THE KINGDOM OF THE INVISIBLE

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By Mary Platt Parmele
The Kingdom of the Invisible

When the soul of man was placed upon a fair young earth to work out the destiny of a human race, it was an experiment attended with much danger, and we are told by Milton, the veracious chronicler of this event, was watched with many forebodings by the Heavenly Host. If archangels had fallen into such an abyss out of heaven, what might be the fate of man—lower even than the angels—upon that insignificant, unprotected ball circling about the sun! The tree of knowledge must be carefully guarded, and its fruit doled out
in infinitesimal morsels, for this child of earth must not suspect the magnitude of his inheritance, nor dream of the vast forces and opportunities lying all about him. The windows of his soul must be thickly curtained, especially that one, the highest of all—the watch-tower—which looks out upon infinity. So, while the house prepared for this Infant of Days was a marvel of ingenuity and of adaptation to his needs, it was only a beautifully constructed prison, designed to screen him from the universe, not to reveal it. Instead of having windows on all sides, giving ample opportunity to look out upon the fair creation of which he was a part, there were only five little openings—mere crevices—through which there struggled and flickered pulsating streams which he came to know as sensations. A wonderful network of filaments, which
we should now call telephonic, connected each of these receivers at the windows with the soul within, and gave report of what they saw, heard and felt, and consciousness fed eagerly upon these nourishing streams, and grew apace; and the royal infant in the house of clay found it very pleasant, was content, and never suspected that he was a prisoner at all.

Then, with a capacity for omniscience which was Godlike, he began to piece together the poor little meagre fragments of truth which penetrated his prison-house, and to construct a system of knowledge. An appetite was awakened transcending anything he had before experienced—an appetite to know, to understand; and then as he found that with increase of knowledge there came also increase of power—that, in fact, knowledge was power—the hunger
became a craving, and he grew impatient at the smallness of the windows.

The one called *Sight*, the most far-reaching—the only one, in fact, which penetrated beyond the confines of his earthly abode—was the narrowest of all—only one little octave of space. Whereas, its near neighbor, which admitted what was called *Sound*, measured eleven octaves, seven of which delighted his soul with music!

But he had found that "things seen are mightier than things heard," so he set about the task of artificially enlarging the capacity of this window; and lo! where had been, as he believed, nothing, he found form, color and rushing activities. A drop of water was teeming with life like an ocean, and the stars were doubled in number!
The authority of the senses was profoundly shaken. They had been implicitly trusted. Humanity had believed that all there was, it saw; and behold! here all the time there had been existing a world of matter—of substance which could be weighed, measured and counted; an unsuspected world within a world, with a marvelous and perfect economy of its own. Was this the end? Would more enlargement bring more worlds? Strange doubts came into his soul.

But the senses held their ground. A very august thing called Science had come into existence; and Science based all of its conclusions upon reports sent in by these revered old teachers. To be sure, these reports were found to be misleading and needed much revising and correcting; but after allowing for reflection and deflection, and for refraction, and for
imperfect recording, and for time required in the transmission of the message, something approximating to the truth was found; and Science patiently labored on over her task of classifying the facts and unraveling the mysteries of creation.

The being within was aroused. Things must be explained—accounted for. What was light? What was color? Heat? What was sound? And what this strange substance in amber which, when awakened by friction, would draw bits of matter hungrily to itself? There was imperative demand for answer to these questions, and to some of them Science gave reply.

Heat was a mysterious substance, a subtle fluid called Caloric, which penetrated matter, its presence producing warmth, its absence cold. Light also was a physical emanation. Streams of infinitesimal light-arrows,
of the Invisible

which were rushing to us from their home in the sun, bathed the world in radiance. Obviously, these had only to be variously tinted to give the chromatic scale. So there it was, simple and snug, caloric in one reservoir and light-arrows in another.

But, alas! nothing in the domain of knowledge remains snug! There is no more difficult task than attempting to keep your mental furnishings in order. A distinguished scholar upon being asked, some years ago, what scientific books in the library of the Glasgow University had better be thrown out, replied: "All not written in the last decade." The last four, or perhaps I should say five, decades, have rendered many libraries useless. There has been in this period an upheaval of the very foundations of knowledge, and this has been wrought chiefly by making the
invisible visible—not to the physical eye, but to that more perfect organ, the eye of the mind—and thus bringing to the consciousness of man a supersensible world, a world inconceivably minute, but clothed with a majesty and a power inconceivably great.

One of the early causes leading to this upheaval was the discovery of an unsuspected source of disease in the presence of minute animal and vegetable organisms, which, with incredible swiftness, were reproduced in incredible numbers, and feasted during their more or less prolonged existence upon certain organs for which they had a liking in the human body.

Then the companion-discovery was made—that there were other micro-organisms whose business it was to exterminate these invading hosts; and that at the entrance to the
throat, stationed like forts on either side, and at other strategic points in the human body, these were permanently garrisoned to protect the vital parts from such invasion. The deepest cause of disease was laid bare, and the science of medicine was transformed.

But these creatures, malevolent and beneficent, who had been fighting their battles since the dawn of earthly life could be weighed, measured and counted, so were only on the threshold of the world invisible. They are, in fact, the last we see as the sensible vanishes into the supersensible creation. But Cause was beginning to be tracked to its home in the invisible.

Then another assault upon the outposts of mistaken beliefs was made by Herbert Spencer by precisely reversing this process and proving that the invisible was deeply
rooted in the visible. One feature of the neat classification of the good old time was the separateness of the various departments of knowledge, each in a package properly labeled and complete in itself. To the orderly mind nothing could have been nicer. There was but one objection to it—it was not true! In the first place, there were two grand divisions, a material world and a spiritual world, between which a great gulf was fixed, cleanly, properly and forever separating them. Science was the priestess of one, and Religion of the other; and the poles were not wider apart than they!

In similar fashion, the sciences had each its own system of laws, separate and distinct. The laws governing the chemical atoms, and controlling their affinities and reactions, had nothing whatever to do
with those with which Physiology was dealing; while these were of a different sort altogether from those relating to the sciences of heat, light, sound and electricity, which again had nothing whatever in common with each other; while Psychology, a sad and homeless wanderer belonging neither to heaven nor earth, claimed a melancholy distinction in having not the remotest connection with any of the rest; because, forsooth, while they were all dealing with matter, human consciousness was the sublimer field of her gropings.

It was Herbert Spencer who disposed of this fallacy. When he placed the facts of human consciousness upon a physiological basis, he brought Psychology down from where it had long been suspended—in the upper ether of pure thought—and planted it firmly upon a foundation of matter.
Instead of seeking to penetrate the mysteries of sensation, thought and emotion by an ethereal pathway, he discovered a material one—a frail bridge which linked that nebulous region to the prosaic continent of scientific truth. This connecting bridge was the nervous system. When “states of mind” were found to be correlated with certain definite movements of physical atoms, movements which might be mathematically stated, not only had Psychology joined the family of material sciences, but it began to seem as if it might be only the subtle and vanishing end of that one science to which it was so closely allied—Physiology!

This was startling and subversive, but less so than another discovery which was at hand; another and deeper truth which was going to tear down every wall of separation, and
bring all existing things, material and spiritual, under one compelling and universal law—a law embedded so deep in the heart of all created things that it must be the Law of Laws!

It was found that in the phenomena of nature, under all seeming and being, in things solid and things fluid, things palpable and impalpable, ponderable and imponderable, the final cause is an atomic movement. And not alone that, but things are what they are, solid, liquid, fluid or gaseous, or what we name heat, light, sound or electricity, simply because of the character of the action of this inscrutable energy which pulsates and throbs through all created things!

This fell upon unheeding ears. Men were too busy with realities to stop and think of intellectual phantoms. But when it was declared that the solidity of the earth was a
fiction, that it was, in fact, only a mass of swinging, oscillating atoms never at rest and never in contact, then there came a voice from the citadel, that last stronghold of mediocrity. Common Sense, that precious possession of the average mind, came to the rescue and pronounced it *transcendental*, which means a plaything for the visionary. How could such a theory be proved? And of what practical use would it be if it could?

Let no one accuse me of undervaluing common sense. I love it. And so I do infancy. I revere it. And so I do the multiplication table. More than that, I know that when it acts as the handmaiden to sense of an uncommon sort it may become genius. Yet, I must insist that common sense has always made a mistake when it has attempted to define
the limits of the Infinite! Common sense derided the still small voice which was coming from the heart of the granite. But for all that, that whisper was bringing a sublime revelation. It proclaimed that there was a soul in matter. It declared that all the potencies of life exist in what we have called dead matter; that there is no dead matter. It meant that in all the wide created universe there’s nothing dead!

But this was only the beginning of the revelation. The atom was not alone throbbing with life, but with rhythmic life! There was music and poetry in these atomic souls; and atoms attuned to the same rhythm, singing the same song,—and here is the marvel, the wonder of it all!—atoms singing the same song have an irresistible affinity for each other! —and all the varieties of the material
creation must have been brought into groups by this sympathetic hunger of like for like!

There is not time even to hint at the vast revelation of which this is the alphabet, a revelation in which all loves, human and Divine, all things, material and spiritual, seem to find a reasonable solution. Whatever the problem, in whatever the science, however it may be veiled and disguised in technicalities, its solution lies at last in the facts of motion and its rhythmic affinities. Life is motion. More life is more motion; and pari-passu with more motion, there must exist a finer element in which it may act. And so we have started upon a path inevitably leading into that separate realm which we call Spiritual! The wall of separation between the two worlds is—not broken down, for it never existed
—it has vanished, melted into thin air.

And this is only one of the revolutionary changes following in the wake of this atomic revelation. At one stroke, the origin and genesis of man is removed from protoplasm far back to cosmic dust. It has taken an eternity of æons to travel it; but at one end of this long journey is a simple atom—an atom with a soul tethered to the divine heart,—and at the other end that most complex of all organisms—man—who as he has climbed the ladder of being, in every stage, at every step of his evolutionary development, has been drawn on and on, by this same innate hunger for a divine perfection of rhythm!

Like all truths so heavily freighted with meaning, once it commenced to unfold, this expanded swiftly. Not
alone the ultimate particles of gross matter, but those of the atmosphere and the ether were subject to this law; and sound, heat, light and electricity were only more and more intense forms of atomic vibration.

The messenger bearing sound, traveling only at the rate of about 1,000 feet a second, might make his leisurely journey in the air. But the angel of light who, as he speeds with his message to the eye, traverses nearly 200,000 miles a second, needs a rarer element for the vibration of his swift wings, so retires into the ether. And for a brief period the ear responds synchronically to the aerial music, and we say we hear, and for a still briefer period the eye synchronically catches the ethereal strain, and we “see.”

But in all this transaction observe, it is the energy which is the reality,
and its perception is merely an incident. Sound, heat and light are no longer objective realities any more than are the progressive markings on the thermometer. They are only way-stations in a journey which, so far as we know, has no end. They happen to be the stages at which an ascending column of energy is able to penetrate the human organism through three narrow crevices; a fact which reflects upon the limitations of the organism, not the energy, which is probably ready at a thousand intermediate points to flood the consciousness with new sensation, and they are no less sound, heat and light before and after they reached this particular stage of vibratory motion to which the perceiving organ is synchronically attuned; and to the all-perceiving mind all energy, at every stage, must be color, sound, heat and light; and
The Kingdom

wherever there is life there is motion, and wherever there is motion there music and radiance, and every atom is vocal, and the stars do sing together, and all created things do unite in a rejoicing song!

But the most profoundly suggestive attribute of the atom is its sympathetic quality, which seems not only to explain all the complexities of human relations, but irresistibly and convincingly spiritualizes what we call gravitation in the universe of matter, and what we know as religion in the universe of soul. Is it an accident, does it only happen that light and gravitation are diminished with increase of distance (the one in brilliancy and the other in power) at precisely the same ratio and by the same mathematical law? Or is this an indication of a near kinship in these two manifestations
of rhythmic energy? And if individual atoms are drawn to each other by identity of rhythm, then why must they not be so drawn in their masses? And why is not gravitation simply the hunger of a rhythmic affinity? And if sympathetic vibration be the secret of all affinities, why need we look further for an explanation for the eternal hunger of the human soul for its Divine source? And why is not the religious impulse in humanity simply the transcendant expression of this law?

But it was only an elect few who heard these heart-beats of the Divine in dense matter. Prof. Tyndall, who seemed to hear them more clearly than any one else, said that these atoms were not gay triflers singing and dancing in space. They were disguised giants, and terribly in earnest. If they needed more space for
the wider and swifter swing of their vibrations, walls of granite could not contain them. And men, seeing the riven boulder, or the toppling wall wrenched from its foundations, said: "'Tis the work of the frost," or "of that growing sapling;" and were not amazed! But Tyndall, with clearer vision, said: If such be the energy existing in its lowest form, while it sleeps in stone, what must it be in its higher and intenser manifestations? We are compelled to believe that by sounding the sympathetic note of some such rarer stream as may exist, an energy might be evoked sufficient to tear the stars from their orbits! These are not his words, but they correctly summarize the startling utterances of the great scientist.

But, while interesting to some speculative minds, all this, like that other wild theory of the non-solidity
of the earth, was absolutely incapable of proof, and merely an opportunity for intellectual gymnastics for which few had time or taste. But the Mills of the Gods were grinding, and were grinding more "exceeding fine" than they had ever done before. When Science turned its searchlight upon the spectrum, it discovered that upon both sides of this small octave of color there existed invisible rays; that beyond the more sluggish energy at the red end, these invisible rays being able to vibrate in the atmosphere, as was to be expected, produced heat. While at the swifter and ethereal end, where the violet was singing its intenser song, their action was not heat-producing, but chemical and more vital.

But both were realities, and both were beyond the range of human vision. Science was on the verge of
one of her most momentous triumphs. It came swiftly. The earth was not solid! The most scoffing and skeptical could see for himself that it was not. That impossible, that absurd theory, that theory which was an offense to all sane thinking was scientifically demonstrated! A swifter energy, moving in a finer medium, only a step beyond the capacity of the human eye, was able to convert dense matter into gauze!

Amazing as this was and is, the implications it brings with it are more startling still. To the human eye, so finely constructed that it could respond to the invisible rays, and could discern just one color more beyond the violet, to such an eye nothing would have been solid. We should look through the interatomic spaces as through the meshes of lace. And, if this be true, is a long step
required to conceive of an order of beings who do so regard matter? and to whom its interatomic spaces are not alone windows through which they may gaze, but open doors through which they may pass to and fro? Can any limit be placed to the possibilities of being, which are implied by the Röntgen Ray?

And what is this Röntgen Ray? How does it act, when, as is claimed, it destroys the germ of cancer? The newspaper this morning says it does so "by producing heat and electricity." Amazing dullness! These may both be present; probably are, with other more or less efficient manifestations of energy. Such an explanation might have been satisfying in the days of "Caloric" and "light-arrows," but not to-day. It is simply because the invisible ray is a swifter and more subtle form of
motion that it does this. In its capacity to penetrate finer and more subtle recesses of space, it consumes—not alone the visible tissues—but their invisible foundations, laden with the germs of vicious life in its incipiency (for the beginnings of good and of evil are "exceeding small"). It simply burns them up, as we do an infected house. But this consuming fire is not appreciable as heat. The sensitive nerves give no report of it to the consciousness.

As wonderful as this is, amazing as it is to have the power of vision so quickened and intensified, it is less important, less startling, than the inseparable companion-truth which comes with it—that just beyond the frontiers of human sight there exist these more vital realities! Now, if this be true of sight, we are justified in believing it must also be true of
of the Invisible

all conscious perception. And that on the nether side of every sense, there must be the same extension into more intense forms of what has vanished into nothingness.

We are accustomed to think of the invisible as nebulous and structureless. But Nature does not do her work in that way. Doubtless perfection of structure increases with its subtlety; and organized structure is already far advanced when it first reports itself to the eye, or even to the lens. If proof of this were needed, it is found in the fact that in the earliest stages of embryonic life, the most minute, physical characteristics of the future man already exist. Even the pattern of the spiral tracings on his finger tips is already unchangeably complete.

Now we know the pathways by which heat, light and sound travel to
the brain, and where and how they give their report. But how do faith, hope, love, anger, remorse, how do thought and all the emotions of the soul reach there? Do they rush in headlong and disorderly haste across a structureless chasm? Has Nature made such splendid provision for the use of the senses, and provided no pathways for these sublimier streams on their way to the conscious soul? Once there, they report themselves to the brain by the same rhythmic cipher as that used by the senses; but are there no channels which have conveyed these more vital streams of energy to the consciousness of man?

In other words, does the human organism cease where it vanishes from sight? or does it, by natural gradations, melt into an invisible structure, finer, more sensitive, more vital, through which there flow—across a
of the Invisible

more ethereal nervous system, and into a subtler brain—streams of energy as much more rarefied than sound and light, as these transcend the pulsating streams which pour over the brink of Niagara?

Does such a body exist—detachable, but not detached—vitably connected for a time with its gross and visible partner, and the source of its best doing and achieving? Is this that subliminal, subconscious self, which, with intermittent flashes, illumines man with a wisdom not his own? And are we expanding or contracting this finer habitation of the soul, according as we dwell in it or desert it? And is this the abode of the Divine germ? and the home of conscience, and of all that makes for exalted being, and for Immortality? And is this the indestructible part of man, in which the soul is clothed
when it passes through the portal we call Death? Wise and prophetic souls, from Paul to Emerson, have affirmed something very like this.

The fact of its invisibility—what does that mean? Nothing, absolutely nothing. To the beings attuned to those finer harmonies, it may be shining in such light "as never was on sea or land," and radiant and ample, or dim and shrunken, according to the soul-life it contains and expresses.

We know that an objective creation transcends our power of vision upon both sides of the spectrum. We also know that we might have been created upon a scale of being in which we should only begin to see and hear at the point where now all fades into darkness and silence, and that our world then would have been no less real and objective than
it is now; and that our present objective world would then have been to us practically non-existent. And if, as Milton says, "Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth to-day unseen by man," it is because the things I have been trying to say are true. And it is perfectly conceivable that material beings created upon a more sublimated plane than we, and with powers immeasurably transcending ours may be occupying the same space which we think we have appropriated, and not necessarily be more aware of our presence than are we of theirs.

If it is unthinkable to us that highly organized beings, leading lives of more profound significance than ours, should exist in the interatomic spaces, it is simply because of the grossness and egotism of our point of view. We forget that the ocean
of ether, which pours through matter as through a sieve, affords abundant space for beings to whom it is the natural element. And it is evident that we also fail to realize the spaciousness of the minute. And when we pass into that other life, so veiled in mystery, we may be not only bewildered by scores of new openings between our infrequent senses, but we may also awaken to a new conception of space, by which centre has all the possibilities of circumference! Indeed, what we already know compels such belief.

But some will ask of what use are these wild speculations? What has this new gospel of matter done for practical living? The reply is that it has done two things which the most utilitarian must acknowledge entitle it to some consideration. It has revolutionized human thought, and
of the Invisible

it has afforded a new basis for all practicalities and all utilities. Every man who receives a cable message to-day, or a wireless report from mid-ocean, or hears the voice of his friend a thousand miles away, or sees the deeply embedded bit of metal which is destroying the life of his child is reaping the benefit from these wild speculations concerning a transcendant world. And to the part of humanity which thinks and cares, it has been a profound experience to see all truths and all paths converging into a divine unity!

The unity is not yet complete. Religion has not yet fallen on the neck of Science, nor has Science embraced the feet and kissed the robe of Religion! Many mistakes will have to be admitted by both before that is done. But it is coming. Not long ago they were glaring at each other
The Kingdom

across an impassable gulf. Then they tolerated each other. Now, each regards the other as an admirable person, holding some mistaken views; and it needs small prophetic vision to see that the time is not far distant when they must embrace, and religion of necessity be scientific, and science by equal necessity be religious!

We discover that the message brought to the world nineteen centuries ago was so transforming, not because of the things read into it by Bishops and Church Councils and Creed-makers, but because it brought a new key to heaven, the same—the very same key, which, strangely enough Science is now compelled to use in unlocking the mysteries of a physical creation. And at last we stand before the secret of the Universe, and LOVE is the binding
of the Invisible

power which holds the suns in their courses, and the "Golden key which ope's the Palace of Eternity!"

So, in every department of knowledge and thought the unexpected has happened, and all because of these searchings into an invisible and transcendent world! Science has reluctantly found out God; Religion, as reluctantly, has found herself linked to gross matter; Physics has melted into metaphysics; Metaphysics has glided into physics; Science has become occult; Philosophy, in bewild-erment, finds herself growing mystic and spiritistic; matter has been spirit-ualized; an over-spiritualized heaven has been reasonably linked to earth; and we find that the region of mind and soul is not a separate domain at all, but, subject to the same laws, only a sublimer part of the same familiar territory.
The Poet is a Prophet and a Seer, because he knows this. His inspired soul has always thrilled with the consciousness of this identity between the seen and the unseen. By swift intuition and at a bound, he long ago ascended the ladder which Science has laboriously constructed, and with heavy steps is trying to climb.

Shakspeare had never heard of "vibratory physics," nor "ultra musical silence." But his sensitive soul needed no science to teach him Nature's secret, when he made Lorenzo utter these words to the fair Jessica:

"Look, how the floor of Heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold.
There's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest,
But in his motion like an angel sings.
Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubims.
Such harmony is in immortal souls (1),
But whils't this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

38
And if Poetry in its profoundest depths is scientific, has not Science itself grown into the sublimest poetry when it tells us the foundations of the universe are laid in music; that Love is its architect; and that a harmonious combination of numbers is all that marks the difference between chaos and cosmos, or Heaven and Hell! Did ever poet make a wilder or sublimer utterance than that?

But it is quite true that the world cannot grow upon sublime theories nor utterances. These must be translated into plain, simple, practical truths for everyday use. And this is precisely what the new conception concerning natural forces has done. The business of Science has been to make a practicable highway—a highway of the concrete, not the abstract—for the feet of humanity to tread as it climbs upward. And
splendidly has she achieved this task, and vindicated her right to be. When Pythagoras divined that “harmony and numbers” were all, when—without any scientific ladder leading inevitably to such a conclusion—he made that inspired guess, he also taught that the seven notes of the musical scale were only a symbol of the choral sung by the seven planets. More than two thousand years later, Science, having not divined, but laboriously discovered, the same truth, did not rhapsodize about the music of the spheres, but said to a toiling world: “There are legions of giants all about you, ready and waiting to lift your burdens. You cannot see them; but they are here, there, everywhere. Stronger than a million horses, fleeter than anything but thought, and with potencies eternity cannot exhaust. Make them your slaves!”
Then came the age of transforming miracles, each more wonderful than the last; swiftly dropping by the way more and more of the cumbersome equipment needed for the work; until now—with no connecting wire—with only a transmitter at one end and a receiver at the other, the message flies straight as an arrow to a delicately constructed ear, which is listening one hundred and fifty miles away! Why? Why does it go to the ear on the Nantucket Lightship, and not to some other and more accessible point? For the same reason that the human soul struggles to reach the Divine centre—because a rhythmic affinity compels it!

This was the whole truth as we knew it when it was written ten days ago. But such magic is there in the agency of this sympathetic force that the fact was outgrowing the state-
The Kingdom

ment, even while the words were being written, and for one hundred and fifty miles I must now write two thousand miles. This in the infancy of the process! Who dare place a limit upon its maturity?

Now what remains to be done? Only to drop the transmitter and the receiver, and send the thought on its own wings, confident that it will go where it is sympathetically attuned.

The magic which has transformed modern life came with the use of invisible agents, and has increased as we have penetrated deeper and deeper into the Invisible Kingdom. If, as is believed, the twentieth century is destined to transcend the nineteenth in achievement, that is to be done—unless there is a strange break in the line of progression already pursued—by drawing upon the resources of a still more atten-
uated, a still more superlative ether, and a still more mighty and subtle form of energy. And what can that be, if not that all subduing motion which we know as Thought, and which in its highest manifestation we call Prayer?

So, to the Heavenly Host observing human development, not as a succession of events, but as a process, the archangels have watched their royal prisoner as he grew to manhood; have seen him slowly forging his way through the entangling wrappings of matter—that muddy vesture of decay which grossly hedged him in. They saw him gradually emancipating himself, until at last free as a young gladiator, he emerged, and springing into the air, grasped its atomic forces for his practical uses. Then swiftly outgrowing
The Kingdom of the Invisible

the air, they beheld him as he seized
the greater forces pulsating in the
ether and compel them to draw his
burdens, light and warm his cities and
energize all the activities of life.

Then there seemed to catch his
ear whisperings from a still more sub-
limated region. His soul had begun
to vibrate responsively to a still
higher and mightier range of activi-
ties and potencies. And the arch-
angles smiled as they whispered:

"He is beginning to find out that
he is Godlike!"

L.of C.