Thus we on earth expected to greet our loved ones here, and thus these here expect to greet those on earth when they come up disenthralled; each and all ennobled, developed, made purer, better and sweeter.”

“What you say, Amicus, had been somewhat explained to me by Ariel, and is touching and beautiful. Such wonder, beauty, and transformations do I here behold with every thought that wells up within me. And you have been here in this exalted realm since your body expired on that day in my arms?”

"Yes, but it seems as though it were just now. Nothing recedes from the mind here, nothing passes into the dubious shades of forgetfulness. It seems as if everything were a happy, ever-present consciousness. You say I expired in your arms? I did not realize what had happened to me. I saw you; then earth's phases grew dim and glimmered more and more faintly; then there passed over my body a tremulous struggle, though not painful, as though my fleshly counterpart were numbly rending asunder; then there came a flash as of some new light, and with that flash an opening up of these grandeurs. I hardly knew what had taken place; I suppose that was what we termed death, and this was my exaltation, my transfiguration.

"Dear Assurance, I died in your arms, and then they closed my eyes and folded my hands? And the preacher smoothed over my poor memory with consolatory words? And then they wrapt my poor mortality in the earth from which it came, and my loved ones wept over me? All this? And then silence, the specter, which fills our void, took my place, and the waves of time surged over me? And that was all?"

"I can answer yes and no. Within Love's sphere, that sweet, and most gentle sovereign who has a domain even on earth, your place has always been yours. Within this heart of your friend, and in the hearts of loved ones, you remained immortal there. But otherwise you went the way of all earth's dead: and so far as I know thus I have gone. You suffered long and much, and your earthly body wasted away in that crucible of protracted agony. I did not depart thus from my fleshly entablature. I felt not the occasion, or the moment, of my taking off. On that night of my departure, I fell asleep, as usual, in my chamber. My next experience was my sublime transfiguration here at a period that seems but now.

"How strange, Assurance, that you should have shuffled

off your mortal coil, without the pain and labor of your undressing; a struggle which so many poor mortals have to undergo. You experienced not the stripping off the body from the Psyche by death; protracting his torturous dissection in his slow, deliberate way; sucking out the blood from its courses; burning to fevered crisp the rounded flesh of form and limb; plunging, by stealthy stroke, his cruel knife of pain into each vital part; until numbness stiffens all, and the misty iciness of that umbrageous river encases round; and then the end! It might almost be said that you eluded the cruel monster."

"So, so. But do you think that I have passed through? You know, I have had certain strange emotions concerning myself, something like forebodings, not painful, but strange; and I communicated them to my beloved Ariel, he who first welcomed me here, and asked him, if I could be at earth to know my true state, and to see my body, and thus acquaint myself with myself; and he informed me that this was impossible, and explained to me why—giving reasons which I suppose you know."

"Wise Ariel, whom I know and esteem, has informed you correctly. Often did I wish to know and see the after-trend of earth's affairs since my departure thence; but God's purpose is wise which renders this impossible to us. For us to see, and know, the woes, trials, and burdens of earth and of those we love, would fill our souls with sorrow even in these ethereal realms. God does not desire that such cup should be put to our lips again. When we have passed up, having overcome evil through tribulation, we cannot descend again into tribulation. On earth's perturbed sea our blissful voyage must not tend. We rest our faith in God's beneficence that he will temper the winds of adversity to our beloved, whose life-vessels have not yet anchored on these peaceful shores. 'Tis true, from minds, that know our loved ones on earth, who tend to these realms before them,

we may hear of them ; and if sorrowful tidings come to us, we must needs list with pity's ear ; but such tidings are swallowed up in our joy. For we know that those light afflictions of our beloved work out in character exceeding great joys, and that all will be well with them in the rounding up of a grand and final destiny. I have learned here that the sublime purpose of our earth-life was to furnish forms of character fashioned in the strong, stern molds of adversity, sorrow and affliction. These latter are necessary for the production of the former. All the phenomena and forms and forces of earth were formulated for the purpose of the production of character ; and of all things there, character alone is eternal. Refined, noble, beatific character is the final result and fruitage which God garners to Himself from the material sphere ! For this harvest alone was the gross sphere of earth planted in the universal fields of God's creation ! The grandest, best, most eternal types of character must come up from adversity, temptation, sorrow, and tribulation. Thus only can such be formed. And so God embarked spirit upon that turbulent sea of life which we have crossed."

"Amicus, I thank you for such helpful words. In such joyful thoughts you pun on my celestial name for you give me full assurance here.

"But tell me further, have you yet known in this celestial realm any one dear to me ?"

"No, only Constance and Sincerus, your dear friends of earth, whom you knew, and loved, and who came hither since my arrival. But I will acquaint you with a new and wonderful power, with which we are endowed here, if you have not heretofore become conscious of it, a power by which you may have present with you at any instant any one whose soul and mind are *en rapport* with yours."

"Why, Amicus, I know not this power ; we possessed it not on earth !"

"No, not on earth, yet there some analogous powers of mind existed, only faintly developed, or hinted at. We observed premonitions of this subtle, mysterious, psychic power, this influence of mind over mind, there, in the phenomena which we knew indistinctly as hypnotism, thought-transference and the like, by which the mind and will of one being controlled, and became cognizant of, the thoughts, actions, and volitions of another mind. You and I while on earth witnessed special instances of this power. Our dear Christ exercised on earth this and other celestial powers of mind as showing the power of spirit over matter. Here in this pure sphere of mind, we are fully endowed with this, and other wonderful powers, which may be termed faculties of mind and modes of psychical communication—the transfusion of thought into thought, the intermingling of mind with mind, the attraction of will to will. By this power your will may draw unto itself, or be present with, the objects of its love and desires. Without this power in this limitless realm, the soul might live for æons and not meet those most dear to it. Throughout these spheres minds glide, and mingle, and pass out, on missions of thought, wisdom, and love, studying and searching out the mysteries, grandeurs and beauties of infinity, bearing truth and love with them evermore and everywhere! No mind except the Eternal One hath Omnipresence. Only fix in your thought whom you would have in communion with your soul, and upon the volition of your intent will, the one desired will be with you, or you with them as you may wish. To pure mind space is not limiting, distance is no hindrance, and there is no localization of thought and will. Oh! the power and grandeur of disenthralled mind! Thus we realize our sublimity and kinship with the Father of Spirits!"

"Amicus, can these things be true? Then in haste will I will for Their blessed presence! God be with me and share my joy!"

My beloved Parents, come !

* * * * *

Around the Holy of Holies of that Sacred Instant, when they met me, and embraced me in love, let the veil be drawn !

My futile pen shall not profane that scene, when my soul embraced the beloved Ones, who gave me birth, and were the harbingers of my life on earth ; who nurtured my young fancy into manhood's strength, and then passed out from light and life and living things on earth.

* * * * *

Yes, dear God, she has the same face ; a face of featured devotion. Yes, the same, except that those lines of care had all been washed away, as if with some effulgent substance, that had englossed it with a kind of divine glow ; and those sinkings-in of her cheeks, into which murky trouble used to gather and darken, had filled out into rounded beauty.

Yes, the same eyes, that on earth used to droop, and had become somewhat sunken, and glimmered dimly in her latter years, and from which I had seen tears flow ; except that now they had become beautifully bright and radiant—filled out with light—but had the same tender softness and kindness mirrored there. Yes, the same mouth, that kissed me into life, except that it had exchanged the earthly smile for the celestial. Yes, the same form that was so sweetly molded on earth, and which used to move about the home like the gliding of some sweet emotion on a mission of love, except that, that slight stoop was gone, there was a more perfect fullness, and that tremulousness of limb had given place to the elasticity of swift-moving flight.

Yes, the same "voice" that first lisped love into my infant ear, and sang the lullabies of my childhood's happy days, except that now its tones were sweetly ethereal and its melody more marked and harmonious.

Did I know her ?

If, in the vaporous shades of Jupiter's dark-spreading clouds I had seen that face, I would have known it was she ! If, amid the swift-flowing undulations of Sirius' rhythmic light, I had seen her glide, I would have known it was she !

I knew her, as when a toddling boy I nestled to her shielding bosom and looked up and received her smile. I knew her, as I know God, who dwells within the evident intuitions of my soul's consciousness.

And likewise I knew him, my Father, to whom on earth God committed my life. Here he was the same personality, except that there was transfiguration of all his earthly embodiments. Him a clear light in clearer light I saw. His strong Personality stood out in bolder relief; his form and features, freed from the gross tissues of shrinking flesh, assumed the full-grown model of his noble soul. There was the same reverential mood that used to sit upon his brow; the same calm thought and earnest air that mirrored forth the deep serenity of his mind.

And when he here "spoke" again to me so tenderly, I heard the "voice" of long ago, which used to call me from forbidden paths, and which counseled me to wisdom's better way.

Yes, I saw, and heard, and knew ! And when The Hand shall again roll back from me the impending veil of obscuring time, I shall see and hear and know again !

* * * * *

"Assurance, you look serenely happy, you saw them ?"

"Dear Amicus, veiled from you in that temple of filial adoration, they and God only there, I quaffed a cup of joy which has sweetened every rank and bitter drop that ever passed my lips.

"O ! at their feet, I felt once more as a prattling boy, who knows no sorrow, and conceives no care.

"I come to bid you adieu for the present. They and I will hold sweet discourse together, until duty calls them hence."

CHAPTER XIX.

DELIGHTFUL CONVERSE.

"CLAREESE, I felt the attracting effluence of your will drawing me towards the temple and this spot, and since I meet you here, I suppose you willed for me."

"Yes, Assurance, I wished for you to be by me. You were not at the Temple to hear Meoön's discourse on 'The Elements and Powers of Pure Spirit.' I have that great discourse transfixed into pure thought-forms, and will give it to thee."

"What do you mean by this, Clareese?"

"I see you do not understand how here each thought and sentiment may be transfixed in form by any mind, that they may be transmitted to all other minds, and may be thus sent forth as truth-bearers for all."

"Do you mean by this a process of writing something, like we had on earth?"

"I know not your process on earth. Here in these celestial realms, the mind instantly may flash its intellection into pure thought-forms, transfixed upon and in the surrounding psychic element, and these psychic forms remain the heritage of all minds, and may be multiplied at will. He, who desires, may, anywhere in these realms, perceive and study the thoughts and truths of other minds."

"And so, Clareese, these elements themselves becomes as teachers for us?"

"It is even so."

And then for the first time I perceived the truth of what Clareese said, in the psychic elements about me. I then replied, concerning my absence from the service :

"I was absent from the service because I was engaged in adoration elsewhere. I am just from sweet communion with my beloved Parents, who had nurtured me on earth and to whom God committed my infant life there. In their presence I experienced, what was to me, a happy eternity."

"Why did you not will me with you? I could have had equal joy with you, by sharing your supreme delight. I long to know them, and to love them for your sake."

"When we return you shall know them. Dear Clareese, I realize more and more that the great God turns every sorrow, and care, and affliction, and pain of earth into magnified, unspeakable joys here! I would welcome another life on earth to gain the reward just now bestowed upon me! Unless you had felt the pain of long and dubious separation, not knowing whether it would ever end in the longed-for meeting; all the while yearning, doubting, and despairing; unless you had so felt, you could not realize the rapturous bliss which just now filled my soul."

"Assurance, such being so, then is my prayer for your exaltation being fulfilled!"

"Yes, Clareese, and not only have I met them, but others also, who are near and dear to me, and who came to me, as I willed for them. And I knew them all;—the personality and identity of each were so perfect, and so plain to me; there was only this difference, that all appeared more serene and beautiful, transfigured! But some, a few, whom I willed for, did not come to me. Why, think you, did they not?"

"There is only one hindrance which could prevent. Their souls are not *en rapport* with yours, and they must be in Plutone, the Evil Sphere."

"O, Clareese, can this be true? They shut off from all these grandeurs, and knowing not these beatitudes? Where is this sphere? Can we go there, and, if God permit, rescue them from evil, and bring them to this holy realm?"

"This evil sphere, Plutone, lieth immensely removed from

this beatific state. The evil mind there finds, in that state, the evil which it craves. Like seeks for like, and joineth itself unto it. We may be at Plutone, Assurance, but whether we can give the rescue unto those you crave, and elevate them here, I know not. But I do know that, from out that darkened and perturbed sphere, beings do often arise to this blessed state, reformed in mind, regenerate in emotion, transformed in desires, holy in will, blessed in character !

"From these beatified spheres, there are pure spirits, 'Celestial Truth-Bearers,' who are sealed unto God, who go on missions of love, light and hope, to lift up to God and truth these misguided and darkened minds.

"Wise Ariel, and good Benedictus, and very many others find holy delight in doing thus, and in such happy work they have been much blessed."

"Good Benedictus ? Why, Clareese, I knew of this noble man on earth ! He labored all his life there to lift up to light and truth the lowly and ignorant minds of darkened lands. He ceased his labors there and arose here in our year of time 1850. His earthly name was * * * which here is Benedictus.

"So here he still pursues his soul's desire and chosen work ?"

"Yes, Assurance, every holy and happy bent of mind and desire, each mind here follows on, perfecting pleasure, and ripening inborn powers evermore ! Do you wish to be at Plutone ?"

"Yes, I should so desire ; when shall we ?"

"As it may suit you. But let us remain to the next holy service in the Temple, for on that auspicious occasion, our Elder Brother Christ, will impart to us most blessed thoughts of truth and light. We could not be away."

"No ! no ! Clareese, He, who was the Beacon Light of our world, its inspiration towards higher attainment ? Who taught us of this pure spiritual life and exemplified it ? Who

there gave form, feature and strength to despairing Hope? Who taught us to become sons of God with him? Who so exalted man? Who opened to us the way to this blessedness? Did you say, He will speak to us? And face to face?"

"Yes, Assurance, Christ, unto whom the Eternal Father hath given of His Spirit abundantly; our Elder Brother, who, being more holy, hath closer communion with our Father than all others; who manifests the tender attributes of our Father so sweetly to our conceptions, that we may grasp them, live upon them, become as them—He will speak to us."

"Then, my soul, shall I be taught of him! Clareese, we shall remain. Naught could hide from me one thought, one look, of him who spoke on earth as never man spoke before. Why doth he not remain always here with us, and teach us, that we may learn forever?"

"He wills not. His missions of love and light call him to other spheres. He dispenses to all intelligences our Father's truth and love! And so we may not have his presence every instant here. Besides, it is his will and purpose that his brethren here should do their part and work in dispensing knowledge, truth, holiness and wisdom to one another; for thus they grow on to grander attainments, and thus their powers are magnified. Life here is an ever buoyant and joyful activity!"

"You say his missions of love and light call him to other spheres.—Did you know of his mission to earth?"

"No, I myself knew not of that mission, for I was not then created intelligence, but the record of it is many times transfixed in these psychic elements, and often have I heard my elders here tell of how he mercifully chose to go as the Father's special messenger to earth, and how he descended to that low estate and became incarnate in material form through material nature's formative processes of birth and growth. How he, of all holy sons of God, being most fitted

by the Father's will and power, chose to leave these grandeurs, joys, glories, and beauties, and to go into the midst and body of evil, of temptation, sin, sorrow, affliction and death, in order that he might know, feel, suffer and experience the woes of that perturbed realm; that he might come into actual, personal contact and life with that vast multitude immured in the throes of the material earth; that, thus embodied and environed, he might teach them the Father's truth and will, and gloriously illustrate to them a life of love, purity and sinlessness; and show to them the possibility, power and purpose of spirit-in-matter; and teach them how the pure spirit-entity, which is from God, might triumph over all the powers of evil, and by its innate grandeur, endowed of God, might rise to heights of perfect life and character! How he thus exemplified and unfolded to them the life of this celestial realm, and inspired them to its attainment, pointing to himself as the way hereto, teaching them to become sons of God and heirs with him to these glories! How he thus carried light into that world, and revealed the evil and ignorance there, and then proclaimed the way, the truth, and the Perfect Life; calling upon all to follow him therein, and become likewise glorious! How he showed them how to endure and to suffer, and then make conquest over the minions of evil, even of sin and death! How he taught them to transform trial, adversity and affliction into the texture, beauty, and strength of pure spiritual character; thus overcoming all and causing the powers of evil to subserve the purposes of Good. How, having accomplished all, he submitted his earthly body unto material death, and re-ascended triumphantly here!

"Thus have I often been told by the sons of God, who knew the momentous occasion, and thus is it transfigured here in psychic form. They say he ascended here gloriously, and that these realms rang, and resounded with pæans of joy and æonian praise.

"They say that our blessed Elder Brother remained immured on earth while Algol waned his light four times a thousand, and as often renewed his glow."

"Yea, Clareese, so long enduring all those woes, that we of earth might know the perfect way to this sublime life! And through his inspiration so many have risen here beatified! And it is true that I shall soon feel and know his sacred presence? Then shall my cup of joy be full to overflowing!"

Upon my will calling for him, Ariel appears:

"Assurance, I felt the transfusion of your will calling me here to you. What will you have? Can I serve you?"

"Yes, I learned that you had not yet passed to Plutone on your mission there, and I desired your presence that I might have a few thoughts with you.

"Dear Clareese tells me that Christ will teach us at the next holy service. I thought it would be pleasant to have you tell me of this occasion. I know our Elder Brother's thought will be sweet to learn."

"Yes, each thought most blessed! For by his thoughts we are brought so near unto the Eternal Father and to a realization of our own perfect life.

"The Father manifests Himself in His wisdom, and power, and law, and beauty, and form, and being in these vast worlds, realms, and spheres, and in the unnumbered beings, His creatures, who inhabit and enjoy them. His highest, grandest work is His children, and they are nearer to Him, and more like His holy nature than all the infinity of these realms. Mere substance without mind is so much wasted force. He created these vast abodes for us. Our study and enjoyment of them are His glory, for he loveth us tenderly. But He was not content that we should have communion with Him only through the objective manifestation of His power and wisdom in His creative activity. He would have His children closer to Him. So He comes to us in the mel-

lowed influence of His pervading spirit, which is all and in all. His infinite Spirituality is the source and sustaining power of all creatures and of all forces. It fills every holy soul, transfuses every true mind, pervades the everlasting spheres, and is the fountain of every force.

"But God would be nearer than even this influence to His children. He would have us personally realize, and know, His love, tenderness, affection, holiness and all His blessed attributes. So our dear God giveth unto Christ, that beloved son, His spiritual effulgence without measure. He set forth in Christ more perfectly the blessed attributes of love, mercy, beauty, holiness, tenderness and goodness, which are faintly shadowed in us, and which are His chiefest glories, in order that we might behold these beatitudes perfected in that creation of His love. He magnifies us in Christ by revealing to us the possible glory and destiny of our life and nature. In Christ He unfolds to us ourselves in full realization. He thus defines, bodies forth, His Infinite Personality, individualized in His children, and so unites us with Himself!"

"Ariel, your thoughts so magnify me: You so open up and define the plans and purposes of the Eternal Father with reference to the elevation and perfection of His children."

"Such thoughts, which are from God, exalt every mind that receives them and makes them a part of itself. We must participate in these beatitudes presented to us in Christ by assimilating them unto ourselves, and by growing into them. They will not make us glorious, good and great, unless we love them better than life, and make them life of our life. Christ is our Pattern, our Example, our Inspiration here, as he was on our earth, so endowed of God and given to us, who hath blazoned out the way wherein we must follow, if we, like him, would become perfected in these beatitudes, and thus attain to the supreme heights of our being! He leadeth on, and inspireth us to follow. The more we become like him the nearer and dearer will be our relation to the

Father. God designed that in Christ we should behold, and realize, the grand possibilities of our nature, when fully open to the Father's influence. When we attain our perfect likeness to him, then will take place unity with the Father—not unity of existence, whereby we lose our own personality, but—a unity in kind in that perfect character and love which are offered us. We are thus sealed unto God. Whosoever attains this perfect state reaches unto that sublime existence possible to created beings. We thus become wholly spiritualized and in accord with those higher spiritual elements and powers, which are supreme over all things.

“We thus become in perfect unison with the will of our Father, and His will is the fountain source of all our power, joy and gladness. To be in unison with His will is to be in harmony with all things, and so to have all things minister unto us. Thus do the stars sing for us, and the elements make sweetest music for us; thus do all things come gently to us, bedecked in most radiant beauty; thus doth Love make herself known to us from out all forms and shapes, surprising us at every turn with delicious sentiments, and looks, and blessings, and tender glances; thus do the worlds become our chariots, and the vast sphere-systems our souls' convoy and the ether-glow our curtained chamber!

“All things except sinful souls are according to God's will, and to become His will is to have all things in accordance with ourselves. Thus we behold the grand mission of Christ sent forth of God and so endowed that he might show us how to get unto the very heart of the Father's will, and so have all things ministrant unto us. We must, as he showed us, overcome all sin and evil, for these are the annulling of our life, the negation of God's will, and keep us in discord with all things that should minister unto us.

“Hence with exceeding joy, will we listen to each thought communicated to us by our blessed Christ! For the present, adieu: I am called elsewhere.”

"Just a little while longer with you, Ariel. Will you soon address the minds in Plutone?"

"I have not yet determined. Benedictus will address them there."

"I will go hear him, and to seek for some minds in durance there."

"Assurance, thou mayest be there on mission of truth and love, but beware! That realm reeketh with evil."

"Ariel, I desire to ask you this, because I want to know about how God feels toward men. I have been taught that God had vengeance against them."

"Ariel, does God hate people of earth and those of Plutone, who are evil?"

"Assurance, God hates no living creature. How could God, The Good, hate the children and the offspring of His love and creation? Hate is incompatible with His nature, for He is love! And the love and beneficence and tenderness within us and in Christ come forth from God's exhaustless heart. He is the source. God hates the sins, the sinful tendencies and propensities, the lust and cruelty and revenge, and all that brood of evil passions that deform and debase His children, and lead them away from Him and from His love and life. The tender Father allows His children to suffer the afflictions and woes that arise as consequences of their sins, in order that through these tribulations they may learn the error and curse of sin, may suffer its penalties, and so be brought to overcome sin, and be led through suffering to true life and to Him. God hates not the souls and the offspring of His love, but the sin in the soul, by which the soul has defaced itself. The sufferings of the soul on earth and in yon Plutone are ordained to purify the soul of all the evil that defiles it. Thus the purpose of punishment is twofold."

"Ariel, what you say seems consistent with God's nature, and with His wise purpose in creating living beings!

"But it used to sadden my heart so much on earth, when I saw the terrible sufferings of the children of men there. If God loves His children there, Ariel, why did he permit the fierce forces of nature in the material sphere, such as storms and cold and heat and earthquakes and wasting disease and pain to torment and destroy them there?"

"Assurance, the pathway of man across Earth's disc was designedly beset by pitfalls, and strewn with thorny obstructions, and crossed by painful hindrances. The only way I can know myself to be strong is by overcoming something which opposes me. The only way I can know myself to be true is by encountering and overcoming the false. The only way I can know myself to be brave and courageous and noble is by meeting and opposing and subduing the base and ignoble. The only way I can know myself to be patient and forbearing is by enduring long-suffering adversity. The only way I can know myself to be meek and kind and gentle and charitable is by spurning from me all the allurements and temptations of pride and selfishness, and doing acts of kindness and love to those who are distressed and oppressed by earth's woes. The only way I can know myself to be good is by knowing the evil and refusing it, and choosing and loving and becoming the good. And so the only way I can realize myself, know my self-mastery, attain my conscious, personal self-hood, is by thus encountering and overcoming all the forces, tendencies, and propensities of evil in the soul—and also by suffering, experiencing, and subduing, the limitations, adversities and tribulations of earth's environments, which oppose and try me! How could I have ever known the emotions of kindness and charity and tenderness unless there had been placed about me beings who felt weakness and suffering and poverty and want and woe, who had need of me and unto whom I could minister? How could these gentle qualities of soul have been developed in any personality, unless there were the occasion, the sur-

roundings and the objects to do it? Thus and only in this way are we developed into our Personal Selves, and earth was but the crucible of our creation!

"The forces of nature you mention—such as storms, earthquakes, heat, and cold—which produce suffering and death on earth, and which we there look upon with so much horror and fear, are of small consequence to the human soul. They sometimes terminate the earthly life, that is the existence of our bodies; and cut us off, we think, prematurely—but the termination of life on earth's sphere is not an evil or harm to us, but most often a blessing, if we would look at it correctly, and view it in the light of these higher realms. We should remember that it is inevitable that death must come to all material organisms sooner or later; and it should be a matter of small consequence to us on earth, whether God translates us suddenly to this higher life by some sudden catastrophe, which quickly devitalizes the body, or by a slow process which gradually but surely denudes us of our fleshly garments. The difference of a few years of life on earth is a small thing to any being considered in the light of this life. Man's duty on earth is to apply his life unto wisdom and love, while he lives on that lower sphere, so that he may be the better prepared for his translation to this higher and purer sphere where his existence is psychic and concerns only spiritual realities. As to the occurrences themselves in material nature of those forceful disturbances, you mentioned as taking place on earth, they are, as I have once before told you, but the shifting, the disintegrating, the forming and reforming, the changing and adjusting, of material forms and forces. The earth we inhabited was always in a state of creation or disintegration. Nature's changes and the necessary actions of the forces projected into matter, in carrying on the earth's formative and developing processes, necessarily act upon and destroy forms and organisms that are subject to those forces and changes. Man is not excepted

from the operation of those forces. As far as his material existence on earth is concerned, he is subject to the infirmities of the material, as are other organic forms and organizations. By his creation in matter, it was designed that he should be so subject; for along this rough journey was mapped the way to his destiny. But these material infirmities do not hurt the soul, nor debase the character, nor destroy the real true man—but they minister to the growth and development, yea, to the very life, of the spirit! The Father has no cruel vengeance in the suffering and infirmities of human beings on earth. These are but our developing and refining processes, the means to our real creation!

“No mere adversity, or bodily infirmity, or material hurt, or catastrophe, that affects only our material existence, is evil. That which is without us cannot hurt us, but only that which is evil within ourselves; for, though there be evil about us, it hurts us not until we take it, and adopt it, and make it a part of ourselves.

“There is but one thing upon all earth which a true man should fear, and that is doing evil;—for this alone can debase and injure him, and depose him from his true dignity and estate. This enemy can proceed only from within.

“Thus in all man’s material surroundings on earth he should appropriate all of beauty and of grandeur, all of truth and of thought, all that conduces to the development of his character and to the ennobling of his spirit. He should make all earth’s infirmities subserve himself, and neither quail nor groan before any; yet depending upon none of earth’s shifting, material processes and forms and environments for his happiness, but seeking for happiness where alone it can dwell, within the clean chambers of the calm, unblemished soul, that keeps its face always toward God!

“For whether there be beauty it shall fade; whether there be health it shall decline; whether there be strength it shall wane; whether there be wealth it shall dissolve; whether

there be riches they shall fly away; whether there be loved ones they shall depart.

"But as these all are not necessary to our true happiness and dignity on earth, so their absence should not make us unhappy, nor detract from the true grandeur of our lives there. For he, within whose serene spirit the God of infinity dwells, hath all that is, or can be, within himself!"

* * * * *

To Ariel's thoughts so inspiring and assuring Clareese and I had given our most devout attention.

We now discussed in mutual joy and thought what he had taught. After a pause, Clareese remarked:

"And this wise and good man, this beatific character which we recognize in Ariel, he is from earth, that gross material sphere which is enveloped in evil and darkness! He alone is greater than all that world of mere matter!

"Thus we see, not only in Ariel, but in myriads of others beatified, the sublime results of God's plan in creating the material sphere, and of Christ's work on earth in teaching and illustrating to man how to conform to this plan and so attain to God's purpose in himself."

"Yes, Clareese, your thoughts are so true. My life has been so expanded here!

"After the holy service we will journey by your home, the sweet Pleiades, and then let us go by Plutone—God will protect us there. I so desire to be there, for the purpose I have told you, and also to learn Benedictus' thoughts to the evil minds. I desire to know more and more."

"Yes, Assurance, as you desire we will go by Plutone. And this leads me to think of what Ristos said to me in the bower near the sweet-singing cascade, when he asked me to be alone with him, and took me from your side."

"Tell me, Clareese, all that he said to you."

"O! he said many strange things. He first told me of his great, glowing love for me. In his beautiful eloquence

he vowed and vowed to me of his pure passion for me alone of all the most fair ones of these beauteous realms. How he pierced my soul with shafts of his tender emotions ! How winning and persuasive he was cannot be described by me. In such his earnest pleading he became master of all beauteous arts, and in his address and action he laid them at my feet. In my deep sincerity I told him of my high esteem for him and of my love for him, as for all the good and true : but that I did not, could not, feel the holy, thrilling contact of affinite love. And I confessed to him that my soul's true passion did not accept the proffered offering he had made.

"And then he looked away off, as if his vision were affixed in some vacant abyss. I thought I saw his beauteous face take on a scowl, and I distinctly heard him vent these strange, weird, thoughts :

" ' They shall descend there ! My plans are ready. If I fail, woe is me ! If I succeed, woe is him ! ' "

"Then, Assurance, he seemed to gather in his vision, and to concentrate it in burning gaze upon me, and said :

" ' Adorable Clareese, I perceive thou lovest him who is but just now from Earth. Remember the thought-forms of wise Ariel in the Temple, when I interrogated him. Judged by his answer, thou should'st know that he just from Earth hath his love's affinity there, and cannot love thee here, and be holy. Therefore, bestow not on him thy most purified passion. Thy yearning for affinite love can never find its counterpart, its other self, in him. Death on earth did not absolve him of his holy troth to her. ' "

"Then I told him, dear Assurance, that I did not know ; that your earthly sorrows had so sanctified you to me, and that your past life had touched each thrill and tender passion of my soul. I told him that I knew you could not give me unholy love ; and that I would stay near you, and would wait with you for her coming, and in this I would be happy.

Did I not so promise you? And I told him that if she should love another, and break her troth to thee, this would absolve thee. She could not then love thee as her affinity here, could she? Then, my Assurance, thou would'st need me. Somehow I feel that God has committed you to me. Would not thy joy and happiness require me?"

"My tender, most purified Clareese, thy blessedness, purity and beauty do so intoxicate me! If we should love, how could it be unholy? You speak truly of my love to her on Earth. Such love as hers, Clareese, could not, will not, be untrue to me, though death standeth betwixt us!"

"So, in like manner, Assurance, be thou true to her until thou knowest otherwise."

"I will, but while I wait for her arising, stay thou near me—or until I get tidings from Earth of her. Then if she be unfaithful to her first love, and if she forget me for the sake of another, then may I not pray thee to bless me with your pure and most tender passion, and to accept my devoted love as wholly yours forever?"

"Yet, Clareese, if she ariseth here still my troth, canst thou not embrace us both in thy love? Be our ministering Spirit sent of God, that we both may love thee?"

"Oh! Clareese, if she should forget me, and thou should'st be another soul's affinity!"

"Thou wilt not leave me?"

"Assurance, you have my solemn promise."

"Clareese, Ristos is most strangely wrought upon. He seems to have had a desperate emotion, as he spake to you by the singing cascade. Yet methought him so holy! Can souls become evil here, Clareese?"

As I asked this question, she looked towards the Holy Temple wistfully—and then in an instant Meoön was by her side. Then she looked at me with her eyes of soft hazel light, and expressed not a thought, but raised her beauteous hand, so like a fair-formed glow of pinkish light, and with

her finger, as a tapering ray, she pointed me to Meoön, meaning: "Ask him thy weighty query."

Then Meoön, whose grave dignity had enkindled to joy, as Clareese's light flashed athwart his sky, said, "Clareese, most beauteous and pure, at thy beckoning will I stand by thy side. How may I serve thee?"

I answered: "Good Meoön, she called thee here for my sake. While speaking gravely with her, I had cause to ask of her this question: 'Can souls become evil here?' And then she pointed me to you for answer, what say you?"

"Assurance, on this sad and weighty interrogation, I would not linger, but in hasty thought will try and give you answer.

"Souls here not sealed unto God can become evil, but they cannot abide here. More than this I cannot say.

And as we thanked him, Meoön bowed graciously, and with his melting glance transfixed on Clareese, vanished.

CHAPTER XX.

CHRIST COMMUNICATES TRUTH TO THE ASSEMBLED MINDS—
HE UNFOLDS HIS LIFE AND MISSION, AND THROUGH HIS
LIFE THE DESTINY AND SUBLIMITY OF MAN'S LIFE.

"CLAREESE, within the hallowed light of the holy Temple, wherein Christ will meet with us, and teach us, we will tend. O! to realize the grandeurs of that convocation."

We were there.

Once more in the period of the eternal. Now I stood within the infinite Temple of God.

I noticed as before that ere I was within it I saw it from without.

I beheld it again as a vast firmament globed in prisms

light of such varied and beautiful colors, as cannot be described—for no earthly colors compared to them. I saw from without, established about it on all sides, the vast colonnades, and arches, and pillars of these prised colors, upon which seemed to rest the vast-spreading, many-hued canopy.

I saw uplifted, above this canopy, mighty turrets, glittering spires, vast peaks, and crags, exquisite transformations; all combining every outline and delineation of perfect form; all enveloped in every tint and shade and hue and glimmer of perfect color. I again saw rising from the central orb of the Temple's entablature the gorgeous dome of light, which forever ascended higher and higher towards the infinite glory and beauty of God.

After I had again passed within the Temple, I observed as before that I could see no limiting circles nor boundary. Within, it seemed to be illimitable. Its spaciousness appeared to forever recede on and on; and all that unnumbered throng seemed to be an infinite center of holiness, beauty, and light, without any circumference.

There I was again in the presence of God and Infinity. I felt that none but these enveloped and filled my soul.

Description and narration fail me. Words are impotent to incarnate the thought, the sentiment, beauty and grandeur of that place and occasion.

And that beatified multitude which surrounded me,—almost infinite in number—what can I say of them? How describe the majesty, beauty, softness, tenderness, holiness, glory, joy, of these beings, all ethereal and spiritual, robed in garments of celestial light?

Here I observed before me a character majestic in every proportion; there another grand in all the powers and attainments of intellect; here another endowed with all holy and beauteous emotions; yonder one who personified all-inclusive love; to my right, one in whom was individualized pure, glowing passion; to my left, another who was an embodiment

of holiness ; here others in whom joy-imparting art seemed incarnate ; there others in whom divinest music thrilled and charmed in rhythmic life ; and everywhere countless throngs in whom all beauty had taken up its abode. All were beatified, buoyant and blessed, as though ever growing on into perfect symmetry of holy character ; yet each possessing his or her characteristic feature, attainment, and individuality.

Here they all were canopied within the sublime holiness of the infinite Temple ; flooded over with the Father's smile ; endowed with every emotion of ecstatic existence ; environed by all the elements of perfect, celestial, spiritual being. Beneath them worlds rolled and revolved ; planets sped and circled ; systems gleamed and glided. Above all was God, the Supreme Will, who guided the destinies of all.

At this instant appeared in their midst—Christ ! Glorified and exalted over all the mighty host, he arose in the center of this hallowed Infinity ; and as he appeared many fell down to worship him, and he stretched forth his hand and pointed upward and commanded : “ Arise, worship God, I am but as ye are, His begotten, only I am more abundantly blessed with His spirit. Did I not always teach ye to worship God ? ” I taught you to love and revere me, but to worship God. On the instant every soul experienced the contact of that perfect Personality. His virtue diffused through all. Not one in that legion-assemblage was far away.

Before the very eye of my soul, I saw him, who was perfected in the spirit of the Father ; who on earth called us brethren and joint-heirs with him to these glories, and with whom here we were the Sons of God.

How could I attempt to describe him, the well-beloved-Son, in whose life, character, and personality were unfolded to us those heavenly virtues, which were the brightness of the Father's glory ?

His face, countenance, features, form, delineation, were all

revelations to me of most perfect and exalted Character and Personality.

One has seen forms that made one feel instantly like falling down and worshipping God; forms that filled the soul with sublimity and praise; that inspired one with sentiments unspeakable.

So I felt when I beheld the Personality of Christ in visible delineation before me. In him I saw the climactic head of all defined, limited, visible being.

In this most beloved of all the sons of God I saw manifested the consummation of all the greatness, goodness and glory of individual spiritual character.

Here was the perfection, the model, the archetype, the exemplar, the goal, the hope, the expectancy, of the Father's children, in absolute consummation. We possessed the earnest, he was the positive realization.

I thought: "What a grand destiny to follow on and up towards him forever; ever becoming more and more like him; always striving on, inspired and thrilled by the ecstatic purpose and ambition of attaining nearer and nearer unto his likeness! I could not take each feature, faculty and lineament of Christ's Personality and describe them to the millions of his disciples on earth.

One has on earth seen sublime works of art, whose combined whole overcame one with its perfection and beauty, with its form and combination, with its tints and colors, with its perspective and symmetry—the aggregate effects of which one could recount, but could not analyze and describe each part, each shade of color, each detail of form and symmetry, which altogether composed the marvelous creation.

So one has beheld scenes in material nature; felt the unspeakableness of vast solitudes, or of old ocean's tranquillity and rage; or has been enraptured with the delights of some soft, sweet or sublime music; or has been transported by the overweening powers of eloquence; the effects of all

which one could narrate somewhat by way of suggestion to the sentiments and experiences of others, but could not dissect part by part, note by note, and word by word, and so describe the grand unity, which produced the wonderful impression upon one.

So must I speak of Christ, the sublimest Personality within the defined limitations of intellectual and moral being that had been presented to my conception !

Who can describe Perfection ? In Him I saw it defined. Who can depict Love ? In Him I saw it personified. Who can narrate Holiness ? In Him I saw it embodied in ethereal being. Who can in material language portray pure spirituality ? In him I saw it formed and featured.

To paint in language Christ's appearance would be to paint all these. One can only look, and see, and feel.

Christ was defined in pure form ? Yes. He was featured ? Yes. One could look into his face and countenance ? Yes. And behold the power and tenderness of his eyes ? Yes. And see the dignity and benignity of his head ? Yes. And these were all psychic and ethereal ? Yes. But these I cannot describe.

To know and to realize them you yourself must behold these glories. A babe cannot describe Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment : " neither can I describe Christ.

Exalted in grandeur above this mighty concourse, He cast a searching loving gaze into each face, and in clear thought-forms expressed to my mind the truths which I attempt as best I can to convey in words as follows : *

† "In the name of our Father I salute, and bless, ye all.

* NOTE.—I have compared much of Christ's thought as I comprehend it, as expressed herein, with his words on earth, as recorded by his witnesses, and give the references in foot-notes. The reader can make further comparisons if he sees fit to carry on the investigation.

† See note to Christ's Discourse, p.

"Let our Souls be full of love and praise that we are met together again in this temple of the Father's holy presence.

"Here we are filled with the brightness of the Father's glory.

"No one hath seen the Father; yet here we may draw nearest unto Him and receive the powers of His all-sustaining spirit.

"As we abide in holiness, so we imbibe His spirit.

The Father is spirit, and is infinite, pervading and sustaining each being and the universal spheres. He is the source of all powers and all being. As He is Infinite, ye cannot perceive Him outside of yourselves, for He is within you also, encompassing all. Hence ye cannot see the Father as ye see me. He is the Infinite Creator and Parent of us all, and of all created things, and is in all and through all. We are all subject unto Him.*

"Ye cannot know the Father, nor behold Him apart from and outside of yourselves, as ye know me and know one another; *but ye can only realize Him as ye realize yourselves, within the sacred consciousness of your own being.* He abideth within each loving spirit.

"The Father hath endowed me abundantly with His holy spirit that I might minister unto you, and keep you always in Him.

"Whoso loveth and followeth me, abideth in the Father, groweth into His likeness, becometh one with Him in His holy spirit.

"To be in harmony with His will, to be perfect in love and obedience to Him, is the end and purpose of our being.

"Perfect love and obedience to the Father beget for us joys unspeakable, and produce in us spiritual powers that are as yet not comprehended by you.

"Ye are His Temple.

"This Temple within which we here meet to learn of Him

* Compare 1. Cor. 15; 22, 24-28. John 14; 28.

and of His truth and works, is not more holy than ye, if ye abide in the Father.

"We meet in this Temple that our union here may increase the love and joys and knowledge of all, and that we may through one another learn of Him and of his thought. He filleth us all here with His presence. But He is with us everywhere, for He abideth in each soul of love. Each loving worshipful soul is His holy shrine, and there is His truest altar.

"The Father is Infinite, and we cannot attain unto Him, nor unto full comprehension of Him, but we may rest in Him always, and evermore increase in our knowledge of Him and of His unspeakable glory and power.

"And this is Life Eternal!

"The Father is greater than I, and I am greater than ye, my brethren, for He hath so given me of His spirit; and ye may become more like the Father by growing unto my likeness.

"I was given life and power, and was sent forth and ordained, that I might teach you, and show you in myself, the way to nearer and dearer union with the Father.

"I have no power, nor glory, nor holiness, nor life of myself, but all these proceed from the Father. I am sent unto you in order that you might know the Father. In myself behold His love and mercy and tenderness for you, which I bring to you, and give unto you for the Father.

"Ye are His children, made in the brightness of His glory. If ye would be like unto Him be holy as I am holy.

"If ye would always abide in His glory and light, ye must love and do the truth. He that doeth truth, seeketh for, and abideth in, this light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. Thus the pure and good only abide in this holy sphere.*

"But He that thinketh and doeth evil fleeth from this

* Compare with John 3d chapter, and 20, 21 vs.

holy light of the Father's presence, and cannot abide in it, but seeketh the darkness of the realm of evil. For like seeketh and fleeth unto like. Only the righteous and the pure in heart and the souls of love can abide in this holy state.

"The Father hath ordained me, my beloved, to lead you into all spiritual truth, and to keep you steadfast therein forever. Such is my glory and mission evermore. He hath appointed me to be the way unto Him, the pattern of righteousness for you, the light and truth, that you might become as I am, and in my likeness abide in Him forever. Fashion your character after my likeness.

"Ye can only know the Father and can only realize the grandeur and joys of your own being, when your spirits are in harmony with the Divine Spirit. Ye become in unity with the Father, become sealed unto Him, when ye come into my image.

"Ye must thus become more and more spiritual, grow evermore unto the nature of the Father's likeness, if you would truly abide in this pure kingdom of God, and partake fully of these spiritual powers and glories.

"He that hath not the pure spiritual nature cannot partake of these spiritual joys, because he cannot comprehend them, nor conceive them.

"Remember always that ye become glorious only in and by perfect obedience, and that perfect obedience is fulfilled only in perfect love.

"In this blessed state love alone is our law, and love alone is the fulfilling of all law. Yea, love supersedeth all law—for it itself is the fulfilling and perfecting of all law. Love is the source of all of our joys.

"No one, who hath not perfect love to God and to all His creatures, can abide in this holy kingdom. Without this love there can be no perfect life.

"Love is eternal life, as well as perfect life, and without love there is neither perfect life nor eternal life.

"Love is the assurance of the Father in us, for God is love. Without love we cannot know Him.

"And this is life eternal, to know the Father and to know me whom He hath sent to teach you of Him; for He hath sent me that ye might learn of Him through and by me.

"He who faileth in love, faileth in all. For love casteth out all evil from the soul, and all hatred and all manner of sin.

"Where love is not, evil straightway taketh possession. Ye overcome all evil by love.

"Therefore, if ye would truly live, ye must have perfect love. So, my brethren, love perfectly, love completely, love universally. As is your love, so is your greatness, so is your increase in glory, so is your life. Love overcometh all; love comprehendeth all; love includeth all.

"Behold my love in my life opened out before you, as the way to the Father's glory, teaching you of His love.

"As I love, so love ye.

"I labor in love for my brethren. I minister unto my Father's children throughout these realms, blessing all, and showing them through love the way to the Father and to light, life and joy.

"I seek the fallen and the weak, and give them of my strength, I find those that are darkened, and give them of my light. I go unto those that are without love and give them of my love. I seek my Father's children everywhere that I may through love prepare them for His bosom.

"I teach them how to overcome the evil, which they have brought upon themselves; how to become chastened under the penalty which their sin inflicts upon them; how through all to attain unto eternal life.

"Thus by my labors of love I teach you that love is active and not slothful, and rejoiceth in doing good. Such is true

life. Love liveth for all. He that hath love liveth for all, and includeth all within his life. He, who so doeth and liveth, becometh the greatest of all. He that loveth most liveth most.

"Many of the Father's children love not, and have departed from God. He, who loveth not, violateth his life and God's law, and so becomes evil. Many have so done.

"These have brought upon themselves woe and evil. They have wailing and gnashing of teeth.

"The evil within them layeth many stripes upon them—for sin is a pitiless master. It is needful that they should reap as they have sown.

"They must suffer in order that they may be brought unto a knowledge of evil. They must struggle with sin and temptation that they may attain mastery over themselves, and so realize what is true life. They must learn that their chosen sin has taken them away from the Father, and that away from Him fullness of life and joy cannot dwell. So we must teach them, and minister unto these fallen ones, and show them the way to life and to God.

"They must be disciplined by suffering and trials; they must grow strong under the heavy weight of adversity; they must by self-developed power become all-powerful over all sinful limitations.

"All evil must be subdued to the law of love. The good (which is of God) must overcome all. Every soul shall bow before the Father in love. For, thus the Father giveth me the kingdom. To accomplish this mission, and work was I appointed and ordained and sent forth in the vast realms of being by the Father. For as I taught on Earth, every plant which the Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. Sin is not of Him and cannot endure in His realms.*

"Every child shall know the Father, and perfect love and

* Compare John 12; 13. Luke 9; 56. 1 John 2; 2. Acts 3; 21. Col. 1; 19, 20. 1 Cor. 15; 22, 24-28.

obedience shall triumph over all. For by my love and life I shall draw all souls unto me, and through me unto the Father. I say unto you, follow after me, triumph with me in the consummation of this sublime purpose, and perfect yourselves in this work.

"Thus I command you to do, that God may be glorified in all, and that you may accomplish His purpose in yourselves. My brethren, ye know not the grandeurs of the life before you, which shall be yours more and more if you will but walk in my paths!

* * * * *

"I see many before me glorified, who, following me, have come up from Earth whither I was sent by My Father to point out to them the way to live.

"I thank thee, O Father, that Thou hast blest my work there, and hast taken these unto Thyself.

"It is needful that I should speak a few words to you, my brethren from Earth, and teach you some truths more perfectly, face to face.

"Happy am I to greet you here, and to behold the exceeding great joys which you experience here. Blessed are ye, and more abundantly ye shall be blessed.

"You now experience those unspeakable spiritual glories, which on Earth could not be described to you. These heavenly mansions in our Father's pure realms and these glories of this perfected life no tongue could express there.

"Ye now see face to face. My brethren, receive my love and my Father's love more abundantly, since ye have, by following me as best ye could, triumphed over the dominion of evil and of death.

"I thank the Father for the abundant reward of my labors, which He hath given me in you.

"Our Father sent me to earth to teach you deliverance from the dominion and afflictions of evil. Sin came as a result from disobedience and disregard of God's law of love.

"Love is the law of life, and all evil came from disregard of that law.

"It was necessary that God should create you free beings, free to choose, and free to act, in order that you might be moral beings. There could be no moral character without freedom of each individual will. The trials and adversities of earthly life were ordained for the discipline and development of human will and character. These are not evil—God did not create evil, but evil arose from men's action in disregard of the law of their being and development.

"Evil is not a power without man, but a perversion within man. Man could attain his perfect development and spiritual stature and life only by conformity to the law of his being, as established by God for his perfect growth.

"Just as all things can attain their perfect development and growth only when in conformity to the laws of their existence and growth.

"Man perverted this law of his being, and thereby perverted himself. Thus evil came as the result of man's free action.

* "It was in the power of men to choose life, and good, and obedience, but they chose disobedience, evil, and death.

"They set aside the only law of their perfect development—which was the law of perfect love to God and all his creatures—and thereby established within themselves all the imperfections of evil.

"They became enthralled and blinded.

"They bore the fruits of evil, of hate, of revenge, of lust, of deceit, of all manner of uncleanness; when they should have borne the fruits of righteousness, of love, of purity, of truth, of virtue.

"All their lifetime they became bound unto evil. They,

* Compare with this utterance of Christ, Deut. 11., 26, 28, and 30; 15.

became at war with the law of love, and thus hated their brother.

“Earth became a realm of woe and carnage, and reeked with evil.

“Men oppressed one another, and struggled against one another, as the beasts of the fields. Love for one another became a mockery, and hate and deceit and lying and slander and war and oppression of the weak by the strong, became the rule and law of their action.

“Men forgot God, forgot love, knew not mercy, showed no kindness. Greed, avarice and selfishness became supreme over all holy and kindly sentiments. Men battled one against the other, and in all things sought their own unholy ends, and spared not.

“God had created them that they might grow in spiritual power and character, that they might obey in love and be happy, and so glorify Him, and so realize that grandeur of life designed for them.

“But they chose to be evil. They repudiated the law of love which would have kept them in harmony with the Father and rendered them pure, kind, and good.

“They perverted their minds and hearts, thus poisoning the source of their actions.

“They practiced evil habits, thus enslaving their will.

“They degraded their will, thus degrading and perverting their character.

“As was their character, so was their life. As was the tree, so was the fruit.

“As they sowed, so they reaped.

“They sowed to all manner of evil, and both on earth and in yon realm of evil they are reaping suffering and woe.

“They became as corrupt trees and their fruit is corrupt.

“All these things were open to the mind of God. He knew the wreck and perversion of human life and character.

“He saw that men were blinded and enslaved and were

ignorant of the way of life and love. They knew not what life was.

"So the Father would have them know the perfect way of life, wherein they could attain the purpose and end of their being. He would have them overcome sin, subdue the powers of sin and disobedience, and so attain to even grander heights of being. For by overcoming sin they gain mastery forever over that last and only enemy of true and perfect life and joy.

"Therefore, in His great love for His children of Earth, He ordained and appointed me, and by the power of his pervading Spirit created me, and sent me to Earth to proclaim and establish the kingdom of love there, to teach them the Gospel of Perfect Life, to teach them salvation from their sins, and how through the sufferings of sin to attain to higher life and selfhood, by showing them how not to commit sin, and how to become stronger than all sin, and so exterminate it in their triumphant life.

"In order that I might do this work, it was necessary that I should take on the fleshly embodiment of man, and by the process of nature grow into man's stature, for thus only could I teach, and commune with, the children of the flesh.

"Rejoiced to do the Father's will in the consummation of this sublime work, and happy to give scope to my own fervent love for all creatures, I submitted my spirit to the task and withdrew from these realms and glories.

"I entered the gross womb of material nature, and through her whom God gave as my mother on earth (now blessed forever) my material counterpart passed to infant life, then on through childhood's growth, and thence increased to manhood's stature.

"Full-grown, in my wisdom of these eternal, spiritual realities, I yet there increased in my knowledge of that earthly life and its surroundings.*

* See Luke 2; 52.

"I toiled and labored and suffered in the flesh. I met and mingled with the children of men and came to know, and to feel, their weaknesses, sorrows, temptations, and woes. How I mourned for them, and sympathized with them, and longed to lead them into life, light, and love !

"Misconstruing my mission, and that Spiritual power with which I was endowed of God, some of those of my earthly nationality sought to make me their temporal king of the line of David, but I taught them that my kingdom was spiritual and eternal and of God.

"¹ I taught them that I was greater than David or temporal king ; and that I came forth from these spiritual realms fully endowed with these spiritual powers, that I might teach, and establish, that spiritual kingdom in which alone their souls could attain the end and fruition of their being.

"I became poor and weak, that I might know and feel the trials and afflictions of the oppressed. I sought neither riches, nor wealth, nor worldly power.

"I was there born Jesus of Nazareth. I was a man approved of God among the people by wonders and signs and miracles which God did by me in the midst of them.

"I used the wonderful spiritual power of these psychic realms, with which I was endowed, only to do them good.

"² I was sent to do my Father's will, not mine own will.

"³ I preached not my doctrine, but His that sent me."

"⁴ I went to earth not of myself, but the Father sent me.

"⁵ I preached the gospel of love, of always doing good to all, of charity, of gentleness, of faith in God, of purity, of meekness, of forgiveness, of cleanliness in life, heart, and mind anew to the world.

Compare these words of Christ with :

¹ Matt. 22 ; 45.

² and ³ with John 6 ; 38, and John 8 ; 16.

⁴ with John 7 ; 28, and John 8 ; 42.

⁵ Compare with Sermon on the Mount.

"As I taught, so I lived. I made my gospel my life. I thus showed the world Perfect Life.

"⁶ As His Son sent forth from this our Father's celestial realms, I honored my Father who sent me, and I received honor among men from Him.

"I taught them that the Father was greater than I; that I was His Son sent forth by Him, and that the words which I spake unto them were given unto me by the Father.

"I taught them that I came forth from the Father to teach them the way unto Him, and to show them how to have perfect love by which they all could become the true sons of God, as I was His Son, and so realize their perfect life.

"I taught them thus to believe in me as the Son of God, for if they believed in me as the Son, they must also have faith in the Father who created me His Son and and sent me into the world, and so believing they would receive my words of life.

"I taught them that my authority and power were of the Father, and that I of myself had none. I proved my divine mission by the works which the Father performed in and through me, by virtue of these spiritual powers with which I was endowed.

"I so taught them that they through me might receive, and attain to, that faith in the Father which produceth perfect love and pure life.

"I called upon all to come unto me and to believe in me, and so follow me, that I might lead men unto my Father, and their Father, and that they might become heirs and partakers with me of these spiritual glories, which are the portion and life of those that love God.

"While I sojourned and taught on earth, many accepted my truths and gave their lives unto my service in battling against the sin and evil of their earthly state.

"These I banded together, and ordained, and sent forth,

⁶ John 8; 42, 54.

to proclaim among men the kingdom of God, as against the kingdom of sin, which they had set up there, and to teach the doctrines of pure life which I delivered to them from the Father.

"I proclaimed unto them fervid repentance unto remission of their sins, and called upon them to have trust and faith in God, and taught them to accept me as the Son sent unto them by the Father; for, if they so accepted me, they must also accept the truths which I bare to them from the Father.

"I taught them to have faith that they might have perfect love.

"I lived a life of love, poverty, and self-denial, doing good unto all; blessing my enemies and teaching them so to do; curing the sick, and the lame, and the blind, and the suffering ones, and, by the power of my Father, doing many wonderful works of love. These things I did that I might bear witness of myself, that my works might testify of me, and that the Father that sent me might bear witness of me.

"So by my life and words I taught men how to live for others and how to love.

"I taught them that I was thus sent to be unto them the way to the Father, the truth, and the life.

"When my work was finished and my time of departure came, I taught them how to die and to sacrifice all, even that mere earthly existence, for truth and for love of others.

"I submitted my material body into the cruel hands of evil powers for torture and death, refusing to use the spiritual powers with which I was endowed even to save my own life; that I might put the seal of my death upon the truth and purpose of my mission on earth, and so draw all men unto me, and to acceptance of the truths and of the love for which I suffered and died.

"Submitting myself unto death, I overcame death, and thus demonstrated to them this spiritual immortality, this true life.

"Thus I finished the work that my Father gave me to do, and reascended to these glories.

* * * * *

"And ye, my beloved brethren, the Father hath given unto me. Ye have come into the kingdom of the Father, unto this heaven of life and good, where no evil nor death can abide.

"Ye have overcome the powers and dominion of sin in you, though some were much led off from the simple truths which I taught men—truths great and glorious, though so plainly and simply spoken that all could understand.

"So perverse has been the ignorance of that world of evil, that they, who profess to follow me, have not kept my words as I delivered them unto those whom I taught.

"How the sin and the designs and the unholy ambitions and ignorance of men have perverted my sweet and simple LIFE-GOSPEL which I delivered unto them.

* * * * *

"Behold I send a message to earth, and there is one here who shall re-enter there, and bear it, and write it, and deliver it unto the dwellers of earth.*

"I will so endow and commission him, and on the occasion when I send him thither, I will acquaint him with that witness and proof by which this message shall be received and established on earth.

"Of the period of his departure I will instruct him.

"He shall say unto them as I have spoken, and as I shall now declare unto him and unto ye all :—

"Say unto men : I proclaimed myself not as God, but as the Son of God.†

"I taught them, not that I was 'God the Son,' but that I was the Son of God—that I was Christ, Messiah, the

* See Note to Christ's Discourse, p.

† Compare Christ's words with :

¹ Luke 22 ; 70. Mark 14 ; 61, 62. Mark 12 ; 1-11.

Anointed of God,¹ and that of myself I had not life, but the Father gave unto me to have life in myself.²

"I taught them that the Lord our God is One Lord.³

"I did not teach them that I was equal with the Father, but that the Father was greater than I,⁴ and that He sent me to earth to teach and show them true life, and to preach deliverance from their sins, which cursed and enslaved their lives.

"I proclaimed myself as the 'son of man' also,¹ for to accomplish my work it was needful that I should be born of a woman, and should take on the fleshly counterpart of man by the processes of material nature.

"I taught them that as the son of man,⁵ and not as God, I would come again to earth and judge the sin and evil of the world, and that it was not so much I as the words I taught that should judge them.⁶

"For it was just that by my life and gospel among them as the son of man they should be judged.⁷ In all I did, or should be empowered to do, I taught them that I was but executing the will and authority of Him that sent me.⁸

"I taught them that I was not almighty, but that the Father⁹ was, and that all my power was given me by the Father,¹⁰ and that of myself I had no power and could do nothing.¹¹ That it was the power of the Lord God that was with me to heal,¹² and that by the spirit of God I did my

¹ John 4; 25, 26. Luke 4; 18, John 20; 31.

² John 5; 26.

³ Mark 12; 29.

⁴ John 14; 28.

⁵ Compare: Luke 18; 32, and 19; 10, and 22; 69.

⁶ Mark 13; 26. Mark 14; 62. Luke 12; 40. See Acts 17; 31. Luke 17; 30, 26,—Luke 18; 8. Luke 21; 27-36.

⁷ John 5; 27, 31.

⁸ John 12; 47, 48.

⁹ Mark 14; 36; 10; 27.

¹⁰ Mat. 26; 53. Mat. 10; 27, 28. Mark 10; 40. Luke 5; 17, 18. Luke 22; 43.

¹¹ Mat. 20; 23. John 5; 30.

¹² Luke 5; 17, 18. John 14; 31. Mat. 12; 28. Mark 3; 23-30.

wonderful works on earth, and that the works which the Father gave me to accomplish, the very works that I did, bore witness of me that the Father had sent me.¹

"I taught them that blasphemy against the eternal spirit of God by which I did my works was the great sin, and not blasphemy against me.²

"I taught them that all my authority was given unto me,³ and that of myself I could do nothing.⁴

"I taught them that the Father created them.⁵

"I taught them that I did not have all knowledge as the Father has, but that my knowledge and truth were given me by the Father.⁶

"I told them that there was a day and an hour—that of my second coming to earth—of which I knew not, and that only the Father knew.⁷

"I expressly told them that I taught them all things which I had heard of my Father.⁸

"I taught them that I worked not of myself, but that all my works were of the Father that sent me, and that I was empowered to do the wonderful works I did by God's spirit, in order that they might know that the kingdom of God had come upon them, and that they might believe my message.⁹

"I taught them that God was the One Good and not I.¹⁰ I taught them that all I had, even my life, was from the Father."

"I taught men to worship God the Father,¹¹ as I myself prayed to and worshiped Him.¹² And I taught them to worship God, who is spirit, in spirit and in truth.¹³

¹ John 5; 36. ² Matt. 12; 31, 12.

³ Mat. 28; 18. John 8; 28.

⁴ John 5; 30.

⁵ Compare: Mark 10; 6, 10.

⁶ John 8; 26-28. John 12; 49, 50.

⁷ Mark 13; 32.

⁸ John 15; 15.

⁹ Mat. 13; 58, and 12; 28.

¹⁰ Mark 10; 18. Luke 18; 18-20.

¹¹ Luke 18; 2-7. and 4; 8. Mat. 4; 10, and 5; 16.

¹² Luke 23; 34, 46, and 11; 1, and 10; 20, and 5; 16, and 6; 12. Mat. 14; 23, and 26; 36-43.

¹³ John 4; 23, 24.

"I taught them to say 'Our Father,' for He was their Father as He was my Father, and if they did His will, and so overcame sin, they were truly my brethren,² and were partakers with me of that true life which I revealed unto them.

"I prayed unto God as Lord of heaven and earth.³ So I taught them that my Father answered prayer,⁴ and taught them to pray to Him. I taught them to ask for blessings of the Father in my name.

"In⁵ my last acts upon earth, my agony in Gethsemane and death on the cross, I prayed to the Father—my Father and their Father.

"If I had taught them that I was God, I would not have worshipped, and prayed unto, myself."

* * * * *

"Why and how could men so misconstrue my mission and my nature? Could they not comprehend that I was sent forth from these psychic realms as a spiritual being endowed to do the work that I did? To unfold unto them the way and the destiny of that life which reposes in the bosom of the Father's love?"

"While I was on earth men revered⁶ me and besought me for my blessings of healing and of the spirit, which I bestowed upon them by the power of my Father; I asked and demanded of them in return for my love that they love me and the Father through me, above all earthly things, yea, above their own lives. But I taught them to worship God.

"I did not teach them that I was the Father.

"I did not teach them that I was one and the same in being with the Father; but I taught them that I was one

Compare:

¹ Mat. 5; 6-15. Luke 11; 1-5.

² Luke 6; 35. Mark 3; 35. Mat. 12; 50.

³ Mat. 11; 25. Mark 14; 35, and 6; 46. Luke 10; 21.

⁴ Mat. 18; 19. John 16; 23, 26, 27.

⁵ Mark 14; 35-40. Luke 22; 42. Mat. 26; 39. Luke 23; 46.

⁶ See what Schaff says of the "Reverence" given to Christ, as distinguished from "Worship" in Schaff's Com. on Mat., page 151.

that bear witness of myself, and the Father who sent me was another, who also bear witness of me.⁷ For it was written in their law that the testimony of two was true.⁷

"I taught them that there was unity between me and the Father, as there was between each holy soul and the Father, and that I was in union with the Father, as my disciples were with me;⁸ but I taught that I was distinct from the Father, and was His Son, and that I was one, and the Father was another.⁹

"I taught them that I was sent of the Father to do His work, and that I did not do mine own will but the Father's will.¹⁰

"I taught them that they who received me, received Him that sent me;¹¹ and I called upon them to believe in me as one sent by the Father; for in so accepting me, they must needs believe in Him who sent me, and that they might thus have faith in God.

"Thus I taught them that they might receive of me, as by authority, those spiritual truths which assured unto them this eternal life, that we here know, and which there they know not of.

"For they knew not of this eternal life in the spirit, and I proclaimed it, and demonstrated it, to them in my life and works.

"I showed them the Father, for I taught them that I was sent to them by Him to bear them His love and mercy, His holiness and righteousness; to teach them in my life of love of His love and compassion for them; and so constrain them that they should deeply repent¹² of their sin, and

⁷ John 5; 31, 32, 37. John 8; 13, 14-18.

⁸ John 17; 21-23. John 16; 27.

⁹ John 5; 31, 32, 37. John 8; 13, 14, 18.

¹⁰ Mat. 26; 36-44. Mark 14; 36. Luke 22; 42, 43.

¹¹ Mat. 10; 40.

¹² Compare: Luke 13; 1-5, and 3; 3.

evil, even unto remission,¹ renunciation of their sins; and should turn to the Father, and accept of His love, and in their lives overcome all sin and grow into His righteousness. In my life, and even unto my death, I taught them remission of their sin and evil ways, and how to live unto the Father.

"I went into that realm of sin; became as a servant unto them; gave my life in my fleshly body to sinful powers as a ransom² for them, that by my life there I might show them the way of relief from the bondage of sin which they had brought upon themselves by their evil habits and disobedience, which kept them from all knowledge of true life.

"Thus I became a ransom for them to their enemy (a), which was sin, submitting myself unto all shame and

¹ Mat. 26; 28. Luke 24; 47. Luke 3; 3.

² Mat. 20; 28, Mark 10; 45.

(a) NOTE—The verb "To ransom," means "to rescue," "to deliver from an enemy," to release from bondage or the power and control of an enemy. As a noun "ransom" means "that which procures the release of a captive or of captured property" (Webster—Blackstone). Bearing these definitions in mind, it is very plain and rational to comprehend and interpret what Christ means when He speaks of His becoming a ransom for men, and of ransoming them. The paraphrase given in the text of this book makes Christ's work in this respect plain, rational, and comprehensible. Who, or what, was the enemy of men, that they needed to be delivered from? Not God, their Father, for we are His "offspring," says Paul; we are His "children," says Christ; He loves us with "an everlasting love," and "His mercy endureth forever," says the Psalmist; "we are the creatures of the Infinite Power," says Science; what only power or thing in the universe is the real enemy of man and of his happiness and greatness? Sin! Evil! the perversion of that moral order of our perfect growth and development; which sin arises and abides only in the free, personal human soul and life, by which men are perverted and enslaved. Christ came and submitted Himself to this material body and environment, with all their limitations and temptations and trials, in order that He might make plain in His life the "way" of "deliverance" out of sinful enslavement, and "proclaim (*i. e.*, declare, teach and establish) release to the captives," and "set at liberty them that are bruised" (Luke 4; 18). And in all His words and gospel He taught that He came "to save men from their

travail and death that I might be enabled to teach them deliverance from sin, and show them how to vanquish it in their nature.

"God was not their enemy demanding a ransom—for He loved the children of men so dearly that He sent me unto them to teach them of His love, and to lead them unto Him.

"The Father was not their enemy, nor had He vengeance against the children of men, nor hate, that needed to be appeased by bloody sacrifices of innocent victims.

"For the prophetic teachers of old had taught that, 'Sacrifice and oblation, Thou dost not desire, but Thou hast opened ears for me.

"'Burnt-offering and sin-offering Thou wouldst not, but that I should come to do thy will.

"'The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a lowly and a contrite heart, O God.'¹

"So the prophet Isaiah taught:—

"'Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom, give ear to the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrha.

"'To what purpose do you offer me the multitude of your victims? saith the Lord. I desire not holocausts of rams and fatlings, the blood of calves, and sheep and goats.

"'When ye come to appear before me, who hath required these things at your hands?'

"'Offer sacrifices no more, your new moons and festivals I cannot abide; your assemblies are wicked.

sins," and to teach them "salvation from their sins." Both Christ and the Apostles emphasized the truth that men were in bondage to sin, and not to God, as an enemy, and that it was release from this captivity which Christ came to proclaim.

Grant that God was angry with men on account of their sins, how would a sacrifice, made to appease His wrath, "release," "ransom," men from the sinful perversions and tendencies and propensities incurred by their free, self-choosing, self-debased, personal selves?

¹ 40th Psalm and other Psalms.

“ ‘My soul hateth your solemnities, when you stretch forth your hands I turn away Mine eyes, for your hands are full of blood.*

“ So the prophet Jeremias taught :—

“ ‘I, the Lord, spake not to your fathers, and I commanded them not in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning the matter of burnt offerings and sacrifices.

“ ‘But this one thing I commanded them, saying, Harken to My voice, and walk in My way.

“ ‘But they have set their abominations in the house that is called by My name, to pollute it.’

“ So I taught the children of men when I was on earth that God was full of yearning love for them, that He hated not them, but those sins and evils that kept His children away from Him, and that He desired always that they should abide holily and sweetly in the bosom of His tender compassion.

“ I nowhere taught them that our blessed Father was full of wrath against them, that needed to be placated by the bloody sacrifices of innocent victims, writhing and quivering in gory pain and death before Him. But that He desired them to accept of His tender love for them and of His light and truth, which I went to earth to bear to them, and to illustrate to them in my life of light and love, that by so doing they might cease from their sins which alone kept them from perfect life and love and union with the Father.

“ All these truths I bore them in my life and work and teaching, as living bread and water sent down to them from this heaven of God, and I called upon them to eat and drink of these spiritual realities and so have eternal life.

“ I taught them that as they were loved by me and by the Father, so they must love the Father, love me, and love one

* See also teaching in Amos, 5th chap., 14, 15, 21, 24 verses.

another. I went to earth to teach them in my life of love how to love God and one another.

"I taught them to believe in, and to love, the Father, whom I declared, and who had sent me unto them, and that if they so did they had already passed into eternal life.*

"I taught them to love, and believe in me also, for I came to show them the Father, and if they would not believe in me, who had been sent, they would not believe in Him who had sent me.

"If they believed not, they would not follow in my way, but would remain under sinful condemnation; for there was no way out of their sin and evil and unto the Father, except the way pointed out by me, and exemplified to them in my life among them.

"My life was to teach them to do the Father's will, for to do His will is to be in living harmony with themselves, and with all things.

"I taught them that it was not by calling me Lord, Lord, that they should enter into the kingdom of heaven, but by doing the will of my Father who is in heaven.

"Thus was I sent to earth to show them *how* to do my Father's will, and how by following me they might learn to do His will, and so attain to perfect life, even as I was perfect; so that when they were perfected they should be as I.² Even as here in these blessed realms I teach ye, my brethren, how to attain more and more unto that perfect life designed for you by the Father.

"There was only one way to become righteous and my life was that way. I became the archetype for them. I taught them that to become one with me in righteousness was to become one with the Father, for I and my righteousness were from Him.

"I taught them what perfect obedience to the Father was, and commanded them to do it,³ and showed them the way."

* * * * *

* Compare John 5; 24. ¹ Mat. 7; 21. ² Luke 6; 40. ³ Mat. 5; 17, 20.

"Many of them, who have received my words and known my life, have rendered instead a life of the form of godliness without the spirit and power thereof.

"They have offered empty professions of what they term belief in my name, have called me Lord, Lord, but have not done the will of my Father in heaven, as I taught them to do.

"They have professed my name, but have done violence to my life.

"Verily these are not fit for this pure kingdom of God, for they have not subdued the evil within them.

"Their heart and life being evil, they are as an evil tree, and cannot bring forth good fruit.

"Say unto them that confession of my name as one sent by the Father is not of itself faith in God, nor the life that springs therefrom, but they must also conform their heart, mind, and life unto mine, and follow me in the way I have showed them. For the kingdom of God must be within them, must be established in their lives, before they can enter into this kingdom of God.

"Why call they me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say unto them? *

"Say unto men that their empty forms and ceremonies, their long robes and long prayers, their loud confessions and costly ceremonials, their stately temples and vain-glorious worship offered in my name, are an abomination unto God, so long as the poor suffer, and the weak and helpless are oppressed in their midst, if they could relieve them and do it not. The realization of true life is first shown in ministering to the lives of others.

"There is no offering nor gift that they can make to me or to my Father, except they make it to the poor and the suffering children of my Father on earth.

"They, who rob the weak and poor of the right and means

* Luke 6; 46 and 17; 10.

of justly supplying their earthly needs and wants, and of acquiring needful comforts in the earthly life ; or who strive not to give the unfortunate ones a just chance of attaining their share of the Father's bounty there, are unworthy to share in these unspeakable glories here.

" They make their laws designed to oppress my poor, and then humble them with contemptible mites and crumbs of charity, and even think they are doing my service.

" Their earthly treasures, their gilded temples and costly service therein, to which the poor feel no welcome nor attraction ; their vain, conventional gatherings in my name, are all but as wasted dross, so long as the poor, the widow, and the orphan among them want for bread and raiment and life's needed comforts, and dwell in ignorance, darkness, and woe.

" I became poor on earth, and knew the afflictions and oppressions of the poor, felt their sadness, gloom, and despair. They are the Father's weak and little ones.

" Of the untold bounties with which God has blessed the earth, designed for the comfort and wants of all His children, what vast myriads of my down-trodden poor received no part thereof.

" The cunning few in wicked self-worship pile up in secret hoard earth's fat abundance unused, and leave the multitudes to suffer and famish, or subsist as best they may.

" By what law of God or nature doth one man hoard away in needless superfluity what another in distress needeth ?

" Are not all things my Father's, and were not those needful elements on earth designed for the comfort and blessing of all His children in their short earthly life there ?

" Say unto men that they who overlook or neglect my poor and suffering ones on earth are a stench in my nostrils, and are unfit for the kingdom of the Father of these little ones.

" They who love not these, my little ones, and who feel not

for their suffering life on earth, are unworthy of this kingdom of life and love, and cannot abide here.

“ They spend their vast treasure to build costly temples and edifices of wood, brick and stone that perish, and neglect the bodies and souls of the Father’s poor that are immortal.

They minister to their own pride and luxury ; they worship God vain-gloriously, arrayed in costly raiment ; they profess long creeds and forms, and say long prayers standing in their public gatherings, as the Pharisees did. These things they do, professing to follow me, the lowly Jesus of Nazareth, and professing to serve God ; and they neglect my poor. Yea, they oppress the weak by their unholy laws and governments, and thereby increase the poor. They provide no way of elevation and advancement for the poor, and yet call themselves my followers.

“ Woe be unto them, for though they may say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name done many wonderful works ? Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

“ For not every one that calleth me Lord, Lord, shall enter this kingdom of God, but he that doeth my Father’s will ; for only by so doing and becoming is it possible for him to enter here. While I was on earth I lived among the poor, I ministered unto the poor and oppressed and afflicted ; I did them good. I preached my gospel of this eternal spiritual life to them. My gospel of life was freely offered for the poor in body and the poor in spirit. I taught the children of men that if they would follow me they must do likewise. I told them that they who did anything for the poor and oppressed did it for me ; that if they ministered to them, they were ministering to me.* I pronounced woes upon them, who neglected and oppressed the poor and the weak.

* Compare Luke 4 ; 18. Mat. 25 ; 31, 46. Luke 16 ; 19,—31.

" All this I did, and all this I lived. And yet they profess to call themselves my disciples, and do not these things as I commanded. How can they overcome sin, when they violate the law of love every day of their lives? Know they not that there is no way to overcome sin except by conformity to the sweet law of love?

" Say to these that they are hypocrites, and I never knew them.

" If they love not, and minister not unto, their poor suffering brother whom they see, and of whose want and affliction they know, how can they love me and minister unto me whom they have not seen?

" Say to them that they cannot give me of their gold and treasure, except they use it to minister unto my suffering brethren among them.

" The cries of the poor and the oppressed have come up to me more and more; and yet those, who call themselves my disciples, profess to have multiplied what they call my 'churches' more and more.

" With ill-gotten gain they are building gorgeous temples of mockery in my name, and as with a bugle-blast they are proclaiming their barren creeds and their cold, empty, lifeless professions of me, as my religion of life, brotherly love and charity; while from under the shadows of their temples and from beneath their feet the cries of the poor rise unto me continually!

" The poor ask for bread, and they give a stone. They ask for fish, and they give them a serpent. The poor ask for justice and they rend them with extortion and all forms of oppression. The poor ask for labor with its reward, and they offer them unremunerative toil with its enslavement.

" The poor pray for mercy, and they bestow a curse.

" Whatsoever they do unto these my poor, they do unto me. Whatsoever they deny my poor, they deny me.

"Yet on that portion of earth's gross sphere where they vainly boast of rearing most temples in my name, and where they claim, and profess, to preach what they call 'my gospel' on each hill-top and in each vale, they thus treat my poor.

"If I should now again re-enter there a poor and laboring man, as was my wont and state, when I went to deliver my gospel of meekness and lowliness, of love and charity, would they not so use me, as they are using my poor ?

"And yet these worshipers of mammon ; these earthly treasure-hunters ; these blind devotees of gold and riches ; these, who enthrone gold, that darling precipitate of base matter, above all character and holy life ; these, who bend their soul to the yoke of sordid greed ; these, who require measures of money as a gauge of social standing and character ; these, who make bread dear to the hungry to increase their own store ; these, who in their getting spare not the weak ; these, who are puffed up and haughty and self-righteous ; they call themselves my disciples, and after my name call themselves Christians !

"The poor and the hungry cry for bread for the body, and these offer them for their soul the empty profession of my name, which by their life they have brought into contempt.

"They, who as far as they are able, provide not for the temporal bodies and wants of the poor, are not worthy to preach my gospel to their souls.

"While I was on earth I detained not the hungry and famishing to teach them of this eternal life, but also ministered unto and relieved the wants of their temporal life. I gave the loaves and fishes for the body, while I offered them light and truth for the soul." *

* * * * *

"They have not kept the Father's gospel as I delivered it to them on earth.

"I taught them the gospel of love.

* Compare Mark 8 ; 1-10, Mat. 14 ; 16-21, and 15 ; 32-39.

"I taught them that their whole duty, the perfection of their life, was to love the Father with all their strength and to love their brethren as they loved themselves.

"I organized my disciples into a Brotherhood of Love, and taught them that they must love one another even as I loved them.

"I taught them that they must love one another so, that they would prefer one another,¹ and each would strive to be the servant of all. I showed them an illustration of what I meant by the love they must bear to one another, by gathering them together and washing their feet, and making myself the servant of all.² I also gave my whole life for my brethren, laboring in love for them, seeking not mine own good nor earthly comfort. Having wonderful powers, I used them not for myself—not even to escape death—but I submitted myself unto all suffering, that I might teach them the greater power of love.

"I also illustrated to them their common human wants, their common dependence upon the Father, and the unity and brotherhood that should exist among my disciples, by gathering them together as one family of the Father's children around the frugal board of the Passover, and there broke equally among them all the loaf of bread, and likewise gave the wine; each partaking as the other; and I taught them thus to do in life and not in stated form, thus to share with one another of the necessities and blessings of life, and thus to aid one another, in remembrance of me. I taught them that thus I had given my earthly* life and body for them, as I illustrated to them by giving the bread and wine,—that they might by putting on my life have deliverance from sin.

"As I had given all for them, even my earthly life, so I taught them they should do for me, and for one another; and that in so doing for one another they were doing for me.

¹ Luke 22; 26, 27.

² Luke 22; 27.

* Compare Luke 22: 17, 21.

I nowhere taught them to go through the mere form of love, but to be, and to do, the very life of love. This was the spirit of my teaching.

"I won, and demanded, their most intense love for me—yea, above all earthly loves, a love deeper than life itself.

"For, if they so loved me, they would love my life and gospel, and would love those whom I loved, and thus would love all.

"My whole gospel was to teach them repentance unto remission of their sins; to teach them by and through my life to have perfect faith and love to the Father, and perfect love for all His children—and thus to become perfect in life, as I was perfect.

"For perfect faith and love to the Father would produce in them holy, pure, individual life; and perfect love toward one another would produce among them perfect, peaceful, and just social life. He who has perfect love toward God and his fellow-man would not defraud nor injure him in any way, but would do justly to him, and comfort him, and would do all possible to aid him in attaining to a holy, happy and perfect life.

"But behold those people, who call themselves Christians on earth, evermore waging cruel and relentless warfare against one another; slaying their brethren beyond number, taking away the life that God gave to His children on earth; spreading woe and devastation everywhere; each essaying to ask God's aid and blessing on the success of their murderous deeds; professing my name thus they do, and yet they wonder why my gospel, which they assume to profess, does not speedily cover the earth!

"Moreover, in order to gather in the gold and treasure of earth, each to himself, they debauch one another, they put temptation to the lips and in the lives of the weak; they make traffic of drunkenness, and dignify it by their forms of law; they beset the young with all manner of evil; they establish false standards of life, measuring all by the gauge of

gold and wealth ; thus degrading the soul, the character, and the spiritual powers of man, and elevating over all the perishing materials of decaying earth.

“Verily they who so do have neither faith nor love. They know not my gospel of love and perfect life ; they have no conception of these grand spiritual realities and of this higher life here, which I went to earth to teach them of and to establish there.

“All their empty professions of my name ; their barren faiths and creeds of their own imaginings ; their lifeless, formal rites and ceremonies ; which they have substituted for my pure, simple, all-forceful gospel of life and love, are abominations unto me.

“They are but as the Pharisees of old, who would make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but within were full of extortion and excess ; or like unto whited sepulchers which appear beautiful outwardly, but within are full of dead men’s bones and all uncleanness. They pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin ; they put on outward observances of godliness, but omit the weightier matters of my gospel, love, mercy, faith and life.*

“They revel in ease, glory in their great possessions and vanities, and would buy my gospel and its life with their gold.

“They strain at a gnat and swallow a camel.

“They pretend outwardly to profess my name and gospel, but within they are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

“As I rebuked the Pharisees of old, so I rebuke them.

“They have never known the truth of my gospel.

“They have set up as my gospel what I went to earth to tear down :—lifeless forms of godliness, meaningless ceremonies and superstitious rites, barren creeds that have no life nor truth, and which mislead men, and take them away from the pure life in the spirit which I showed them.

* Compare Mat. 23; 23-29.

"The gospel I taught them was that God was their Father ready to receive¹ them to His bosom when they abandoned and remitted their sins ; and that I was sent forth from Him to teach the gospel I taught, and that they must be pure in heart and life, as I was, and must love God with all their powers ; and also that their fellow-man was their brother, and they must love him, their neighbor, as they loved themselves. And I taught them that this was life. This was the New Commandment which I bore unto them. I taught them by my life as a pattern how to attain unto this life,² and so showed them how to attain unto their divine sonship. Thus in calling upon them to believe in, and to accept, my sonship, I revealed unto them that relation with the Father to be attained by them, if they followed in my way. *Thus it was necessary for them to believe in me and in my sonship in order for them to realize themselves and attain unto their sonship.*

"I taught them also that their neighbor, whom they were to love as they loved themselves, was he who was in need, distress, want, affliction and sorrow.³ I taught them to see me, and to love me in each man, whatever his state, for I saw enough in each one to call forth my love and sacrifice for him. In loving all, they are but loving me in all, and loving the Father through all.

"I established my Father's kingdom, my church, my spiritual society, on earth, and I myself declared its only creed and doctrine.

"Let my message to earth be judged and interpreted by mine own words which I spake there, as recorded by my personal followers, my disciples, whom I chose as my special witnesses for this purpose.

"To these I promised that I would pray my Father to

Compare ¹ Parables of Prodigal Son and of Lost Sheep. ² Luke 10 : 25-28. Mark 12 : 29-34. ³ Luke 10 : 30-37. ⁴ Luke 24 ; 48th verse. Luke 1 ; 2 and 3.

send the spirit of truth to them, to bring to their remembrance * all my teachings and gospel, in order that they might declare and publish unto the world the message of eternal life which I taught.

"They were to declare my teaching from their remembrance, and from my authority, and not from their own authority.

"By my own mouth I taught the doctrine and message delivered unto me by the Father, and I declared that my doctrine was from Him,¹ and that I really and actually came out ² from the Father and from this higher realm of life, and came into the world for the purposes which I there declared.

"I finished the work which my Father gave me to do, and I left nothing undone, and I so declared.³

"I left nothing for my disciples to do, but to obey me, and to declare my gospel,³ as I had commanded and taught them; even as I had obeyed the Father and declared Him.

"And I taught them to make the nations follow in the way of life I led, and to teach them to observe all things whatsoever I had commanded them.⁴

"Neither my disciples nor any one else were taught by me to teach a new and different doctrine from that I commanded.

"I established my church as a banded brotherhood of those who were following in my way into the spiritual life of the Father; that they might be one in love, and that, as representing me, they might declare my gospel to all the world, and in their lives illustrate, live out, that gospel, as I had done in my life.

"I declared my simple gospel of repentance † for sin, of

* Compare John 14 ; 26. ¹ John 17 ; 1-14, and 25-26. John 17 ; 8. John 14 ; 10 and 26 and 31. John 15 ; 10-11 and John 16 ; 25.

² John 16 ; 28. ³ John 17 ; 4. Mark 16 ; 15. ⁴ Mark 16 ; 19 and 20.

† See Luke : 3 ; 3

renunciation of sin,—of faith, trust, love, purity of mind, heart and life, of doing good unto all men—so that the little ones of earth could understand and receive it, and could know that eternal life was to come unto the Father that sent me, and to obey Him in love, as I showed them, and thus to attain unto this pure state.

“But the blinded and perverse leaders of earth have made of my church a formal thing, an institution of conventional creeds—yea, a titled and priestly hierarchy, seeking thereby for themselves worldly riches, ease, position and advancement. They have made of it a bone of contention, a body of mysteries, a war of discord and a house of disunion.

“They have made of my gospel a mesh and snare and delusion; a mystery and scheme which they themselves know not, nor understand, and which mislead my little ones.

“They leave the gospel of the Great New Commandment which I delivered unto them and hold fast the tradition of men.*

“In the place of my gospel of earnest, spiritual, pure life, as I showed them, they have set up what that they call a ‘Scheme of Salvation’; by which sin is gotten rid of, and my righteousness and life attained, without their struggles to rise above sin in their lives, and so in their lives grow into righteousness as I showed them. Thus they have distorted that simple, forceful truth which I taught them when I told them they must be ‘born from above.’ †

“Sin was not imposed upon men by God, but men have grown into sin in the perversion of their lives. Sin is within the imperfect, undeveloped, disobedient life and nowhere else. As they become sinful by choosing and doing

* Compare Mark 7; 7-8.

† See 3d chap. of John’s Gospel, 3d verse, etc. The correct translation that gives the *real* meaning of Christ’s words, is “Born from above,” and not “born again,”—on this see marginal note in Revised Version of N. T.

sin and growing into it, so they must become righteous by choosing and doing righteousness and growing into it in their lives. My gospel was to show them how to attain this state, and so overcome sin.

"They enter into that life from above, as I showed them that * new birth of the spirit,—though they may discern not its ongoing processes,—when they pass up out of that life of sin, by overcoming sin and subduing the evil in them; and putting on that new life of love and obedience which I unfolded to them.

"I taught them love and kindness and tenderness and gentleness and meekness and humility—that the humblest was the greatest of all.†

"Instead of seeking and attaining these beatitudes in their lives, they are vain, proud, selfish, haughty, cruel, trampling upon the lowly, puffed up by their earthly vanities, each thinking himself better than all.

"I taught them to win men in my name by love; but in my name these self-righteous, self-conceited Pharisees have persecuted, and oppressed, and spurned, and ostracized, those who went not with them in their imaginings.

"Whoso persecuteth in my name, or in my name is unkind and bigoted and oppressive, bringeth my name into contempt.

"I taught my disciples not to persecute men, even if they were persecuted, but to love all men, and to be forbearing towards all men.

"I taught them that they who were not against us were for us, and that if they were doing good we should not hinder them, even though they were not following with us in our company.¹

"But behold the death, the woes, the intolerance, the

* See note on preceding page.

† Compare Luke 14; 7-11. Mark 10; 42-45. ¹ Mark 9; 38-41. Luke 9; 51-56 and 49, 50.

persecution, the sorrows, the tortures, that these blind leaders of the blind have inflicted upon the children of men, and that in my name ! Why ? Because men differed from them in their belief of what I taught the world was my gospel.

"They do thus and yet they wonder why my gospel of love and kindness and mercy does not speedily cover the earth.

"They think it a little matter to tolerate, and even wink at, and indulge in, forms of sin and wickedness which they teach is so easily forgiven and gotten rid of by the 'scheme of salvation,' which they have set up as my gospel ; but they curse, and oppress, those who do not follow, and agree with them in their dogmas concerning their conception of my teaching.

* * * * *

"My beloved brethren, here in this blessed realm, let not these things now afflict you, nor give you sorrow, while I speak of them, for it is my Father's will that there should no more sadness come into your lives, nor any more sorrow into your souls. It is needful that I should tell you these things, that you should know the truth, and that my message should be delivered unto the world.

* * * * *

"When I established this brotherhood, my church on earth, I commanded only one public ceremony or form for their observance ; and this was a form already known and practiced among those to whom I spake. I only adopted it for my purpose. This was known as the rite of Baptism. I used it simply as a symbol that indicated cleansing, becoming pure, without stain and blemish.

"I considered it needful that those who accepted my message from the Father concerning pure spiritual life and its attainment, and deliverance from their sin and evil, should by some symbolic act proclaim and declare to the world their renunciation of sin as I taught them, their faith in the Father, and their acceptance of that clean, pure life in the spirit, which I unfolded unto them.

"So I commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; in the name of the Father, that they might thus declare their faith in the Father; in my name as the Son, that they might thus declare their acceptance of my mission and message; in the name of the Holy Spirit, of the Father that they might thus declare their life in the spirit.

In this command and formula of baptism given by me, I did not teach that I was God or that the Holy Spirit of the Father was a distinct person from the Father. I taught that the Holy Spirit of God was the comforter and helper,¹ the Father's spiritual influence which proceeded forth from the Father; the spirit of truth which the Father sent forth to testify of me and to confirm my teachings; which filled me; and by which I did all things,² (as I of myself had no power), and which I promised my disciples should dwell in those who accepted and obeyed my message.

"I taught them that the 'Comforter' or 'Helper' which the Father would send to them in answer to my prayer,³ was the spirit of truth which goeth forth from the Father,⁴ and which bare witness of me.⁴

"I told them I would pray the Father to send to them His spirit of truth as a helper and comforter to them, that they who received me might be able to exemplify in themselves the truths of the spirit, which the world of sin did not do; that the spirit of truth might dwell in them as in me, so that they could embody in their lives the spiritual realities which I revealed unto them.⁵ Thus I taught them that the spirit of God enters where that spirit of their sin and disobedience is renounced.

* Compare ¹ John 15; 26. ² Holy Spirit is the correct translation and not Holy Ghost. See new revised version of N. T. ³ Compare Luke 4; 1 and 18. ⁴ Mat. 12; 28, and Luke 11 Chap. and 20. ⁵ John 14; 16. ⁴ John 14; 17, and 15; 26. ⁵ John 14; 16-17. John 15; 26.

"This spiritual influence was the Father coming down into them, to commend them, to help and comfort them, when they repented of their evil and remitted their sins. Thus in that pure life in the spirit they hold sweet communion with the Father of spirits for He enters each loving soul.

"I taught them that the Father would give of His holy spirit to them that ask Him.¹ I did not teach them to worship and pray to the Holy Spirit as to a divine Being distinct from the One God, but to pray to the Father for the gift of His spirit.

"I taught them always that God was a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth ;² I promised them that the Father's spirit would come³ into them; and teach them, and lead them into a knowledge and realization of my spiritual life and its truths."⁴

"The eternal infinite spirit of God is the source of all truth, and from God proceeds all truth and all knowledge. Within each soul that perceives the truth is the pervading, everlasting spirit of God.

"This spirit inspiring the teachers of old spake through them the truth that there was one God and His name One ;⁵ that none else was God :⁶ that before Him there was no God formed, neither should there be after Him, and that He was the Lord and beside Him there was no Saviour ;⁷ that the Lord He is God and there was none else beside Him ;⁸ that there was none like Him, nor any God. beside Him ;⁹ that He was God alone ;¹⁰ that He was first and the last, and beside Him there is no God¹¹ ; that the ends of the earth should look unto Him and be saved for He was a just God and Saviour, and there is none other ;¹²

Compare ¹ Luke 11; 13. ² John 4: 24. ³ Mat. 10; 19-20. ⁴ Compare with these thoughts the following passages : 1 Cor. 2 ; 10, 11, 12, 14, 16. Eph. 1 ; 17. 1 John, 5 ; 20. 1 Thess. 4 ; 8. ⁵ Zech. 14 ; 9. ⁶ Joe. 2 ; 27. ⁷ Is. 43 ; 10 and 11. ⁸ Deut. 4 ; 38, 39. ⁹ 2 Sam. 7 ; 22. ¹⁰ 1 Kings 8 ; 60. Ps. 76 ; 10. ¹¹ Is. 54 ; 6, 8. ¹² Is. 55 ; 21, 22.

and when I was on earth I told the people that the Lord our God is one Lord,¹ and I worshiped Him as my God, and their God, supreme over all, blessed forevermore!

"They were taught that I was the servant of God whose spirit was upon me.² And that He anointed me, set me apart, to reveal and proclaim the gospel of deliverance from sin and evil,³ and to bring to them a knowledge of eternal life.

"I taught them that this was life eternal that they should know Him, the only true God, and me, Jesus Christ, whom He had sent unto them.

"I went to earth to reveal unto, and teach, them more perfectly the blessed and only God, the King and Lord over all, who alone hath immortality, and who alone is eternal Being, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see, and whom I have declared by virtue of His Spirit which abideth in me.⁴

"And so I prayed unto the Father, as Lord of heaven and of earth,⁵ and so taught them to do.

"While on earth I did not teach them that I was God, or that I was equal with the infinite Father, but that I was the Son created by the Father, and that all they of earth, who believed in the Father and who were led by His Spirit, as I was, would also become the sons of God.⁶

"I taught them that there was unity and relation between my Father and me, as there was between all those who loved and obeyed the Father; and thus that the Father and I and they were all one.⁷ So I taught them that I showed them the Father, and that I was *in* the Father and the Father *in* me, but I did *not* teach them that I *was* the Father, or that I

Compare ¹ Mark 12; 29-34. ² Mat. 12; 18, 21. ³ Luke 4; 18.

⁴ Compare this language of Christ with 1 Tim. 6; 15, 16. ⁵ Luke 10; 21. ⁶ Mat. 5; 9. Luke 6; 35 and 40, and see similar thought expressed in Romans 8; 14, and 1 John 3; 1 and 2. ⁷ John 17; 21 23.

was *equal* with Him, but that the *Father was greater than I* and that of myself I could do nothing.

"If God had not been the One eternal, infinite Spirit above all and through all, as the teachers of old had taught, the true *only God*—I would have taught them, that they might know the truth concerning that God to whom they must render worship forever and ever.

* * * * *

"Though I instituted only this simple rite of baptism, and for the purpose which I declared, yet many of those who called themselves my followers have hedged, my simple gospel about with all manner of rites, ceremonies, sacraments and superstitions, making of it a lifeless body of form and ritual and of meaningless ceremonials. In this simple rite of baptism I used water as a symbol of cleansing, and many of them have made the symbol a means and necessity of salvation.

"Thus do they everywhere substitute the letter and the symbol and the form, for the spirit of my gospel and life. Could they not comprehend that all my truths were spiritual, and that I used simple figures, parables and symbols to clearly convey to them my spiritual truths and doctrines?

* * * * *

"I went into the world to bring each soul into direct communication with the Father, that Source of all true life, that every one might know Him and love Him and be in His infinite bosom, as a near and dear Father; but blind leaders have separated the children from their heavenly Father by the intervention of artful, designing priests, who covet power and position, and who in my name have often oppressed the children of men; who for their own emolument wring from them their hard-earned substance and the fruits of their labor. Yea, they even rob them of my truths which I spake unto them, and substitute therefor wicked and ignorant inventions of their own contriving.

"O ! THAT MEN WOULD STUDY AND ABIDE BY MINE OWN WORDS WHICH I SPAKE UNTO THEM, AS RECORDED BY MY DISCIPLES, THOSE WHOM I HAD ALWAYS WITH ME IN MY PRESENCE AS MY WITNESSES ; WHICH WORDS OF MINE AS INTERPRETED BY THE SPIRIT OF MY LIFE EMBODY THE MESSAGE AND GOSPEL OF LIFE WHICH I WENT TO THE WORLD TO DELIVER UNTO THEM FROM THE FATHER, AND WHICH GOSPEL AND MESSAGE I COMMANDED MY WITNESSES TO CALL TO THEIR REMEMBRANCE AND TO PREACH TO ALL CREATURES. AS AGAINST MY OWN SOLEMN TEACHINGS THE DECLARATIONS AND SPECULATIONS AND DOGMAS OF MEN ARE NOTHING ! "

* * * * *

At this point one from Earth asked this question :

"Blessed Christ, how didst Thou teach us that belief in Thee would save us ?"

"It delights me to answer you, my brother, and to make plain to you my nature, my mission, and my work on Earth. Weary not with me if I often repeat these truths to you.

"I went to declare and interpret the Father and His love unto the world,¹ and to teach men to have faith in Him² and to love Him³ : and I taught them to believe that I came out from Him to declare His love unto them, and to show to them how to love Him, and how to love one another, and thus how to attain to the true life designed for them. I taught them God's great love to them, and called upon them to be reconciled to God, and to accept of His love, and to consecrate unto Him their love.

"My life on earth was given to illustrate God's love to men and also to illustrate to them how in their lives to consecrate all their love and life to God. *Thus that in me and in my life the world might see the perfect union and quality of God's love to man, and man's love to God.*

"I called upon men to love me more than they loved all earthly things, because I had humiliated my life unto death

Compare ¹ John 17 ; 25-26. ² Mark 11 ; 22-23. ³ John 16 ; 27.

and all shame for them that I might win their love for me; so that in loving me they might love and obey the doctrines and the principles which I taught, and which I declared were from the Father. I taught them also that they must love one another, and that in loving one another they were loving me, and in loving me they were loving Him that sent me. Thus that through myself I might develop love in men for all those who, I taught them, were so dear to God as to receive my love.

"I called upon men to believe in me,—for belief in me is belief in my gospel. My gospel and my life were one, for one included the other. I personified my gospel in my life, and so became the light unto men of a Perfect Life.¹ By accepting me and my life they came into a realization of themselves and of their own lives.

"My gospel and my message were from the Father.² I spake not of myself, but the Father who sent me gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak,³ and this commandment is life eternal.⁴

"This was that great commandment-gospel which I came to declare and to illustrate, in my life among men, which was perfect, absolute love to God and to one another.

"This I showed to men in my life. Thus was I the way and the life to them.⁵

"I proclaimed to men deep repentance unto remission of their sins;⁶ for without a complete renunciation of their sin there could be no life in the spirit, and no love. For sin is the negation of true life and love.

"Belief in me is belief in the gospel which I preached, and which I illustrated in my life.

"Belief in my gospel includes conformity of life unto it.

"There is no saving faith until belief of my gospel is

Compare ¹ John 8; 12. ² John 8; 26, 28. ³ John 12; 49. ⁴ John 12; 50. ⁵ Mark 10; 21. ⁶ Mat. 26; 28. Mark 6; 12. Luke 3; 3. Luke 24; 47, and 13; 1-5, and 15; 4-7 and 10.

translated into life, and bringeth forth the fruits of repentance, faith and life in the spirit.¹

"Belief in me and in my gospel must include deep repentance² for sin, renunciation of sin,³ and then building up of the life into my spiritual likeness, bearing the cross⁴ daily, following after me.⁵

"The great principles of the pure spiritual life of my gospel I taught in my sermon to the multitude on the Mount,⁶ and I there taught the world that he who builded his character and life on that gospel, as declared by me, built upon an eternal foundation; but that he who did not so do was as one who builded his structure upon the sand.

"Saving faith is twofold, it includes belief of my words and conformity to my life.

"Faith is dead and worthless unless it is developed into a holy life. There can be no faith without fruit.

"My gospel was both my words and my life.

"He who believeth my gospel must become obedient unto my life,⁷ otherwise he believeth not in me.

"I went to Earth to save men from their sins, and salvation from sin is a state of growth and development into my likeness. Thus I taught on Earth in my parables that the kingdom of heaven was a growth, an expansion, a development.

"The kingdom of heaven is a growth within men of their true selves into perfect spiritual development of life.⁸

"As I taught them on Earth I now repeat to them, if they would become like me, free from all the power and dominion of evil, perfect in life,⁹ and in unity with the Father's supreme law of perfect life, they must deeply repent of and renounce all sin (for sin is the negation of true life), deny themselves of all evil or gross pleasures, take up their cross

Compare ¹Mark 4; 3-20. ²Luke 15; 4, 7-10. Mark 6; 12. ³Mat. 26; 28. Luke 24; 47, and, 13; 1-5, and 15; 4-7 and 10. ⁴Luke 9; 23. ⁵Luke 14; 27. ⁶Mat., chapters 5, 6, and 7; Luke 6; 47, 48. ⁷Luke 6; 46-49. ⁸Mark 4; 3-20 and 26-32. ⁹Luke 6; 40.

and follow on after me in the way I have led, doing good unto all creatures, raising them up towards God, obeying in all spiritual things as I have shown unto them in my life.

"I was sent to the world to show them this way in my life, and there is no other way unto the Father and unto eternal, perfect, blessed life but by my way.

"This way is perfect love—rising above the sinful powers of the world, becoming so that one cannot commit sin, denying self for others' good, doing good unto all creatures. Oh! that men would know the joy and blessedness of following in this way opened out before them by me.

"I myself in my life on Earth became this law of love unto men. If a man loveth me he will keep this law.¹

"My gospel was to teach men this law, and in my life I illustrated, and made plain, its fulfillment.

"My gospel is involved in my character, and my character was made plain in my life.

"Again I say unto men, belief of my gospel and faith in me includes obedience to my words; and obedience to my gospel bringeth about conformity of life to my life.

"No man hath saving faith in me who hath not obedience,² and no man hath obedience who groweth not into my likeness; for obedience to my gospel of love produceth my likeness.

"Thus it is that not every one who calleth me Teacher and Master, shall enter the kingdom of God, for they only are blessed that hear the word of God and keep it.³

"A man may profess to have faith in me and in my gospel, and yet he hath it not, if he hath not love and charity and humility and peace and meekness and kindness and forgiveness and chastity of mind and heart and life, and virtue and honor and honesty and truthfulness and sincerity, all exemplified and personified in his character and daily life⁴—

Compare ¹ John. 14; 21-25. ² John 14; 21-24. ³ Luke 11; 28.
⁴ Luke 6; 46. Mat. 7th chapter.

and added to these devotion of his life to the kingdom of God. As we know here, our real true spiritual lives consist in our thoughts and desires and feelings and volitions, so I taught them on earth that to be true and pure and good, they must be true and pure and good in thought, feeling, desire and will, and not merely in outward acts and deeds. Thus I taught, that they might discipline their real selves, and grow into conformity with, and be fitted for, this pure spiritual life. Pure life consists within us and not in outward deeds.

"These beatitudes of the spirit are the very substance and fruitage of faith in God, and where these are not there is no faith and no life in the spirit.

"He who remitteth his sins and cometh thus in my way, abideth in the pure life of the spirit—yea, becometh thus in his life a new creature having new loves and new principles—is so born of the spirit of God into renewed spiritual life;—and he will bear the fruits of the spirit as shown in my life;—for a good tree must bring forth good fruit.

"My gospel was unfolded to men in my life as the way to be saved from their sins; and of what account would faith be, if it casteth not out sin from the life, and in its stead establisheth the pure beatified life of the spirit? To have faith is to be! Faith in God is being in God. Faith in me is being in my life, becoming my life. So I always taught that to have faith was to live—yea, to have eternal life!

"To have faith in me, as I taught men to have it, doeth these things.

"He who truly followeth me, must overcome the world, must in his life rise superior to the powers of sin, and must be wholly subject to the powers of righteousness. The kingdom of heaven must be within men before they can enter the kingdom of heaven."

* * * * *

At this point some sweet, tender soul asked of Christ this question :

"Blessed teacher, didst thou teach us when thou wast on Earth, that God would damn men who did not follow thee and righteousness, and would punish them without hope in endless torments forever and ever after their death on earth?"

* Christ in the most gentle thought answered :

"I taught men that if they believed not in me and followed not my righteousness they would be condemned, and that by and in their lives of sin they were already in condemnation.

"I taught men that it was better to enter into the life which I unfolded to them, blind and maimed and racked by physical suffering, than having two eyes or two hands, to go into Gehenna, into the unquenchable fire, where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.† For every one shall be

* I give these thoughts of Christ's as I understand them and as nearly exact as I can possibly express them in our language.

† Mark 9; 43-50. "This text has been quoted to prove that Christ taught endless torment, but Christ is here borrowing the purely temporal language of Is. 66; 24, and this fact is, even alone, an argument of overwhelming force against the meaning which has usually been attached to Christ's expression. The expression 'quenchless fire'—for the phrase 'that never shall be quenched' is a simple mistranslation—is taken from Is. 56; 24, and is purely a figure of speech, as it is there, or as it is in Homer's *Iliad*, 56, 123 and many other passages. The gospel, like the law, as the Talmudic proverb so wisely says, 'speaks in the tongue of the sons of men.'" See Canon Farrar's "Eternal Hope" p. 123, note. The passage in Is. 33; 14, sometimes quoted to prove endless torments has not the remotest connection with the subject.

The text Mark 9; 43-50, and the same expression in Matthew is without any doubt in the world metaphorical, as the expressions to "pluck out the eye" to "cut off the hand," etc., indicate; he designedly taught in parable and metaphor. I have no doubt that Christ's words meant exactly as is explained in the language used in the text of this book. So the expression in verse 50, "that every one shall be salted with this fire," shows that Christ could not have meant an endless torment of hell in the previous verse, but a purifying process of some sort. Schaff in his commentary on Mark seems to recognize the difficulty of interpreting these words under the idea of an endless hell.

salted with fire. In this I taught them the degradation and loathsomeness of sin and evil,* the foul and repulsive state of which I illustrated to them by comparing their state of sin and its consequences to Gehenna,† a term and state well-known and understood by the children of Israel unto whom I was speaking. Thus I also taught them the ceaseless gnawing and remorse and consuming of sin in the human life, which state I warned them would continue so long as the soul practiced evil and abode in sin. And that compared to this shame and corruption of sin, the worst bodily pains and mutilations would be of small moment. I also taught them that every one should be salted with fire, and so through this savor of tribulation be purified, seasoned.

* Thus Christ speaks of "A son of Gehenna," in teaching a state of deep depravity in sin, thus illustrating the senses in which Christ used this term "Gehenna." Mat. 23; 15.

† To the Jews, whom Christ was addressing, the word Gehenna meant an intermediate, a remedial, a metaphorical, a terminable state of retribution, and even a state of purification. Note that Christ used the Hebrew word and did not attempt to translate it into the Greek in which He was speaking. It thus seemed that Christ wished to preserve unimpaired its old meaning in this text. In the Old Testament it is known as the Valley of Hinnom (Ge Hinnom) which valley was at one time the scene of idolatry and of Moloch-worship and was defiled by Josiah on this account. It was afterwards used as the sewer and dumping ground of the city of Jerusalem. The corpses of the worst criminals were thrown there and left unburned. From these things it became necessary and customary to keep fires burning there to purify the contaminated and foul air.

It subsequently came to mean the awful judgment which a Jewish court could pass upon a criminal—the judgment of Gehenna—which meant the casting forth of his unburied corpse amid the fires and worms of this polluted valley. The word then came to denote a punishment. But this punishment to the Jews and to their Rabbis and teachers never meant an endless punishment beyond the grave. For the history and authoritative exegesis of the term "Gehenna," "Judgment of Gehenna," etc, see Canon Farrar's "Eternal Hope," Preface, pp. 30-34, and pp. 81-83, and citations of various Jewish authorities on the subject, and pp. 193-218.

"I also taught men throughout my ministry on earth that they would incur judgment and condemnation on account of their sin; and I taught them of the fearful curse of sin and its penalties in the degradation of their life, and in separating the soul from God. But I nowhere taught men that God, our Father, would damn them and punish them with endless torments. Who would willfully so teach of me, my brothers? Did I not teach them that the Father, the Good Shepherd, would seek for his children, his lost sheep, until he find them? * Did I not teach them that men would be judged and chastised according to their deeds and works? That some would be beaten with few and some with many stripes? †

"Did I not teach and reveal to them that 'God is love,' and that to know him is life eternal; and that it is not His will that any should perish? Were they not taught that God afflicteth not willingly, but for their profit, ‡ that they may be partakers of his holiness?

"Did not the spirit of my life and of my Gospel, by which my words should be judged, teach them, and illustrate to them, the yearning of God for their salvation from sin, and for their exaltation? Did I not tell men that all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme, except that blasphemy against the spirit of God by virtue of which in me I did my wonderful works on earth, and that he who is guilty of this sin is in danger of eternal sin, which would not be forgiven him in that age nor in the age to come? §

* Luke 15; 4.

† John 15; 22. If this be true, how could there be an endless punishment in a tormenting hell?

‡ If punishment be torment and be endless for all sins or any sin, how could it be for our profit? Christ taught without any doubt that our punishment and sufferings were to purify us, to make us "holy."

§ Mark 3; 29. Mat. 12; 32. Revised Version of N. T.

Thus Christ taught that all sins and blasphemies, except that against

"Did I not teach them that the unmerciful debtor was only handed over to the tormentors until the debt shall have been paid?

"Did I not teach them that I would draw all men unto me? Were they not taught that I even went and preached to the spirits in prison—in yon Plutone—that were aforetime disobedient,* thus showing them that my mission is to lead disobedient souls everywhere back to the Father and to true, perfect life?

"Did I not teach men in and by my whole life on earth of the great love of God for his children, that through this love of their Father for them they might be led to love Him and serve Him, and thus be rescued from the curse of their sins and evil ways? Did I not teach them that I went to earth to save men and not to destroy? So I taught not destruction, but salvation from sin.

"Was not my whole life given to teach them how to repent of, and how to remit, their sins, and how to live unto righteousness, that thus I might make known unto them the way of salvation from their sins and deliverance from evil?

"In my great love for my brethren's future welfare, I taught them that each one would suffer according to the deeds done in the body,† and that as they sowed so they must reap, and that as was the tree, so must be the fruit—for I would have them all fully know concerning the future curse of sin in the life and in the soul. So I taught the wicked Pharisees, and the hard-hearted, and the hypocrites, and the corrupt in life, and the oppressor of the weak and fatherless, that

the Spirit by which He was endowed and did His works, shall be forgiven unto men, and that he who commits this sin would be in danger of an eternal sin as opposed to temporal sin, which would not be forgiven in this age (æon) nor in the age (æon) to come. Even in this case I cannot interpret Christ's words to mean that this sin, and blasphemy shall never in any age (æon) be forgiven.

* 1 Peter, 3; 19-20.

† Mat. 16; 27.

they would receive the greater* judgment and condemnation, and some the judgment of Gehenna †—yon state of sinful suffering, purification and expiation! So I taught such souls that they could not abide in these pure realms, in these heavenly mansions prepared for the pure in heart—for like seeketh like, and the evil fleeth from this pure light and seeketh the darkness.

“I also taught those who remain wicked and sinful in their lives, and refuse to enter into the way to attain to that eternal life which I revealed unto them, that after their life in time on earth they would enter this eternal ‡ state still in their sins, and in this eternity would suffer and wail in yon outer darkness on account of their sins.

“These thoughts and truths and warnings I taught men on earth that they might know the curse of sin itself in their souls; but, my brethren, I nowhere taught them that their Father in Heaven, who created them the children of His love, would torment them in an endless hell! §

* Mark 12; 40. Luke 20; 47.

The Greek verb used by Christ, which in some places in N. T. has been translated “to damn,” is neither more nor less than the verb “to condemn;” and the words translated “damnation” are simply the words which in the great majority of cases the same translators have translated, and rightly so, by “judgment” and “condemnation.” The New Revision makes this change, either in the text or in marginal notes in perhaps all cases where the words “to damn” and “damnation” had been used in the old translation.

† Mat. 23; 13-34. See this text in Revised Edition of N. T. and marginal note.

‡ There is abundant authority that Christ in his teaching on earth never used a word with reference to the duration of the suffering of sin endured by those who die sinful, that meant primarily an everlasting or endless state, but the term used meant more truly an eternal state—that is, a state simply that would exist in and appertain to eternity—age-long, æonian, but not endless.

§ There is also abundant authority that the word “hell,” as we now understand its meaning in the Creeds, “as a place of endless torment by material fire into which all impenitent souls pass after death,” conveys

"How the ignorance of men have perverted and misconstrued and mistranslated my teaching to them on earth concerning the truths which I made known to them !

"When one asked me on Earth, if there were few that be saved ? I answered him, 'Strive to enter in at the strait gate.' * So I taught each one his individual personal duty

meanings which are not to be found in any word as an equivalent in the Old or the New Testament, and that Christ never used a word with such a meaning.

In the Old Testament the word "hell" represents the single word "Sheôl," which means only the "Unseen World," and is often translated simply "the grave." In the New Testament there are three words which have been translated by the word "Hell." One of these words is "Hades," which only and simply means the "Unseen World" (see Acts ii. 27-36), and corresponds to the word Sheôl in the Old Testament. Another is the Greek word Tartarus, used in 2 Peter ii, 4. It refers to an intermediate state of the soul and cannot be rendered "Hell." The third is the word "Gehenna," used several times by Christ, and which, to the Jews to whom he used it, never meant a state or a place of endless punishment beyond the grave. In perhaps the majority of cases the New Translation in the Revised Edition of the Bible has corrected the use of the word "Hell" as it was employed in the old translation.

* See Luke xiii., 24.

We might quote the teaching of many of the Biblical authors on this doctrine of punishment and its limited duration.

We note *passim* the following :

The Psalmist says (Ps. ciii. 9) : "He will not always be chiding : neither keepeth He His anger forever." See the Psalms, *passim*, and Mic. vii. 18— "He retaineth not His anger forever, because He delighted in mercy." So Isaiah said (Is. lvii. 16) : "For I will not contend forever, neither will I be always wroth : for the spirit should fail before Me, and the souls which I have made." See also Is. xlix. 9, and Hos. vi. 1, and xiv. 4.—So John (i. 29) taught that Christ taketh away the sin of the world, and see John iii. 17 and 35, and in xii. 32, Christ says he "will draw all men unto" himself. See Luke ix. 56. So in John xv. 22 : "He that knew not his Lord's will and did commit things worthy of stripes shall be beaten with few stripes." How could this adjustment of punishment be consistent with an endless torment for all who die in sin ?

John's idea, as expressed in 1 John ii. 2, concerning Christ's work was that, "He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also

to strive to enter the strait gate, and to walk in that narrow way I showed them, that leadeth unto life—for the gate and

for the whole world;” and also in 1 John iv. 14. So the author of Acts, in 3d chap., 21, speaks of Christ as having departed into the Heavens, until the times of the restoration (restitution) of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.” So Paul says (Eph. i. 10): “That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.” See what Paul says in Phil. ii. 10, 11. In Col. i., 19, 20, He teaches that all things, through Christ’s work, will be reconciled unto the Father, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And see Rom. viii. 19, 24, and Rom. v. 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, wherein Paul emphasizes the teaching of the superabundance of grace (which means God’s love, mercy, kindness and blessing bestowed) over all sin, abounding more and more where sin abounded. See Rom. xi. 32, and xiv. 9. And in 1 Cor. xv. 22, 24–28, Paul teaches that Christ in his work shall put down and subdue all the enemies of God and the soul, and all rebellious rule and power and authority, making no exception or reservation of sin or evil anywhere, and thus concludes: “And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.” So in this text Paul also taught that Christ’s authority and mission and work in subduing sin and evil in the universe were subject to and derived from God, and that God alone is all and in all. So 1 Tim. ii. 4: “Who willeth all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

In 1 Tim. iv. 10, Paul says the “living God is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe:” and ii. 1–6: “Who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time;” and Tit. ii. 11, 12: “For the grace of God hath appeared, which is saving to all men.” And other writings, of Paul could be quoted. On these teachings of Paul the Rev. J. L. Davies says: “Will any one contend that the Pauline conception would be satisfied by the endless existence of the majority of the human race in misery and sin? Has Christ subdued those who gnash their teeth at Him because He makes them suffer? Is this the working whereby He is able to subdue even all things unto Himself? Will God be all in all when vast multitudes of His creatures are in impotent but absolute rebellion against Him?”—“Manifestations of the Sons of God,” p. 358.

So the Seer says (Rev. v. 13): “And every creature which is in

the way were broad that led to sin and its woes ; and many were going that way. So long as men sin I taught them no surcease from sorrow ! They must suffer its destroying power so long as they remain in it. Sin is that dread enemy which I taught men to strive against and to overcome. The fearful struggle in overcoming sin, the wailing and gnashing with it, must be had. If this battle is not fought and won on earth there must be that æonian woe, that wailing and gnashing in yon outer darkness in this eternal state.

"Thus I taught men on earth.* As I taught them, men

heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever." See also *xxi.* 4, 5, and in *Rev. xxii.* 3 : " And there shall be no more curse ;" and *xx.* 14 : " And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire."

"The sacred writers are singularly emphatic in expressing their truth. They could not have been more full and peremptory, had they intended to guard against men's straining their words to another meaning. They speak not only of ' Christ's dying for us,' 'for our sins,' 'for sinners,' 'for the ungodly,' 'for the unjust,' but affirm, in yet more extensive terms, that he died 'for the world,' 'for the whole world.' Yes, that they might not be misunderstood, they say that ' God laid on Him the iniquity of us all ;' yes, that ' He tasted death for every man ;' yes, that ' He gave His life a ransom for all.'"—*DR. CHAUNCEY.*

Dr. Isaac Watts once said : " There is not one place in Scripture which occurs to me where the word death . . . necessarily signifies a certain miserable immortality of the soul."

"That the doctrinal writings of these three chief teachers of the gospel—*St. Paul, St. Peter and St. John*—are wholly destitute of any assertion of the endless misery of sinners as the literal sense, can be verified by every reader."—" *Mr. White, Life of Christ,*" p. 347.

Martin Luther wrote : " God forbid that I should limit the time for acquiring faith to the present life ! In the depths of the divine mercy there may be opportunity to win it in the future state." See *Canon Farrar's "Eternal Hope,"* pp. 205-218.

* Some objector may say : " Well, if Christ did not teach endless punishment, he also did not teach an endless happiness—for the same Greek word he applied to both." In reply we say in the words of a

must give an account of the life they fashion for themselves on earth. By their works and deeds they shall be judged.* As ye here know, their spiritual life continues on in these realms as they have made it on earth.

"If men on earth overcome not the world of sin and the powers of evil which seek supremacy in their life—if they overcome not these tendencies there—but give way to unholy passions and evil desires, and remain subject to sin there, their life and character here will be but a continuation of their identity on earth; they will be themselves, and so here

great scholar, "that *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος* as the words used by Christ to express the duration of these states, are words which shine by a reflected light, i. e. that their meaning depends entirely on the words with which they are joined, so that it is quite false to say that *αἰώνιος* joined with *ζωή* must mean the same as *αἰώνιος* joined with *κόλασις*. The word means endless in neither clause, but, just as in Romans 16; 25, 26, there is no reason why it might not mean endless in one, yet have no such meaning in the other. 'If good should ever come to an end, that would come to an end which Christ died to bring in; but if evil comes to an end, that comes to an end which he died to destroy.' So that the two stand by no means on the same footing. An æon may have an end. Æons of æons may have an end. Only that which lasts through all Æons is without an end; and Scripture affirms this only of the Kingdom of God, and of the glory of God in the Church. The absolute eternity of evil is nowhere affirmed! Very much the reverse is affirmed in the many passages which speak of the Final Restitution." Canon Farrar, in "Eternal Hope," Preface, p. 36, n. Also on p. 34 (note), the same author says: "It is remarkable further that the expressions of the duration of good are far stronger than any that are applied to evil (Is. 51; 6-8: Ps. 145; 13. Eph. 3; 21). Also that the expression 'eternal death' occurs nowhere in Scripture."

Again, the same author says on p. 201: "Though 'everlasting death,' occurs in our Liturgy, it nowhere occurs in Scripture, frequently as we read of æonian Life!"

So Rev. Archer Gurney says: "The happiness of the blest rests not on a word or syllable, but on their perfect union with God we have no data whatever on which to ground the assertion that the eternity of evil is equally unlimited, absolute and infinite."

* Mat. 16; 27.

will remain subject to those sinful powers and forces and tendencies which they have made supreme in their natures there, until they overcome these sinful powers here and become wholly subject to the powers of righteousness and love.

"They shall suffer the consequences as they have willfully subjected themselves to the powers of sin and disobedience.*

"As they live so must be their life !

"God created men free, moral beings—they are not as vessels of clay, which God remolds as He fashions the inanimate elements.

"They themselves must become—grow into—purity and holiness and meekness and love, and all the spiritual beatitudes, as I taught them and exemplified to them in my life on earth. Else how could they be pure and holy and spiritual?†

"Character is the outcome of a free, moral, personal life, acting by choice, motive and will.

"Yea, character is but formulated will.

"Then how could men expect to be holy and righteous and spiritually pure in character and life, except they so choose, and by their own will choosing and directing their lives, grow thereinto? Did I not thus alway appeal to them to become my disciples? Did I not invite them and teach, and reason with, them that I might influence their will and bring it in subjection to truth and love?

"How can men do sin and follow evil, and expect to be saved from sin and evil? How can men always follow after the things of death, and expect to realize the fruition of life?

"If men know me and my life on earth, yea, and profess faith in my gospel, and still commit evil and follow sin, of what avail will my life and gospel be to them?

"I went to earth to save them from their sins, by teaching them the way to become righteous, and how to overcome the dominion of sin, but men must follow in the way I showed

* Compare Luke 12 : 47-48.

† See Sermon on the Mount.

them and take my yoke upon them, if they would become as I, superior to all the dominion of sin.

"If they do not so, my gospel will be the greater judgment upon them, because knowing the truth they did it not.*

"Having the power to save my earthly life, I yet submitted my life as a ransom to the powers of sin on earth in order that I might show to men how in the midst of sin to overcome sin.

"The Father loveth the children of men so tenderly, and would have them love Him, and He sent me to teach them concerning His love and to teach them how to love Him.

"Therefore, knowing of His love, they ought to be assured that the Father curseth them not, neither hath vengeance against them, but their sins curse them, and inflict many stripes upon them, and bring woe upon them.

"Sin is its own curse. The Father must needs permit the chastisement and expiation of sin. For men must reap the penalty of sin, and know its curse; that by this chastening rod they may be taught the better way of righteousness and joy in the spirit, and so be finally led unto the Father.†

"For it is eternally established that righteousness produceth, in the end, love, happiness and joy; and sin produceth woe, hate, remorse and imperfect life. Righteousness is the law of perfect life, as I illustrated in my life; sin is the violation of that law. Those who live in violation of the law of life, whether in the natural or spiritual world, never attain to perfect life, but suffer always, while remaining subject to sin, the woes and penalties of an imperfect life.

"Thus righteousness, joy and life are of God; and sin and evil are of men.

* Compare Luke 12; 47, 48.

† See these truths beautifully taught in the Parable of the Prodigal Son.

"While on earth I taught men forgiveness of sin,* and, as the son of man,† by authority of my Father, I forgave sins as proof of my divine mission. ‡

"I taught men to forgive one another's trespasses, and that if they did so the Father would forgive their trespasses.

"While I taught the forgiveness of sin, I nowhere taught men that they were relieved of the consequences or penal chastisement of their sins. For it is the suffering, the remorse, the chastisement, of their sins which teach men its dire consequences, and bring them to themselves, and constrain them to turn from sin and seek a life of righteousness, and so come unto the Father. §

"It is necessary that men should be led to a knowledge of themselves, and should be purified through these penalties and tribulations which their sins bring upon them.

"I went to Earth to save men from sin by teaching them how not to commit sin, how to forever overcome all its powers and tendencies, how to elevate their lives there out of sin and into holiness. For the only salvation from the consequences and penalties of sin is salvation from sin itself! Sin when once committed bringeth forth its sure fruits. He who would escape the penalty must overcome the sin—for sin is its own curse.

"How misled men are when they think and teach that they can easily and carelessly pass though life committing sins day after day against God and one another—living subject to sin, struggling not, nor bearing the cross—and then

* It is striking that Christ taught that as the son of man he had authority on earth to forgive sins, he nowhere taught that of himself, as God, he forgave sins. He did not claim to do this as God, but as the son of man by authority of his Father.

† Compare Luke 5; 24.

‡ Mark 2; 10.

§ Compare Parable of the Prodigal Son. His forgiveness by his father did not wipe out his remorse, nor restore his wrecked constitution and life, nor replace his wasted fortune.

by their formal supplications stately offered to God escape all the consequences of their sin !

"God does not license sin by a process of universal forgiveness !

"How can men imagine that a soul that commits sin can escape the inevitable consequences thereof ?

"Know they not that the curse of sin is already within the soul that commits it ?

"Say to men, I did not teach the world that salvation from sin was a scheme whereby their responsibility for sin was set aside, but that it was a travail of life, a strait and narrow way that must be found and followed, a bearing of the cross, a denying of self, an overcoming of sin by greater righteousness of life, a working out through fear and trembling, a daily growth in spiritual life into my likeness :—these constitute the process of salvation from sin, and without these there is no salvation. These are the steps by which the life rises to the pure and sublime heights of true being !

"I taught men a salvation, not from the woes and penalties of a hidden future life yet to be known by them, but from all manner of sin and evil on earth, which enslaved and cursed them day by day, and which was always perverting their lives and degrading them evermore !

"Say unto men, if they would escape the realm of evil in this future life, they must overcome the realm of evil in their present life. Whatsoever men sow that shall they also reap.

"Say unto men, the way to overcome all manner of sin is to live in and by the inspiration of my life, always filled and impulsed with my spirit, my love, my enthusiasm and devotion, and thus to rise above all the power and dominion of sin, blessing all and doing good unto all evermore !

"For this is the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, which I went to earth to declare and establish, and which I commanded all men to seek above all earthly things !

"This my message shall be delivered unto men by one appointed by me, whom I will instruct as to the duties required of him. *

* * * * *

"So, my brethren, ye who are beatified here, receive the truths I have declared, that ye may know the truth as I taught it to the world, and that ye may know me and know God and yourselves more perfectly.

"May that perfect love and perfect life designed for you by the Father, and taught by me, be your portion forever and ever! Grow ye evermore into all truth, and so have life more abundantly. When ye my disciples are perfected, ye shall be as your teacher!"

* * * * *

Thus ended Christ's thoughts.

What can I say as to the indescribable effect produced upon me and those who received the truths taught by him?

What an awakening and enlargement of my soul's vision!

What a clarifying of that pure, simple life-gospel, which Christ taught men, and which the world had wrangled over, and mystified, and perverted into weird superstitions, and used as an iron rod of torture, bigotry and oppression, for so many centuries on earth!

How plain and beautiful this gospel appeared unto me, as I beheld it stripped by Christ himself of all the delusions and illusions and dogmas with which men had deformed it and masked it, and masqueraded it before the world!

And Christ declared that the world should receive it, as He had taught it to us, and that He would commission one to so deliver it to men.

Who could fulfill so grand a mission? Who is it here who could re-enter that material sphere, be re-incarnate, and so be able to convey thought to minds immured in that state?

Such thoughts as these rushed rapidly through my mind.

* See note to Christ's Discourse, p. 228.

What a wonderful, weird, grand experience and mission that messenger will have, to re-enter earth in organic form, and mingle there again among the beings of flesh, teaching them in earthly language these pure "thought-forms" of truth fresh from the glowing mind of Christ. That messenger mingling among men, teaching them of these truths and grandeurs—with his holy, intent thought, inspired by these experienced glories, rising ever up towards them:—his mind in aspiring imagination gliding among these celestial spheres beyond the material stars; yet he upon earth laboring and toiling to feed and clothe and sustain again that earthly body.

Having been celestial, yet again feeling pain and woe and sorrow and weariness—again bound down by gravity's cables to a solid opaqueness—again limited and localized by the circumscribing conditions of gross matter—again struggling with evil, and finally battling with death!

Whose mission will this be? Christ intimated not in his public discourse.

* * * * *

After this service, which was concluded with worship of God in holy prayer and praise, in which Christ led us, the very heavens seeming to become glorious in praise—Christ came down, and mingled among his brethren, greeting all with loving salutations and embraces of affection.

His vast soul of love seemed to go out to all, and to encompass all in his fervid blessings. His uplifting virtue, his sublime personality and life seemed to come into direct personal contact with each mind, enlightening, exalting, glorifying all.

What inexhaustible love, what tenderness, what light he had for all!

His Personality and the truths he had taught us about himself and God and about our own selves seemed to expand

the universe, and to reveal within it superadded beauty, glory and purpose.

I thought: "So close to God as this, and yet, through Christ, our Archetype, who is filled with the Father's spirit without measure, forever and ever to get nearer and nearer unto God, experiencing always grander and more ineffable emotions and conceptions than even these! O Life, sweet Life!"

Then I thought of Christ's closing thought: "When ye my disciples are perfected, ye shall be as your teacher."

Oh! God, the sublime destiny of the holy soul!

NOTE TO CHRIST'S DISCOURSE.

Have I transgressed any of the bounds of religion, reverence, or even respect for public opinion, in elaborating, formulating, and writing out the "Discourse of Christ"?

I feel that no one could so think, or so accuse me. As a careful investigator, who has given the phenomena of Christ's life and its history here on earth, a searching and close study, I am irresistibly forced to admit the verity and reality of his existence here. That verity stands out as an invincible fact, that must be accepted and acknowledged. Then this being so we come to the details and records of the claims and doings of that Life. What were the claims Christ made for himself as a Being, what of his Nature and Powers as declared by himself? And then what of his words, acts and deeds, as illustrating, and as consonant with, his claims as to his nature and quality of Being? And what did he teach as to his mission and work on this sphere? How can all these be interpreted, and comprehended, in the light of His nature and history, and in the light of our nature and history? What position consistent with reason and with his own words, did Christ occupy with reference to man and to the "Power that makes for Righteousness"? These problems I have tried to group in Christ's Discourse in a form that makes all consistent with Christ's own teaching on these subjects.

Who can say it would not be reverential and permissible to thus state my views of Christ and of his teaching—of his nature, existence and truth—in dramatic form and setting, as I believe Christ's true teaching and meaning to be?

Would it be an act of irreverence for a human soul to say that the

Infinite Father of Spirits taught, or spake, so and so to his or her consciousness? and thus to dramatize what one conceives, and in one's soul feels, to be the communing thought and influence of the Eternal Father?

Then why not so of Christ, who, being made like unto us, interprets and unfolds this Father to our soul's comprehension, as he was fitted and set apart by the Pervading Spirit to do?

Did Christ not speak to me and teach me in every word he uttered on earth? and was not that complete life and character of his a symposium of truth, a perennial interpretation and commentary elucidating and illustrating his word of mouth? Am I not compelled to interpret his teaching in and by his life? So have I done as that life and its words taught me.

That interpretation is set forth fully in Christ's Discourse, which is in the nature of a Paraphrase of that true spiritual meaning of Christ's Life and Gospel, as I conceive them, and shows that the Father at some period, we are not told when, "Begot" this Son of His love, gave unto Christ "to have life in Himself" (see this phrase in John's Gospel), and set him apart; and then in the fullness of time sent him forth from Himself, and from that higher state of being and life, to declare the Father unto created intelligences; to unfold the Father's love for all His creatures; to exemplify and make intelligible the Father's blessedness and goodness; to unfold to the minds and hearts of all creatures that perfect life and state of all those who, through the power of the Good within them (which Christ compares to a seed), develop, "grow," into that state of life which is illustrated in his likeness, working out their salvation from sin through struggles, and through fear and trembling; and so he was sent to bring a living spiritual light into this world embodied in himself on this carnal sphere, that by that life-light he might visibly and concretely show to men their ignorance of true life, which he compares to "darkness," and their sinful departure from that true and perfect life which is the consummation of God's children. That Christ, who was an exalted, spiritual being, and who was full-grown in that wisdom of all spiritual realities, came thus in his perfect spiritual Personality to earth, and entered the gross womb of material nature, became, as to this earthly material life, a human babe; increased, as Luke says, in human stature and in human knowledge of these material environments—grew in every sense into manhood's state, became subject through his human nature to human passions, temptations and surroundings, like as we are, thus throwing down the "wager of battle" to those powers of sin to which we had become subjected, thus making himself a ransom unto sin in order that he

might show us how to overcome sin, how to make sin as though it were not.—Thus, that beholding his life, we might abhor our own imperfect life, might repent ourselves of that sinful state to which we had subjected our lives and self-hood, and so repenting, turning away, even “unto remission” or renunciation and overcoming of those sins that had degraded us (he commanded his disciples to preach “repentance unto remission of sin” unto all nations—R. V. N. Testament, and see Luke iii. 3), we might enter into that self-mastered life, that Christ-like self-hood, which is that eternal life of those psychic realms, fitted and designed for our pure spiritual selves, from which Christ had come. And he distinctly taught that he came therefrom to teach us how to fit ourselves to attain that perfect state. Thus may we comprehend how he became “the way, the truth, and the life” for us. Hence he always taught us that he came to save us from our sins. He did not teach us that he came to save us from the wrath and vengeance of the blessed Father of us all. But rather came to make a glorious illustration to us of the great love and yearning of the Father for all His children. Sin was that enemy to which he became a ransom for us, and he became that ransom when he subjected himself to the depraved states, temptations, weaknesses, passions, infirmities, woes and suffering of this limited, decaying, fleshly nature of this material earth. Hence we may somewhat comprehend that fearful sacrifice he made when he descended from that perfected state of spiritual joy and life to this gross travailing womb, this struggling bringing-forth, of embryonic human-character—subjecting himself to all human shame and suffering even to that material death inflicted at the hands of those sinful powers which he came to teach us deliverance from. Thus may we understand how he became a ransom for us.

So we are taught that Christ was sent not only as messenger to earth, but we behold his perfecting work, his “restitution of all things” elsewhere,—for his Life-light illumines also that realm of “Plutone,” or, as Peter says, that state called “Hell” into which he taught that Christ descended and preached. Did not Christ declare that he would draw all men unto him? And that every tree which his Father had not planted should be rooted up? And what other creature or thing is there in this universe which our Father has not planted except sin? Sin is distinctively and peculiarly a plant whose seed and growth are nowhere else but in the will and character of a free, self-determining being, who had done violence to that sweet law of love set over and in him by the beneficent Father—thus germinating and culturing that vile plant, which Christ declares shall be rooted up. Thus by showing to us what true life and love are, and by imparting to us the spirit, enthusiasm

and inspiration of his love and life; he makes us able at some time to follow that way into his likeness. Thus Paul says that the Father empowered Christ to subdue sin and all sinful powers unto the dominion of God, that God might be all in all (1 Cor. xv. 22, 24, 28, and Col. i. 19, 20.)

And as a refrain we hear the voice of John the Seer saying, "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire;" thus seeming to render emphatic the idea that all sin and evil and all the environments of evil shall be blotted out of the Universe.

CHAPTER XXI.

CELESTIAL VOYAGE THROUGH THE INFINITE ABODES OF LIFE.

THE celestial sphere Algol had reached the ruddy brilliance of its light, and then began to wane its glow, since the holy service in the Temple, when Clareese willed me to her side to begin our celestial voyage to her home, the sweet Pleiades, and other far-lying spheres.

I found her enrobed for our close communion with the celestial spheres. I say enrobed, for, in the psychic realms, the personality takes on its heavenly investiture of such hues and form as it wills.

Her "hair" (as we would say on earth) was a halo of color like the golden glow of Arcturus' hue, and sat upon her head like a royal crown.

Her "robes" of light clung about her willowy embodiment, like caressing grace embracing the form of her lover.

The brilliance of her investiture was mellowed by the modest loveliness of her face.

Around her perfect form was a girdle of color like the bluish cast of Vega's hue. All else about her was of the exquisite white of Sirius' flame.

Over her radiant countenance in chasing gleams played Herculis' ruddy flame.

She appeared to me as an entrancing revelation of beauty.

I was so overcome with her beauty and the forcefulness of her radiant life that I impulsively thought to myself: "Thou pure being, personifying perfect Life, Form and Beauty, without one gross atom of heavy-wrought matter; and yet life-endowed; more ethereal than the ether, quicker than the light, more forceful than all gravity's mighty cables binding the grosser spheres. O! that the denizens of earth could see, thus individualized, life, mind, spirit, beauty, form, force, in their primal elements."

"Most happy Clareese, I salute you, and am ready to do your bidding."

"Then, most beloved Assurance, we will tend this instant toward my home; we will meander along the far-stretching vistas where the yellow flame of Aldebaran kisses the white glow of Altair; where the ruddy red of Herculis embraces the bluish tints of Vega; where the 'sweet influences of Pleiades' clasp the holy 'bands' of Orion; where the black wall of Plutone receives the glowing shafts of Sirius. Come, we will be gone."

These thoughts so quickly communicated and we were gone.

As we willed, we rose aloft, and sped on like the wavy, scintillating motions of the light-bearing ether. So ethereal were we that upon our volition the celestial elements ever buoyed us on and up, like fleeing down before the speeding storm.

All motion, all velocity, were subject to our will. Illimitable space seemed to be at our command, within us, as it were; and yet we could glide and meander through the beautiful and grand, celestial immensities, as we desired. Here, there and yonder were, and were not, as we willed.

Sidereal zephyrs wafted us, and with refreshing caresses kissed our bounding forms.

As by our will we glided on as we desired, on every side

from interminable space there gleamed toward us the flashing, celestial colors of radiating spheres.

Many-tinted stars blended their varied hues into spreading gardens of vast-formed and exquisitely-blended tints and colors. To describe these celestial colors I must use, of course, the terms employed in language of earth.

The red-rose tints of Mira and Pegasi blended with the yellowish vermilion of Pollux and Capella.

The pale creamy hue of Argus melted into the ruddy glow of Antares.

The glowing white of Capella faded into the bluish shade of Altair.

The violet and green, the olive and gray, the russet and fawn, of a myriad dancing and bedecked satellites bathed their modest shades and hues in the deep blood-red sea of mighty Polaris.

And ever and anon along our gliding course each tint and color of these scintillating celestial spheres glowed into one harmonious embrace, as though in deeper blush each gave to all a kiss of love. And then they seemed to speed away like rainbows chasing rainbows, gamboling across the spacious fields of light. All these colors, softened, intensified or mellowed by the enchanting distance as we willed,—blended and contrasted, battled and embraced, combined and rent asunder,—hueing o'er the abysses of the infinite with the evanescent countenance of changing beauty. And these colors, as we willed, took on every form and contour and design and perspective and tone and character that the most exquisite art could conceive or execute, depicting to us infinite Beauty in infinite variety.

“ Oh! Clareese, thrice glorious, magnificent beyond the wildest stretches of the imagination; behold God embodying His glory in these divine colors! ”

“ Yes, Assurance, 'tis glory inexpressible! The soul can only drink and drink, and then fall prone in silent adoration.”

"But look, Clareese, behold that vast, white-glowing sphere bulging out the far-stretching firmament, and sinking sheer down as though into the abysses beneath us. What sphere is that of such untold brilliance?"

"That is the celestial Sirius, the home of Ristos."

"This is not the material Sirius that we viewed from earth, is it, Clareese, who flashéd the brightest glow athwart our earthly firmament?"

"Oh, no, Assurance, that I have never perceived and cannot. What we now behold is the celestial sphere. I heard Ariel once teach that there were the material and the celestial spheres—the one of matter; the other of substance—and that they never came in conflict. That they were of different elements; that the celestial passed through and encompassed the material as though it were not. He said that as my pure substance might meander through earth's abysses, and comprehend and feel and know it not; so does the celestial realm and sphere pervade and encompass the material sphere without let or hindrance. Each to the other is as non-entity—as though it were not."

"Clareese, how strange and weird: but yet in keeping with the infinite multiformity and adaptability!"

This sphere astounded me with the immensity of its pure form, and with the indescribable white glow of its celestial effluvium. This effluvium assumed varied and almost unnumbered forms: these appearing to embody all the forms and figures of systems of pure mathematics.

Triangles of light pierced the glowing firmament; and this firmament was circumscribed by that ever-breaking, endless line, the circle; and projected upon it was the mystic Hexagram; parallelograms of pure dimension floated athwart the view, like perfect-angled, glistening clouds. Vast cones with their multiformed conic sections like gleaming, silent mountain peaks, shot upwards; the ever-receding Parabola traced its curve on the infinitude. The Infinite Right Line

like a ray of light passed on forever. The geometric point, that unit of space, though without extension, yet gleamed in solitary ray from out the firmamental vastness. Mighty Planes, like placid, shoreless seas of incandescence, were mapped, sheening the abysses. Everywhere I beheld Geometry in repose. The effluvia seemed metricized, mathematicized, and attuned to the rhythm of the Geometrical Progressions. There were awful mountains of immensity, semicircled. There were vast stretching distances of immeasurable perspective, paralleled. All the spacial effulgence was an equation.

The celestial Sirius in its exquisite beauty of conditions and surroundings reminded me much of that "Home of Psyche" (which I have already described), where I first met the happy concourse of Intelligences, when Ariel aroused me to consciousness. There was the same entrancing beauty; the same ever-changing panorama of celestial scene.

There was this difference: the celestial elements of Sirius were more of a clear, pure intellectuality, an abstraction of the refined processes of thought. The very pure, white effluvium of Sirius suggested the pure, white light of thought.

It was of these elements, we observed, that Ristos partook in his nature. He differed from the benign, deep-feeling Meoön, as Sirius differed from the sphere Orion.

When one first experiences the clarifying processes of Sirius' effluvium he instantly thinks: "What a sphere for the mind to delve in the cold, passionless abstractions of mathematics and metaphysics!"

This strange influence of these surroundings may seem peculiar, and incapable of credence. The reader may think so—but a somewhat similar influence of surroundings and environments on the trend and workings of the intellect is noticeable even on earth's gross sphere.

Some of earth's zones conduce to, and produce, the mental

taste and power of the abstract sciences : while other zones minister to the artistic, poetic and emotional faculties.

So in the celestial realms, the divinely created elements and effluvia, that appertain to different spheres, conduce to the development, exercise and enjoyment of the various faculties, powers, passions and emotions of Intelligences. If you wish to experience the sweetest thrills, the purest and divinest passions of a blissful love, soar to the sweet-scented Pleiades, whose imagery is of pure passion, and whose rhythmic motions seem a sonnet of love. There colors blend in sweet caresses, and motions end in rhythmic kisses.

Do you wish to know, and feel, and study, the depths, breadths, and intensity of pure religious emotion? Of deep fervor of soul? Of the holies of worship? Of emotions of grandeur and sublimity? Then abide within the silent, slow, vast undulations of Orion's holy bands,—whose light reminds one of a serene temple's halo,—whose music flows in chants' and anthems' measured rhythm.

And so, I thought, God adapts to our varied faculties, tastes, and powers a varied and glorious universe—creating all things for, and adapting all things to, the loving, holy Life!

* * * * *

We had scarce alighted on Sirius before we were in company with a number of highly-cultured, intellectual minds. One of this company, a mind of vast learning, by name Cyril,—venerable in wisdom and in æons of eternity, though not in age,—was so kindly and attentive to us, and impressed me beyond description. When he learned I was from Earth, and that I had been created admixed with matter, he seemed anxious to detain me, and learn from me concerning the planet Earth. He questioned me much about our learning in Mathematics and Metaphysics. I remember one inquiry he made was, "Have minds on earth ever conceived of the spacial metrics of Quaternions?"

You can imagine his astonishment when I told him of the high attainment of earthly minds in the higher systems of Mathematics, and how Sir W. R. Hamilton had beautifully developed the system of Quaternions as applied to spacial relations; and how Prof. J. Clerk Maxwell had applied the system in studying the laws of magnetism and electricity.

Cyril could scarcely believe that Intelligence had acquired such vast domain in the gross elements of an insignificant planet like Earth—"which," he said, "had not even a place on the celestial astronomical map of the heavens, and which gave not even a point of light to mark its position, or to give it a local habitation and a name." Then benignly and earnestly he added:—"This teaches us, my brother, that pure mind only is supreme, and that to minister to its sublimity did God create this vast—ininitely vast—Macrocosm."

He then earnestly requested us to remain and attend his discourse on "God's Nature as Revealed in the Infinity of Pure Mathematics," which occasion he said was near.

I thanked him, and told him our mission would prevent, which grieved me much. For I knew it would be sublime to receive the thoughts of this learned mind on so grand a subject. I promised him that we would soon return to Sirius, when I hoped to receive treasures of wisdom there.

Cyril then requested one of the company to favor us with some Divine Harmony before we departed. In an instant I perceived flowing out from the metric effluvia about us a harmony and inexpressible melody, such as could not be conceived of by minds on this earth.

O, that welling and that swelling and that flowing; that tintillation and that vibration; that rising and that falling; that approaching and receding—on and on! away!—away!—of meter, scale and gamut unimagined by me! The tones and notes seemed to march on—forever!

At the conclusion Ariel turned to me and said: "That was a Rhapsody of Geometrical Progressions."

As we bade this learned company adieu to take our departure I said to Clareese :—

“What learned minds there are on Sirius ! What stores of knowledge to be acquired there in the æons to be experienced by me ! ”

Clareese replied :—

“And what æons of happy, holy love to be experienced by us in my beautiful Pleiades ! ”

Clareese had scarcely communicated to me this tender thought, when an Intèlligence revealed itself at our side, and hurled out this menacing thought :—

“So thou hast come to my own sphere to thwart me, and mock me in my love, hast thou ? ”

Instantly I recognized Ristos. I answered :—

“Ristos, if your charge were true I would not mock you but Her—my own of Earth—if she should be faithful to me. I adjure you let not your mind harbor evil for my sake for——”

“Adjure me not—we shall meet again ! ”

And instantly he vanished.

By this time we had risen, and were soaring towards Orion's spherous constellation.

I addressed Clareese : “Soul of love, what doth learned, beauteous Ristos mean by such seeming threats to me—me a wondering, wandering mind just from Earth ; so weak, and unused as yet to this untried life ? How could he, even if he should be prone to evil (which God forbid) injure us aught ? ”

Clareese replied : “He surely would not ! yea, he could not ! 'Twould only reck to his own ruin ! ”

“Yet I almost have foreboding, for he is so skilled in learning, and knoweth such mysteries ! But God is greater, and He shieldeth us.”

“Clareese, behold ! ” I cried. For we were now on the awful dome of space which vaulteth o'er from Sirius' towering pole to vast Orion's central band, and as I directed

my mind in downward view, so fearfully sublime was our position in infinitude that I cried out to Clareese.

Beneath us rolled worlds upon worlds, planets upon planets, constellations upon constellations, and systems upon systems, all celestial—all speeding through vastness illimitable!

Constellations were racing in their mad courses, ever circling around their central orb; chasing each other in circling courses like maddened steeds, with breath of fire and mane of glowing light! And as they sped onward, some whirled round and back as it were upon the haunches of their axes. Others seemed to move straight on like peaceful flocks, in fruitful meadows;—except that the smaller herd frisked around and around the great central leader!

Vaster systems moved along in swift-rushing grandeur: now curving upward in sublime arc, then bounding forward in beaten orbit; the smaller orbs in swifter pace vaulting ahead, then rounding back upon their former track:—the whole rushing system in multitudinous roar like the surging masses of tumultuous seas.

Planets chased planets; worlds in mad charge after worlds; constellations flanking constellations, then storming heights far above or burrowing in abysses beneath; mighty systems marching and counter-marching: some speeding swiftly on as though to obstruct the beaten path of others; some checking to the rearward, as though for stealthy attack on others in front:—yet none meeting in conflict, nor clashing in combat!

Wandering among them from regiment to regiment, from company to company, like sleuth-hound spies, or racing couriers, crept or sped, vast, glowing serpentine-forms like unbridled comets—yet they entered no regiment, nor stopped at any camp, but aimlessly on they seemed to go, trailing the abysses.

The only appearance that seemed like conflict of arms or

deadly combat among these giants of Infinity was the evergleaming and speeding and hissing of countless forms of tinted light, like meteorological balls, forever scintillating and whistling and howling as though hurled from the fiery mouths of a million death-dealing guns!

And I noticed that while there was marching and countermarching; advancing and retreating; flanking to the right and to the left; scaling heights and burrowing beneath; yet all in grand perspective moved forever on, as though passing in perfect system about some Almighty Center that promulgated every order and issued every command.

Some of these spheres and systems were nearer and some farther away. Some seemed a glowing point in immensity. Some appeared as gleaming, rotund bodies bulging onward and outward in the vastness. Nearer to us I perceived vast groups of mighty substance, huge and rotund, like rounded snow-crowned mountain domes dissevered, and hurled tumultuously through space.

Still nearer to us from another point of view I saw mighty spheres, concaved into almost limitless bulk—and so near were we that I could see their duplex speeding motion, revolving ever around, yet swiftly floating and gliding on, as though they had no weight, and were buoyed forward by the luminiferous ether.

Some were vast double stars or spheres that whirled about one another, around and around, at an almost incalculable velocity, that we would have calculated as hundreds of miles to the second of earthly time.

Strange! Wonderful! Sublime!

And as we willed our minds drew near to each system, sphere or constellation, and then receded to other points of view, contemplating all this grand panorama of Eternity in every aspect we desired—for space was no hindrance to mind.

I beheld in this sublime spectacle as much beauty of color and of motion, as of order and system.

The sublime motions of the spheres were ever rhythmic with sound and music.

There were the deep-flowing, incessant intonations of the lower vaults, like the slow-vibrating hum of an endless gamut—some murmuring in shorter and some in longer beat. Mingling with these infinite basses arose tones higher in the limitless scale of sound than any I had ever conceived of as possible. There were other tones that vibrated like an unending cable evermore battling with storms!

Then would come a smothered roar like seismic waves undulating through chaos pregnant with sound.

And anon piercing through all others arose notes clear and long—then tremulous and quivering—piercing the vastness with its thrilling tenor, as though some planet was passing near, exulting in its glory!

Then there arose trembling from the abyss dismal moans—prolonged and fearful! that sounded like the despairing groans of a lost sphere rushing to its doom; and this scarce had died away into a sob, before the ether was rent in twain by bugle-calls, rising and falling, welling and swelling, exulting and calling, as though shouting in victory or leading to arms!

Then I heard all these tones and myriads more blended and combined into an orchestral symphony; and then these tones sweetly mellowed into the dreamy, soft harmony, which glides out from a thousand æolian harps, floating through ether, stealing away on the winds, and dreamily dancing on the light—coming from a thousand harps, and each with a thousand strings, each string resonant with a thousand sounds, and each sound a sacred harmony! And as this melody encompassed us, and overwhelmed us, in itself, and set our souls atune with itself, we were overcome!

And Clareese leaned her head upon me, and sweetly murmured:

“’Tis the harmony of the spheres!”

I said: "O Clareese, who can comprehend the infinities of God! We have just beheld in wonder these spheres and constellations and mighty systems. Yet they are but as a point in this infinite vastness—for, behold, on and on in yon forever beyond, countless other spheres and constellations and mighty systems rolling and speeding and scintillating and singing in yet mightier orbits!"

Then Clareese replied:

"Come, behold another Infinity! This infinity Ariel unfolded to me once. See this very mite of celestial substance? We enter into it. We explore this celestial mite. Behold! parts within parts! See, Assurance, within each part circuits of force, and within each of these the pulsations of the eternal, increate Essence, the infinite Etheric Energy; and within each impulsation, the very immanence of the Infinite Mind! And behold here, like the Universe without, an infinity of parts infinitely small, like firmaments and planets and constellations and systems, all concentrated about the Infinite Mind that dwells here. And, Assurance, as we see it here in the celestial, so Ariel said you saw it in the material; there was not only the infinitely great in matter, but there was the infinitely small also.

"'For,' he said, 'within the mite of matter were its infinitely more minute parts; there were its body and limbs and organs all formulated and articulated; and within these limbs and organs the minuter parts that made up the limbs and organs; and within those minuter parts coursed the life-blood; and within that life-blood the globules that composed it; and composing the globules the gases and so on.'

"And Ariel conducted me into a molecule of Hydrogen, which gas, he said, entered into the globule of this mite's blood. This element, Hydrogen, you know, is in the nature of pure substance, or of the quality of substantive-force. Ariel informed me that it in itself was not matter, yet, he said, if it was subjected to some creative forces, such as heat, mo-

tion, etc., as he termed them, which were but velocities, or modes of motion, or processes of the creative agency of the Eternal Mind, this Hydrogen would pass into a material compound or precipitation with other forces, and form 'water.'

"This substantive-force, called Hydrogen, being one of the primal elements, was in itself of such pure substance as my celestial thought could perceive; and yet by a conjunction with other forces it passed into a material compound or precipitation termed water; this water was one of the main elements of the blood of this material mite.

"So, with Ariel, I entered into the infinity of a molecule of this Hydrogen, which with other elements composed this compound, 'water,' which was a constituent of this globule of blood in this mite.

"And Ariel said: 'Here is the mite, and here are the organs composing the mite, and the parts composing the organs; infinitely smaller still the minute particles of blood in these parts, and then the water in the infinitely small particle of blood, and then the gases which form the water, and then the molecule of Hydrogen, which, with other gas-forces, form the water.' 'And now,' Ariel said, 'let us take this minute molecule of this Hydrogen, and there within that we beheld the universe imaged forth—for within it we see what is in reality an infinity of infinitesimal atom-worlds with their firmaments and spacial distances and suns of light and heat, and center and circuits of forces and electrical currents, all harmonious. And thus on and on without end!

"Thus we exist always between the two infinities of the Great and Small; and yet none are small, for we can only perceive and speak comparatively;—so infinitely great is this small that it can be divided and made smaller forever, and could never become so small as to be indivisible; and we for the purposes of our thought, had to assume an indivisible unit of matter, so-called, which we termed the "Atom"—just

as here we assume that unit of space the geometric point ; which we assume to be without extension or parts.

“So, indeed, do we everywhere exist and abide in the midst of two infinities. And we, our One-Self, our thinking personal Identity, are the only units in this infinite cosmos—save God—and He is the Infinite, All-inclusive Unity, in all and over all ; thus are we in our Personal Spirit-Entity fashioned in the image of the Father of Spirits ! ”

And here, as Clareese finished, we lifted up our souls in worship.

* * * * *

We could not remain longer thus entranced.

We passed on towards Orion's sphere.

We soon perceived ourselves entering his holy shades. I saw that he was a vast sphere with others of smaller magnitude, his satellites ; each satellite was transfixed in its own segment, and did not revolve about Orion's center as does the satellite of our earth. Each satellite was of a different shade or glow of sacred color, that reminded me of vast cathedral windows. These were Orion's band or girdle of stars—all celestial. The effluvia (or “atmosphere,” as we would say on earth) reminded me of a perfumed, prisms radiance, that fills some mighty, holy temple's spaciousness. The firmament was a sacred halo. Directly above was a curved band of whitish, glistening, frosty light, that sparkled gorgeously—glittering and scintillating ; in shape a sword. The horizon on every side was, as I have described, of mellowed, solemn tints that toned to softer shade the brilliance from above.

To the northward of these transfixed satellites, though within Orion's space, were vast, murky distances, filled with a kind of formless mist, at times dark and hazy, then again like a milky foam. This distant, overhanging canopy gave a kind of reverential awe to the face of all things. Beholding these murky distances made one feel as though one were be-

side a tranquil sea, in sacred meditation; or in vast solitudes holily awaiting the voice of God; or alone in some sacred cathedral, spacious and magnificent, filled with holy light, its vast aisles still reverberating with that worship whose service has just ended. I saw on every side sacred multitudes, and they were all enraptured by the emotions of blissful adoration and worship.

They all seemed to be, as it were, overcome and overwhelmed by the depth and intensity and indescribable effects of these all-possessing emotions, which pervaded and encompassed each soul that entered the serene and mellowed shades of consecrated Orion.

There was no music here save that which chanted some sweet, soft-flowing, sacred, hallowed emotion;—and this rhythm of the Soul, so sweet and low, came forth from everywhere and entered into and filled every being.

O! such blessed, serene joy everywhere!

I felt such worshipful and inspired emotion, on this holy sphere that I willed Meoön's presence.

In a thought's duration he was at my side, and said: "My brother, can I serve thee? And you, beauteous Clareese, are here, let me be even your servant; what wish you both?"

We saluted good Meoön, and thanked him for his presence and proffered service.

"I wished you here, Meoön, that in this your home, sacred Orion, we could with you enjoy these deep emotions which well up in our souls, and encompass us everywhere. How close to God I feel in these hallowed shades!"

Meoön answered: "So sacred a delight I rejoice to share with you. Here each thought transfixes its roots in the holy depths of the emotions, and towers forever upward to God. Life here is perpetual praises, and every joy is worship. Do you not feel the inspiration so holy and fervid, of this ever-diffusing effluvia? O blessed emotions, revel with-

in my soul! fill me forever, and let me abide in this light of our Father's smile!

"May this glory be yours, Clareese, and yours, Assurance, and mine, forever!"

Thus, and more than thus, welled up our adoration and praise.

I could not, and would not, attempt to tell in words the sublime emotion which possessed me on this sphere! I will not say more.

* * * * *

"Brother Meoön, what is that vast, murky, milky canopy, which rests there above us, like moving vapors of aerial darkness, and then anon like frosty mists?"

He answered:

"Between Orion's sphere and Pleiades' celestial constellation there intervenes a void, a waste in space, where once went out the light and beauty of created spheres. There is now void there, which reaches on somewhat betwixt Orion's constellation, overspreading in part his spacious habiliments. Orion's mellowed light in broad effulgence stretches athwart the expanse of this overhanging canopy. And from the depths of this frightful void rolls outward a strange and formless influence, which some philosophers teach is the Creative Agency forming by eternal laws material spheres. 'Tis very strange to me that I can perceive this overhanging vaporous sheen, for I was never created admixed with matter; but I account for this power of my celestial vision in this wise: As I have before told you, our ethereal minds—we who were created pure mind unmixed with matter—cannot perceive any element of gross matter. But this vaporous sheen is the conjunction of celestial light with the highly attenuated, and as yet unformed, matter of this void, which is as yet only in the creative process of becoming matter. Doubtless, Assurance,—as you were created admixed with matter and have passed up through it and are

able to perceive it—the appearance of this far-reaching canopy is far more vivid and real to your vision than to mine.”

“ Yes, Meoön, it is, and even the astronomers of Earth had noticed and tried to unravel this wonderful appearance about Orion’s constellation.”

“ I ween, Assurance, that you did not there perceive this celestial radiance and substance which here envelops us. What we now experience is the celestial Orion. I have been informed that there was the material sphere, which in earthly language you termed Orion, and that its visible contour was a strange duplicity of this celestial embodiment. Doubtless that vaporous sheen—the eternal substantive Force in process of becoming material form—was visible to you of Earth as to us here, in that it was the Creative Metamorphosis of one element into the other, ”—and then Meoön added, “ O God, wonderful are Thy works and Thy ways past finding out ! ”

I added : “ Meoön, it is even so ! We can but learn, wonder, and admire ; and then progress always in these ineffable glories ! ”

I then continued :

“ Clareese and I are, at our leisure—wills, soaring towards Pleiades, and we shall pass through this void, when I will observe it. From Pleiades we tend to Plutone’s evil sphere, and from thence back to the sphere of The Temple. Will you not delight us with your gracious company on this meandering ? We would prize your presence much.”

Meoön answered :

“ If there be one in all the Home of Mind, or if from out the ‘ sweet influences of Pleiades ’ one has come lovelier and more beauteous, and whom I prize and adore more than all others ; and who could command my soul, as her blessed counterpart upon her lightsome wish, she, adorable Clareese, is that soul ! To accede to your kind invitation, acquiesced in by her (to my soul’s delight) would be my pleasure ; but

holier duties detain me, and in their performance I am most blessed of God.

"I believe you said your way was to Plutone's evil sphere. If so, my beloved ones, let me pray you keep your thought while there always dwelling on God's holy laws; for he who is not sealed unto God, should enter those darksome realms with fear and prayer. Beware! Now farewell, and God be with you!"

Clareese replied :

"Good and gracious Meoön, grieve not because of our undertaking, for Assurance tendeth there on missions of mercy. Feeling for him, so newly-come into these infinite realms, I will accompany him. I thank you for your earnest wish for our welfare, and for your tender and gracious thought of myself. I shall always cherish your sincere esteem and regard. You bless me much more than I deserve. Farewell!"

This said and we vanished. And as we vanished these thoughts from Meoön's mind flashed into my perception :

(Meoön alone.)

"And she to Plutone's sphere with him—journeying meanwhile in thought's leisure through all these immensities, soul joined unto soul!

"I fear for them!—Her love seems to me transfixed on him, and both appear already in unlinked affinity!—Still her seeming passion may be from her deep and sincere sympathy, induced by his sad past on Earth's travailing sphere; for so deep-feeling is her tender nature, formed amid the 'sweet influences' of the beautiful Pleiades!

"I sometimes thought and felt that God had fashioned that exquisite soul,—so enraptured of beauty,—for myself; and my soul,—so deep-feeling and grave,—for herself.

"But Thou, God, makest and appointest for me my holy choice, and I rejoice that I have not yet pained her by mention of this my seeming holy passion. The manifold joys

she would give me would, I ween, heighten and sanctify my adorable worship of God—for such joy quickeneth all worship;—yet without her my graver adoration still receives acceptance of my Father.

“Ristos knows they tend to Plutone’s realm, and his strange and darksome actions toward them makes my soul somewhat aghast. He has been there ere this, risked his soul in Plutone—why? Knoweth he that he is sealed unto God?—And so knowing can without fear enter into temptation? He doth not know this, for he hath not passed up through great tribulations from a travailing state, and thus become stronger than all evil and temptation.

“Then I liked not his thoughts expressed to me this wise :

“‘They (meaning he and Clareese) shall not love, except to their ruin, or my destruction.’

“I must to Ristos and protect him and these !”

CHAPTER XXII.

CLAREESE AND I IN THE VOID.

“CLAREESE, seest thou this strange nebulosity? This somewhat airy nothing, yet somewhat becoming something?”

“Yes, Assurance, it seems to be a dim fading out of the ethereal elements into what appears to me a formless semi-nothingness.”

“No, Clareese ; it appears to me to be a compression of the ethereal substance into a highly-attenuated material substance—a wonderful transformation of this pure, divinely natured Force into a grosser precipitation. For behold these darting, rushing masses or particles of as yet inconcrete matter, as yet ungathered by gravity’s forceful cords, circling

ever in vast stretching orbits, and still yet unformed by God's creative power !

"Look where this once void impinges on Orion's celestial firmament ! Seest thou that spreading sheen as a shielding canopy o'er it ? 'Tis there this incubating void seems to break on the celestial Reality. From what I have experienced of the material elements, it seems that this void is almost ready to heave with some attenuated inflation, as of a gaseous entity."

Clareese said despairingly :

"Of this I know not."

So strange was this concave void of semi-nothingness that we both remained silent, intent in thought. To my experience there was nothing really visible here but a kind of circling mistiness here and there, as a dust, made visible by wandering rays, of what seemed to be luminiferous ether, meandering here in scattered segments, darting midst the swift-flowing inconcrete masses. To the physical vision it would appear as though one were in a wide-stretching cavern, full of murky vapors, through whose diverse crevices crept weird gleams of light.

There was no sound ; nor any motion except of this incubating substance. There was no star there—except Clareese—and for me she was sufficient. Seeing her thus surrounded made me think of evening's dusky twilight when the shadows have fallen on earth—and Venus as the evening Queen sits glorious on her eastern throne, all else adoring her.

Onward we sped riding on chaos as with winged winds. We seemed to glide as far as from Earth to Neptune's frontier orb, yet chaos still sped on.

We came to where a denser shadow fell—that seemed a pall—which told the weird tale of a world's demise. Here I said :

"Clareese, if you care not, suppose we pause a while beneath this denser shade, that in this solitude our quick

emotions may take form, and feel these strange surroundings. What fitting place, where thou alone art radiant, to tell me what you promised of your life, your love that was, or is, or that will be. Thou hast my life in mind; my past, its secrets and its joys and woes have all been told to you—so much tell me of yours.”

And there beside the darkened wall of that descending shadow, with only scattered, wandering rays meandering through this void's immensity, with Chaos encompassing all, paused Clareese beside me, yielding her pulsing form to mine.

Thus reposing, she, in soft flowing thought-forms, so gently missioned as though she feared they might pass beyond my intent mind, said :

“Half a hundred times has Mira veiled her brightness since I became Intelligence.

“Within Pleiades' sweet influences I experienced first the joys of consciousness. From love I came, and into love's sphere was I created conscious life. When I became Intelligence, I first was conscious of myself and then of other minds. Thus knowledge came with my creation : for here existence is but ceaseless thought, and life is mind in conscious action.

“The parent minds to whom God committed my spirit-entity to be nurtured in His wisdom, whom I will ever dearly love and revere, were Gracias A Dios and Griselda.

“Besides myself, God gave them two others, my tender sisters, Caritas and Sophia. These will rejoice to know you when we arrive.

“My parents reared me most happily and tenderly, imparting to me always God's love, and teaching me His wisdom, as ever manifest in these beauteous realms.

“Wisdom and sweet sentiments and emotions were my companions ; for, everywhere amid the erudite and impulsed elements, the transfixed, psychic thought-forms, as ‘Truth-

Bearers,' were ministrant to my expanding and developing soul.

"There was no sin nor evil nor temptation ever before me; I knew and experienced only love and its beatitudes.

"Thus sped and grew my expanding self, becoming knowledge while I felt the joys of many blest emotions.

"I remember that, as even just now to my young thought, these glittering realms afar were spirits playing in the tinted fields of light, and each twinkling ray became my tiny toy.

"My celestial form increased in stature and proportion as it basked in the life-imparting effusion of the Divine Substance, which fills and sustains all. I celestial grew by this absorption, as you told me did your material self by eating and drinking the perishable sustenance of earth.

"Pain or sorrow I never felt or knew; except that in my maturer emotions, when pure passion stirred my fervid nature, I have felt somewhat lacking in my full life;—not that I was unhappy, but that my nature yearned for that most holy joy that springs from union of soul to soul in blest affinite love. I do not pine, I yearn. I do not weep because of grief that makes me sad; but sing for joys that are yet to come.

"Think it not strange that I should impart to thee my deep emotions towards thee—as I shall do—for here each soul sings of its love and passion to another, as it would of any and all pleasurable things..

"I had never felt nor known affinite love, until I knew you, and heard the story of your earthly life, its sorrows and woes.

"I used to say: 'When to my soul there glides my other self, which God, I know, will send to me, and for whose coming I await in hope, my joy will then be full, and all my life will be a gladsome song.'

"You came into my life, and since you came and gladdened me by your companionship, my soul has been aglee

with joy that I had never known before. In these blessed realms our deep emotions are so close akin, that it may be my tender, deeply-wrought sympathy has overleaped its bounds, and usurped Love's dominion in this my yearning towards your soul.

"How the elegy of your earthly life and its trials, darker and more gloomy than this pall that envelops us, has knit you to me, and made me pray that I might ever shield you in my love, and bear you ever up towards God's unspeakable glories, and away from all that has possessed and harmed you.

"Think not that I could wish to win your love from her of Earth—or deprive her of thee, when she ariseth true and steadfast in her love to thee.

"I could not receive from you affinite love,—not yet,—but in my love I crave to shield and bless you till she comes."

Thus Clareese blessed me with such sweet thoughts, her hazel eyes of soft light all the while beaming upon me, suffused with tender emotion.

I answered, enchanted and overcome by emotions most intense:

"Dear Clareese, so matchless is thy life and so gracious thy love!

"These yearnings of thine for affinite love—so fruitful in anticipation—are the foretastes of joys which God will yet fulfill for you. I feel that thou hast divined rightly in that thou lovest me for pity's sake, not for myself. I could not fill your life with what it craves. I am as a weak child, as yet just risen from the sordid flesh, which thou wouldst have spurned from thee. I could not be to your life as light-created Meoön, nor as wise Cyril of Sirius, nor as many others I could mention, who have long abided in these pure realms. Dear Clareese, I do love thee! God knows I love thee! Did I have other emotion than this I would be base indeed. Thou art radiant and adorable to me!

"But it is not as I love her. You taught me rightly, I am hers and not my own. In God's witness I vowed to her, and she to me, and I had ever felt that we sealed this vow with our love.

"'Tis true, I cannot know that she is still faithful in her love, nor that she was sincere. For the spoken vow may come from a cold and formal heart, that never knew love's holy thrill; and when love's vow is taken thus, the formal heart that spake it leaps from the yoke, perchance, when death or sad disaster strikes down the partner. To such a love my vow would surely be fulfilled at death, and in these realms my celestial self could mate itself to truer soul, and thus could feel the sweeter joys of sincere love.

"But how could I feel that she was such an one—who gave the hand and withheld the heart? She, the sweet angel of my love's young dreams, who always thrilled me by her soft, warm touch?

"Still, Clareese, who can know the human heart, who can sound its depths, and find its secret emotions?

"So very often on earth when death divides the twain, that he or she, who still remains, forgets the absent one, and seeks and finds another love, and straightway vows to this as to the first. Thus runs the world along.

"If she should thus forget me—and—— Oh! Clareese, I could not lose thee nor let thee go—till——"

"Fear not, friend of my love, for till then I shall be as faithful and steadfast to thee as she could ever be, and as true to protect her love as you could ever be."

CHAPTER XXIII.

IN THE PLEIADES.

"CANST thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion?"

Thus did the poet Job of old ask of the intelligences of earth.

Had he known what I saw?

* * * * *

"Assurance, seest thou that quivering halo about yon septametered constellation, as though it were coming to meet us dancing?"

"Yes, Clareese, I could not but see such beauty."

"Well, that is the seven-sistered Pleiades, that you told me your poets of earth wrote of—my most blessed Home of Love!"

"And are we so near it, Clareese, your home?"

"Yes, now we are here."

"Be ye here father and mother, and my sweet sisters, I long to greet you all, and that you may know him with me, my dearest companion!"

This ringing call, clear, sweet and tender, was scarcely thrilled forth from Clareese's pent-up love, ere I saw about her two exquisite forms of beauty like herself; and two other forms that reminded me not so much of verdant, merry spring with its flowers, as of quiet, mellow, beautiful autumn with its fruitage.

Here were spring and autumn and Clareese all twined in one bouquet of living, loving beauty!

So exquisite! Such touching love! Such deep emotion!

Clareese's father (as we of earth would term him) Gracias

a Dios, as soon as he had embraced her in his bounteous affection, and had blessed her, turned to me ; and as he did so, Clareese drew near to me and said :

“ Father, this is Assurance from the lower material sphere, Earth. I met him when first he had risen, and I loved him—for his earthly sorrows so touched me, that I longed to make him happy here. He touched my soul, as has no other one ; and so must God have given him to my keeping and care—and then finally to my love, I may hope, if another’s love fail him ! ”

Then Gracias a Dios replied, addressing me :

“ Assurance, if such be so, I welcome thee thrice o’er. If such be not so, I pray that God may have blessed thee with the love of one, so dear as she, my sweet Clareese ! Let me present thee to my dear loved one, to my adorable Griselda, and to these, Caritas and Sophia, the beauteous souls, whom with Clareese God gave to our love. Now abide with us and be happy ! ”

I replied : “ Most happy am I to meet with you all, whom dear Clareese loves, and who on her bestow love.

“ I thank thee, most noble Gracias a Dios, for thy hearty welcome, and thy blessing. Of Clareese’s love I am unworthy ; her charming pity I implore and accept. It is this she feels for me ;—for when I told her of Earth’s woes, its travailing and despair, and how through all my soul had struggled on, till death stripped off my groaning mortality and sped me hence, I saw her beauteous orbs of hazel-light suffuse ; sweet pity filled their glowing disk till mellowed light, like filmy tears, diffused them o’er. From then till now that pity, so sincere, has blinded her, and its tender emotion, so near akin to love, has possessed her. With her tender nature so thrilled alway with each blest emotion, I do not wonder that she should mistake the throb of the one for the pulse of the other. Thus she esteems me, and thus only am I worthy.

"Yet if she—my loved one of earth—should forget me, and if our God, who mateth the doves of earth and these enraptured spheres of heaven, should to Clareese's waiting love mate my humble soul, such glorious union I would hail with joy! In this I must await.

"Clareese can tell you how I left on earth one dear to me, tidings of whom I must await.

"So enchanting a realm is this, your happy home! How blissful a life it must be to abide forever here, the recipient of the love and beauty of these pure, passion-thrilled elements?"

He said :

"The celestial beings whom God creates here, and those who come and abide in this sphere, experience above all others the entrancing emotions of every pure passion, which imparts happiness to the soul.

"The intense passion of a soul for its affinity here becomes sublime. I cannot describe to you the blessed delights that arise from the embraces in affection of affinite souls, melting into one life, combining into one compact of divine passion. Those who abide within the 'sweet influences of Pleiades' experience in these emotions celestial rhapsodies that can never be described in formal thought.

"These are the 'sweet influences of Pleiades' which God has sent forth from Himself for this purpose, and thou canst not bind them, nor destroy them."

And here Clareese added :

"The tender, thrilling passion of the lover is just as much the gift and blessing of our Father, and its enjoyment is just as much His praise as the sacred emotions of worship and the reverential prayer."

And thus in happy converse we engaged, till Algol waned somewhat his steady glow, when Clareese and I departed for Plutone's realm.

I do not feel equal to the task of even attempting to describe the beauties and emotions pervading all life and every element of the sweet-sistered Pleiades.

Orion's holy, calm and serene solitude are incomprehensible.

Pleiades' "sweet influences" and inexpressible emotions are indescribable. You feel them ; you are throbbing and pulsating in them ; you are enraptured with them ; you are intoxicated by them. These elements are buoying you up from beneath, and they are surging over you from above ; they are embracing you upon the right, and caressing you upon the left ; they are kissing you ; they are singing to you in cadences of love.

Their soft, mellow light suggests to you the look of love.

Their sweet-scented effluvia waft to you the breath of love.

Their warm, sidereal zephyrs thrill you with the kiss of love.

Their ever-exhilarating influences remind you of the embraces of love.

Their tintillating motions sing to you the songs of love.

Their fitting forms of beauty reveal to you the joys of love.

Beauty, sweetness, life and joy reign and mingle everywhere.

Love's emotion, love's devotion, fill you, thrill you, evermore.

The sweet Pleiades was like an almost boundless celestial flower-garden bordering vast palaces fitted for lovers' abode ; —and this garden, trellised and bowered, and shaped in every aspect to suit each fancy of pure passion and fastidious beauty. In every direction there were exquisite colors like flower-plants and flower-fields : those beneath you reaching upward, and those above you revealing their beauty downward. And hither and thither and upward and downward

among these fields and mirages of colors and forms of ravishing beauty, there bubbled and coursed and danced and rippled and ascended and descended ethereal currents, like fleeting cataracts and bubbling fountains, sweetly singing as they sped ; each rippling streamlet bordered by carpets of color like the exquisite sea-green.

Everywhere the soul quaffed the most delicious fragrances, which always invigorated and augmented every faculty of being.

Between the upper and nether expanse of these celestial colors there had formed exquisitely-wrought, tinted curtains of variegated hues, woven and draped, like climbing and descending tendrils of all kinds of graceful trellis-forms—warped and woofed,—caressing and entwining. These, at tasteful intervals, had thus, as warp and woof admixed, become lovely shapes of hanging tapestry, and had formed here and there, by graceful foldings, unnumbered hidden bowers and retreating alcoves, amid which radiant forms glided and wandered ; and each sacred, sweet bower and recess vanished from all others when a twain of happy lovers held concourse therein, and enjoyed the blissful raptures of affinite love. None others could approach the shrine of love while they twain were ministrant at its altar.

Some of these artistic foldings of this variegated beauty took shape like vast draped arches dividing gorgeous chambers ; others fluctuated as receding, overhanging waves flowing ever outward and onward, like vast bridal wreaths bedecking the variegated firmament. Legions of sweet fragrant forms, like trees and shrubs, were twined and locked, as though they also were loving and being loved.

Ever and anon the sweet-singing ethereal currents, seeming to tire of their solo and single flow, would glide together in their dance and duet of love.

The elements were melodious everywhere, and the music was all soft and low, like a myriad æolian harps all kissed

and caressed by fondling truant-zephyrs; as though they were all humming and singing the sonnets of love.

I heard no sound of drum-beat, nor bugle-call, nor rolling diapason. Nowhere did I see glare of light, nor somber shadow. But there was a mild glow, clear and not murky, that faded away in every direction in the distance into countless tints, like rainbows pendant on the silvery sheen of far-lying clouds.

There was no emotion of anything cold or hard in these celestial environments, but everywhere you experienced the warmth of a kiss, or the yielding touch of lover's cheek.

Neither was there any revelry, nor what we could term sensuality, nor anything licentious or impure.

But instead everywhere was worship of God offered in the joyous incense of celestial emotion and rapturous passion!

These blessed joys and emotions of pure passion could no more be compared to anything sensual and impure of earth than could the forms and qualities of the pure celestial be compared to the grossness of the material sphere.

Here pure passion was never cursed with any counterfeit of lust.

Here sweet love was never defiled nor debased by any emotion of sensuality.

Only the pure in heart can appreciate this pure love of affinite souls!

It is only the impure in life who cannot comprehend that in the blissfulness of love's passion abide the truest joys of worship.

CHAPTER XXIV.

IN PLUTONE'S SPHERE—WE BEHOLD THE PERVERSIONS OF
IMPERFECT LIFE.

"CLAREESE, methinks, I feel the first tremulousness of soul experienced by me since I came to the celestial spheres. Judging from these strange feelings, and from the sharp, unpleasant contrasts between this radiance of holy light and those dense, darkly-laden shadows beyond, we must be entering the evil effluvia of Plutone. Why else should my soul feel these quick and dubious misgivings?

"So, Assurance, do I feel most strangely wrought upon. Such emotions have never before possessed me. Draw more closely to me, my dear companion; I feel a craving for thy protecting powers, for thou hast known sin and evil, and experienced its woful powers. I have never companioned with it, and am as a babe before it, so I must cling closely to thee. Seest thou those strange abysses, and now and then those exquisitely beautiful apparitions flitting, and beckoning to usward?"

"Yea, Clareese, I do, and very much do they impress me. See! Some smile on thee and some on me. Those glancing to me are more delicate, beautiful and luscious—those glancing to thee are more forceful and fulsome in appearance. Do they not so seem to you?"

"Yes."

"As we would say on Earth, Clareese, they seem as Venus and Apollo. How unexpectedly it strikes me to see such beauty here. I always thought, Clareese, that in Plutone's evil realm there was nothing but forms hideous, deformed, oppressed, afflicted, accurst."

"So thought I, till once wise Ariel in conversation with me informed me differently. He said there were some beings here in the lowest states of Plutone, who were offensive in their deformed hideousness—forms that groveled and squirmed in the depths of precipitate corruption. Others, he said, were accurst with beauty—so exquisitely, enrapturously beautiful that they charmed to destruction all who yieldingly came within their influence—just as their beauty had charmed themselves to destruction."

"Why, Clareese, this is unheard of to me! May God save us here! It neareth the occasion of good Benedictus' discourse, and I wish to be near him and Ariel here. I think it were better for us and——"

"Did—you—speak—to—me—Clareese? I heard a tender voice speaking to me!"

"No, Assurance, I said naught."

"Then it is strange—for so sweet a voice as I had never heard before—so like unto yours—whispered to me, but you would not have uttered the thought!"

"What spake it, Assurance?"

"They were such enticing thoughts, so intended for evil, that I could not repeat them to myself, much less to you."

"Evil thoughts, Assurance? What were they about? How evil?"

"Your pure soul, dear one, could not know such, could not realize such!"

"We have evil thoughts and desires and impure joys when we do not render, and enjoy them with true love to God, and to those whom they concern. That which reaches us and proceeds from us in any other channel than that pure channel of love to God and others is evil and impure. Thus are the joys of the sinful minds but the forerunners of woe and suffering and self-detestation. Every delight which we cherish and enjoy devoid of love to God and of the rights of others is sinful—for all things which are pure and good pro-

ceed from us in love, and return to us in love." Just at this instant Clareese, blushing and all wrought-up, said to me excitedly :

"What, Assurance? Didst thou address to me those thoughts? It seemed to me your voice?"

"No, Clareese, only what I addressed to you just now in our conversation. What spake the voice?"

"I scarcely know! So strange and new meaning to me! I think it said :

" 'Spend not the dull hour at Benedictus' harangue, but go with me to yonder beauteous retreat where, love twined about love, we will quaff the sweets of life, and risk the after-death—for one such passioned hour would balance o'er the dull delights of æons of prudish chastity.' "

"What meaneth this, Assurance?"

"I at first thought it was yourself, and I was ready to say, 'Yea, my love, if it be in God's love, your wish is my desire.' "

"Let not your thought for one instant, pure soul, dwell on these seductive thoughts. They are of evil, that you know not of. Behold, yonder, Clareese, that company in revelings. I hear them singing :

"Come with me, come with me
To the bowers of love;
We will be, we will be,
As the mated dove!

* * *

"Yea, yea, you will go:
Nay, nay, say not no:
We will twine in sweetest loves,
We will mate as cooing doves!

* * *

"In the bowers among the flowers,
With sweet lovers' kisses,
We will joy the happy hours
In ecstatic blisses.

* * *

"Spirits fair from ether air,
Do not fly in haste away :
Leave behind all chastened care,
Give to love this happy day."

From out this company two most beautiful forms of lascivious love advanced to us. One, a form and contour of woman, the other that of man. "She" possessed such beauty as might be dreamed of, though not described. Her soft-toned bust was bedecked in a close-clinging film, matched below with an ethereal translucence that yielded to each curved and rounded part of loin and limb, suggestingly inciting all emotions that yield to such ravishing charms. Her eyes were soft and dreamily mellow, enticingly tender, inviting love's embrace. Her neck, like ivory hued with downy tints, leaned gently forward, as in beckoning call. Her lips wore smiles that promised much, and seemed inclined to give much more.

"She" sped in luscious grace to me. "He" was beautiful, replete in every part with manly charms.

A mantle-gauze of pinkish light as though pendant from clinging girdle passed round his form.

His stature was full-formed and softened over in graceful outline as though with yielding flesh—though all was immaterial. His eyes were of dark glow, and wore a longing, cunning look. His face aglow with seductive smiles enchanted you.

"He" went direct to Clareese.

"She," who came to me, spake first. "She" said :

"You seem to be strangers here. Grant us the pleasure to know you that each may share the other's joys."

I replied :

"We are strangers here seeking the holy convocation of wise Ariel and good Benedictus, who will discourse here to evil minds, showing them the way of goodness and truth. Will you direct us to this convocation?"

"He" replied: "We will with pleasure when the occasion arrives, which is not yet. We have come to you that we may impart to you, and you to us, much joy ere then. If nothing more is acceptable to you, we can show you the varied life of beings here. If you will yield to desire, we will share with you its pleasures. What thinkest my sweet lady here? May I humbly serve her?" The latter addressed pleadingly to Clareese. She turned towards me and replied not.

I resolutely began to reply, disdaining such proffer, and bidding them attend the convocation, when I felt a strange, hilarious influence take possession of me. I was possessed by it. It came from "her" gaze—"she," who had sped to me—and from "her" touch, for at this instant I noticed that "she" had taken my hand in hers.

I changed my thoughts after I began to reply. I answered thus:

"It would be impossible—that is—it would be—impossible for us to accept—or rather—not to accept your offered kindness. But now we wish to hear Benedictus—you will go—with us? And I fear the occasion would pass by us if we should now enjoy your pleasure. You will seek us after the service?"

"She" replied: "Now that is most kindly said. It shall be as you wish. This way to the service."

During this strange proceeding Clareese seemed to be aghast. When I recovered myself, I found her looking to me with emotions of awe mixed with pleading. Confronted with such an untried experience, she of course knew not what protests to make—so she was silent.

Weak ex-mortal that I was! with mortality yet clinging to the skirts of immortality! Why did I not think of Christ, and say:

"Get thee behind me, Satan!"

* * * * *

What I shall now record in this place was related to me afterwards by Meoön, but I give it here because the scene took place in this connection. It was between Ristos, "He," and "She," in Plutone's realm.

Ristos: "You did meet them both, and hold converse with them?"

"He" and "She": "Yea, we did."

Ristos: "Did they—or he—readily yield to your seductions?"

"She": "No, not at once. He made like to rebuff our proffers, and would have done so, but on the instant, before his mind could formulate its negative opposition, I threw my gaze into his eyes, and clasped his hand, and my mind-flowing power reversed his tidal thought, and changed it to the ebb of my volition.—He was not proof against my power, as I feared he would be—since he had arisen from earth's travelling state, where he had had experience with evil. He will yield to me. I quieted his lightest suspicions, by yielding to his wish to be at this convocation. He will meet me after then. I see him now. I read his thoughts. He thinks of me. He is enchanted. As he made to leave me he let his hand linger in mine!"

Ristos: "And Clareese, how with her? Remember, harm her not; stain not her pure soul, at least not until I bid thee, and I shall not bid thee till all else fail. I will be near thee after the convocation."

"Enchantress, Meoön is in these realms to thwart my plans. Beware of him. Observe him. And should he attempt to circumvent my purposes, enthrall him also with your spell—if his reinforced nature does not o'ermatch thee!"

"She": "Upon my soul, already inured to curses, you may rest assured of that accomplishment."

* * * * *

THE CONVOCATION.

Reaching the convocation, I saw a vast concourse of minds, of flickering hopes, of varied powers and shades of thought, of various degrees of degradation and abasement. Some were ignorant, some learned. Some of high and some of low degree; admixed, and graded, as you see on earth. Some were full of lust and evil passion, lascivious and beastly. Others were cold and stern, unfeeling and indifferent, cynical and pitiless. Some were rigid and austere with hate; some fevered with hot passion and desperation; some refusing all knowledge of God and holy truth—spurning all trust in the Supreme Good; others were dubious and uncertain of truth, disquieted always with indecision.

Some were ever intending to give their minds to the study of uplifting truth, and to yield to its reforming practice, but procrastinated continually, deferring always to present pleasure.

Here were some minds but little removed from beastly instincts, that had been bred in vice, and environed in the hidden slums of earth,—the birth of whose bodies in the material world revealed the secrets of vice and illicit love. These minds reminded me of sickly plants in some dark cavern crawling about, seeking a ray of light.

They were born, they lived, and they died, in the dark.

Here in this psychic realm, even of Plutone, they were accessible for the first time to a ray of vivifying, reforming, uplifting light.

I discovered that all here suffered. Woe and pain followed every one, as the shadow, the body.

I found that, while there were revelings in forbidden pleasures, in lasciviousness, and in all manner of evil, the sure and inevitable results of pain and woe followed swiftly in the wake.

I saw forms of every deformity induced by sin. Sin was

the violation of the law of love, which was the law of their moral and spiritual development of soul and character ;—as a result I saw warped development and imperfect attainment of character.

Here I beheld the operation of that same universal law of development which I had observed in everything on earth. For perfection can be attained only by conformity to the law that produces it.

I saw forms here ravishingly beautiful, fitted in themselves for the more complete accomplishment of evil—using the quality of beauty for the carrying out and enjoyment for the time of base desires. Impure pleasures and lusts here wrangle, and voluptuate, and take form and expression in the desires, in the emotions, and not in the acts of a material body as on earth. In the realms of soul and mind, we live in thought, in emotion, in desire, in volition, and not in acts performed as by a material body. Our acts and deeds were in the activity of the soul and its faculties, and were subjective and not objective. What we thought, felt, desired and willed were what we did. Hence Christ taught to think evil was to be evil, to feel lust was to commit lust.

Thousands were here to be taught of truth by Ariel and Benedictus. These two pure minds labored to teach truth and love ; thus they went hand in hand proclaiming love, life, truth and reformation. So labored Ariel the Philosopher and Benedictus the Preacher.

Thus, ever, I thought, are Philosophy and Religion joined hand in hand, ever striving to save, and exalt all Life,—both striving to answer and apply to life's needs, that momentous question, "What is truth?" which was asked of Christ.

When this query was asked of the great Teacher, he made no definite reply. Perhaps he thought, "My life, my words, my works are a sufficient answer."

Before many of us for so long this question has stood motionless, like a specter with its finger upon its lips.

Yet can we not hope and affirm that the sphynx-like countenance of this question has somewhat broken into smiles of light in answer to the importunings of man's indomitable thought? Have not some truth-revealing tones been wrested from the dumb mouth of this sphynx? and have not some visions of the unknown realities been caught by man's eager gaze beaming from its stern and expressionless visage?

Just before the public service I heard Ariel discussing this very question with some minds in Plutone, trying to lead them to a realization of that moral and uplifting truth which would ennoble them, and tend to fit them for that higher state of the soul.

He said :

"How fatal an error you commit when you create a conception of what you think truth ought to be, and then reject the Reality because it does not match your conception. How fatally wrong is the error when you, having created your false conception, call it the Reality, and becoming unsatisfied with your own creation, you cast it off, and, in so doing, imagine that you have cast off the Reality.

"You always commit error when you first fashion, or have fashioned for you, a conception of what you and others think truth ought to be, and then attempt to fit the reality into it, and perchance, if the great reality does not fit into your phantasm, you cast the reality away as false. In so doing you become an abject vassal of that great enemy of all truth—prejudice—for you allow it to bar the entrance of your mind against all truth.

"I applied these principles just now in teaching one from Earth, who said that there was no truth on Earth, where he once lived, to guide men in the attainment of those spiritual realities that would fit them for yon pure realms of light and perfect life.

"I asked him if he had forgotten the beautiful life and

teachings of Christ when he was on Earth, whither he went to show men what perfect life was and what overcoming sin meant, and how to attain that spiritual state that would fit them for those realms of light and love?

"He was almost indignant at once when I mentioned Christ's teachings, and said to me:

" 'How can you mock me, even in Plutone's dark realm, as my thought was mocked on Earth, by telling me to look for light and truth in that mesh and snare and delusion of superstition which they called, on Earth, Christianity? Have I not had enough of its dogmas? How will those dogmas help me to become good, even if I could force myself to believe them? How will it change my desires to believe that there are three divine persons, separate and distinct, and yet one God? How does it make me love Christ to be told that he was God, and that it must be a part of Christianity to believe that he was God, when I read in Christ's own words that God was greater than he, and was distinct from himself, and that he was only obeying God and serving Him in what he did on earth, and that God sent him to earth and commanded him what to do, and gave him all the power he possessed in order that he might obey the will of the Father?' And my objector to Christianity said further:

" 'And this Christianity, which they told me Christ taught on earth, not only taught that Christ was God, but that God was so angry and wrathful towards the children of men that He in His wrath sacrificed himself in order to satisfy himself. Now tell me, how does it help me to love God, my Father, as I ought with all my life, to be taught that as a part of a plan to save just some of His children, it was necessary for God to kill God in order to satisfy God? And then that notwithstanding this "scheme of salvation," as they termed it, vast, vast, vast numbers of poor beings—many of whom sinned in ignorance—will be consigned by their heavenly Father to endless torments!

“ ‘Now suppose I believe all this, how would, and could it regenerate my will, transform my life, reform my character, and make me become in myself, as a free personal agent, pure and good?’

“ ‘All such truth (?) I have long since done with! And yet you come now and ask me if I did not have Christianity on Earth to guide me to that sweet truth which would fit me for those blessed realms of light?’

“ ‘I replied to him: ‘No, you mistake me.’ I did not point you to Christianity, so-called on Earth, I pointed you to Christ and his life and words on Earth. I pointed you to that beautiful true spirit of his life, which was the real safe interpretation of his words.’

“ ‘After saying this to him I gave to him to study the trans-fixed Psychic-Thought-Forms of Christ’s discourse, but just now delivered by him in the sphere of the Temple, which Thought-Forms I have here to transmit to you all—wherein Christ teaches us so lucidly of that perfect life which he has patterned for us, and of that true way that leadeth up to that state of pure life and light, where the Father and the pure in heart abide.

“ ‘Now the trouble with my objector was that he had a conception of what he had been taught was Christianity, but he had no idea or conception of the true Christ. He had allowed this false conception to take the place of Christ—the Reality—and having become dissatisfied with his conception he had cast it away;—but in so doing he imagined that he had done with Christ—when the truth was, he had no conception of Christ. He, who will study Christ’s life and teaching, and will interpret his teaching by the spirit of his life, and not by the letter of the record, which is often parabolic and figurative and intended to apply to the then age and locality, will find that the Christianity believed in by a large part of the people of Earth has very little in it that bears the stamp and teaching of that Life and Personality, whose name it has assumed.

"How could a man, or a people, or a church, who really believed in Christ, be bigoted and intolerant and cruel? And yet look at the record that many believers in what they term Christianity have made on earth? Their history is gory with blood and black with infamy. Look at Christian (?) wars! Blackstone, who was one of our great legal authors on Earth, said: 'It may be justly observed that religious principles, which (when genuine and pure) have an evident tendency to make their professors better citizens as well as better men, have (when perverted and erroneous) been usually subversive of civil government, and been made both the cloak and the instrument of every pernicious design that can be harbored in the heart of man.'

"So the perversions of Christ's gentle and beautiful teachings have plunged humanity on earth into dungeons of superstition so foul with blood and filth that the choke-damp of some coal-mine there seems innocuous by comparison;—through these perversions, they nursed into bloody and deceitful deeds all that was most dark, wrathful, false, crafty and cruel; priest and tyrant eagerly combined to carry out the maxims of 'tooth and claw;' intolerant bigotry and persecution and fanaticism run wild, changed the 'cross of love' into the 'guillotine' and 'rack' of cruelty; priestly censorship and domination strove with might and main to shackle and immure the mind and thought of the ages; sectarian strife and warring discord, like some demoniac simoom often swept Earth of beauty, peace and joy, and rent man's social life limb from limb; the pages of history are lighted up with the record of these libels on Christ's life and these perversions of his teachings, as by the murky glare, lurid and smoky, of infernal fires!

"These are not the fruits of Christ's life and love and truth, but show what men will do when they pervert truth, and in spite of Christ and his truth.

"On that dark, dismal picture as a background, I see in

relief but the more clearly what the life and teaching of Christ are.

"Yet those of us, who thought for ourselves and who studied Christ and relied on him and his teaching, and not on what others said and taught about him, did not throw away Christ and His truth, and his life on account of those perversions and abuses and errors.

"It is not wise nor right to reject truth because some phases of it may have become more or less encrusted with human errors. Better save the blessed truth and segregate it from any and all false admixtures !

"Too many of us do not seek this truth for ourselves, but we go along following 'our noses and our neighbors,' receiving what is received, and rejecting what is rejected. After awhile we find ourselves with an admixture of errors with a sweet name, and we become disgusted with all, and throw them all away ; and because our errors had this sweet name we think we had all that was to be had, and we imagine that we have thrown away the sweet (though as we think false) reality also.

"Thus are men doing all over the earth and here in Plutone with Christ's work. Let me beg you all to study Christ. Study what he said and not the dogmas of others concerning him. Study what he says he said. Study what he did. Get into the spirit of his life, and you will thus get into the spirit of his words. Herein lies the way that leads to those pure spiritual realms ; herein lies the truth that leads us to other truths ; herein dwells the life that will conduct us to that Perfect Life ; that blessed consummation, 'The spirit of the just made perfect.'"

CHAPTER XXV.

BENEDICTUS' TALK TO THE EVIL MINDS—HE TEACHES THE
ATTAINMENT AND PERFECTION OF LIFE.

DEVOUTLY erect in the mid-ether in full view of all that convocation of countless minds—his soul going out to all in deep fervor of love for their exaltation—thus situated and environed, Benedictus, in pleading thought-forms, said :

“ I am sent from God to teach you of truth and of perfect life, and to point you to the Father.

“ There are some of you here who deny God.

“ You should know that whatever is holy, whatever is good, whatever is light, whatever is pure, are of God. For these qualities and realities could not come out of evil.

“ Ye must admit that ye are finite, limited beings, that ye are imperfect and unholy.

“ Ye are in every way imperfect, and hence ye could not be the source of these perfections, which I proclaim to you are from God.

“ Nor could these perfections of life, truth, love, goodness, purity, come out from the impersonal, unintelligent ether or other elements of this universe. Neither could your own Conscious beings come from a universal unconsciousness.

“ Yet there are some among you who deny God—the All-Conscious One !

“ Ye know that we, wise Ariel and I, do not abide here in this state with you : and we affirm to you that we are from God's pure realms, where there is no evil, neither any of your lusts, nor any of your consequent pain, remorse and sorrows.

"Why doubt ye us? Why doubt ye God?"

"I say to you, for whose reformation to God I yearn, I assever to you, that when you leave God out of your intellectual system, as you term it, you must find sooner or later that your mind gropes and famishes in the void wastes of a lightless, purposeless, chaotic region of solitude—a hopeless region—peopled only by the ghosts of others' thoughts that aimlessly wander there.

"There is no mental satisfaction, no rational quietude, no spiritual hope nor illumination, for those who do not posit God as the beginning and the end of all systems of thought.

"I may grant to you that God is mystery, yet He is One vast Mystery which, as an hypothesis if nothing more, solves all other mysteries.

"He is an awful Infinity of Light, which though Itself dazzleth the mind's vision, yet It floodeth all other mysteries with the illumination of day!

"It is only in God as an unconditioned Will, or Self-Directive Power—seeing Its own way, and having the reason of Its action in Itself alone, that I can find—or that you can find—the adequate explanation and reason of this universe.

"This Cosmos—vast, varied and limitless—is the expression and manifestation of the Thought, Will and Power of God.

"God is a rational and moral necessity, and whatever is necessary must be true!

"The mind that sanely thinks can move no way without positing and acknowledging God.

"Attempt otherwise, and a thousand 'will-o'-the-wisps' flit before you, leading you from precipice of thought to precipice; and against impregnable walls of darkness!

"Doubt and contradiction haunt you like hooded ghosts of legendary lore!

"You grope like one with sunken eyeballs; or you rush 'helter-skelter' as one totally lost in some deep, dark abyss, unexplored by thought, and unilluminated by one ray of light!

"As in the vast cosmos of worlds, so in the vaster cosmos of moral being and life, God is the basis of all!

"Physical law is but physical order. So moral law is but moral order, and both these must be based on the thought and will of God.

"As in the physical realm no perfect, normal, consistent growth and development can occur except in conformity with the physical order—so in the moral sphere no fully developed, God-like Character and Personality can be attained except as the result of action, conduct and life in accordance with the will of God as expressed in His moral laws.

"The violation of God's physical laws or order brings material decay, pain, imperfection and death. So the violation of moral order brings unhappiness, imperfect character and spiritual and moral decay. So we have here sin.

"If moral laws—which are the laws producing perfect character—are not based on God's eternal moral Order, and are not related to God as their promulgator, then they are mere social expedients; and if so, we would be forced to conclude that even benevolence, charity and self-sacrifice are but enlightened or fanatical and maddened selfishness, and all virtue lies only in the pursuit of the greatest ultimate pleasure.

"If moral laws are unrelated to God's eternal Order, then there can be no moral order, except in the sense that morality is a stipulation or compact into which intelligences are supposed to enter, and for the breach of which there is no other result than the disapprobation of the social compact.

"So, I say, if this be true, then 'whatever usurps the name of virtue is not a principle but a feeling; not a determinate rule but a fluctuating expedient, varying with the tastes of individuals, and changing with the scenes and years of life.'

"If this be true, ye of Plutone are as wise and good as we of light!

"But this ye know cannot be true, for here ye have misery and wailing, and lasciviousness and hate and disorder and commotion, and all manner of imperfection and woes, and ye know that these things do not arise out of conformity to perfect order and law. We have not these things in our home of light.

"Then must not God of necessity have to exist as the basis of moral order?

"Why, therefore, deny Him, and refuse to conform to His laws in your lives and in the development of your characters? Know ye not that God's moral order is but the development of exalted, pure life?

"Why is it that you inhabit this sphere and state instead of yon holy state of the pure in mind? Do you not seek this evil state as like flees to like?

"Why do ye pollute with evil this would-be beauteous portion of God's realms? Is not this His creation? He said, 'The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof'—so also is this His.

"It is not yours to pollute with sinful passions and all manner of evil.

"Not only is the realm of holy life and beauteous righteousness His; not merely the vast outlying spheres are His—but this also wherein ye dwell in evil.

"Ye also are His if ye would but give to Him your lives for His habitation, as He invites you to do.

"Some of you while on earth were evil, and some also from other spheres, who gave not your life and love to God and one another. And ye are here now in this evil state because your past evil desires and thoughts and habits and wills and actions inevitably tended here. Ye have not sought and struggled for that pure, perfect life.

"Ye are reaping in your lives what ye have sown. And

ye are now in your evil life sowing what ye shall reap hereafter.

“ ‘ Our deeds still travel with us from afar
And what we have been makes us what we are.’ ”

“ Ye, who are of earth should know that there is a spiritual as well as a natural husbandry.

“ This is the great law of moral sequence by the operation of which God is executing His judgments upon you—the eternal law of moral continuity, in which divine judgment follows your actions with undeviating regularity.

“ Remember every seed produceth fruit after its kind—so the good we do brings a harvest of good, and the evil a harvest of evil.

“ Remember the moral order and government of God secures to each of you an infallible and equitable retribution by binding Character to Conduct—character and consequence—in indissoluble bonds, thus evolving a reward or a punishment out of that permanent moral state of your lives which has been induced by the free, self-determining action of your Will !

“ The purpose of the moral laws and order of God is the building up in you of Character, and the consequent promotion in you of eternal happiness and spiritual glory !

“ Your character is but your completely-fashioned Will. It is that ‘ultimate stress and determination of the soul which results from the coherence and complexure of habits, and habit is the result of repeated acts of voluntary choice. From the persistence of your habit a fixed disposition and cast of the inner man is evolved, which constitutes his moral individuality.’ ”

“ So your happiness or misery, your weal or your woe, consists in the state of your own character and life, the fixed determination of your will.

“ Thus it is that the inward peace and joy of the righteous

soul, and the certain misery of the unrighteous soul, are but the blossom and fruitage of the seed which has been sown. 'For whatsoever a man sows that shall he also reap.' So the connection between your sin and evil and this suffering and punishment, which ye here endure, is no arbitrary or accidental or vengeful condition. It is just as much a relation of cause and effect according to the workings of God's moral laws, as in the relation between sowing and reaping in yon physical world of earth.

"As a mind of earth once wrote : 'To cause the mind to punish itself ; to work a retribution out of yourselves ; to secure it by fixed nature ; to inflict it by inflexible necessity ; to convert the capacity of sin into the instrument of suffering—is the prerogative of Divine rule.'

"Thus it is that 'he that doeth wrong shall receive back the wrong which he did.'

"Ye now see that your transposition from the other world to this psychic existence or state has not changed your life or character. Neither Divine fiat nor death can change you, because then ye would not be yourselves. Ye have still the same moral state which you formed and fashioned for yourselves on your other sphere. Your works do follow you.

"'Wherewithal a man sins, by the same shall he be punished.'

"The judgment of God, of which ye have all been warned, is but another name for the natural and inevitable consequences of your lives. And this judgment is now being executed on you by the operation of that universal law established from the first by God. It has already begun for every one of you.

"What I have thus taught you has not been done for the purpose of disheartening you, or giving you over to despair ; but only to show you your condition, and whither ye are inevitably tending—and thus to arouse within you the latent powers and principles of **your natures** for good.

" For, however you may have given yourselves to the practice of evil, yet its power, notwithstanding its self-perpetuating dominion, never becomes absolute and undisputed in your lives.

" By reason of your evil habits and perverted will, ye have formed within yourselves a tendency to evil—thank God, not a necessity !

" The dominion of sin over you is not a necessary dominion, as of a decreed fate.

" There is in each soul of you the potency of a spiritual force or principle, which can become reactive, rebellious, against the usurped powers of sin ; which may more and more encroach upon the dominion of evil.

" Herein lies for you the possibility of a New Life, which may establish its own supremacy.

" Yet hope not for this reformation without a struggle so intense as would almost rend your soul in pieces ! Thus will your evil passions tear and rend you, when you arise to assert the mastery of your own soul over them.

" But this struggle is the penalty which ye must inevitably pay for your past evil indulgences. This cross ye must take up and bear.

" As the tendency of evil is to perpetuate itself, so is it the forceful law and principle of Good not only to perpetuate itself, but as a positive principle it intensifies its own power and encroaches upon the power of evil.

" The establishment in your life of this positive, renovating power of good is that ' new birth ' out of the sinful life into the pure life of the Spirit of God.

" Within your sometime quickened hearts, penitence and remorse may be awakened, yea, must be, and thus arouse within you an uprising of your better self against the seeming dominion of evil.

" Thus the repentance of evil, the feeling of revolt against it, show that it may be overthrown, that it is a usurpation, a

perversion, and not a principle in our nature; for a soul never repents of being and doing good, as it repents of evil, which shows us that the good has the sanction of our conscience and that evil has its condemnation. And hence the law of continuity of the moral life to perpetuate itself, though it may, when it has reached a certain stage of virtue, be such as to exclude the possibility of a lapse from virtue (as I trust is the case with wise Ariel here and my unworthy self), yet the operation of this law as to evil does not exclude amendment and conversion from your lives of sin.

"Your soul is a conflict between principles of good and tendencies of evil. In proportion as you live in subjection to this tendency to do evil, you sow to sin. In proportion as you obey the higher principle of good, you sow to the spirit.

"As your life continues, the oftener you sow to the good, the greater will be your harvest of the good, and the stronger will grow the principle of the good in your nature.

"Just here, as inspiring and strengthening the good that is in you, let me direct you to the love and affection of God—the Author of all good—for yourselves. If you believe in Him—and why do ye not?—you must realize His love for each creature to whom He has given the blessing of rational life.

"This supreme realization of God's love for you should prove a power, a force, ever buoying you up toward Him. This His love by a simple natural law of your nature should inspire within you a love for Him.

"For you can cast no blame on God for your past or your present evil condition.

"It was absolutely necessary for God to have made you rational, free, self-determinative beings, in order for you to become beings of moral character and moral attributes.

"There must exist in your natures freedom of will, power of decision and choice, in order for you to be beings of moral character, possessing moral attributes. For no moral nature

is possible to a creature, who is a machine as of some necessity, and who is not master of his own moral powers.

"So then, this being true, your evil and its consequences are the results of your own free choice and actions. So it is written that ye shall be 'judged every man according to his works.' 'And the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books, according to their works.'

"Sin and sorrow spring from the exercise of your own free powers, and they are no mere arbitrary, cruel conditions and penalties put on your unhappy souls by a God, who either could or would of His own will inflict punishment on His creatures.

"To accuse God of the exercise of such cruel power would be a libel on His altogether beneficent character.

"So then you can lay no charge against God, except that He created you.

"Having created you, He must of necessity love the object of His creation, especially when that object is created in His own image. 'We are His very offspring,' says Paul, that great teacher of earth.

"So you must see and admit that God loves you, and that you only have committed sin against Him and yourselves, and not He against you.

"Then this love of God for you, what a mainspring it is to your better nature, to the power of good that is within you, inciting it to become more powerful and to overcome the evil tendency of your life! And thus finally, by the ever-increasing continuity of our moral power for good, ye may become like unto your Father, who so loves you. Thus ye may overcome all the forces, tendencies and desires of evil and become sealed unto God!

"Now I come to bear to you from God a gospel, which opens upon your life new lights and forces—which more unerringly points you to the way of your reformation and salvation from your lives of sin.

"What you so much need is salvation from anger, hatred and revenge ; from vanity, lust and guilty passions ; from corrupting vice and lying hypocrisy, and all manner of evil.

"I do not offer you a salvation from the penalties, the moral consequences, of your past sins.

"These penalties are as inevitable as the universal laws. They are wisely adapted ; for this punishment of your evil is the best possible result to follow your acts of disobedience to the moral laws of God and of your own natures.

"The harvest that has been sown must be reaped.

"I wish to offer you salvation from sowing another harvest of the seed of evil and sin—salvation from recurring sin and its curses.

"This gospel which I bear to you is not merely a gospel of thought. A mere gospel of thought is cold. This is a gospel personified in a grand life—even in the life of our blessed elder brother, Christ,—which life has been made manifest to you here by him—for he has pointed you to his life as the truth and the perfect life and the way to attain to the Father.

"God had sent His gospel of thought into the realms of Intelligence before He sent His gospel of blessed Life.

"But God would have us know more clearly and completely His love, tenderness and mercy toward us.

"So the Father personifies those tender, loving attributes of His adorable nature, that He would have us become in our lives, in one made like unto ourselves.

"The Father was not content that we should only know of Perfect Life and Love and Mercy and Blessedness and Holiness and Righteousness and Purity and Virtue and Humility and Self-sacrifice, as impalpable conceptions or emotional abstractions. In this form they were not real enough, not vivid enough. They needed the soul and throb and fervor and enthusiasm of an exultant beatified Life !

"So God anointed, and sent forth in His universe of in-

telligent beings, one whom He had sanctified—the man Christ Jesus, unto whom He had given life and being, unto whom He gave of His spirit without measure—known on our Earth (whither he went on his mission of Life) as Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God there, by wonderful works of love and mercy which God did by him among the people of that sphere.

“Him God ‘begot’ of His love, appointed, and sent forth as His Living Gospel!

“In him Love lived and spake, and suffered, and pitied, and blessed, and sanctified.

“In him Mercy prayed and forgave. In him Purity breathed, and blushed, and felt, and lived, and remained pure. In him Humility bowed down, and stooped, and self-sacrificed. In him Wisdom taught, and planned, and preached, and counseled.

“In him Charity wept, and sympathized, and stretched out its hand, and blessed, and knelt upon the earth. In him this living Gospel of God opened up the Way, became the Light and Life, proclaimed, in fervent words and blessed acts, the Truth.

“He, whom God thus appointed, and made the living channel of His holy, saving, life-giving truth, is our Elder Brother.

“Him God fitted to teach us how to live, to show us Perfect Life! His pure, beatified, resplendent Life should lead you to that true ‘repentance unto remission’ of your sins. He, standing forth in the midst of corrupt and warring evil, should make you feel as never before the sinful character of your own lives. His purity should put you to shame, and before his virtues your hideous vices should flee away in self-abhorrence.

“Look at his resplendent Life! Study its record and history which you have here entabled upon these psychic elements.

“Behold the pure, the good, the blessed, in his life, and

then see yourselves revealed in all your sinful wretchedness and deformity !

" See blazoned in him the way of Life and Good, and behold him beckoning you on to walk therein !

" See in him your exemplar, and fashion yourselves like unto HIM.

" He inspireth you to emulation, and strengtheneth you to attainment.

" Let your souls yearn, and hunger, and feel their destitution, and then go to his life and be filled.

" God created you for Himself. Go ! fulfill your sublime destiny !

" God wills not the death of any soul, but that all should have life more abundantly.

" What your fullness and grandeur of life may be, ought to be, behold it sublimated in Christ ! Become it !

" If in spite of all the pure, spiritual truth magnified in Christ ; if in spite of his blessed beatitudes freely offered you for your acceptance and emulation, inviting your transfiguration into them by conforming your life unto them ; if, in spite of all these, you cling to the body of sin and of this living death, then I pity you, I commiserate you ! You become, while you so remain, a foul, revolting blot on God's beauteous creation !

" It is your duty and blessed possibility and privilege to become sealed unto God.

" When you have reached this beatified state—if you ever should—you will be free forever from the power and dominion of any sin and evil.

" In the progress of the development and growth of the higher spiritual nature, that is even now latent within you all, there is a point reached, a blessed state attained, whereat the good and Godlike in us becomes all-powerful, wherein we become of God's spiritual image as He intended for us, whereby the soul becomes sealed unto God !

"This is the sublime state of our perfection in Holiness. Here every tendency and power and principle and emotion and thought is for good. And the dominion of evil is forever vanquished!

"Be ye thus sealed unto God!

"I see before me some from Earth's sphere, who have hardly seen the first glimmer of light—who were born, and who lived, while on earth, in the very alleys and dismal, darkened dens of ignorance, sin and vice. Legions of you are from the darkened lands of Earth. And you are here, your sickly souls creeping and crouching, as it were, in this befouled realm. You have not been able to rise above this state, because you have never been taught on Earth to know of a purer, higher life. Some of you were there society's offcasts! They of earth, among whom your sad lot was cast, were always much concerned about themselves, and their vanities and luxuries; they thought it a grand thing to rear many grand structures, as temples dedicated to God, in which they held their stated and stately worship in luxurious convocation—but you they let alone to be dedicated to sin and evil!

"God looketh upon you with much pity! In yonder world much was not given unto you, and here much is not required. The consequences of your darkened life on earth can here lay on you but few stripes. Ye scarcely knew what ye did.

"You most tenderly would I lift up into the light. Be ye patient and endure a little while!

"And thou, tempted, suffering Magdalene! So often sorely tried, so much oppressed in thy young days, so driven and burdened by hard task-masters, who devoured widow's homes! Ye, who thus wert crushed into sin, are near to God's tender love! Yea, the Father hath already forgiven you, but ye must be cleansed in your desires.

"To all of you I wish to say this much more.

"The evil delights in which some of you debauch your lives will after a short while become stale, flat and unprofitable. Yea, with the most of you it is even so now.

"These viands of evil will turn to ashes and gall.

"Your lives will become a perpetual wasting away until all light, joy and hope grow dim, futile and despairing.

"With many of you it is thus even now.

"With others, now so gay and so debauched in the revels and wicked abominations of this corruption; so hilarious in the enjoyment of all these forms of evil—the same dull, insipid, monotonous wasting away and decay will come.

"Such are your pleasures here for which you desecrate your souls.

"And now to you all I say in parting from you, as your lives revert from this evil current and, purified by tribulation, turn lovingly to God, His purer realm of the blessed Good awaits you!

"It will be no perilous journey from this to that. For when your life here reconcileth itself to God, and becometh imaged unto His life which is exemplified before you, it cannot remain here except to do good and to lift up these other fallen ones. Like seeketh like!

"The glorified soul findeth God everywhere, and like the twinkling holy thought it giveth forth, it flasheth at once into His glorious presence! Farewell!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

AFTER SCENES—DEATH? OR THE PROCESS OF BECOMING LIFE?

THUS ended a discourse which opened up to me the responsibility of man, the connection of cause and effect in man's moral actions; the sequence of suffering and punish-

ment, joy and blessedness, as the outcome and results of man's own free doings; such as had never been presented to me on earth. And here in this psychic sphere I saw its truth in demonstration, in practical application.

I saw the natural, rational truth spoken by Benedictus exemplified everywhere about me.

I saw poor, suffering creatures reaping the harvests which they had sown. I saw them still sowing the seed of evil to produce other harvests which they would have to garner in misery and degradation.

So like what I had seen on earth a thousand times.

Mēn sowing to the wind and reaping the whirlwind; sowing tares and reaping tares.

I saw that men's evil inclinations; their propensities for sinful and degrading acts and deeds; their all-consuming lust and licentiousness and all manner of uncleanness; their hate, revengeful emotions and animosities; their avarice, and mean, snarling selfishness; all remained a part of themselves as they had been in their former states of existence. Their change of locality or sphere had not changed their identity or their individual characters. The same forces of personality remained dominant within them.

This discourse of Benedictus, as well as what I saw and learned from other sources, taught me another truth, that God never shut up a soul to eternal despair and hopeless torment. If any being ever arrived at such an awful state it became his portion of his own volition.

In Plutone I saw still offered to them the incentive and hope of holy life and higher spiritual attainment.

In the case of vast numbers of these poor beings, I learned that here they received their first glimmer of spiritual light; and learned for the first time their true and possible relations to their Father. Their whole former existence had been in darkness, ignorance and degradation.

The latent principles and powers of good implanted within

them by God had never had on Earth one chance or incentive for exercise and development. "All their lifetime they had been in bondage" to physical poverty, want, ignorance and deprivation. How could they ever become spiritual, and grow into righteousness in their lives when all their days on earth they were driven by the temporal wants and necessities of the body, and goaded always into sinful desperation?

Poor creatures, there was this consolation here in Plutone, that they received but few stripes, and also that they had opened up to them here, by the "Celestial Truth-Bearers," the sublime vistas of a higher and purer life!

Of these good Benedictus told me that many of them, when they received for the first time the knowledge and inspiration of holiness and purity and beauty and joy, and when they learned of a Father in the pure spiritual realms who loved them, leaped for joy; they spent their every moment struggling against their evil natures, desires and habits; they bore with heroic resignation the fearful cross of that terrible battle against the dominion of evil within them, which every soul must bear for itself; they seized upon every hope; they kissed the penal rod which their former sins laid upon them, rejoicing in that fearful expiation which was necessary for their purification and exaltation; and when their souls were able to receive God and the Light, they rose triumphant into blessed Life!

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The nature and characteristics of this realm inhabited by these evil minds were not in themselves hideous and repulsive. To one of pure heart and sanctified mind this realm itself was celestial and beautiful. God created it as He did all others, and He never created anything of itself hideous.

However, this sphere by reason of its inhabitants had not the beauty of holiness, such as that which enshrined the celestial spheres where God dwells in the souls and lives of His creatures. For in the spheres of the Holy Minds there

was sanctity; there was a radiance of serene order and obedience; there was the sabbatical calm of worship and repose; there was the perfect beauty of divine system; there was the quiet halo of universal peace and good-will; there was the music of sweet love and worship without the hoarse discord of hate, ribaldry and debauch; there was pure, beauteous affection without the canker of any lust; there was sanctified passion without the stains of sensuality; there was good everywhere without the dark foreboding curse of evil; there was rapturous, exultant hope in realization without the dismal frown of any despair.

Not so in Plutone.

For there I saw the leprous soul of vice, which had gorged itself with evil, until it had become rotten with corruption.

O! to behold a mind whose every grand faculty has been subjected to the service and uses of vice! Which grovels rather than soars! Such I saw here. These minds had subjected every faculty, enthralled every power, enslaved every emotion, to devise new forms of vice, and to multiply the forms that were.

To such depths had some of these minds gone in sin that they seemed startled at their own corruption; they seemed satiated to nausea; they revolted often at themselves; their corrupt desires and emotions seemed turned into coals which burned and sizzed within them, and polluted all about them with the poisoned stench of their presence.

I saw one of these creatures, who on earth had been a seducer of the innocent, and a constant companion of the vile. He had there gone about seeking whom he might devour and corrupt. He had made the practice of vice his business, and the contemplation of it the occupation of his pastime. He had indulged in it in his waking hours, and had embraced it in his lascivious dreams. He had always subjugated his soul to licentiousness.

This being I saw in Plutone!

How shall I describe him? His capacity to enjoy his vices had become deadened through his excessive and sinful indulgences. The evil desire, the thirsting pang, the hungry propensity, were keener, sharper and deeper. He was ever parched with this thirst, and could not drink; he was ever desperate with this hunger, and could not eat; he was ever ravenous with desire, which he could not gratify.

The allurements of vice were all around him, enticing him, inviting him, taunting him.

Poor, miserable creature, he was husbanding his abundant harvest! Will he be consumed in this second death?

And ever and anon I saw some evil enchantress (whom he had corrupted on earth) flit about him, taunting him; enamoring him with "breasts like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies;" with form fulsome and luscious swaying and posing before him, to reveal each whim and suggestion of unholy passion's tempting embodiment; then anon encircling him with warm embraces; then mocking him, cursing him, abhorring him!

His form and ethereal embodiment were a shattered wreck of immortality. His mind, which should have been majestic, was a tottering ruin. His eyes, which should have been pure gleams of intellectual light, were sunken and had no glow, but there was a sullen, hollow stare, a dead light, that saw no good anywhere. His countenance expressed its emotions in skulks and grimaces of woe. His face was peaked and drawn out, his features rigid as in pain. His whole being was sicklied o'er with disgust and inanition. All about him told of shame and misery. He was in the midst of many, many like him. They cursed themselves and lay groveling!

* * * * *

I saw another unfortunate wretch.

On earth he had been avarice's slave. He had been an extortioner. He had had no mercy on the poor. He had

been an oppressor of the unfortunate, the widow and orphan. He had amassed his tens of thousands of sordid gold. He had made that gold his god, the object of his supreme devotion. He had groveled before it so much on earth, humbling his mind and soul before it, that his psychic form had assumed a shape as of crawling subjugation. He appeared always to be scanning everything beneath him, and saw nothing above him.

Now and then he got upon his knees, remaining there in miserly seclusion, counting over and over, as he thought, his sordid gold.

He appeared to hide from every being about him, and was always skulking away. He never looked upward.

He appeared to search continually for secret, hidden places where he carefully went through the rigmarole of hiding his treasure.

He saw no forms of beauty, yet there was much beauty in Plutone's sphere. He mingled not with other souls. If others approached him he shuffled away.

His face was stern, fixed and austere, and wore always an uneasy, suspicious air.

I noticed that, while Benedictus preached, he muttered to himself, and now and then seemed to search about himself for his treasures.

He was possessed by his all-consuming avaricious desires, as by incarnate demons, which were rending and tearing him.

Yet he was without the present power and ownership of wealth, or the means of getting it.

He had developed his character into a fiend of sordid greed, which here could find nothing to feed upon but itself.

It turned upon him and gnawed him. His gold god sat upon him and crushed him.

* * * * *

Another form passed before me. She was but a type of many here.

She had been, on earth, a creature who hired out her body. She still strove to do so here.

She had always peddled that which belonged to virtue. Her life had been devoted to degrading the charms of woman. She sold her beauty, as the trader his wares. She bartered her virtue for vice.

She valued her body as the butcher his hog; with both the question was, how much will it bring?

In selling her body she threw in her soul, as so much boot. She valued that simply to fill out the measure of vice.

She had made vice the supreme object of her life. In her, vice had assumed personality. Everything she did or said was as though vice did and said it. When she walked and posed, you could see vice walking and posing. In her, vice passed from the abstract to the concrete, from the general evil to the individual body of viprous poison.

I saw her arrayed in her tawdry tinsels. She sought her colors here.

Her tossing head suggested the bold defiance of brazen-faced lust. Her half-bare form was an evil poem on licentious passion. Each glance of her eye invited to a liaison of sin.

Her character was a foul composition of unchaste desires and unchaster habits.

Even her laugh was an hilarious curse on virtue.

Every faculty of her being was warped into one hideous deformity, revolting and disgusting!

Here, in this realm of evil, was this foul character still foul. As this decayed, deformed tree had fallen, so it still lay.

Would it, could it, ever renew its life, and rise upright?

Yet she was God's child! But God had made her pure!

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And then I saw one, the tempted Magdalene, who had fallen, as it were, by another's sin. Here she sat mourning, draped in the sorrow of her sin. Repentance was working out the purification of her soul. Poor, tempted soul, she was sadly reaping her harvest, but she was not sowing another yet to be reaped.

She had not ensnared others, but had been herself ensnared. She had not sought sin, but had been overtaken by it. Vice, uninvited, had crushed her, as some cruel footstep crushes a pure lily. I heard her murmur this beautiful prayer :—

Stay thou with me, Sweet Hope,
For the way is dark and long,
And my feet do wander from
The straight and narrow path,
So hidden 'mid the encircling gloom.
Stay thou ! O, leave me not,
Until my darkened way
Doth end in radiant light ;
Until my wearied feet
Do find that perfect rest !

Stay thou with me, Sweet Hope,
For my heart is faint and weak,
And my faith doth falter in
The hard and 'dubious fight,
So smitten by opposing foes !
Stay thou ! O, leave me not,
Until my fainting heart
Doth drink His boundless strength,
Until my faith is 'gulfed
In His Omniscience !

Stay thou with me, Sweet Hope,
For my life is sad and sore,
And my soul doth shudder at
This stern, despairing state,
So dismal by its want of thee.

Stay thou ! O ! leave me not,
Until my life is safe
In His Eternity,
Until my soul is wrapped
In His Infinity !

When I saw her, her eyes and her face seemed already to wear a look of sanctity. She was quickly winning the battle. Bearing her cross she had almost reached her Golgotha. Then would be her ascension. She had suffered much ; and I heard good Benedictus say to her so sweetly : " Yet a little while and thou shalt be blest much, my daughter ! " And then he turned to me and said :

" Oh ! these crushed virgins of earth ! So sinned against, and so ensnared by cruel fate of circumstances ? So entrapped by man's vicious wiles ! So driven to sin by the dogs of want, oppression, extortion and seduction ! They shall yet be God's pure doves, and, nestling in His shielding bosom, no turbulent storms shall drive them hither and thither any more ! "

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I saw, further down, in a darkened shadow, a hideous creature (he was but a type of thousands I saw there) snarling and biting and striking into the surrounding ether, as though piercing it with a dagger. He was cursing, and his rage was violent.

He had been a murderer of his fellow-man.

Here he was murdering his haunting phantoms ! He was trying to assassinate the grim fancies of his own outraged conscience.

Now and then he threw himself fearfully forward, as if in a death struggle. Then he would crawl, and sneak with stealthy step, as though creeping upon an adversary. His eyes gleamed darkly—they did not look out upon you—they glared.

His face and countenance wore a grimace of rage.

No one ever approached him, except the "celestial Truth-Bearers," who communicated to him so gently of God and of the purified life of the pure and meek in heart.

After they would leave him, he would pine away, and moan most piteously, prostrating his being prone upon the sphere beneath him. Then he would hastily rise, and look wildly and searchingly about him; then he would rush swiftly away shrieking, as if flying from a thousand haunting phantoms.

His whole being seemed constantly to writhe in contortions of agony.

I saw him kneel once, and look up to God, and then despair appeared to seize him, and to hurl him down.

He then uttered such shrieks of woe and penitence, that I could not bear to behold his sin-inflicted torture.

I turned away, for my soul could endure it no longer; I saw thousands like unto him. Bloody-conscienced kings and cardinals and priests—cruel monarchs and heartless rulers—who spared not human lives nor human hearts—O! the ragings and the groanings and the heavings of their volcanic consciences!

They had spared not and they were not spared. They had heeded not the groans and tears of others, and theirs seemed as yet to be of no avail. Neither crowns, nor scepters, nor phylacteried robes, nor regalia, nor standing armies, nor vast earthly kingdoms, were of any avail to them here.

The terrible cross was laid upon each expiating soul, and there was no Simon of Cyrene to bear it for them to its Golgotha.

And thus all through Plutone's realm I saw each grade and type of sin and its attending woes.

Poor souls everywhere garnering their tares!

Some of them had vast harvests to garner. When would ever come the end of their travailing autumn?

Others had but few sheaves to garner. Their deliverance was near.

There were some souls that seemed already to behold the mount of their transfiguration. They were passing up through great tribulations. The flail had been laid upon them, and they were being purified.

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AFTER IMPRESSIONS.

Yet do not suppose that in Plutone there were no forms of pleasure. There were pleasures of evil, as on earth, but here their sweetness turned more quickly to bitter poison.

Disgusting staleness and nausea followed fast in the track of evil satiety.

Revelry and debauch in sin, wildly intoxicating while they lasted, succumbed speedily to the terrible retributions of conscience. The powers of good in these souls were merciless in their chastisements.

Conscience was here a task-master that laid on many stripes.

The forces of reformation in these souls offered no flag of truce to the powers of evil.

Here was being waged the decisive battle between good and evil in God's universe. Each soul was a battlefield, and within it were the contending forces. Concerning the wager of this battle, wise Ariel said to me :

"As sure as the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, good shall triumph over evil everywhere. If this be not so, the evil tendency of the soul is mightier than God and good conjoined."

Yes, there were pleasures in Plutone. There were revelleries and mirth-making. There was the merry spring-time sowing, and there was the scorching harvest of woe. But there was this difference, the groaning harvest was miserably greater than the spring-time sowing.

Plutone reminded me of a vast school, an austere curriculum of discipline, or a prison for reformation.

In this school there were severe masters.

The lessons to be learned, the tasks to be accomplished, were arduous, but sooner or later each soul had to master its curriculum, and perform its meted tasks. Conscience was the stern keeper always relentless. The "Celestial Truth-Bearers" and the all-pervading spirit of God were the beneficent teachers—re-enforced by each soul's experience—illuminating each soul, sealing home to each, by the Father's love, every good impulse and aspiration.

What I beheld of this winnowing discipline reminded me of the thoughts expressed in the following lines with which I had been familiar on earth :—

"For till the bruising flails of God's corrections
Have threshed out of us our vain affections ;
Till those corruptions which do misbecome us
Are by the Holy Spirit winnowed from us ;
Until from us the straw of worldly treasures,
Till all the dusty chaff of empty pleasures,
Yea till his flail upon us He doth lay
To thresh the husk of this our flesh away,
And leave the soul uncovered ; nay yet more,
Till God shall make our very spirit poor,
We shall not up to highest wealth aspire,
But then we shall, and that is my desire."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE GREAT LESSON IN LIFE—ASSURANCE'S FINAL EXPERIENCES —RISTOS' FALL.

As soon as the discourse of good Benedictus was over, Clareese and I greeted wise Ariel, and he presented us to Benedictus. I told Benedictus that, from his celestial name, and judging by the blessed trend of his activities still pursued in the celestial spheres, he must be one, who, by the

earthly name I knew so well, had carried on such labors there.

He replied that he was honored by God to be the one to whom I had reference; and that he gloried unspeakably in these activities in which he was here engaged, which were always so fresh, exhilarating and blest. Such had been his holy toil on earth; it was his triumphant glory here!

And he added these gloriously hopeful words:

"For here God blesseth my labors among these erring ones much more abundantly than on earth! And what joys celestial when a soul is here disenthralled from the powers and forces of evil within it, and becometh radiant in the dominion of Good.

"All these powers, forces and forms of evil and sin shall become subject to that supreme Good, which was personified in him who brought light into the world of earth and in whose Life shines forth that living reality of perfect life!"

I said:

"Dear brother, is God able, is the power of Good operating in each individual soul sufficient, to overcome the sinful domination swaying, writhing, and maddening, in those poor, perverted souls down there?"

"Yea, Assurance, for God is infinite in love and blessedness as He is in power. The power of Good is as limitless as the infinity of God's love.

"To say that God cannot, through and by the individual principle of good in the soul, save, elevate, and perfect them, is to limit His power; to say that by these means He will not, is to limit His love.

"To affirm either is to commit presumptuous sin.

"This self-suffering, this self-inflicted chastisement and expiation, which you behold these souls undergoing, is the discipline which will finally subjugate the powers of evil, inflict the penalty of sin, and establish the dominion of Good in each soul."

"Benedictus, such thoughts are glorious. They lift the pall of sin and death from off God's grand and beauteous creation."

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After this, Benedictus, Ariel, Clareese and I, in thought's leisure went some way through the realms of Plutone, viewing its surroundings, and cheering and comforting those minds who were willing to receive truth and comfort from us.

I asked them if they knew — and — and others I named to them, whom I had known on earth and whom I had not found in the realm of Good, with whom I was anxious to meet.

They replied that they did not.

We went still further towards the confines of Plutone's realm, and then good Benedictus and wise Ariel, having warned Clareese and me against the influences of evil there, and having blessed us, vanished.

* * * * *

The conversation between Meoön and Ristos, which I will now relate in this connection, was related to me later on by Meoön, but I will record it here because it occurred in Plutone's realm in this connection and at this point.

Meoön :—

"Dear Ristos, conceal not from me your deep-laid evil plans to entrap and if possible destroy these two. I have divined and learned enough to convince me of your designs. Knowest thou not that if thou shouldest succeed in thy evil purposes and destroy these, thou wilt also fall into sin,—yea, hast already so done in the designing—and if thou attemptest such wickedness and failest, thou wilt nevertheless destroy thyself? O! Brother of light, I have come to these realms of darkness to save thee and them! Ere this sad falling, thou, who wast created sinless, and who hast not known sin, hast kept inviolate thy high and holy estate. But thou canst commit sin. For thou hast not arisen out of sin, and been sealed

unto God by likeness to and oneness with Christ through travailing and tribulations. Thy free, sovereign mind,—heretofore stainless, and not having been sanctified, and thereby through sanctified experience learned the curse of sin and the all-conquering lesson of Good by which souls become sealed unto God—may pollute itself, and thy soul may come into woful subjection to evil and its pain and degradation for æons to come ! O, remember these things !

“Thou art allowing thy passion for Clareese, in itself pure, to overwhelm thee and it into a passion of evil ! My brother, yield not to this destroying tempter that besieges thy soul ! Fly to God ! To the Temple ! Look at this glorious Life in the pure, celestial realms of Light ! Cast it not away ! ”

Ristos :—

“Meoön, thy admonitions unbidden come to me, and unheeded they shall pass from me.

“In all my æons of life I have but desired, and pleasures celestial came always to minister unto me. I would rather glide into the abyss of these shades than yield myself to the denial of one sovereign desire. If I cannot be limitless in joys, I would as soon be subjugated in all things.

“And to fail in this my passion for Her ! and yield Her ! supinely to this weanling of earth’s gross bosom, I would rather——”

Meoön :—“Stop ! Beware, Ristos, I beseech thee ! ”

Ristos :—“I have pronounced it. Adieu ! Cross not my purposes ! ”

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Meoön alone in Plutone :—“It is very strange that Clareese and he have become lost to me ; I should have remained with them. I intended to have informed them of Ristos’ plans. The far-reaching effluvium of my will has traversed the segments of this realm of Plutone, wishing them to my side. My mind has called them and they do not appear by me !

Why this strange absence? Can it be possible that their minds have come under the delusive influence of some evil enchantress, and being thus thwarted and forestalled in will, they cannot perceive the psychic effluvium of myself? I must be at them!

"I traverse Plutone; I go circling in my search. I rush hither and thither in the quick scintillations of thought. I pass vast companies reveling. I flit by bowers in which impure desires are satiating themselves. I flash past the gloomy haunts of despairing, self-abnegating souls, writhing in penitence.

"I find them not.

"I see a swift-gliding intelligence traversing Plutone, passing near me. I hail it:

"Hail thou, who passest me; a thought with thee!"

"Thou Intelligence of Light what wouldst thou with me?"

"I am Meoön, I seek whom I cannot find. Canst thou guide me to where the minds of evil have overcome Clareese and Assurance, minds of Light?"

"Nay, I know not of whom you inquire. I have just come to this realm seeking my kind. I passed where the pure light dazzled my hideous soul, and I fled, seeking this my realm. Here all is tempered more to my sickly, darkened, distorted vision. Farewell!"

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After wise Ariel and good Benedictus left Clareese and myself on the confines of Plutone, and I went to search for those whom I yearned to see, "She" and "He" who formerly, before the service, had come to us, came to us again. Drawing near to us "She" said:

"So, sweet ones, we meet you again. We have constantly remained near you that we might serve you. We heard you inquire of Ariel if he could direct you to minds here with whom you wished to commune. He did not know of them.

We come to guide you to them, and to redeem our promise made to you before good Benedictus' convocation, which was that after the service we would have you share with us the pleasures of this realm. Shall we not now fulfill these joys, you with me and she with him?"

I answered :

"Thou so ravishingly beauteous without, so foul within, wouldst thou essay to tempt us and suggest evil, even now when the holy scintillations of good Benedictus' thoughts have scarcely passed to meditation's quietude in our receptive minds? Wouldst thou presume that I would trust her, my blest companion of Light, with him, a warped and defiled soul of evil?"

"If thou wilt show me to them whom I seek here, I will thank you. Beyond this I have no further want of thee, except to lead thee to God and holy life."

"She":—"Your every sweet wish shall be my pleasure and command. Only grant me this request, that I shall accompany thee. Those whom you seek are far from here, and we will course our way to them along that route where thou mayst behold most of this realm, so that some profit may compensate thee for the irksome glamour of my presence, —say aye!"

While she thus addressed me her eyes melted into a soft light; each varying glance was an appeal, such as you would think could only come from the longing look of a sincere, supplicating love. Her face wore a mellowed shade as of twilight, changing with each thought as though half-sad dreams were fitting and nestling in the depths of her countenance.

Clareese said :

"That your wish, dear Assurance, to find those you seek may be granted, deny not on my account her conditions of acceptance. We will be near together, and I am sure no harm can come to me. Since I have seen this realm and

heard good Benedictus' holy thoughts, I fear no harm, even though I am unused to evil, for good is greater than evil."

Scarcely had Clareese uttered this assenting approval than "She," who had drawn to my side, clasped my hand, exclaiming with an outburst of delight:—

"Kind Assurance, thou wilt sweetly glide with me? May love and beauty betide us!"

No sooner had she done and said this, than I felt the intoxication of a dreamy, joy-possessioning submission come over my being.

As soon as I felt her weird, strange influence beginning to negative and neutralize my will and self-assertive power, I feebly wished for Meoön's presence—but too late. If I could have formulated my volition one thought-span sooner, Meoön would have been at my side. It was about this time that he willed for my presence with him as related above, and I did not appear. He had divined rightly the cause of my not heeding his call.

My identity was merged into that of this beauteous evil that held me in absolute subjection.

Her influence over me was such that I seemed to rest supinely, sweetly, passionately within her charms. I felt that I was being borne hither and thither in her soft, luscious embrace. I seemed to feel her rapturous arms about me—arms full of dimples, each dimple a mouth that kissed with clinging passion my yielding form. And then I felt that I was in the grasp of a giant; that giant a desperate evil passion.

I knew that we were gliding—but whither? I knew not, I cared not. Though I felt that I was not so much gliding as floating. The sensation was as floating on rhythmic undulations that rose and fell to the tintillating music of some lullaby of love. And within the rhythmic folds of that downy, undulating billow I felt that I was not alone. About my neck I felt soft arms clinging; and not only clinging but

drawing me closer to some pulsating, rapturous form. Upon my flushed cheek there seemed to be playing the quick, warm, love-breath of some living, passionate being.

I was nothing more than an entranced passivity. I had been metamorphosed into an entity of indescribable passion. I could not resent, nor resist. The inertia of an all-controlling ecstasy possessed me. I had no power to disentwine those caressing arms, nor to remove myself from the magnetic clinging of the curved and rounded form that grew into each part and portion of myself.

Each kiss jealously clung until another more jealous supplanted it. Ever and anon gentle words caressed me. And a voice that surpassed melody would say: "And thou dost love me as I love thee?"

To which my voice would respond without any effort on my part:

"Yea, and more also, sweet one!"

Her voice and mine thus cooing, did not appear as persons articulating dull words, but were more like two birds, who of themselves were making love in the spring-time.

And her voice would sing:

"And thou wilt ever thus love me?"

And mine seemed to chirp:

"Aye, aye, and more!"

Then would thrill my being such delights that I would be transformed, incarnated, into a terrible ecstasy. I was conscious of no thought, no succession of emotions, nor volitions, nor ideas, such as make up continuous existence, but I was conscious only of an all-possessing rapture!

How long this beauteous, though evil, enchantress thus held me entranced in her power, and thrilled me with boundless, indescribable bliss, I will never know.

Suddenly she partially released me from her spell. I was enough myself to feel a languid state of a sort of dreamy ennui or semi-nonentity.

"She" said: "Thou hast had delights, knowest thou what they were?"

I replied: "They have possessed me, what were they?"

"The delights of evil, forbidden, but sweetened thereby in the commission. My love and beauty gave them thee. Thou wast weak to evil. I have your troth forever pledged in return for those joys.

"Come, thou sweet joy of my love, and let us tell it to her, that she may know your choice; and so knowing that she may leave thee, and seek another.

"So assent freely; and that thou mayest, I release thee from that charm in which I held thee in blissful liaison. You know my power, and have felt my joys. To show I love and trust thee, I cast both my love and my power at thy feet. Now, call Clareese!"

That name in my thought—that enchantress' power withdrawn—that fearful evil spell broken—my will and personal consciousness reasserting themselves—I was myself again! Quick as thought could flash I said:

"Clareese! thou my ward in this realm! Pure Clareese! Pure forever! Come to me! Faithful! Pure! Thou art here, and pure!"

In an instant Clareese was at my side, exclaiming:

"Yea! Evermore! And thou also art pure."

"Nay, Clareese, I am not, I will tell you. But first say to me, they did not harm thee!"

"No, Assurance. They essayed not to do it. Thou wast lost to me. 'She' this hideous, evil, beauteous one vanished from me, and in her void you fell. You did not go. You were thus lost to me. I willed for you, and you came not, and then I knew that she enchanted you; and being thus enthralled, you could not sin, though evil overcame you. 'She' had no sooner vanished, beafing you unwilling into her void, than he, the now fallen Ristos, was by me, offering his protecting power, Saying pleadingly and exultingly:

“ ‘Come now, dear Clareese, with me ; I will protect thee hence to where pleaseth thee ! SEE ! I came to rescue thee ! My love for thee brought me to these evil realms ! Behold what I told thee ! He has left thee with evil, he fleeing to evil ! oh, weanling of adulterous Earth deserting thee, embracing evil ! Thee for a harlot of evil he would barter ! ’

“And thus, Assurance, his evil mind did scintillate and avow to me ! I clasp thy hand ! I will not leave thee ! ‘She’ cannot take thee from me, nor from Good ! ”

“Sweet, pure Clareese, love me not ! For in the foul fascinations of her evil bosom I was entranced in forbidden joy. The delights of her charms, beauteous and blissful, though pregnant with evil, possessed me. I was overwhelmed, though consenting not. Oh, weak ex-mortal, I thought I was strong, and that sin was nothing to me. Yet Clareese, her foul domination did call forth and command the resistless storms of my enforced passion. It was not I, Clareese. ‘She’ sexed her foul incarnation in my then molten being, me plastic to her will, and in her double sin, she fain would make me accursed ! And, Clareese, am I or not accursed ? How canst thou affirm (for no lie can escape thee) that I am still pure and faithful ? ”

“I affirm it because it is true, Assurance ! For while I stood waiting for thy call for me, knowing it would come to me, behold, when thou became thyself, I felt the ethereal thrill and effluvium of thy pure will take hold of mine, drawing me, calling me, unto thyself. In an instant I was here. Thou knowest already (for that celestial power thou didst learn from Ariel) that only mind *en rapport* with mind can flash its will and thought to others across the ethereal distance.

“Therefore, Assurance, if I am pure, thou art pure ! ”

Just as these thoughts of Clareese were concluded Ristos appeared and quickly retorted :

“If thou so sayest to him, then thou hadst better say :

'Therefore, if thou art impure I am impure;' which would be nearer truth."

Meoön appeared at this moment, for whom I had willed on the instant I beheld Ristos, and said :

"Ristos, the pall of evil has fallen about thy once pure soul, hence thou makest false accusation.

"If thou art not evil, why that scowl on thy once radiant face? Why the foul thoughts that flit as darkened shadows from out thy mind? Woe art thou! If thou, poor soul, hast not fallen from thy high estate, and if I have not spoken truth, then come, go with us to the sphere of the Holy Temple, or to the other celestial realms of light and there abide! If thou so doest, then I have accused thee falsely."

Ristos replied: "I will not stand my trial on the enactments of thy judgment. Nor will I announce to thee the decision of my mind's intent. Whither I choose to go is of no concern to thee."

Meoön said :

"May God and the Good save thee, and may thy woes and penalties purify thee!"

I willed for Amicus to be present with me, and at this instant he appeared and I addressed him :

"Dear friend of Earth and of yon pure realms, thou heedest my call!"

Amicus :—"Yea, beloved Assurance, I craved for thee and when I felt thy thrill it gave me joy!"

"Amicus, this is Clareese. I present her to thee with much pleasure. So sweet and pure a soul should be known to thee."

Clareese responded : "I am happy to know you, Amicus, one who, my companion, Assurance, has told me, was his friend on sad earth's sphere."

Amicus said : "I am not worthy to receive thy kind consideration, nor can I express my delight to know you. Would that I were only as worthy as Assurance of thy good will."

In the mean time Ristos had disappeared, vanishing with "She."

Another being, seemingly newly-arrived from Earth appears. I realized that I had seen him on earth, but I could not recall his identity. He explained that he had but a short time ago entered Plutone. That being evil he sought the shades and likes of evil. In passing he recognized me and came near, to bear me tidings from her, my beloved of earth.

"Then tell me what thou knowest! If good, or evil, tell me all. Of her I know there can come no evil tidings, unless it be that she has fallen under pain or suffering! Tell me!"

"Then brave thy soul. Thy long departure and the soothing hand of time kindly assuaged her grief at thy demise. Her sorrows gradually sought thy hollow tomb, and one by one she buried them sacredly there with thee. Then came fancies free and gay. Then one who sought thy place at her side and in her arms. She has been overtaken by his entreaties, and they have plighted their troth. Yea, give me not the lie in thy looks! For in kindness I have told you but the truth!"

"If thou hast lied thou art thy own condemner! I believe thou hast been sent here by Ristos.

"Clareese, Amicus, my soul, so sad, is widowed, and I fain would go to my Earth and haunt in love that spherous segment of space wherein she dwells—even though I can see her not, nor commune with her!

"Clareese, Amicus is of Earth, and his soul is pure and noble and hath not affinite love there nor here. I, so saddened by this rumored affliction, just borne to me, cannot troth my weeping love, which for long æons must wear its garb of mourning sorrow.

"Clareese, thou canst love him and be happy beyond compare. Love ye one another and abide in blessed affinity.

"If not this, Clareese, he can make thee happy until I return, of which time I reckon not.

"Nay, nay, Clareese, thou canst not go with me on this sad, sorrowful mission! Let my soul alone seek the solitude of its own grief!

"O God, thou answerest the piteous wail of weeping faith! so grant me this my prayer. O God, my Father, grant that into earth's life, and into that form and substance which I did inhabit I may re-enter, and know of her, my love, again!

"Then, O God, if she hath broken her vow, which I hold sacred and inviolable, receive me quickly back into this Thy bosom, that I may worship Thee always in sanctified tears.

"But, O! my good God, if she is ever, even now and henceforth, faithful and true in her plighted troth to me, grant me, as my portion of Thy heaven celestial, which would be mine for the span of time of our life on earth, that I may exchange it for that span on Earth, and dwell and sorrow and rejoice for that while with her on earth. For, O God, my heaven is where my love is!

"Grant me this, O God, and I will gladly meet death again, and purify my soul anew through suffering.

"If thou wilt grant my prayer, even now plunge me into that form materi——"

In an instant I feel myself borne away from all those about me, and I realize myself surrounded by the purest and most intense radiance. I find my every faculty alert, buoyant and active. I feel some sublime virtue entering into and encompassing my whole being. Then in the flash of a thought there appears before me—Christ! I throw myself wholly upon his power and love and cry aloud:

"Blessed Christ, I was exalted in that realm of light. I received thy blessed thoughts taught us there. I beheld thy blessed self, I felt myself so strong in thy truth!

"Why am I here? What has befallen me? Whither

shall I go? Should I not return to earth? How unfitted am I for this kingdom of God? Did 'She' of evil just now lead me into evil? Will not my prayer be answered to return to earth?"

Christ replied :

"Thy prayer will be answered. This experience has taught thee that thou must be strengthened yet more by conflict with sin, and must be purified yet more by adversity and tribulation. We are not sealed unto God until it is impossible for evil to be even a temptation to us. Thou didst not overtly commit sin with 'Her' of evil, but wast overcome by her sin. Thou hast not become more powerful than sin.

"Evil becomes powerless to us only when we become more powerful than sin. Strength and perfection of character—that which is impregnable to all sin and evil—can only come out of the mold of adversity and tribulation, rising up through evil and temptation, and overcoming them, and so becoming forever superior to all the powers of sin and evil. Simon Peter, the stronger, was also the most tried and tempted. This truth thou hast been taught also by Ristos' fall. He, though once pure and sinless, having been created pure spirit in Sirius' pure realm, was weak to sin. He had not that strength which can only come from combat with evil, and by overcoming it. He had not been placed where temptations try, rend, and finally strengthen, the soul.

"He knew not the curse of sin and its woful powers. That battle he must now wage. He has entered the conflict with sin.

"To overcome sin and evil, and to rise forever above them, so that they cannot even tempt or influence us, is the great *Lesson of Life*. Thou hast not learned this lesson, as I would have thee know it, nor as I would fit thee perfectly for thy higher life.

"Thou heardst my message in the Temple, which I declared should be delivered to the children of men ; and that

I would appoint a messenger to re-enter there and publish and declare it.

"Thou art he! Thou shalt so do. Declare always the truths thou hast received from me. Each soul must declare its quota of truth, in whatever sphere it may be. Therefore, Our Father will answer thy prayer, and fulfill my purpose!

"Unfold to men of earth all the glories and beauties of these pure realms of mind. Teach them of this eternal, spiritual life! Teach them of that cross of evil which here in Plutone must be borne, if they submit to evil on earth.

"For this purpose hast thou been so sublimely blest in this thy most wonderful experience!

"Declare my message! as thou understandest it to have been delivered by me."

Here I interrupted:

"But, dear Christ, how could men believe my message of what thou hast taught?"

Christ replied:

"Let them compare my message delivered and published by thee with my message and life, freed from all their perversions, which I gave to them on earth, while I was in their midst, as interpreted by me. Do thy duty! Deliver the truth as thou hast it! Behold, thou hast received *Assurance* of thy yearnings, thy hopes and thy thoughts.

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