Scientific Romances

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SCIENTIFIC ROMANCES

[SECOND SERIES]

BY

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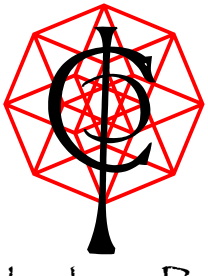
THE EDUCATION OF THE IMAGINATION
MANY DIMENSIONS
STELLA
AN UNFINISHED COMMUNICATION



Celephaïs Press
Ulthar - Sarkomand - Inquanok - Leeds
2008

"The Education of the Imagination" and "Many Dimensions" first published as individual pamphlets, London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1888. "Stella" and "An Unfinisihed Communication" first published as *Stella and An Unfinished Communication: Studies of the Unseen*, London: Swan Sonnenschien & co., and New York: Macmillan, 1895. Collected edition of all four texts published as *Scientific Romances, second series*, London: Swan Sonnenschien, 1896. This electronic text produced by Celephaïs Press, somewhere beyond the Tanarian Hills, and manifested in the waking world in Leeds, Yorkshire, England in 2008 e.v.

Release 1.0: 30.11.2008

On the Education of the Imagination.

WHAT is the imagination?

Many definitions have been given of this mysterious power by which the world is poised and balanced in thought; by which reality is fixed and recast in forms more akin to the mind. By its means the intellect asserts its supremacy, enthrones itself as law-giver and judge, rises to the conception of a higher ideal, and prepares to emancipate itself from the trammels of an inferior condition. We are told also that in science this power has its use; that the greatest discoveries have been made under its inspiration; and that its aid is required, if we would have a light cast on the darkness which surrounds the island of our knowledge.

But no less earnestly than we are called upon to achieve its use, are we warned against its misuse. While it leads to the noblest achievements if an adequate basis of knowledge and accurate observation is laid down, it is a most dangerous guide when we start from inadequate premises or half-reasoned truths. Here, however, there is somewhat of a dilemma, for, if the imagination is to lie dormant until the heights of any science are attained, until, through long experience and discipline, a criterion of truth is gained, it will,—at least,

if it resembles any of the other powers,—have become atrophied; and, even if it be stimulated into exertion, its flight will be but a feeble fluttering under the load of knowledge. Shall there then be a separate department of discipline, in which the powers that are suppressed in scientific training shall be cultivated, so that, when the right conditions are secured for its use, it may come to its work fresh from a vigorous life of its own?

Or, is it possible, on the other hand, to incorporate this faculty amongst the others, which are called out in a scientific training, so that, on the one hand, each step in learning shall be an exercise of the power which is of such assistance in great matters; and, on the other hand, each small portion of the work done shall be stamped with the same characteristics as the greatest?

In order to decide upon this question, the practical educationalist has to define clearly to himself what power he will take as that which is indicated by the name imagination.

The more the mechanism of the senses is understood, the more is it verified that the process of sensation consists in the transference of a physical change, corresponding to the object perceived, upon the structure of the sense organ. Thus, the act of vision consists, so far as it can be traced, in the reproduction upon the retina, by means of chemical changes, of the gradations of light and colour which characterize the object looked at. When a piano is heard, the vibrations of the strings of the instrument are transferred to certain delicate fibres within the inner ear. Were the process of sensation traced farther, it would be found to consist in changes of the structure of the brain.

In the case of an hallucination, there are set up at some part of the sensitory nerve the same changes of structure as correspond to the excitation from a real

external object. Experiments have not been made on animals subject to hallucination, so it is impossible to say whether the modifications produced from an inner cause are to be found on the retina, or whether their seat lies within the brain. But that such modifications of structure can be produced, is a most important fact, for herein lies the power of memory. The faculty of imagination, as it is useful to define it from an educational point of view, is a closely allied one. Indeed, there is a simple apparatus often used in physics, which so exactly corresponds to that power of the mind which we are considering in this its most accessible aspect, that it may be worth mention.

A piece of glass is placed, slantwise, in the path of a ray of light coming from a distant object. An eye then, looking at the object through the plate of glass, sees it, but is also con.scious of a reflection in the glass of objects on one side. The two sets of rays enter the eye together, and, by varying the arrangement, it is possible to superimpose a scale upon the distant object, which would otherwise be seen alone, or to bring colours or lines from different sources into exact juxtaposition.

In the same way, imagination, acting on the perception of the outer world, enables the artist to see exactly how his picture would look if a strip of colour or a new form were introduced; and, acting on the images which are called up in the inner world of memory, it enables the scientific man to form permutations and combinations of the representatives of objects which lie stored up in the laboratory of his brain, until he finds one which he does not recognise at once to be profitless, but which he thinks it worth while to submit to the test of experiment. In both cases the rule of taste or judgment is probably an entirely negative one, and is formed from a personal or inherited experience of a great number of attempted

combinations, which have turned out to be unsuccessful. This sense is what Faraday called the possession of a "clear idea of what is physically possible;" and a perusal of his experimental notes will convince any reader of the absence of any positive rule of speculation, in his case at least.

But, in science this negative rule itself often falls through, for, owing to the very incomplete nature of the representatives of external objects, which exist in the brain, a combination is often liable to be dismissed as fruitless, which a more hardy experimenter would find led to valuable results. Thus, for instance, it is said that there are people who can discern magnets in the dark by a peculiar light. If this be so, magnets must affect photographic plates in the dark. This seems contrary to our notions of physical possibility; but an experiment will show that it is actually the case. A magnet placed close above a photographic plate will leave an image of itself. Further experiment will show, that not only a magnet, but any other body, will leave a picture of itself. This fact, however striking, is not new, but was observed with daguerrotype plates long ago.

There are innumerable instances of a similar kind to be found in science; and the conclusion is irresistibly forced on the mind, that speculation is a following in the direction in which our knowledge of physical nature is at the time progressing—that it is, as it were, a tangent to the curve which knowledge describes—a curve which often turns abruptly round. Thus, in the natural selection of ideas, the only test is, "Will it do?" But it may well be urged, there must be some positive origin for ideas; they cannot spring out of nothing. Undoubtedly, every fresh structure must grow out of some previously existent one; and every idea must spring from others already in existence. This is felt by the consciousness as analogy.

Thus, we see that imagination, which consists in calling up images and in superposing them, as it were, is a necessary factor in the process of thought; for, without this superposition or juxtaposition, it would be impossible to form analogies.

These generalities may seem aimless, but they will indicate an, at any rate, possible method of cultivating all the powers, without going beyond the limits of science, and will show a plan by which the details of science may be vividly and graphically realized, without being any the less trustworthily remembered.

The undisciplined use of the imagination is usually connected with a loose and careless sort of work, a beginning of investigation into all things, human and divine, which ceases as soon as the stimulus of obtaining the first easily plucked fruits is over.

But it is not so with the greatest masters in the use of the imagination. With them we find the utmost vividness and definiteness of conception, and,—at any rate in the Latin races,—the utmost precision of form. Each line of Dante, for instance, seems to call up a visible image and shape.

And if we recall the experiment (of the interposition of a piece of glass in a ray of light) mentioned above, it will be seen that the contrivance was adopted for the sake and with the result of ensuring the most accurate comparison and measurement

The imagination, then, is in its very nature definite and accurate; and the vagueness and indecision under which many of its undoubted efforts now-a-days labour, come of the work which this faculty is set to attempt not being broken up small enough, so that the power is overweighted from the beginning. Instead of working in the fields and turning over the soil, it tries to move the most ancient landmarks. What wonder, then, if it be

overwhelmed in the attempt, and merely produces the impression of unsteadiness and indecision!

Goethe tells us in his Farbenlehre, that, when he was studying plants, on shutting his eyes images of flowers would present themselves to him, perfectly distinct in every particular, and would arrange themselves in rosettes or other regular figures.

It may be, that. Just as an object may be brought before the consciousness by an act of imaginary vision, so an imaginary sensation of touch may be produced. I have tried a great many experiments with this aim, but have not succeeded in getting beyond rudimentary indications of such a possibility. From this point of view it might be worth while to inquire whether those extraordinary manifestations which are reported to take place through what are called "mediums," may not be the result of a brain organization of incomparably greater delicacy and efficiency in this respect than that of ordinary people. If this were so, it would be difficult to set any limits to the results which might be achieved by such persons, if their powers were disciplined and brought under the control of their will.

Again, the advantage of the systematic cultivation of this power of imagination from a moral point of view is obvious. Material progress consists in the increase of man's power over the external world; and intellectual education is the amplification and bringing under his control of the inner and representative world. That man who is accustomed to call up at will whatever images he pleases, will be, however powerful his imagination, nay, by very virtue of the power of his imagination, least of all subject to caprice.

Defined as we have defined it, it will easily be seen that there are many ways in which this power may be educated. The practice of drawing objects from memory

is an excellent one; but, that it may be useful, the imagination must be conversant with solid bodies. In this way we are led to the plan of setting children to model from memory.

But since the imagination, as we are here treating it, is chiefly to be cultivated as an aid to thought, there is an imperfection in both these methods. For in the simplest natural figure or outline there is far more than thought can grasp. To render the imagination serviceable, we must take lower ground. The accuracy and completeness which are required suggest mathematics.

And it is from a sort of union between the plastic art and mathematics that I have found the happiest results to follow.

In introducing mathematics, however, we are at once confronted by the same difficulty that met us in the case of drawing—that the imagination, to be useful, must be conversant with solids.

Now, mathematics, as known by mathematicians, are pre-eminently devoted to the study of solid forms; but this region of solid geometry is separated from the learner by a whole waste of subtilties deposited by many a generation of intellectual giants and their attendants.

The problem before us, then, is to attain a more genial and practical starting-point, wherefrom we can exercise the intuition and thought power upon the relations of solid forms. To solve this problem, we must turn back in the history of mathematics; and if we do so, many a suggestion meets us. To take a not so very distant point in time, let us revert to Kepler; and, in order that we may catch the spontaneous action of his mind, let us turn to his earliest work,—the "Mysterium Cosmographicum: De admirabili proportione orbium cœlestium deque causis cœlorum numeri, magnitudmis,

motuumque periodicorum, genuinis et propriis demonstratum per quinque regularia corpora geometrica,"—the work which, together with the reputation derived from his astrological prediction of the extremely cold winter of 1593 in Steyermark, and the disturbances of the same year amongst the Austrian peasantry, established him in his scientific career.

The plan of the work is a demonstration "a priori," of the truth of the Copernican system, and a further determination of the relations which must exist between the orbits of the planets.

I will extract from this work so much as will serve our purpose.

Kepler begins by proving that in creation body, "corpus," must be used. To do this, he adopts the opinion of a certain Cusanus, that the proportion of a straight line to a curved one, represents the relation of creature to Creator; and that it is just as impossible for the creature to comprehend the Creator, as it is to square the circle. Now, that which is essential to body is quantity, and quantity is the means of comparison of straight lines with curved ones. Hence, in the very existence of bodies, the relation of creature to Creator is shown forth. Now that we know it is possible to find a square representing the circle with any degree of accuracy required, it may be as well to let Cusanus' opinion drop; but Kepler's remark, that the essence of quantity is the comparison of straight with curved, or, to put it more generally, that quantity only exists as a means of denoting form,—that there is no absolute size, but that all we know is different relations of size,—will be found of service to us.

On the 27th page he says, discussing the geometrical forms which are to be found in creation, "But as for right lines and superficies, they are to be rejected from

a finite, most beautiful, and perfect world; for they are infinite and incapable of order."

Whatever may be the truth of this remark about the external world, let us take it as true of the thought world. And indeed it is very hard to find admittance at all into the child's mind for these mathematical conceptions.

It is true that, in a note added twenty years afterwards, when he had done work of which an orthodox mathematician of the present day would be proud, Kepler says of this very sentence:—"O male factum! Shall we cast them out of the world? But I have restored them to their rights of citizenship in my 'Harmonices.' Why should we cast them out? Is it because they are infinite and little capable of order—ah, not they, but my ignorance it was, at that time common to me with many others, that was incapable of order."*

But his correction had reference to motions, not to bodies, and for the present we will not be deterred by it from following out his earlier suggestion.

Accordingly, let us proceed to see if he gives any indication as to which of the regular bodies it will be best to use for building up our imagination of the world.

Cap. V. is entitled: "Quod cubus primum corponim et inter altissimos planetas;" and there follow no less

* O male factum! E mundo ne ejiciamus? Imo, posiliminio revocavi in Harmonicis. Cur autem ejidamus? An quia infinitiæ et proin ordinis minime capaces? Atqui non ipsse, sed mea illius temporis inscitia, communis mihi cum plerisque ordinis illarum minime capax erat. Itaque lib. I. Harmonicorum et delectum aliquem inter infinitas docui et ordinem in lis pulcherrimam in lucem protuli. Nam cur lincas nos ex archetypo mundi eliminemus, cum lineas Deus opere ipso espresserit motus plametarum! Lingua igitur corrigenda, mens tenenda. In corporum numero sphœrarum ampiitudine constituenda primits eliminentu sane liniæ. At in motibus qui lineis perficiuntur exomandis, ne contemnamus lineas et superficies, quæ solæ proportionum harmonicarum sunt origo.

than nine reasons why it should be considered as the first amongst the solids.

The second reason is: "The cube is the only solid that can be divided into homogeneous cubes without prisms being left over."

The seventh is; "It is the most simple of all the rectilinear solids; even if there be a doubt in the case of the pyramid, the tetrahedron, the difficulty is easily solved by the consideration that the cube is the measure of the pyramid, and it must be that the measure is prior to the thing measured. The cube is a measure by ordinance of men, for, when they measure any of the solids, they conceive its quantity divided up into small cubes. But it is also a measure in the nature of things. For one right angle is equal to another in whatever plane it is laid out; therefore, it is continually equal to itself, and so stands singly, for of others larger and smaller than itself there are an infinite number. Now, a measure must be one and the same, and also finite." And the last argument, the ninth, is; "But it must not be omitted, that experienced (artful) nature has given to the most perfect animal the same six limits (as a cube has) (διάστασεις) most perfectly marked, and this is no mean argument how this body approaches herself in worth. For man himself is, as it were, a cube; for there are, as it were, six boundaries to him—Upwards, Downwards, Forwards, Backwards, To the right hand. To the left hand."

Without, perhaps, altogether sharing to its full extent this enthusiasm for the cube, it will be well worth our while if we follow up the suggestion contained in the seventh argument, namely, that it is a natural measure of all bodies. It is used as a measure of quantity familiarly enough; but if we recall the first passage of all, we are reminded that the essence of quantity is the

comparison of straight with curved, *or, more generally, the measure of form*.*

Hence it is a simple carrying out of two different principles enunciated by Kepler, but not actually brought together by him, to apply cubes as a measure of form. And in order to do this, let us begin by using them to register position, which is the first and most natural approach to the study of form.

The idea I want to express is exemplified in the case of a large house.

Suppose four people are spoken of as being in four different rooms of a well-known house; their positions in space with retjard to one another are thereby defined. Three of them, for instance, may be in three rooms, so as to form a triangle on one story, the fourth, at some distance above one of them, on a higher story.

If there were six rooms in the front of the house on the ground floor, and all the four people were in them, there would be two ways of naming their positions. They might be said to be in room number one, two, five, and six respectively, or else to be in the green room, the white room, the dining-room, and the library, if those happened to be the names of the rooms. Thus, for the rooms in the front of the house, there are two interchangeable sets of names—the numbers, and the names they ordinarily bear. But for rooms in the interior of the house there are no names, except for such as have obtained them by use, *e.g.*, master's dressing-room.

Now, a person going from one house to another similarly built, would naturally, if he had to give directions,

* Hanc imaginem hanc ideam mundo imprimere voluit, ut is fieret optimus atque pulcherrimus, alque is eam suscipcre poluit. Quantum condidit, quantitatesque sapientissimus conditor excogitavit, quarum omnis, ut ita dicam, essentia in hæc dua discrimina caderet, rectum et curvum, ex quibus curvum nobis duobua illis nodo dictis modia Deum representaret.

use the names he was familiar with in the old house for the corresponding rooms in the new house, even though the green room, for instance, might not be furnished with green.

This suggests the plan of taking a typical house, and using the names of its rooms so as to designate corresponding positions in any other house.

Instead of doing this, let us arrange a heap of small cubes, so as to form a larger one, and give to each of them a name. In this way we shall get a more regular and accurate scale of comparison; and the names may be employed to denote the position of any objects with regard to one another in space, exactly as numbers denote the position with regard to one another of objects in a line.

For the sake of simplicy, let us take at first 27 cubes and arrange them to form a larger cube. If books or any objects that will rest on one another be used, the system will be quite as well illustrated as with cubes.

To avoid the introduction of unnecessary names, let the first cube or book be called (1) the second (2) and so on, and arrange them as in the following table:—

First Layer.			*Second Layer.*			*Third Layer.*		
(7)	(8)	(9)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(25)	(26)	(27)
(4)	(5)	(6)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(22)	(23)	(24)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(19)	(20)	(21)

(1) then means the whole book or cube (1) or lump of any sort, and comes underneath the book or cube or lump (10).

Below are given a set of names which it is convenient to use, for the numbers will serve temporarily, as it is often convenient to take a larger set of cubes, say 64 or 125.

The first step, then, in the cultivation of the imagina-

tion, is to give a child 27 cubes, and make him name each of them according to its place, as he puts them up.

The only difference of the cubes from one another is their position in the heap; but it is not a bad plan to mark each, or write its name on it, and each time the heap is re-made to put the same cube in the same place.

It should be a rule, that a cube is never to be used without its name being said.

When even such a small system as this is learnt, a child becomes possessed of a new power. He can be made to build up brick houses of any form, by simply being told the names of the cubes in the order in which he has to put them. He can be directed to arrange chairs about a room in any order. If, for instance, he is told to put a chair in (1), another in (2), and himself in (11), he is highly amused at having to seat himself in the second chair; and if then he is told to put his hat in (20) he will, after a little consideration, put it on his head. With even this limited number of cubes or blocks, it is possible to make arrangements of any complexity.

The key to this is given by Kepler's second argument, namely, that a cube can be exactly divided into smaller cubes, for taking as the cube (1), for instance, not one of the blocks but twenty-seven of them arranged in a cube, each of these can easily be given a name. The first of all will be (1) in (1), the second (2) in (1), and so on.

Next to the big cube (1) comes the big cube (2), containing likewise 27 blocks. The first of these is (1) in (2), and so on in succession. The fourth cube above (1) in (1) is for instance (1) in (10).

The smallest children do not find the least difficulty in understanding this principle, if there are enough blocks supplied them to carry it out practically to some extent.

But it is by far the best plan not to show the child

this way, until he has learnt a cube containing five bricks in a side, for thus all his interest is concentrated in a desire to learn the names or places of more cubes, in order to make larger buildings; and it is only those thus learnt by heart that are really known at all.

It is impossible to give a too strong caution against any systematization of the names, as for instance calling the first cube (1,1,1) the second (2,1,1) and so on. If that be done, the child does not really learn his cubes at all.

The making of rules and systems in this sense is the curse of education. A rule is most often only the means which those who do know something adopt for protecting themselves from the need of really teaching those who want to learn. Or it is the means of appearing to know when nothing is known. Rules may be useful in the way of enabling a learner to construct his experience for himself; but, if relied on, they simply paralyze the mind, for the attention has to be kept on the machinery for attempting any problem, instead of on the problem itself.

If, when a child is asked the way from one cube to another, he calculates what numbers they are on the sides of the big block, his knowledge is worthless. If he at once starts off on a diagonal, naming, the several cubes as he comes to them until he gets to the right one, his knowledge is good. The right use of the intellect is to determine what knowledge shall be made intuitive.

When a child has learnt a set of cubes perfectly, it will be found that his power of imagination, as defined above, has been greatly increased. The imagination is, as it were, a power of inward drawing or modelling; and what corresponds to the actual delineation of a form on paper or modelling in clay, is in the mind the affixing a name. When a shape of cubes is thought of, and each of them is named, the mind can recur to each part of it

and note its relations exactly in the same way as, when a form is put on paper, each portion of it can be looked at and gone over again.

The way to test a child's progress, is to talk to him about a building without having any blocks at hand. After a while, he will be able to talk about structures of some complexity without any difficulty; and then he may be led to apply the method to the description of natural objects. It will be found he has gained power, not only in this direction, but also in noting the forms and relations of all the objects he looks at.

Another very good exercise, though more from the artistic than from the mathematical point of view, is to let the child draw piles and arrangements of cubes from their names without actually putting them up.

The analogy between the whole of this process and drawing is very instructive; for, just as, in order to draw complicated forms, it is necessary first to be able to draw simple ones, so, in order to imagine more complicated solid forms, it is necessary to have the power of imagining the simplest and combinations of the simplest solid forms. And, to go further, just as a drawing gains in vigour and strength, if, when the eye fails to observe the exact curve, straight lines,—those confessions of ignorance of the pencil's point,—are used, so, in thinking of the shape of a room or massing out a building, by far the most satisfactory result is obtained if it is represented to the mind by a number of cubes in a certain approximate arrangement.

Another test of a child's progress, is to set him to play at an easy extension of the game of noughts and crosses. Instead of confining the attempt to get three in a line on one plane, take mentally three planes above one another. This gives twenty-seven places in all; and it will be found that most children are capable of playing

through a game with interest. In the same way, it is possible to teach boys of fourteen to play blindfold chess in three or four lessons. The plan to adopt, is to name each square on the board like the corresponding cube; and then exercise the mind in going along all the diagonals that can be traversed, and in recalling all the squares around any given one. When the board is thus known, it will be found that there is practically not much difficulty in remembering where the pieces are.

An extension of chess, which we may call cubical chess, I have not yet been able to get any boys to play mentally, because, as yet, none of them have learnt more than a solid of six cubes each way; but this game, played on a set of boards arranged for the purpose, is most useful in giving a practical familiarity with space relations.

Besides educating the powers more allied to the senses, it is no mean training for the child's mind to attain a complete acquaintance with a somewhat large set of cubes. For he has in them a type of absolute knowledge, to which he will strive to make all his other knowledge conform. He knows all about the object before him, and can tell the relations of any one of the cubes to all the others. He has also the opportunity of making a great quantity of observations on the properties of number. Each cube, we may say, is a type of what a piece of knowledge ought to be, simple, definite, and limited in itself, yet capable of being brought into relation with every otheir piece of knowledge.

Moreover, if the names of the cubes are written on them, as suggested above, or if they are distinguished by any mark, the child experiences in a high degree the greatest, perhaps the only, intellectual pleasure—the correspondence between reality and his ideas.

He thinks such-and-such a cube is called so-and-so. Then he proceeds to take up those above it, and finds that he is right. This delight in the correspondence of observation with theory is just as much a pleasure of memory as of discovery. It exists universally in children, and in some of them goes to very great lengths, as in the case of the Scotch boy, who, when he was being flogged by the dominie, could not help saying between his tears, and finding a certain melancholy pleasure therein, "I ee'n thought it would be so, I ee'n thought it would be so."

Owing to the co-operation of several of my pupils, who devoted a good deal of their spare time to testing different suggestions, I have been able to work out the application of this method in several directions; and, when certain experiments on colour and sound are finished, I hope to give a detailed account of the various ways in which the method may be found serviceable.

One application amongst several others I will just indicate. When a mathematical demonstration is written out or a sum worked, all the steps must virtually be produced in the brain. The paper serves to keep the preceding figures fresh in the memory, and to prevent their order from being disadjusted; as, for instance, in multiplication, the right figures have to be put under one another.

Now, it is possible to create a sort of mental paper, which shall serve in place of the real paper.

When a boy hears a set of numbers and tries to calculate with them, they at once pass away, and his mind is left a blank. As the philosophers feelingly remark: "Sensations don't recollect and compare themselves." We want "something permanent." The means by which this something permanent is introduced is, they tell

us, the form of space in the perception of the outer world. Let us then, to stay our little "fleeting of sense," take a portion of space.

Briefly then, to prepare a portion of mental paper, get some paper ruled in squares, give these squares each a name, taking as basis, say. a piece six squares by six, so that thirty-six names are required. These names may be repeated over the rest of the paper in due succession. Then work any calculations that may come to hand on this paper, setting each figure down in a square by itself and saying the name of the square. Continue working, mentioning the name of the square each time a figure is put down, until the name recurs instinctively. It will then be found that the paper is not necessary, but that quite complicated sums can be worked mentally— slowly perhaps at first, but more quickly afterwards. For the squares will be found to have become present to the mind, so that all which will have to be done, will be to put the numbers down in a form that continually presents itself.

I have also had a board constructed, which seems as if it would be of use in the education of the blind. It consists simply of a number of squares separated from each other by a beading, each marked and called by a name. With this board, and with counters marked so as to represent the different numbers, it is possible to go through any calculations, either spontaneously or according to direction, without the use of the sight. To show some of the more obvious uses of the space-numbers, as the named cubes may be called, let us suppose a philosopher engaged in expounding some system. He goes through a series of steps in his argument, each following immediately on the other; these he numbers one, two, three, and so on. But he may want to announce a view or opinion which is not in the main line of his argument,

but which is still, though indirectly, connected with it. What, then, would be more natural than for him to use a space-number, interpolating this view between two of his successive steps, but at some distance on one side of them? And with regard to the philosopher himself, would not some practical man, if required to define the place occupied by him in the affairs of life, gladly use some similar space-number? But let us turn to more familiar uses. With the aid of some paper ruled in squares, it is possible to give verbal instructions so that any map or shape can be drawn with a considerable degree of accuracy; for the notation above given of (1) in (1), etc., has only to be extended and used with a larger number of cubes or squares, to become a very accurate means of defining position. In another direction is manipulation with these cubes of assistance; it serves to educate the direct appreciation of size and shape. But the most important application is, as I hope to show, to the teaching of elementary geometry, for it is possible to construct a system of geometry on the basis of these space-numbers.

In conclusion, imagination, as it has been defined, does seem capable of being trained without a special department being set apart for its exercise. It may be asked, however, whether there is not a deeper process of thought than this manipulation of the representations of external objects. Possibly there is; but it is in any case founded on the representations of real things, and not, as thought is too often liable to be, a mere manipulation of the representations of symbols and words.

NOTE.—This Essay was written by the Author some years ago. It contains the germs of the work, which is

more fully illustrated in his more recent writings, and thus in some respects forms a good introduction to them. For instance, the system of space-names hinted at on pp. 14, 18 above, and a system of identification of space-regions by colours, are given in "A New Era of Thought," being the results of some years of labour. But perhaps the chief interest of the Essay lies in the direct connection evinced in it between the training it advocates and the basic ideas of Kepler.

H. J. F.

[The above Note appeared in the 1888 pamplet edition of "The Education of the Imagination." *A New Era of Thought* is itself not currently very easy of access (apparently not reprinted since 1900); the interested reader may instead with advantage consult the author's 1904 work *The Fourth Dimension* and the pamphlet "A Language of Space" which was bound up with later printings of *The Fourth Dimension*. "A Language of Space" contained Hinton's final refinement of the verbal system of space-names; *The Fourth Dimension* presented a somewhat simplified version of the colour-system from *A New Era of Thought*. "H.J.F." was presumably the same Herman John Falk who co-edited (with Alicia Boole Stott) *A New Era . . .* from Hinton's MSS. after the author had been forced to leave the UK for having unconventional domestic arrangements. — T.S.]

Many Dimensions.

IN connection with the subject of higher space there is a remark which is sometimes made, a question which is put—"If there are four dimensions, then there may be five and six, and so on up to any number?"

Thix question is one, I own, which it would never have occurred to me to ask. Still it often happens that a line of thought which is most foreign and unattractive does repay investigation. And so let us follow the ready algebraist, to whom it is as easy to write down five as four, and *n* as five. Let us see what it is reasonable to think on the subject.

If we take four-dimensional shapes and examine them, we find that there is in them a peculiarity of the same kind which led us to be sure of the reality of a four-dimensional existence from the inspection of these dimensional shapes. In four dimensions we can have two figures which are precisely similar in all their parts, and which yet will not move so that one shall occupy the place of the other.

And the same observation can be made with regard to five-dimensional figures.

Hence it would seem that there is an indication of a higher and higher reality. And if we suppose that the same fact of absolute similarity, without the possibility of superposition, were found again and again, then we

should be compelled to recognize the existence of higher and still higher space, and we should have to admit the existence of an indefinite number of dimensions.

But let us turn away from this direct inquiry. Let us ask what the phrase "an infinite number of dimensions" denotes.

The question reminds me so forcibly of an Eastern story that I must digress fur a moment.

For it is said that once, in the cool of the morning, beneath the spreading branches of a great palm the master stood. And round him were gathered three or four with whom he spent the hours of his quiet life.

And not for long had they gathered together.

One was a warrior, and long ago he had come to the master, asking him what he should do, and had received for answer—"Go back and serve your commander. The day will come when you will have fulfilled your life, and the voice within you will speak clearly."

And the soldier had returned to the life of camps and marches and combats, till at length, at the close of a hard-fought day, he threw down his weapons, and passing through the enemy's land, came to where the master taught.

And his comrades, seeking long for their leader, at last buried with honor a corpse unrecognizable for wounds.

He now sat on a bare stone listening. Beside him stood a younger man. He had been a merchant, travelling over the whole earth in search of gain, and in restlessness of curiosity. And when in wonder he had begged the master what he should do, he had been told—"Wander over the earth, and visit every part; when thy eagerness for change is satisfied, an inward voice will lead thee."

And he had travelled far, till, even, in the course of his wanderings, he had come to the most distant lands, and gained great riches by what he bought and sold.

But when his stores were full, and his possessions had increased beyond his dreams, he left them all, and, seeking that hillside, lived obediently to the master's words.

Half lying upon the ground was one whose countenance hardly bespoke him—fitting companion for the others. And, indeed, he had been that one, whose life had afforded the master the most interest of all of them.

For he had not, like the others, been immersed in an active and adventurous life, but had been a slave to the wants of his own body. And seeing amidst his vices that the master had words for others, he had besought him to tell him too what to do.

And the master had told him first one thing and then another, but always he fell back, unable to withdraw himself, even for a short while, from his bodily cravings, but, gratifying them with drink and Sloth, he passed his days in brutishness.

Then at length the master, hailing him as a friend, had said to him—I will not seek to withdraw you any longer, for is not your body like the rain-clouds, and the sky a part of the changing show that hangs before our faces? Gaze, therefore, earnestly on your body, attend to it the more intently, for this is your vocation; and when you see the flimsy veil it is, come to me.

And this man had sat for ten years contemplating the middle portion of his body, till his frame had grown so cramped that he could not rise. At last he had bidden his fellows carry him to the master; and now he too listened to the words that fell on welcome ears.

And many days they had spoken together, and retiring each to his hut of reeds at nightfall, had pondered over the master's words. And on each of them had come a change.

Into the soldier's face, hard and stern set, had come the dawn of gentleness. The quick, observant gaze of

the traveller now at times changed almost into such an expression as one would wear who looks at the wide fields that lie above the countries of the earth. And in the dull, inexpressive countenance of him who had sat absorbed in the contemplation of his body, had come the kindling light of intelligence.

And on this day the master opened his lips, and began to instruct them about the universe.

He told them much that made them wonder. He told them of the mysterious currents of life that passed away from the bodies and frames which they could see, and that, spreading into the minutest particles of the earth, collected again, and eddying back through seed and leaf and fruit, participated anew with the soul, which also in its turn had gone through many vicissitudes, in that mingling ground of various principles which we call a human life.

And seeing their wonder and interest, and feeling that they were desirous to know, and since, moreover, he saw no harm in gratifying their wish, he began to explain to them the deepest facts of their physical being. And talking of the universe, which contained all that they saw and knew, from the beneficent stars to the humblest blade of grass, he said—"The world rests upon an elephant." And then he paused.

The warrior did not speak. He who had been absorbed in the contemplation of his body did not open his lips—or if he had it would not have mattered; for with the instinctive and right attitude of the half-cultured mind to the proximate object which is the last to come before its intelligence, he would have said if he had spoken, "worship the elephant;" and the master would have greeted this remark with a kindly smile, and proceeded with his discourse.

But just as he was about to take up the thread of his

speech, there came from the traveller, who had been listening eagerly, a hurried question.

For, alas, in his wanderings, this one had traversed the greater part of the globe, and in the course of them had come to the West, where even at this early period a habit of mind reigned, very unlike that which characterized the calm, deep, contemplative souls of the East.

Moved by this restless and questioning spirit, he cried out—"And on what does the elephant rest?"

"Upon a tortoise," the holy man replied. And had he not been beyond all human passions, his tone would have been one of mockery.

He taught them no more. Why should he tell them of these things? Was it not better rather to dwell in the daily perfectionment of brotherly love, and in the ministering offices of devoted lives?

And yet one cannot help wishing that unlucky question had not been put. If only the unfortunate disciple had but said, "Let us investigate the elephant," or, better still, had said nothing—what should we not have known now!

And if then such a question sealed the fount of sacred wisdom at that remote epoch, what must not the effect of our modern mind be?

For now such a disciple would not simply ask, "Upon what does the elephant rest?" but he would have glibly asked, all in one breath—"Upon what does the elephant rest, and upon what does the support of the elephant rest, and on what the support of that? and so on, ad infinitum; do tell me."

And so too, even on the rivulet from the fount of wisdom that trickles sparingly through our own minds, is there not a checking effect coming from this mental attitude of ever asking what is behind and behind and behind, seeking formal causes always, instead of living

apprehension of the proximate?

Indeed, that question was a misfortune if the possession of fact knowledge is a boon. For what could have been a more apt description of this all-supporting elastic solid ether than the broad arching back of the largest animal known on earth—the created being that could bear the most, and of all not-human creatures, the most intelligent and responsive?

The master knew how all the worlds were held together—and how much more!

And, indeed, does not this feeling come upon us strongly with regard to those of the Eastern world, with whom we have the privilege of talking?

For my own part, however much I have learnt in the intervals of my speaking with them, there they still hover on the weather-bow of my knowledge—they, or those from whom they learn, are in the possession of knowledge of which all my powers are but secondary instances or applications.

What it is I know not, nor do they ever approach to tell me. Yet with them I feel an inward sympathy, for I too, as they, have an inward communion and delight, with a source lying above all points and turns and proofs—an inward companion, whose presence in my mind for one half-hour is worth more to me than all the cosmogonies that I have ever read of, and of which all the thoughts I have ever thought are but minutest fragments, mixed up with ignorance and error. What their secret is I know not, mine is humble enough—the inward apprehension of space.

And I have often thought, travelling by railway, when between the dark underground stations the lads and errand boys bend over the scraps of badly printed paper, reading fearful tales—I have often thought how much better it would be if they were doing that which I may

call "communing with space." 'Twould be of infinite delight, romance, and interest; far more than are those creased tawdry papers, with no form in themselves or in their contents.

And yet, looking at the same printed papers, being curious, and looking deeper and deeper into them with a microscope, I have seen that in splodgy ink stroke and dull fibrous texture, each part was definite, exact, absolutely so far and no farther, punctiliously correct; and deeper and deeper lying a wealth of form, a rich variety and amplitude of shapes, that in a moment leapt higher than my wildest dreams could conceive.

And then I have felt as one would do if the dark waters of a manufacturing town were suddenly to part, and from them, in them, and through them, were to uprise Aphrodite, radiant, undimmed, flashing her way to the blue beyond the smoke; for there, in these crabbed marks and crumpled paper, there, if you but look, is space herself, in all her infinite determinations of form.

Thus the reverent and true attitude is, not to put formal questions, but to press that which we know of into living contact with our minds.

And so the next step, when we would pass beyond the knowledge of the things about us in the world, is to acquire a sense and living apprehension of four-dimensional space.

But the question does come to many minds. "What lies beyond?" And, although our knowledge is not ripe enough to answer this question, still, hurrying on before, we may ask—not what does lie beyond, but what is it natural for us in our present state of knowledge to think about the many dimensions of space?

Let us drop for a moment into the most common sense mode of looking at it. Why do we think of space at all? To explain what goes on. If everything followed

uniformly, we should not need to think of three, or even two dimensions—one would do. But problems come up, practical problems, which need to be reconciled. Things get "behind" one another, are hidden, and disappear. So we find that one variable will not suffice. If we were in a line looking at only one thing, its gradual changes of distance from us would be all our experience. We should not call this "distance"; it would be the one fact of our experience; and if we treated it mathematically, we should express it as the *variation of one variable.* So we may consider as identical, one-dimensional space, and the variation of one variable. Now plane space requires two variables. May not plane space then be defined as our knowledge of the variation of two variables? The being in plane space requires two variables to account for his experience. He lives, we say, in a space of two dimensions.

Now why should we not identify these, and say that that which he calls space is the organized mass of knowledge of the relations of two variables that has grown up in his mind?

We talk of distance and size as if each were something known in itself. But suppose a percipient soul subjected to a series of changes depending on two independent causes, which always operated together, and which were each of them continuous in their increase and diminution, would not this percipient soul form an idea of space of two dimensions? Would he not say that he lived in a space of two dimensions? His apprehension of the number of variables by which he was able to account for his experience would project itself into a feeling of being in space; and the kind of space would depend on the number of variables he habitually worked with.

Now we have become habituated to use, for practical thought, three variables; these explain the greater part of

our daily life. Is that which we call space simply the organized knowledge of the relations of these variables? Without pledging ourselves to this view, let us adopt it and note its consequences.

Then it is evident that as we come into the presence of more and more independent causes—I mean, as we find that these are in nature working independently of one or more in number than three—we shall have to study the general aspect of events which turn up from the combinations in varying intensity of these four or more principles, or causes of our sensation. Then we shall get a mental organization capable of dealing readily and rapidly with the combinations of these causes. And this mental organization will be indicated in our consciousness by the feeling of being in four-dimensional (or more-dimensional) space.

It seems strange to talk of there being three independent causes, or of some such limited number, for in the events that happen around us we see a vast variety of causes. There is the tendency to fall, there is the motion of the wind, there are the actions of human beings, each of them producing effects, and besides these many other causes.

But if we look at them, we find that they are not all independent one of the other, but may be different forms of the same cause.

Indeed, if we suppose that we live in three-dimensional space, and that every change and occurrence is the result of the movements of the small particles of matter, there would ultimately be only three independent causes—the three independent movements, namely, which a particle could go through.

Thus it would appear that, since no one would deny that there are an infinite number of perfectly independent causes in nature, the formation of a sense of higher

and higher kinds of space was simply necessary as, our knowledge becoming deeper, we came into contact with more and more of these causes.

It might be said that these causes might be very diverse from each other; one might be apprehended as love, another as color, another as distance. But this view is hardly tenable, for to apprehend a cause it must be congruent with the others which we already apprehend. If it is known at all it must work uniformly in with the rest of our experience. No doubt there are an infinite number of causes, which give that richness to experience of which the intellect can take hold only by a small part. But when the intellect does take hold of a part, it takes hold of it by seeing how it comes in, modifying each of the already existing possibilities and producing a new variety, out of which the actual experience is a selection. Thus, if a being having an experience derived from two causes, and so living in a space of two dimensions, were to be affected by a third cause, he would first of all find that there were many things which he would say could not be explained by space relations. Then he would gradually arrive at the idea of a three-dimensional space. Space being due then not to anything in the nature of the causes themselves, but to the number of them.

Then, to us, when mentally we come into the comprehension of any new independent cause, we must acquire the sense of a new dimension, and the question of space and space relation is altogether independent of the nature of these causes—the real and systematic apprehension of them necessitating an enlargement of our sense of space. Now the unknown comes to us generally in the properties of the minute particles of matter which make the different "kinds." Hence as we study matter closer and closer we shall find that we need more and more dimensions. And the molecular forces in one kind of space

will be the physical forces of the next higher.

That is to say, when in our space we have explained all that we can explain by the supposition of particles moving in our space, we shall find that there is a residuum, and this residuum will be explained by the four-dimensional movement of the minutest particles. The large movements are simply movements in three-dimensional space, but to explain the residual phenomenon a higher kind of space will be requisite.

Still, this all seems to me a barren view, and I am convinced that it is far truer to think of space, as indeed we can hardly help doing, as a beneficent being, supporting us all looking at us in every lovely leafy bough, and bending towards us in the forms of those we know.

And, moreover, there is one very valid objection to the conclusion that we have explained anything, or made any step by using the word "variable."

It will be found that such a notion as a continuously varying quantity is a mere verbal expression. All that we can conceive or understand are definite steps, definite units. We can conceive a great many definite magnitudes, but not continuous magnitude. The idea of continuity is one which we use and apply; but to think men have explained anything by speaking of continuous variables, is really to lose ourselves in words.

But, although we dismiss the previous supposition, still we see that, even if it were true, the practical thing to do is to acquire the sense of a higher dimensional space.

And, indeed, what a field is here! Take a single example. The idea of magnitude is one dimensional simply adding and adding on in a straight line.

The idea of rotation, or twisting, in its very nature involves the idea of two dimensions—for it is the passage from one dimension to another—it is an idea

which, in its essence, has two dimensions.

If we think of a twist, it is the change from one direction to another. It cannot be thought without the two directions being present to the mind—the direction from which and the direction to which the change takes place.

In our space we have nothing more than this rotation. If a ball is twisting, and a blow is given to it, which tends to set up a twist in a new direction, the old twist and the new one combine together into a single twist about a new axis.

But in four-dimensional space there is such a thing as a twist of a twist—a rotation of a rotation—bearing to a simple rotation the same relation that an area does to a line. Perfectly independent rotations may exist in a four-dimensional body.

And again, evidently if there is an idea which in its essence involves two dimensions, may there not be an idea which, of its very nature, includes three dimensions?

What that idea is, we do not know now; but some time, when the knowledge of space is more highly developed, that idea will become as familiar to us as the idea of a twist is now.

And, indeed, space is wonderful. We all know that space is infinite in magnitude—stretching on endlessly.

And when we look quietly at space, she shows us at once that she has infinite dimensions.

And yet, both in magnitudes and dimensions there is something artificial.

To measure, we must begin somewhere, but in space there is no "somewhere" marked out for us to begin at. This measuring is something, after all, foreign to space, introduced by us for our convenience.

And as to dimensions, in order to enumerate and realize the different dimensions, we must fix on a parti-

cular line to begin with, and then draw other lines at right angles to this one.

But the first straight line we take can be drawn in an infinite number of directions. Why should we take any particular one?

If we take any particular line, we do something arbitrary, of our own will and decision, not given to us naturally by space.

No wonder then that if we take such a course we are committed to an endless task.

We feel that all these efforts, necessary as they are to us to apprehend space, have nothing to do with space herself. We introduce something of our own, and are lost in the complexities which this brings about.

May we not compare ourselves to those Egyptian priests who, worshipping a veiled divinity, laid on her and wrapped her about ever with richer garments, and decked her with fairer raiment.

So we wrap round space our garments of magnitude and vesture of many dimensions.

Till suddenly, to us as to them, as with a forward tilt of the shoulders, the divinity moves, and the raiment and robes fall to the ground, leaving the divinity herself, revealed, but invisible; not seen, but somehow felt to be there.

And these are not empty words. For the one space which is not this form or that form, not this figure or that figure, but which is to be known by us whenever we regard the least details of the visible world—this space can be apprehended. It is not the shapes and things we know, but space is to be apprehended in them.

The true apprehension and worship of space lies in the grasp of varied details of shape and form, all of which, in their exactness and precision, pass into the one great apprehension.

And we must remember that this apprehension does not lie in the talking about it. It cannot be conveyed in description.

We must beware of the attitude of standing open-mouthed just because there is so much mechanics which we do not understand. Surely there is no mechanics which we do not understand, but geometry and mathematics only spring up there where we, in our imperfect way, introducing our own limitations, tend towards the knowledge of inscrutable nature.

If we want to pass on and on till magnitude and dimensions disappear, is it not done for us already? That reality, where magnitudes and dimensions are not, is simple and about us. For passing thus on and on we lose ourselves, but find the clue again in the apprehension of the simplest acts of human goodness, in the most rudimentary recognition of another human soul wherein is neither magnitude nor dimension, and yet all is real.

The answer to this is twofold. In order to live, self knowledge is necessary. That knowledge of self which is distinctly a matter of ethical inquiry, is altogether foreign to these pages.

But there is a no less important branch of self knowledge which seems altogether like a research into the external world. In this we pass into a closer and closer contemplation of material things and relations, till suddenly we find that what we thought was certain and solid thought is really a vast and over-arching crust, whose limitlessness to us was but our conformity to its limits a shell out of which and beyond which we may at any time pass.

But if we do so pass, we do not leave behind us the idea of matter. All that we thus attain is a different material conception of ourselves.

In ancient times there was no well-defined line

between physics and metaphysics. And our present physical notions are derived from amongst the mass of metaphysical notions. Metaphysics is so uncertain, because when any one of its doctrines becomes certain, it takes a place in physics.

And the exploration of the facts of higher space is the practical execution of the great vision of Kant. He turned thought in an entirely new direction. And where he turned, all seemed blank—all positive assertions fell away, as he looked into the blackness of pure thought.

But out of this absence can come any amount of physical knowledge. It is like an invisible stuff out of which visible garments can be woven.

But, indeed, many would say: What is the use of these speculations?

Does not the contemplation of space leave the mind cold, the heart untouched? Not altogether.

Is not our life very much a matter of fact, concerned with events? All our feelings are bound up with things which we do or suffer.

And thus a right conception of the possibilities of action in our world, and in a higher world, must have some influence on ourselves.

Then also there is a path through which we can pass, leading from the most complete materialism to something very different from the first form in which it presents itself.

Any one, who will try, can find that, by passing deeper and deeper into absolute observation of matter, and familiarity with it, that which he first felt as real passes away—though still there, it passes away, and becomes but the outward sign of realities infinitely greater.

Thus there springs before the mind an idealism which is more real than matter; a glimpse of a higher world, which is no abstraction, or fancy, or thought, but of

which our realities are the appearances.

And with this there comes overpoweringly upon the mind of one, who thinks on higher space, the certainty that all we think, or do, or imagine, lies open.

In that large world our secrets lie as clear as the secrets of a plane being lie to an eye above the plane. For howsoever closely a being living on a plane may hide from his fellows, he has nothing secret from an eye that gazes down upon his plane.

The very idea that he can put forward to such a one any false pretenses, is absurd.

And so we lie palpable, open. There is no such thing as secrecy.

And as I have said before, the difference between the moral life and the animal life, in a world of any dimensions, lies in this—that the animal life consists of actions which are those natural to the possibilities of space of that world; the moral life (viewed as exhibited in physical arrangements) lies in the striving, by modification and restraint of the natural actions, towards those actions and modes of existence which are natural in a higher space world.

It has been shown how plane beings could only pass each other by courtesy and mutual forbearance. And the great effort wherein the higher spirit most plainly shows itself, apart from convenience, or profit, or any obvious physical good, is in one very simple and obvious tendency towards a higher-dimensional existence. For, as to a higher space being no secrets of ours are hidden—nothing is unknown, so, in making towards one another our limited lives open and manifest, we treat each other in the service of truth, as if we were each members of that higher world.

It is often said and felt, that all our actions do in the course of time impress their effect on the world. Nothing

is lost. And if we, being limited, know that this is so, how much the more apparent is it when we realize our higher being. We know that, as animal frames moving and acting in the world, the effect of every movement passes on and on.

And with this effort corruption and evil fall. Space is so large that no interior can be hidden from the vivifying breath of the universe; no part can be cut off, however foul, from direct contact with the purifying winds which traverse space higher than itself.

As conscious minds, we realize the oneness of past and future in our open communication one with another. We attain a mental consciousness of the higher fact. Whether we represent it to ourselves as a day wherein all that ever has been done will be told, or as an omnipresent and all-knowing mind, it is the same.

Truth is nothing but an aspiration to our higher being. And the first sign of love towards individuals, as towards the world as distinguished from the easy and yielding good nature which always tries to please that which is nearest at the moment—is veracity. This is the secret of the mysterious effect of science on our emotions—the simple description of fact, apart from our own conditions and prejudices. And also in the material world around us, this is the secret of the beauty of the crystal and of still water. For in them the near and the far are brought together; in their translucency they give an emblem of the one vision wherein a higher being grasps every part of the solid matter, of which we can only see outside and surface.

The acceptance of the rule of the great master of empiric religion, Comte—"Live openly"—is really to imitate in our world, and make ourselves conscious of our true existence in a higher world.

There are two sides of religion—the inductive and the

deductive. To the realm of deduction belongs theology, with its central assertion and its manifold consequences. But inductive religion consists in grasping, amidst the puzzling facts of life, those greater existences in which the individual organizations are bound up, and which they serve, passing, as in every science, from the details to the whole. And the connecting link between materialism and the conduct of life, lies in the doctrine of the limited nature of our present space perceptions. For, with the elevation of our notion of space to its true place, the antagonism between our present materialistic and our present idealistic views of life falls away.

PREFACE

IN the following pages an attempt has been made to dwell upon the wider bearing of conceptions which, whatever their origin, have found more definite expression in the speculations of modern mathematicians than at any other time.

One line, one feature, of the landscape of the land to which these thoughts lead, and only one, has been touched upon. But there are many, and each explorer would probably select a different one.

In that respect this age is a happy one; for all doubt, all disputation, about the Higher World can be discarded—there is scope for all our energy in obtaining the necessary faculties of perception. Just as the study of the minute or the very large requires microscopes, telescopes, and other apparatus, so for the study of the Higher World we need to form within our minds the instrument of observation, the intuition of higher space, the perception of higher matter. Armed thus, we press on into that path wherein all that is higher is more real, hoping to elucidate the dark sayings of bright faith.

Stella

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

I DO not imagine that I can do better than tell you the story of Churton's experiences at Beechwood Hall in his own words. There has been nothing analogous in my range of observation, and I shall not attempt to add any commentary of my own, or to improve the manner of his telling. I will simply put down in his own words, as nearly as I can recollect it, what he told me that afternoon, when we met again and renewed an old intimacy—interrupted for over seven years.

If you wish to omit the few details I can give you as to our life at the crammer's at Blackheath, and the origin of the friendship between Frank Cornish and Steddy Churton, you can plunge into the next chapter, in which I am reporter merely.

Here, however, I can tell you what manner of man Churton was before the sobering and refining influences he tells of acted on him. I can point out the defects of his character and record how those two, Cornish and he, in the shipwreck of their early opportunities, brought to shore their friendship merely.

What interested us all the most, in those Blackheath days, was London life—and a very worthless

and corrupt side of London life. We never talked of any subject which could be set in an examination paper—and how few branches of learning are exempt! Our French lecturer found that we got a slightly better percentage of marks on Zola than on other authors, and accordingly we all read Zola—it stuck in our minds better.

Hugh Stedman Churton we called Steddy, short for Stedman, and felt a slight sense of amusement in doing so, as he got into more rows than any of us; and yet we felt the name was somehow justified. He had true parental encouragement for his propensities. He wore an old silver watch. One day, when I was chaffing him about the "turnip," he told me that his aunt sent him a gold watch when he was fourteen; but that same evening he put it on his father's dressing-table with a note asking him to send it back.

"I used to go about with another little chap," he said, "and we used to fight the louts together; that day I was afraid of getting the watch smashed, so I let the other fellow go alone, and he got badly hurt. The governor and I haven't much to say to each other, but we understand each other. Next morning, as I was getting up, he brought this old watch and gave it to me. 'You needn't stand out of anything with this,' he said, 'I wore it in India.' "

And Churton did not often stand out of things; according to his philosophy there was not much good in going into them, but you felt worse afterwards if you didn't.

"The luckiest thing that ever happened to me in my life," said Churton to me that afternoon, " was

getting acquainted with Jim." Jim was one of that numerous tribe of pugilists who have not quite grit enough for the profession, but earn their living as bar tenders and chuckers-out in the service of publicans. Churton was walking along Vine Street one night and saw Jim tugging at the arm of a drunken woman. Her body had got caught in the spring door, and he was pulling at her arm as if it had been a piece of rope. Churton knocked the man down, but he was up again in a moment. A crowd formed round them, it seemed a pretty even affair, when suddenly Jim said, "Beg pardon, sir, I was only doing what I was paid for; step inside if you don't want to get me into trouble."

Churton saw the crowd parting and a blue helmet appearing, so he slipped into the bar-room. He had to come back that night, as he was not exactly a presentable object, but he kept up the acquaintanceship with Jim, and used to make a point of taking him round to Morris's rooms for an hour's sparring, when he was up in town.

You must not imagine that Churton had been persuaded, as so many are, by ladies young or old, to look upon himself as possessing a chivalrous nature. They had no chance to influence him in any way, for he avoided their society with complete success. "They make a man good for nothing," he would say, if any friend of his showed symptoms of the weakness of succumbing to drawing-room fascinations.

We met Frank Cornish first at Doctor Forsyth's. We read of painters, philosophers, doctors, in olden times as surrounded by a band of pupils, who, by contact with the great man, picked up his skill and

method. Such companionship is a natural desire of youth the whole world over. I heard a Hindoo lad beg his professor to let him be his servant, that he might hear his scientific talk and witness his scientific actions. But the rush of modern life does not allow a man of eminence to waste his time in educating others. Some of them, however, have the disposition to collect young men about them. Doctor Forsyth was of this kind; he was a distant connection of Churton's, and Churton took me there. It strikes me that men who talk a good deal resemble one another very much in all ages. There is a mass of common knowledge, universally shared ideas, which require to be remodelled and rediscussed for every generation; and the talkers do not so much say anything original as go over this common stock, restating it in accordance with the tendencies and views of their generation—each new fact slightly altering all. The doctor would run on, the whole evening, we making an observation occasionally, and as we went away would sometimes charmingly apologise for having "led the conversation."

"Opinions," he said one evening, "opinions—men used to be born with them like their noses; to see a man change his opinions gave our forefathers the same feelings that it does us to see a lizard drop off his tail."

"What has led to the change?"

"We are younger; I mean that those qualities which are characteristic of childhood, curiosity and meddlesomeness, do not die out in us at so early an age as they used to; that gives rise to a good deal of science; a singularly grave person the young Greek or

Roman used to be. But we owe a great deal to impostors and swindlers; they find a way of getting round people of fixed opinions."

"Then we ought to be grateful to them?"

"Are we not? Those who try old tricks and antiquated swindles we put in prison, but those who supply the needs of the time, who engineer away our present stupidity, we reward liberally. The deceptions which have done their work seem singularly pointless. For instance, there was a prescription for a remedy for the bite of a mad dog, which was sold for a hundred pounds—a large sum fifty years ago. The materials were secret, of course, but they were published by the last owner of the remedy for the good of the public. There were various ingredients, but the most important one was a portion of the brain of the dog that had inflicted the wound. The inventor of that specific deserved well of the community."

"I suppose," said Cornish, "that every case in which the dog was not really mad counted as a cure?"

"Exactly; there was no denying it: the dog was dead. Nature does not put her problems to us in so pointed a way—it is the impostors who make us think—theirs is the credit."

"You would not do such a thing yourself, doctor," said a well-intentioned youth, who had found his way into our company; and then seeing that his remark hung fire, he added, "Isn't the improvement in education the great means?—the old parrot fashion of learning has gone out."

"This congratulating ourselves that we are not as the animals," said the doctor, "is very gratifying, but I doubt if we gain the kingdom of heaven by it. I

studied my bird, 'Dickie,' here, as he was learning to talk, and it is my opinion that a parrot learns to talk exactly as a child does. Imitation, mere imitation, plays a large part in the acquisition of any power. A child learns that he is living by imitating living beings; he learns he is a person by imitating persons; he learns that he can think by imitating those who do think. And this is the secret of the influence that is often exercised between older people; one man unconsciously imitates another, and finds in himself faculties he had not been aware of before. Trace it out and you will find that many a friendship has its origin in this way."

Of those at the table Churton and Frank Cornish presented the greatest contrast, and the doctor's words recurred to me afterwards with regard to them. Frank was slightly built, with delicately cut features and a look of remarkable intelligence, but his eyes moved restlessly, his temperament was nervously unsettled, he had a constant craving for stimulus from without.

Churton's eyes, if he looked at you at all, gave you a very different impression. His nose stood out a prominent object to an adversary in battle; there was a hard trained, almost ascetic look about his face, such as the rougher games give to their devotees. But he had nothing ascetic in his conversation or manners. Unlike Cornish, he had a great faculty for doing nothing; he would spend a whole morning over a novel; the craving for excitement was quite absent in him.

The two men from that day took every opportunity of meeting, or rather, I should say, Cornish let no

occasion pass on which he could meet Churton. He always joined us on Saturday when we came up for our Sunday in town, went with us to the theatre, and accompanied us to all our haunts.

I asked Churton one day about him. I had heard he was one of the best men of his year, and wanted to know Churton's opinion—"Yes, he's a clever fellow, but liquors up too much."

If there was something in the one of these two men which the other had not, and sought the other's company to awaken in himself, it was not Cornish's intellectual brilliancy, but that latent quality in Churton which made us call him Steddy.

One day, about six months later, a telegram came from Mrs. Cornish—"Frank is very ill, he is always asking for you. Pray come!" "I suppose," said Churton, "that Mrs. Cornish thinks I am a doctor!—she has never seen me. I'll run up for an hour."

He found Frank lying on his bed, struggling, three men there to hold him down. It was a case of D.T. Poor Mrs. Cornish was almost distracted; it seemed as if her boy's violent struggles would wear his life out.

"Mr. Churton, perhaps he will be quiet with you; do try."

He sat down by the bedside. Frank seemed to recognise him. Taking his hand, he signed to the men to go out of the room.

"Save me, Steddy," gasped Frank, and crept up the bed towards him. "All right, Frank," he said; "keep close to me."

So Frank crept out of bed and huddled up on Churton's knees like a baby. The sound of his voice soothed him. Churton kept talking to him, telling

him anything he could think of, but he could not keep quiet a minute without the paroxysms threatening to return. He talked to him of his chances in the examination, of the rest of us, and then told him one after another the coarse jokes and tales better left untold, that were the staple of our conversation —but I suppose, if Mrs. Cornish was listening outside, she scarce distinguished them from prayers.

In a few weeks Frank seemed to have recovered perfectly. He refused to make any difference in his way of living. During that year Churton saw a good deal of him, till the exigencies of the approaching Civil Service Examination demanded all his time.

On the morning of the fourth day of the examination Churton was breakfasting with his father, who happened to be in town. The two were much alike, characterized like many Englishmen by a disinclination for a life of study amounting to incapacity. They were the kind of men who have the habit of being elected captains of their football or cricket teams when young, and of being people to be considered afterwards, but of a mental disposition which makes it an episode of a decidedly healthy tendency for them to attempt to be selected for administrative posts by competitive examination.

The natives of India look on our ascendency with a dumb resignation to the designs of an inscrutable providence, which so often lets rude force hold sway over all the gentler virtues. In the mining company with which I became connected when the government took the opportunity of the fall in the value of silver to break faith with their servants, there are numbers of native employes, excellent men, most admirable

in every private relationship; but they all occupy subordinate positions. We have to put over them some low-lived, swearing Englishmen, with one-tenth of their mental ability, if we want the work done.

There is something the Hindoos lack and which Churton possessed in abundance. But his chances of passing the examination were poor at the best.

As he sat with his father at breakfast a telegram, forwarded from Blackheath, was handed to him. He read it, crumpled it up, and went on with his chop.

"What is that?"

He handed it to his father.

"Frank is terribly ill," it ran; "the doctors have given him up ; try to save him again."

Churton explained the nature of the attack, and told about the previous one.

"Do you think you could save him?"

"I expect it's all up this time."

The old gentleman was silent, recalling bygone memories; evidently some past episodes moved him deeply.

"Waiter," he said, "a hansom."

"Think of all the money you have spent on me, and it's my last shot."

The cab came, and as Steddy got into it the old gentleman replied, "I don't believe you'd pass."

I cannot believe that Frank Cornish had been drinking steadily, as the doctor said, for the past year. He had passed his M.D. examination brilliantly. After it, according to my idea, a nervous reaction had left him a prey to his old craving. However that might be, his condition was terrible. Churton's presence for many hours produced no effect, but at

length the paroxysms subsided of themselves, or the old spell made itself felt

It was a long and dangerous illness, but Frank gradually recovered. Mrs. Cornish's gratitude knew no bounds. She looked on Churton as a son of her own, and, what amused us very much, she formed the most exalted opinion of his capacities. She would hear of no word of doubt as to his ability to pass the Civil Service or any other examination. Frank she referred to in comparison as a mere specialist.

The description had something of justice, for Frank very wisely decided that he was not fitted for the strain of general practice. He took up the purely scientific side of the profession, and finally went to Vienna to prosecute his researches on Tuberculosis.

Churton read for the bar—which is supposed to open the way to so many appointments. He had the prospect of a post in the Chinese customs, in which Sir Richard Part, an old friend of his father's, occupied a prominent position.

When Mrs. Cornish's brother died, it was natural that she fixed on Churton to take Frank's place as executor. Mr. Michael Graham had not employed any man of business to transact his aflairs, and there was much to be done. In addition, there were several curious provisions in the will. One related to the house at Beechwood, in Yorkshire, which was to be left unoccupied in charge of his servant. Another related to a mass of writings, the work of his later years, which he directed should be examined by Frank with a view to publication.

Mr. Graham had succeeded to his father's estates, but an early disappointment—an unhappy love affair, as Mrs. Cornish intimated—had unsettled him,

and he spent many years on the continent. When he returned, he saw but little of any of the members of his family, and the last ten years of his life were spent in almost unbroken seclusion.

It was arranged that Mrs. Cornish, her son, and Churton, should go to Beechwood together. But on the appointed day Mrs. Cornish wrote to say that Frank's conduct had made her too ill to travel. Enclosed was a letter from Frank which explained her remark. He wrote that a patient had just died under a complication of disorders he might never have the opportunity of examining again. He was sure Churton would manage much better alone. The only practical suggestion he made was that the horses and dogs should be given to the neighbours, such, that is, as Churton did not care to keep for himself.

"Frank," Mrs. Cornish complained, "does not care for anything that is not small enough to go under a microscope."

So Churton started for Beechwood by himself.

Shortly after this date I left England. On my return seven years later, I received a warm invitation from Churton to visit him at his father's place in Lancashire. We are neither of us in the habit of writing unnecessary letters, and so I had but a fragmentary knowledge of what had befallen him. We fell back, however, into our old intimacy as naturally as if nothing had interrupted it.

It was on the day of my arrival, and before I had entered the house, that, sitting under the great elms in the garden, Churton told me the following episodes in all their details, reinforcing his memory at one point in his narration by reference to a sheet or two of closely written paper.

CHAPTER II

CHURTON'S NARRATIVE

AFTER leaving the train at a small wayside station there were five miles of road between me and Beechwood.

The dogcart from the inn was soon ready, and for an hour we followed a winding road amongst the moors, the country becoming at every mile more barren and more bold in its outlines.

The sun was setting when the driver pointed to a little village at our feet, and thence to a hill beyond, on the brow of which, amongst some trees, I distinguished the outlines of a house—that was Beechwood. Behind it the moor stretched up and away.

The pile stood dark and forbidding, but coming round to the front of the house, which faced away from the village below, a great flood of light streamed out from the open door. Instead of the gloomy and solitary impression I had expected on entering this house, vacated by death, there was an atmosphere of homelike welcome. There were flowers in the vases, and through an open door I saw a table spread for a number of guests. Parker, Michael Graham's man, took me to my room, and then I heard him go to the front door, say a few words to the driver, and the noise of the wheels died away in the night.

Coming downstairs I found a large reception room

brilliantly lighted, but there was no one in it. I crossed to the dining-room. Its only occupant was Parker, who asked me when I would dine.

"Immediately," I said, and sat down in an easy chair.

The whole of one wall was taken up by a book-shelf; on the other wall the sideboards were built into the wainscoting. At one end was a large vase, at the other between the windows was a small table, on which rested a single book bound in dark leather.

In the course of the meal Parker addressed me as Mr. Cornish. I told him who I was, and learnt that he had not received word of the change of plans. He had expected Mrs. Cornish and Mr. Cornish as well as myself. "No," I said, "they are not coming."

At that moment the door, which was almost closed, swung partially open. Immediately afterwards a great mastiff which was lying on the hearthrug got up, deliberately crossed die room, and went out. I noticed that the door swung open before the dog moved. It was as if some one from outside had opened the door and called him, and yet I heard no voice.

After dinner I looked at the books. They were mostly scientific works, not only modern ones, but old Greek and Latin texts, with here and there a case of manuscripts, in what seemed to me Arabic characters. On the walls were a few fine engravings. There were no photographs. The only object possessing any personal interest was the book on the window table. It looked large, owing to its heavy binding, but contained only about a hundred pages. These were filled with writing, childish at the beginning, but

developing afterwards into a singularly delicate and very legible hand. On the title-page was written, "Michael Graham, copied by Stella."

I opened it at random. There were passages of greater and less interest, obviously extracts from longer works of portions more or less complete in themselves.

On one page I read:—

"When we seek the secret of existence with the intellect, we do but pursue a phantom, vanishing beyond countless corridors. Never do we arrive at any ultimate, but each finality in turn proves to be dependent on that which is beyond, and this beyond itself revolves away.

"Being cannot be grasped by the intellect. And yet it can be known, for when we love we truly are, and love is being in and for another. Hence, necessarily, existence appears as an endlessly linked-on series of phenomena, in which there is no first nor last. Such is the outward garb which is all the universe presents to thought—it is the heart which truly knows."

"A curious turn," I thought, "to give to a painful certainty. We all know we can know nothing, but to take this fact that we can know nothing and prove from it what the universe really is, is a little too original."

A good many pages further on was written:—

"Compare the work of the sculptor and that of the painter. The sculptor makes an object resembling much more that which he represents than does a painter.

"But the painter has a greater scope. In the

thinness of his medium lies his greater power; in the remoteness of his representation from the thing represented he gains his power of wide pourtrayal. And Thought is an art, a representation of the world in mind-stuff, in ideas of space, motion, matter. To say the world is made of space, motion, matter, is as absurd as to say that it is made of paint

"The more that can be represented in any medium the less that medium resembles the things represented, and thought which pictures all reality uses a medium which is most unreal. Its power lies in the nothingness of its means."

So ran the extract—the error was perfectly obvious. The painter, however slight a coat of paint he uses, still uses something real, and so in thinking we shouldn't get anywhere if we didn't use realities. Thinking reaches farthest because it investigates the fundamental realities. Every one knows that the world is made of matter, is shaped in space, and moves by motion. Towards the end of the book I read:—

"The body and the moral sense are intimately connected. A Habit is morality of some kind become bodily. A lack of recognition of this fact is the source of the futility of our efforts in education. In its earliest movements, a child incorporates, in its very constitution, tendencies which we afterwards, alas! and rightly then, recognise as a part of its nature, which it may learn to restrain, from which it can never escape. Think of a little girl, almost from the time when she can first see, creeping up to a glass and looking at herself, decking herself with a ribbon or a string of beads. We allow this thinking about

self, this vanity, to become incorporate in the female child; all subsequent education simply leads it to disguise itself, we can never eradicate it."

I closed the book, pitying the poor child who had been employed posting up the ledger of a bankrupt philosophy, when she might have been playing tennis or dancing.

The breakfast table next morning was decorated with flowers, showing a taste in arrangement which I had hardly expected from Parker, with his indirect glance and painfully correct manner, or from his wife, a subdued looking woman, who seemed to live in considerable awe of her husband. There was a fancifulness and grace in the disposition of the half-opened rose buds which was unlike the work of a domestic.

The table was laid for two. "Does the man intend to sit down with me?" I thought. When he appeared I told him to take away the other plates. He seemed about to speak, then, after a moment's hesitation, removed the dishes, and took away a chair which was opposite to mine on the other side of the table.

The centre of the house was occupied by the offices, and the two rooms I mentioned before. The right wing, the part which lay on the left as I came up from the valley, was taken up by a series of rooms fitted up as laboratories. The apparatus was in good order. There were many instruments with the use of which I was not acquainted. Whatever Michael Graham had required for the prosecution of his re-

searches—apparently in the border land between chemistry and physics—he had obtained regardless of expense. One of the finest spectroscopes I had ever seen was there. In the study were piles of manuscript neatly ticketed, arranged in formidable heaps—a distressing sight

The other wing was shut off by a door covered with green baize. On approaching it Parker told me that it was locked. In a couple of minutes he returned with the key.

This part of the house was quite unlike the other, with its wainscotted walls and dark hangings. There was a light paper, my feet sunk in the soft carpet, and the windows of the passage were draped with a light Indian fabric. Opening one of the doors, I found myself on the threshold of a lady's boudoir, daintily furnished.

"Are all the rooms furnished in this style?" I asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Very well, you can keep the door locked. Mrs. Cornish will see to it when she comes."

I retraced my steps and sat down in the study before the table spread with account books and memoranda.

Michael Graham might have found a real Egeria to inspire him, and Egerias now-a-days need art, not nature, to decorate their habitations—perhaps he made that fitting frame for loveliness, brooding in his solitary life on what might have been. 'Twas no concern of mine, this page in the history of an old man's heart, it was for others to unfold, not for me.

It was evident that it would take some time to put

the accounts before me into an intelligible form. Michael Graham, though methodical, had used no recognised system, and he had jotted down the items of his expenditure in an almost illegible handwriting, as if he had grudged the time. His property was large. Of accumulations, which in his way of life must have been considerable, I could find no trace, but large payments for some unexplained purpose were from time to time recorded.

My eyes caught a slight bareness in the carpet, as if worn by constant steps, and following it I saw a door which had escaped my notice before, hidden in the shadow of a bookcase. Opening it I was in the full sunlight. The trees were swaying in the breeze beyond, but this secluded spot was still, retired from the world, and solitary, an ideal spot for contemplation. A well-worn path led to an arbour overgrown with clematis, beyond was a dense undergrowth shutting in the little region like a wall.

Standing there a sound fell on my ears which surprised me. A faint and momentary sound gives but little indication of direction, yet I thought some one was in the arbour, sobbing.

I walked along the path and looked in. There was no one there. The furniture of the little summer-house consisted of a table, an arm-chair, a bench, and a smaller chair.

The sound I heard, or fancied I heard, was not repeated; there was nothing save the noise of the branches of the sheltering trees swaying in the wind. Probably some child wandering up from the village was lost in the shrubbery; yet there had been something so expressive of helpless abandonment in the

sound I had heard that I waited a long time before dismissing the matter from my attention. As nothing occurred, I lit my pipe.

The days passed on: there were no distractions, yet I found myself perfectly contented. The place had a charm of its own, and I was perfectly satisfied to sit some hours every day over Michael Graham's crabbed writing, to take a walk over the moors, to lounge in the garden, and to make friends with the dogs.

The stables were a quarter of a mile off, and the horses were too old to be of any account, but the dogs were first-rate animals.

The one thing I can do is to manage dogs. If you are not afraid of them they know it, and give in to you at once, and I am not afraid of anything with a doggy face. They have not got any teeth at the back of their mouths, and if one flies at you, all you have to do is to put your hand right into his mouth; a strong man can break his jaw.

One great mastiff was my special favourite: he had two white bands on the black marking of his breast, looking exactly like a white tie, so on this account, and because of the gravity of his demeanour, I called him Clergyman. He was not slow in learning his name, but there was something in his behaviour and that of the other dogs which puzzled me.

In this house I might call Clergyman half a dozen times and he would not come—then finally, as if he had just made up his mind, he would deliberately walk over to me, looking up in my face as if he had the best intentions in the world.

"Did you hear me, Clergyman?" The honest eyeslooked up and said, "Yes." "Why didn't you

come?" "Otherwise engaged," he wagged with his tail; and then he would run around me, as if to say, "I'm perfectly free now, let's have a run."

On one occasion he stood in front of me as I was walking across the lawn, growling, and when I would not stop he sprang at me and tore a great piece out of the sleeve of my coat. He behaved just as if he were guarding against a robber. But there was nothing particular to mark the spot; he had no objection to my walking over it on other occasions.

Clergyman treated me as if I were a guest, highly esteemed, but with distinct limitations to my privileges. He and all the other dogs seemed as if they had another master to whom their first allegiance was due.

The fellows had to be taught better. One day, after calling Clergyman a dozen times, I caught sight of him in the garden. There he was, lying on the sunny side walk as happy as he could be, and perfectly unconcerned about my summons. I was about to give him a lesson he would not forget. But this secluded garden, enclosed away from the grounds by its high hedges, with its straight walks, prim borders, and flower beds open to the sun, was too pretty to be turned into a scene of chastisement. It was just such a garden as a lady of long ago would tend, with beds of lavender and sweet-scented herbs and good old English flowers—walking in it each day, followed by her maids, when their spinning was done.

There was something the dogs saw which I did not see, some influence which they obeyed distinct from mine. Being thus on the alert I distinguished slight

sounds and movements which otherwise would have escaped my notice—trifling enough; but such as would give a house the reputation of being haunted—haunted, however, by a bright spirit that loved the garden and the sunlight and dreaded the cold night.

I was sitting on the steps. Suddenly Clergyman got up, shook my hand off his head and walked across the grass about thirty feet away. I called him back, but he paid no attention. Moved by a sudden impulse to explore the mystery of the dog's disobedience, I said, "You there, pray keep Clergyman," and then I called him again. The dog would not come. "Now let him free,"' I said. The dog came at once to my call. I did not repeat the experiment; it seemed drivelling nonsense to sit there speaking to nothing.

In the afternooq, just outside the grounds, Clergyman brought me a young grouse he had succeeded in killing.

This was not permissible. I made him understand his fault, and beat him. In his struggles the whip caught him on the side of his mouth and made a slight cut

"That will teach you, Clergyman," I said, "to respect the powers that be. Like the rest of your cloth, you think too much of the invisible."

The next day the dog came bounding to me, liking me all the better, of course. He had a neat little patch of plaster on his cut—I wondered at that apathetic and unobservant woman, Parker's wife, having noticed the trifling injury, and bestirred herself to doctor it. Clergyman followed all my com-

mands implicitly; there was not the slightest friction, not only in his case, but with all the other dogs: it was as if he had communicated with them, or as if the influence opposed to mine had retired, resolved to let me severely alone.

Yet I was not satisfied. The charm of the place seemed suddenly to have gone. The business part of my task was nearly over, and I bestirred myself to complete it, yet when it was finished I found that I was exceedingly loth to go. Instead of packing the manuscripts up to read in town, I commenced them on the spot.

They formed a strangely assorted mass, a diary, as it were, of experiments and reflections continued through many years, commencing with a series of researches on organic compounds dealing with the limits within which their optical properties could vary, while the essential constituents remained unaltered.

Interspersed with these were speculations, some of which were stamped on my memory by subsequent events.

"The physical constitution of man differs little, if at all, from age to age, and yet how different is the mental attitude. How is it that substantially the same brain can become the brain of a schoolman in the middle ages, a positivist in the present day? I can only answer this by supposing that it is not the same brain. The course of evolution, which is already complete as regards the bodily organs in general when a child is born, is incomplete as regards the brain. According to its surroundings, that brain assumes very different modifications. The brain of the child is an analogue to that early form

in which the common origin of very diflferent organisms is found."

"Turning to the systems of thought which have been prevalent, we find that the common link is to be found in a very undeveloped form both of the one and the other. One does not transform itself into another, but is connected with its successor by an early stage, in which the specific character of neither is distinct. So with systems of morals. If our whole conventional code, which corresponds to and implies our individual character, emotions, disposition, were to pass away, we should find that the new one which replaced it began with an undeveloped state of the moral consciousness, showing no direct transition, but a common origin deep in our ethical nature. Hence it would be impossible to adapt an adult to a new moral code; the very structure of his brain is formed in correlation to his old one. With a child, on the other hand, it would be possible, as its brain is in a state which admits the potentiality of either. Yet even with a child it would be extremely difficult to devise a means for this transition. In civilized life our least actions are so profoundly modified by our ideas that the conditions corresponding to a different moral system would appear almost as a different physical environment. In the Tartar poem—let it serve as an example—the mother asks of her son, when he returns alone from the wars, if he has revenged his father and brothers. 'No, mother; I have come to dry your tears.' She stabs him to the heart. This represents a different phase of female development from that with which we are familiar—such women nurse their children in a different way."

It was not difficult to judge of the value of the parts I could understand, but there might be something in the chemical work. I copied out some pages and sent them to Frank, thanking him, too, for the gift of the dogs.

Day succeeded day, the weather was clear and settled, but I felt as if I had lost something; Clergyman, too, was in bad spirits. He walked after me slowly, panting. There was something the matter with his breathing. His collar fitted loosely, but there seemed a constriction round his neck. As the key of the collar had been lost, I filed it loose, and found under it a narrow leather strap, which had been left on and which had become too tight for him. In cutting it away my knife slipped and ran into my hand. My coat was inside the house. I had nothing to wrap up the cut in, so I let it bleed. Then a most remarkable thing happened. Suddenly a little handkerchief flew into my hand. It was a dainty little rag, too pretty to use for my cut. How it could have come puzzled me. There was an "S" embroidered in the corner. I preserved it carefully, thinking that possibly through it I might get some light on the strange sounds and movements I had observed. It seemed to be a fly-away object, for half an hour afterwards, as I was sitting in the hall writing letters, it danced off the table and went fluttering along in mid-air. I jumped up and seized it before it had gone far. At that moment Parker entered. It was his opening the door I supposed which had caused the current of air that ran off with the handkerchief.

He wanted to know if I had any orders in the town. Mrs. Parker was going away for a time, and

he, being in town, would be able to get anything I wanted.

"Yes," I said, "my wrist has been troubling me. Get me a bottle of Elliman's embrocation for cattle." My wrist was badly broken and twisted in a football match, and ever since it has pained me occasionally. There is a preparation sold by Elliman for men's sprains, but it is poor stuff. If you ever have occasion to use it, get Elliman's embrocation for cattle.

When Parker brought me the bottle I did not open it, but put it in the hall table till needed. This bottle was the means of my solving the mystery. The old twinges coming on some days later, I took out the bottle from the drawer and pulled out the cork. It did not seem to have the same effect as usual—it was the kind for men. I summoned Parker and asked him what he had brought. "I thought"—he began. "What business have you to get what you were not sent for. Tell John to drive over and get the right stuff." As Parker left the hall I swore at him.

Suddenly a clear, sweet voice said, —

"Parker did bring the other kind, but I sent him back for this."

"This is no good; the one marked for horses and cattle is the one I always use," I replied.

"Perhaps it is the best for you," the voice said.

I had spoken at once without waiting to consider who it could be that addressed me. Nothing was visible save the shadowed hall, and the sunlit lawn through the open door. My voice sounded strange as I said,—

"I beg your pardon; I would not have sworn if I thought you could hear."

"Why should you swear at all?" the voice answered.

"If you would speak to me sometimes, I should be much better."

There was no answer.

"Are you still angry with me for beating my dog Clergyman?"

"No; you have been so kind to him since. But he's mine, and his name is Sir Trevor."

Then I was conscious that the presence was gone.

Who could she be? I connected her with the book I had read on my first day—was she the Stella that had copied those extracts?

The next day there was nothing peculiar. I felt inclined to call out the name I had fixed on for her, but the ridiculousness of speaking to the thin air kept me silent. The key to the mystery might be in the Graham manuscripts. They lay before me in a formidable pile. Word by word I commenced to read them, but I found only the same sort of productions which I have already described. On the following day, however, I was rewarded for my perseverance. Clergyman got up from his place at my feet, and with a little bark of pleasure moved out into the verandah. It was a note of joyful recognition, there was no doubt about that.

For my part, I kept my eyes steadily on the manuscript, and presently became conscious myself of some presence.

"Is your name Stella?" I said.

"Yes, Mr. Churton."

"Won't you call me Hugh?" I said, and then went on, "Did you know Mr, Graham?"

"Yes, Hugh."

"Did you care for him?"

"Oh yes!"

"Did you ever speak with him?"

"He taught me all I know."

"Did he care for you?"

"He loved me for the sake of my mother."

"How old were you when he first knew you?"

"I was five years old; it was twelve years ago when I first came here."

"How long is it"—I was going to say, "How long is it since you died?" but I did not like to use such a word.

"How long is it," I said, "since you were—like you are?"

"Three years," she answered.

"Was it always you I noticed—all those strange things?"

"I suppose so," she replied.

I have heard that people are afraid of ghosts. It seemed to me as if I was in the presence of some bright, beautiful being, so kindly and un-selfconscious that human weakness did not repel it.

But how could I attract this spirit, this Stella? I would do anything to hear the sound of her voice again. But I was at a great disadvantage. If I had known this was going to happen to me I would have brought myself up differently. How many things I would not have done, and how much there was that I might have done to fit me for this kind of conversation. Sermons—they did not seem appropriate,

and I had not heard any for many years. I tried to recall some suitable recollections. At last I said,—

"Do you know, Stella, I once had the privilege of talking to a man who could go without food."

"How long could he go without food, Hugh?"

"Well, when I saw him he had gone twenty-four days without food."

"Why did he not eat anything for all that time? "

"I suppose it was to show the power of the will over the body. A man like that, I should think, gets to feel what it is like after death; he must be quite independent of the body; I suspect he could tell one things."

"Did you talk to him?" she asked.

"Oh, yes."

"Did it do you good?"

"Of course, Stella. I shall never forget anything he said."

"What did he say to you?"

"He said that if I meant it, I had better deposit the money."

"Meant what, Hugh? what did you say to him first?"

"I thought he was a plucky fellow, so I laid him two to one in fivers that he wouldn't keep it up another week."

"Where did you see him?"

"At the Aquarium—it is a place in London, where they show many interesting things."

What a failure! I thought; why did I not use my opportunities differently?

But she seemed interested.

"Did he take nothing at all?"

"He drank water, and he took every day a few drops of a liquid of his own preparation."

"What was it made of?"

"That was his secret ; he wouldn't tell any one."

It struck me that if we have an interest in the spirits' world, spirits have perhaps an interest in our world. And so it proved with Stella, for I was permitted to tell her about many things—things which leaving our world quite young, a spirit would not know. But most of all she seemed to like hearing about my home, my father, my sisters and brothers. She soon knew as much about them as I did myself.

"Stella," I said, one day, "what happens to me after I am dead?"

"Hugh, have you your eyes fixed just on what happens to yourself? Do you want to go quite separate and away?"

"No, Stella, but I should like to know."

"It is very difficult to understand, but I will try to make you feel it—I ought to try—it is all eternity."

"Eternity is time carried on and on," I said.

"No, Hugh; in time carried on and on our souls leave our bodies and are in the presence of God. But eternity is quite different to that. To find your eternal self is not to find yourself apart and separate, but more closely bound to others than you think you are now. You learn yourself in finding yourself linked with others, so that even people who have quite a passing place in your thoughts you find to be deeply connected with yourself."

"But how," I asked, "can I be more nearly connected with them, when my dealings with them are over and done with?"

"Oh, no," she said, "when you learn yourself truly you will find that they are not. If you feel eternity you will know that you are never separated from any one with whom you have ever been. You come to a different part of yourself each day, and think the part that is separated in time is gone. But in eternity it is always there."

"I don't understand," I said. "I came across a man named Jim Reynolds once; do you mean to say that what I did to him and what he did to me isn't settled and done with?"

"No, it is not," she answered; "if you felt eternity, you would know that what you and Jim Reynolds did to each other is gradually changing. You think it is over and done with, but in eternity what you and he did to each other is always there, but altering and changing; as you grow better he will act differently and you will act differently."

"I had a little brother who died quite young; I shall never see him again as he was, shall I?"

"Oh, Hugh, of course you do see him. A child that dies young is like a little plant in a garden, it is only smaller, not any less lasting than the others."

"Do you mean by what you said before that we can alter the past?"

"Of course, Hugh; that is the feeling of eternity. If you felt it you would know that you are always living in your whole life, that it is always changing, though with your eyes you can only see the part you are in now."

I was silent. It seemed to me that she described life as if a painter were painting on a canvas that was taken away at each stroke, so that it was irrevo-

cable, but the painting was always there, and the painter too.

Her meaning was not attainable in my bodily state, it was too foreign to our worldly experience.

And yet I felt as if I had heard something satisfactory—the passing away in time a delusion—the present just a concentration, like attending to one thing at a time. But if my past was real, if I was always doing what I had done, how could I speak to her? Yet she said it might all change; there was hope in that I felt I could bear with anything if this time with her were always with me, never past and gone—I in reality always with her, whatever scenes I might be in in my time consciousness.

"Did you make that little handkerchief move to me, when I was attending to Clergyman's collar?"

"Yes; I was so sorry you hurt yourself."

"Then you can move things?"

"How funnily you speak, Hugh! Of course I can."

And then she went away. I did not see anything when she came or went, and yet I knew when she was present, and was willing to talk and listen; but I must pass on to a conversation which changed matters.

It took place in the dining-room, or library, as it might be called.

"Used you to read these books?" I asked.

"Yes; the large one in the corner was my favourite."

I took it down and opened it. It was a great illustrated work, a kind of historical atlas. I turned over the pages, looking at battlefields, towns, buildings, costumes, till I came to a group of beauties of Charles

II. reign, with their somewhat *decolleté* gowns and their fine arms.

"They make a pretty group," I said.

"Oh, I think they are shocking!"

Turning back I found a plate of some Elizabethan dames with long waists and enormous ruffles.

"These are better," I said.

"Oh, no, they are worse."

"Why do you say so?"

"Because they dress so much more."

"But it is good to dress, isn't it?"

"Oh, no, that is what shows how bad we all are; all women want to be seen. They put on heaps of clothes to attract attention; not one of them is content to be as she was intended to be."

"Do you like Quaker dresses?"

"No, dress is bad altogether."

"I don't understand."

"Don't you know, Hugh, in the garden of Eden Eve was like the air—like a spirit. But Satan tempted her, and she wanted Adam to see her. So she ate of the apple of the tree of being seen and known."

"But I thought, Stella, that the forbidden tree was the tree of knowledge."

"That was Adam's tree, Hugh! There were two trees in the garden of Eden, a big one for Adam, and a smaller one near it for Eve. Her tree was the tree of being seen and known. When she ate that kind of fruit, she became visible, she was no longer as she was meant to be."

"But," I said, "really it was different. Adam and Eve put on clothes because they were ashamed."

"Hugh, you are so simple, you don't know what women are like. Adam was ashamed, but if you scold a woman for being anything, she is only more so. Ever since, Hugh, we have tried how much we could put on, and that is the temptation we must strive against."

"But surely it is a very good and natural thing?"

"It is natural," she answered; "I have often felt as if I should like to wear something myself. But it is a part of our fallen nature; we should not cherish such wishes."

"But could you be seen?"

"If I was so wicked I could; but I don't think it is wicked of the others. It is so natural, and they don't know; but I shall never be seen."

"Then aren't you a Spirit really?"

A musical laugh came.

"Oh, no, Hugh; how can you ask that? Think of all the naughty things I do. I am Stella Hollies."

"Well, Miss Hollies, I cannot understand."

"Haven't you read all about it in Michael's books?"

"No."

"And yet you could have! You have those wonderful writings of his in your reach all day long. I have not seen you read one through yet—you that have the right to!"

I made no answer. I did not want to tell her my opinion of Michael Graham's philosophy.

At last I said,—

"You explain it to me."

"Hugh, I can't; it's all written down."

"Please try."

"You know, Hugh, being is being for others, and Michael, though he lived here alone, was always working for others. He was always thinking how to make the misery of the people less. He tried to find out how the body would be if we were perfect."

"Of course," I said, "the state of the body has a great influence on the mind. Did he try to influence the mind through the body?"

"Not at first, Hugh; he simply studied. He made a very wonderful discovery—that the body is really transparent."

"If it is transparent, how is it we can't see through it?"

"But, Hugh, think of the sea ; where it is mingled with the air it is opaque in the foam."

"Yes, it is opaque there."

"And the body is just like that."

"I can understand that," I said; "the body is composed of many different parts, all manner of foldings and layers, so that the light gets turned and twisted and sent back, even if it is transparent, just as in the case of water. The body can never be transparent.

Suppose the materials of the body are as transparent as you like, it would always be opaque by reason of its structure. When light enters from air into any substance, it is turned at an angle; that is what is called the coefficient of refraction, and the body, being made as it is of a multitude of parts, each turning the light as it enters it, must be opaque. It is perfectly absurd that a real person's body should be invisible." "Oh, there is just one way," she answered. I thought a moment, and then I said: "It could only be transparent if the coefficient of refraction were

unity, that is, if the light didn't bend at all in entering the material of which the body is composed."

"Yes, Hugh, Michael knew all that. He used to think it was impossible at first. But he found out how to alter the coefficient of refraction of the body. He made my coefficient equal to one."

"But why should he?"

"Don't you see, Hugh, being is being for others. Michael used to say that true life begins with giving up. Suppose a man dies for his country, isn't that the truest life?"

"So," I said, "the more you are like nothing the better you are?"

"That isn#t exactly the right way to say it, Hugh. You are only at the beginning, but you will soon learn it far better than I can, for it is like this with me. All great men like Dante and Raffaelle, who have had a great and glorious idea, have tried to represent it in some woman's form, like the Madonna or Beatrice. And Michael has done so too. They only made their image in a picture or a poem. But Michael has made me like I am, being real; that is the difference between science and imagination."

"Then you are a real, living person?"

"Yes, Hugh; didn't you know always?"

"Won't you put some colour or something on your face, so that I can see you?"

"How can you ask me? Why, that would be to paint, and you know what every one says of women who paint."

"But I assure you it is often done."

"Oh, Hugh! I tell you what I call them—fallen angels."

"What do you mean?"

"Those women, Hugh, are ones whose coefficient is really right, but they regret being invisible, and so they paint—they go back. It is far worse than if their coefficients had not been made right at all. You know I'm right, for every one thinks it a disgrace to paint."

"But how," I said, "am I to know you are real? Won't you give me your hand for a moment?"

From invisibility came a little warm hand and nestled in mine for a moment, then went. But the impress lasted, sinking deeper and deeper—never to pass away.

"Isn't there any way I can tell where you are by looking?" I asked.

"If you look very carefully, sometimes you can see where I am by the things being shifted a little out of their right places—it depends on the temperature."

"Then you are there," I said, pointing to the great vase at the end of the room, for it seemed to me quite blurred and indistinct.

"Oh, no," she laughed, "I'm here;" and the door opened and shut.

I am not a man given to signs of weakness, indeed at that moment I was only conscious of a feeling of surprise. But my eyes had got ahead of me—they were so full I could not see anything distinctly.

In a moment or two the meaning of the whole thing dawned on me. I had been able to steer pretty clear of girls before, but this device of Michael Graham's beat me. I recognised the whole thing

now. I had seen the symptoms in many a good fellow. I had been bowled out as clean as any booby of them all, with the stars and eternity business put in.

I once was sent by the father of a friend of mine on a somewhat delicate errand. His son, a curate, had fallen in love with a small greengrocer's daughter at Margate. I was supposed to have some influence over young Vere. Of course such a marriage was absolute professional ruin. He faced that; that was nothing compared to her. He would sacrifice himself to avoid giving his father pain, but he could not ruin the young life that was bound with his, and so on. There was no doing anything with him. When I went to report to his father, I found the old gentleman and his wife and a young lady in conclave. She was no relation, but seemed to have been called in to support the family in their distress. I told them that really Vere was acting according to his lights—he couldn't do any differently, being so deeply in love as he was. Whereupon the young lady said, "I've no patience with him: he ought to have stopped it when he felt it coming on."

This remark seemed to me at the time very practical, although I little thought I should have to apply it in my own case.

It was clear that Mrs. Cornish must come at once, and till she came I must stop to see that all was safe. I calculated that a telegram of a sufficiently urgent nature would bring Mrs. Cornish on the morrow. I must remain till I could give Stella over to her proper guardians. Meanwhile I had to stop it coming on.

As I walked through the garden on my way to the village post-office, I knew that Stella was there by the way the dogs were following something invisible.

"Miss Hollies," I said, "this is very strange. Does no one know about you?"

"I thought Mrs. Cornish and Frank would come."

"Then you think that Mr. Graham told them?"

"Yes; he said that she would be my friend."

"So it was you that got the house ready for them?"

"Yes; I thought they were coming."

"Why didn't you speak to me when you saw me?"

"You did not speak to me."

"But how could I?"

"What did you come here for?"

"To arrange about business matters."

"And not to see after me at all?"

"No."

After a pause she said very slowly, "That is very strange; that accounts for many things."

"Was it you," I said, "I heard in the arbour?"

"When?" she asked. "You always sit there yourself, but I used to go there before you came."

"I mean the first day after I came. I thought I heard some one crying there."

"Indeed! It was very hard not to have any breakfast. I thought you might have let me sit down there; Michael always did. And I felt so lonely. I had no one when Michael died, and I thought Mrs. Cornish and Frank would comfort me."

"Then I have been driving you out of your own place, out of the arbour all this time?"

"Oh no; there are plenty of other places that did just as well, and farther off."

Do just as well to cry in, I thought

"Come, Sir Trevor," she said, and the dog went along the walk.

These interviews must be avoided, or I was done for.

In reply to my telegram, I learnt from her butler that Mrs. Cornish was in Nice: when I had sent a message to her there, I returned. As I approached Beechwood through the dark, it stood out black and lowering—a fitting abode for one who had deprived an innocent girl of all that could make life worth having.

But on coming round to the front of the house a bright light glowed out. There was the same aspect of cheerful welcome as when I had first arrived.

Entering the hall I saw a little flower waving, coming towards me. When I thought Stella was a spirit, I used sometimes to ask her to give me a flower, thinking that I did it to test her power of levitation. Of course it was nothing of the kind; I asked for it just as any other moon-struck idiot might. To-night, however, I said, "Please put it on the table, Miss Hollies."

The flower fluttered into a little vase and rested there. "Thank you," I said.

"Are you sorry I am not a spirit?"

"Oh no," I said; "but it makes a difference, you know."

"You hadn't any right at all to think I was."

The door opened and shut, and she was gone.

By a kind of mutual consent we avoided each

other. I spent the most of the following days out of doors, walking over the hills, never going out of sight of the house. The day before Mrs. Cornish was expected, I saw a man in a wagonette driving along the road which led past Beechwood. As hardly any one except the country folk ever passed by, I hurried back and inquired of Parker if any one had been there. It was his doctor, he said, who had come to see him for his rheumatism. I could not blame him, as I had given him permission to call some one in, but I warned him not to receive any more visits till Mrs. Cornish arrived.

The night before she came, Sir Trevor was howling dismally. Parker had gone to meet the train. What the dogs found amiss that morning I could not tell; they ran all over the place and came up to me inquiringly. At length it struck me that they missed Stella. I went all over the grounds calling for her, but no answer came. I knocked at the little door; there was no answer. Perhaps she was ill; but a deeper anxiety seized me.

"Sir Trevor," I said, "your mistress is gone." His answer was a dismal howl.

It seemed a year before the sound of the carriage was heard. The moment she arrived I took Mrs. Cornish to the green baize door, forced it open, and told her to go in to see if she could find some one.

She looked at me as if she thought my request was rather strange, but did as I asked. She returned, saying that there was no one there.

"Please look again," I said, "there is some one there. You can't see her; call her name, Stella; she'll answer you."

"No, Steddy," she said; "what are you thinking of? The rooms are all over dust; they haven't been used for ages."

As she said this, I caught Parker's eye. He was observing me to see what effect this announcement would have on me.

When I first looked into those rooms there was no dust in them. I went in and searched that side of the house myself. It was as Mrs. Cornish had said: there was dust over everything, and no sign of any occupant.

The wagonette I had seen driving away a day ago must have contained Stella.

There were a couple of burly fellows whom Parker had brought with him to take up the luggage. I resolved to have it out with him later on. It was no use alarming Mrs. Cornish any more. She came up to me, putting her hand on my arm, trying to calm me. I sat down with her, and when she was rested told her the story of her brother's machinations with Stella Hollies.

"Stella is the name of the girl he loved," she said, and she married a Mr. Hollies, but I never heard of any other Stella Hollies."

"There was a Stella Hollies living here," I said, "living here with him. He made her so that you could not see her."

She would not believe me. She did not say so in so many words, but that was the upshot of her replies.

That evening, when the house was quiet, I called Parker, determined to force him to tell me what had become of Stella.

"You know as well as I do," I said, when he appeared, "that there was a young lady in the house; what has become of her?"

"I don't know."

"Did you convey her away out of the house?"

"No."

"Now," I said, "I offer you £200 if you tell me where she has gone."

"I wish I could earn your money," he replied, pumping up his courage; "but there isn't any young lady as you speak of."

As he told this lie he stammered. I am sure I could have broken down his pretences in another question or two, but unfortunately I chose what seemed a quicker path. I seized him by the arm and forced him down. "Now," I said, "tell the truth."

He cried out, "Help!" Instantly the two men he had brought with him, and who had remained concealed in the house, came forward. After a struggle the three of them overpowered me.

The next morning I woke up with a racking headache. I was in bed—a doctor was in the room.

"What is the meaning of this?" I said; "why did those three men set on me?" "You require to be watched." "What for?" "Fits of mania come over you." "Fits of fiddlestick!" and I began to get up. "It is necessary to control you." "Nonsense!" "What if you commit murder!"

"If you think I'm insane, you must get another opinion; if you want to charge me with assault, you must bring the case before a magistrate."

"You are reasonable enough on most subjects," he replied; "but there are delusions under which you

labour. I am here at Mrs. Cornish's request, and if she wants me, you may be sure that it is for your good."

"If your men are here for my good, they took a curious way of showing it last night."

"They were obliged to be rough, you so nearly overpowered them."

"Well," I said, "I don't want to do anything your escort will interfere with. Don't let this matter go any further, I'll give you my word not to put myself out of your reach till Frank Cornish comes; he is a doctor, and you can consult with him. Let us go and telegraph for him."

"Mrs. Cornish has already sent him word, and he is coming."

It was not difficult to convince the doctor that any interference on his part was unnecessary. But he persisted in his conviction that in one respect I was labouring under a delusion. Nothing could be found to prove that Stella had lived there.

I had a private detective down from an office in London. He, it was plain, hardly took seriously to the plan of tracing the whereabouts of an invisible lady. But he found out for me that Mrs. Parker had gone on a visit to some relatives in Australia. Parker had not concealed his whereabouts. He was in a little sea-side village, whence he wrote to Mrs. Cornish for his salary, and enclosed a bill every week for the hire of a policeman in plain clothes. He refused to give his doctor's address, saying that he did not wish to subject him to annoyance.

Mrs. Cornish had written to a friend of hers, a member of the Society for Psychical Research. He

and a friend of his constituted a committee and came to Beechwood. Arriving, as they generally do, after the departure of that which they wish to observe, they were only able to amass some more of those negative observations which form so monumental a tribute to their industry. They talked to me with charming frankness, assuring me that if my insanity was caused by a spectre it was a very interesting case; but if, on the other hand, the spectre originated in my deranged mental condition, it was of no moment to the Society.

At last Frank came. He went into all the circumstances with me, looked at all the localities. We found that some years previously a young girl had lived in Beechwood under Michael Graham's care, but he had taken her away, it was supposed on one of his journeys. The house was reputed to be haunted. Frank saw Parker, but could get nothing out of him.

We had spent three days after his arrival without forming any definite plans of search.

"Cornish," I said to him, "you believe me, don't you?"

"I won't say," he replied; "you have either a very peculiar form of mania, affecting one set of ideas only, and leaving you in perfect possession of your faculties on all other points, or you are correct in every particular. But it doesn't matter what I believe, I'm going to take up your view for all I am worth. We have come to the age of experiment—it's a lesson the gamblers have taught us, to live on chances, as if they were certainties. In old times people used to have to hypnotize themselves into the belief that they were right before they could do

anything. Now we know that every conviction we have is a hypothesis of more or less plausibility, but we choose the supposition we mean to work on, and act on it as if it were a certainty, trusting in evolution, which does for the whole what providence was supposed to do for the individual."

"Good Heavens!" I said, "do stop this rot! I want to find Stella; what do you propose to do?"

"Right, old man," he said, "I was only trying you; you are not weak-minded yet. You have your old healthy attitude towards abstract ideas."

"Abstract ideas of the kind you produce, certainly," I said; "now think it out; tell me your opinion."

We were sitting in the little arbour, from which I had driven her, the great wall of trees stood dark and imperturbable, here and there the sunlight caught the grey stonework of the house; it was the quietest spot in England.

At last Frank looked up.

"Steddy, I have it!"

"What?"

"She has been stolen by the Spiritualists!"

"I don't think she is a girl who could be stolen."

"Well, stolen with or without her own consent. That is what has become of her."

"She would never lend herself to deception of any kind."

"Of course not; but consider, any one who was clever enough to induce her to leave here could work wonders with her. Suppose with regard to her he were to ask her to explain my uncle's ideas, and on the other hand told one of his dupes not to interrupt a spirit. Why, he would satisfy any number of

test conditions. You stop here; you must, in case she comes back of her own accord. Read the manuscript; find out what she would be likely to say. I will look out for any remarkable manifestation in the spirit-loving world, and we can compare notes."

"It seems to me," I said, "that you had better work at Mr. Graham's writings. They were left to you."

"Impossible!" he answered. "No man who knows what science is can stand the jargon about being and substance."

"I suppose the Greeks wrote jargon then?"

"They said all that is possible to be said from the point of view of ordinary observation; they exhausted all that a sensible man can say. The only thing to be done now is to get new observations, new points of view; that kind of thought is extinct. You won't get any modern man to listen to it without a compassionate smile. Now, you have been brought up on the sediment of all the ages. You know how to swallow it whole and deglutinate it in examinations. You may as well do a bit more of that kind of work."

Frank went up to town. Stella's return, if she did come back, would be sure to be made evident by the joy of her faithful followers. My attention was quite free for the study of the philosopher. No one was ever read with greater diligence and aversion.

There was more lucidity about the writings than any one would have expected. The chief difficulty in the way of a clear comprehension of Michael Graham's ideas lay in the confusion of two distinct strains of thought, an earlier and a later one, the transition between the two being nowhere clearly

marked. It was, as often happens, a dogmatic idea lives on into a critical philosophy, and causes no end of difficulties to the student

The first phase of Michael Graham's speculations was well represented by what Stella had told me. Being is being in and for another: this he re-stated with endless variations in expression and representation. According to him, Self-interest was an inversion of the true motive of life. He pointed out that all the economic relations of life which bring good for society out of the self-directed efforts of men show equally that an activity directed towards the good of others would imply the best development of the individual. It would be the duty of every one to exert his own powers and preserve himself for the sake of the whole. The harmony works both ways.

He asserted that the forms of life, on the two hypotheses of acting for others and acting for self, are almost the same. The transition from the operation of one principle to that of the other would imply no violent outward change, but a difference in the working of each part.

The evils which attend our present state of society he looked upon as incurable; they, he asserted, are the forces by which men will be compelled to adopt a new principle as the basis of their action.

Michael Graham did not avoid the objections of all kinds to which his theory was open. Would people in general work as hard for others as they do for themselves? Would they not relapse into laziness when the pinch of hunger, consequent on idleness, was removed by the efforts of others from its exigence on them? What would become of the laws of decency

and morality if each person thought only about others, not what was due to himself or herself? Self-love has a very unmistakable object, love for others an indefinite one. Where will it begin? Is it love for one other, or for all others—for man, including the negro and the Chinese, or for man without those races, for the universe, for what? He seemed to count on a pious fervour, a love of the All, of God. On the one hand he placed love of self with a constant stimulus in the desires and wants of the individual; on the other hand he placed devotion to the All with, as stimulus, not the appetites or desires, but the needs of others. His final solution was not given, for in the midst of these speculations he broke off quietly with the to me most interesting expression, "All these questions I propose to examine, not in the old manner of *a priori* imagination, but by experiment."

Here occurred a gap of two or three hundred pages.

Putting together what Stella had told me, and what I had read, I came to the conclusion that Michael Graham had resolved to try practically what direction the activities of the soul took when the self-regarding impulses were denied the opportunity of existence. A boy cares about eating and drinking and getting things. You could not deprive him of these self-centred activities of his, without making him one with the All—a proceeding which Michael Graham would have been quite capable of, but which would have left him little opportunity for investigation. Instead of a boy he experimented on a girl, for a girFs self-love is concerned with being looked at

—it is in producing an effect on others that her self-love is gratified. By taking away visible corporeality from Stella, he took away the means of living for herself. Refusing to allow her to dress, he put her in a condition in which the set of motives complementary to self-love were bound to come into activity. The ground was cleared for them.

The loss of these pages I blamed myself for. I had no doubt they would have proved my correctness on the disputed point. But the individual who had stolen Stella had been acute enough to take away at the same time the documentary proofs of her existence. I had no doubt they were in their right place, running consecutively on, when I first had the opportunity, which I so neglected, of becoming acquainted with Michael Graham's philosophy.

After this gap the manuscript rolled on in its voluminous flood. In order to gain any connected idea of what Michael Graham was after, I found it necessary to construct a working model of his system—to make a representation in definite and limited terms of the relations he strove to show as universal. But it was a difficult task.

Listen first to a few of the enigmatic utterances of my philosopher, and you can tell what it cost me to assign any definite meaning.

"We do not stop with a catalogue of our sensations; we do not merely say there are these sounds, colours, sensations of contact which occur. We seem unable to remain content with simply regarding them as existing. We stiffen them up. By themselves they are thin—we suppose a substance behind them, and we say the sensations are the relations to us of

substance. But just as without a substance impressions are thin, so this substance in its turn, which stands for a sum of sensation, is thin without a substance to hold it up. Splitting up our experience into a substance and its relation to us, it follows that this substance is but the relation to us of a deeper substance. Thus in the idea of substance as of motion we have an essential relativity. In the study of motion no fixed point can be found. Yet that does not hinder the calculation of movements. So, although we can find no absolute being, yet that is no bar to the discovery of relative being. The idea of substance is a path, not a finality.

"As with substance so with the self. We must remember that the self is a relative term by its very origin and definition, as that which appears to the consciousness in appetites and passions, it is itself an appearance of a self beyond. This self beyond is not to be found in an introspection of the self we know but in the consideration of ourselves as given with others, of ourselves as changing. The higher self is that through which these conflicting selves exist, through which each has its individuality. The hindrance to our entering on the path is that we judge everything by our consciousness, as if that were fixed, instead of recognising that the question is how our consciousness comes to assume the form it does.

"The first step is to recognise that our consciousness is so limited that the realities of the world and ourselves cannot be adequately represented in it.

"On the stage of consciousness the great things of the world and ourselves are presented as fugitive, as not existing yet, as ceasing to exist, leaving a flicker-

ing present between the nothingness of the past and the future. It is not so; there is a bearer of consciousness which by its orbit makes our experience what it is. As the round earth rotating links all men in a common perception of the rising and setting stars, so the bearer of consciousness by its orbit makes us all experience the common human lot, to think the common thoughts, to see one and all the rising and the setting of the body. What that bearer of the consciousness is, how connected with man, is the problem; certain it is that all that men think and feel in common is a means to explore its nature.

"The idea of a higher state of being is one which has left a lasting impress on the history of thought, a state higher and more real. Yet in this respect it is curious to note that although the higher state is supposed to be more powerful than the state we know, yet the emblems and images which are used for it are derived from objects which seem to possess less of rather than all the qualities of matter. The spiritual higher world is imaged under forms of matter so attenuated as hardly to resemble matter at all. The origin of this is to be found partly, and in a small measure, in the influence of that school which looks on material existence as evil, and therefore connects spiritual existence with the absence of matter. But the true cause is that there is a consciousness in us deeper than thought, which is directly reached, which is reminded of the higher existence by the clear depth of waters, by the limitless profundity of the night-time sky. A crystal thrills us with a sense of something higher, saying as it were, 'Confined as you and I are to this earthly state, still letting fall away

the encircling barriers of obscurity that with us this being is, I show myself to you even as you are I and all are to the higher vision.' "

Here there seemed to be a distant allusion to Stella, though one would think it hardly possible that a girl should be designedly made transparent for the sake of being an emblem. Perhaps Michael Graham, having made her transparent in his dogmatic stage, and being unable to undo his work, consoled himself with the thought that she was an emblem. Is it not a merciful dispensation of Providence that physiological chemistiy has been hidden from abstract philosophers, all of them, from Plato and Parmenides down to Hegel and Herbert Spencer.

It was out of writing of this sort that I had to construct something plain and definite. In putting the working model before you, I must ask you not to mind making arbitrary assumptions—it is not a question of truth or error, but of what Michael Graham meant

Imagine then certain figures drawn on a sheet of paper. Call the lines which mark them off from one another their "relations" to each other, or to the surrounding surface. I call these lines relations, because they are that by which the figures come into contact with each other. Similarly, if we imagine a solid divided up into many solids, the faces by which these are in contact with each other can be called their relations. The face is to the solid what the line is to the plane figure.

Conceive now a solid with a great number of faces. These faces are separated from each other by bounding lines, which are the edges of the solid. Suppose

these faces to have the power of reasoning and reflection. Let them come to a consciousness of each other. They know first of all of their relations—to explain these they conceive themselves and those about them to have substance. This substance, however, is what we call plane surface. Now we know that what they call substance is really a relation. Not knowing of the solid, they think that superficial substance is the ultimate substance. But this substance of theirs is really in the same relation to the solid as their lines are to their substance.

This is an instance of Michael Graham's "*path*." The objection to it of course is, that we come to a dead wall. There isn't anything beyond a solid substance of which the solid is a relation in the sense used above. Michael Graham, however, thought he could go one better.

The same illustration serves for the exhibition of the doctrine of the higher and lower self; for the solid is that in virtue of which each of the faces has an individual existence, and which at the same time is known through the totality of the faces.

As to other points we must call in the aid of motion. Suppose a stick to be pushed down into a pool of water, it makes an opening in the surface of the water. If it is held slanting wise, while it is pushed down, it makes an opening in the surface which moves along. Now suppose the surface of the water to be removed, and to form a film like the film of a bubble, only extending very widely. If this film moves along and comes into contact with any object, it has the faculty of filling up all round the object and closing up any opening the object has made as it shifts.

Let this film come to a corkscrew, end on. The spiral corkscrew will cut the film in a spot, and as the film moves on the point of intersection will move in a circle. Call now this film the bearer of consciousness. Let consciousness come in where the film and the objects it meets are in contact. What you will get in this film of consciousness as a record of the spiral is a point moving in a series of circles. To the single existence of the spiral corresponds a whole series of movements of a point on the film. This series of movements attended with consciousness may be called a life. Hence the total life in the film of consciousness is the representation in consciousness of the one state of the spiral. If, however, the spiral were altering and changing, if it had a life of its own, this life would be represented in successive films by a series of lives, each differing very slightly from the last, each total life representing just one stage of the existence of the spiral. In a film view of the solid, what is really coincident must, of course, be apprehended as consecutive. Michael Graham seemed really to consider that our consciousness was of this nature, that we were outside the time we knew, and that a true view of ourselves was as having a life of lives. But, of course, since there isn't anything outside space, when you came to pin him down definitely, there wasn't anything in what he said.

The same defect holds true in his illustration of transparency. If we suppose figures drawn on paper, the lines, the boundaries of each, would hide them from each other, while, looked at from space, each would be perfectly open to view. If one of them were transparent, it would in a sort of way represent

to the others the view of itself a being not confined to the plane would have. But when you come to solids the thing is different.

Michael Graham did not find the next steps on his "*path*" so easy. Instead of abandoning it, however, he argued that we could only observe what we practically had done ourselves; that in order to be able to observe higher matter we must make ourselves familiar with the possibilities of it, and his writings consisted largely of an account of a discipline by which this could be done. However, I have shown that the whole theory is unsound, and the details hang on the same branch.

At length I became convinced that nothing in the manuscripts would aid me in the search for Stella. The correspondence, too, proved barren of information. It was almost more than I could stand to see Sir Trevor pining and moping. I had trouble to get him to take his food at all. Leaving the house in the care of an old servant of Mrs. Cornish—it was difficult to make them understand what to do if Stella returned—I went up to town.

Frank was at the hospital. "I have some indirect evidence of Miss Hollies' existence," he said, holding out a little tube.

"What has a test-tube half full of water to do with it?"said I.

"It isn't water. If your theory is true, the body is really transparent. I have here a piece of flesh. By immersing it in a heavy oil of the same coefficient of refraction as flesh, and keeping it under the air-pump for a long time, I permeated all the minute passages; the result is a substance invisible in the

oil, but which looks like a piece of glass out of it. Now the coefficient of refraction has only to be made equal to unity, and it will be invisible in the air."

"But the blood," I said; "you could not treat a living person so."

"The blood owes its colour to salts of iron," he answered;" all we have got to do is to replace the iron by some element having colourless compounds. I don't doubt this will be a valuable aid to anatomical research. We shall be able to make perfectly transparent animals; but this is only by the way, such things can wait."

"Have you heard of any spiritualist performances?" I asked.

"No, only the usual kind, in the dark. Have you found any references in Graham's correspondence?"

"No; there are many letters from Germany and some from America."

"In Germany," said Frank, "they are mostly interested in pure science, but in America they go in for applied science. This running off with Stella is the sort of thing nobody but an American would have the ingenuity to think of. Do you know Michael Graham's correspondents?"

"Yes; I'll go over there and make inquiries," I said.

"Very well, I'll hunt clubland; everything curious is heard of, sooner or later, there. I shall do it much better than you, for you don't seem in a mood to make yourself agreeable."

"Who would, mixed up with a family like yours, that is always cutting up and interfering with people's bodies," I said; for Frank's experiments with the flesh disgusted me.

"Keep me in the track of your movements. I'll telegraph the moment anything turns up," said he.

I need not bore you with an account of my fruitless journeyings in the States. In California, where I had gone on a false clue, I received a telegram from Frank—"Return." In New York I found a letter from him, which I read on board till I knew it by heart:—

"DEAR STEDDY,—

"You can judge for yourself what amount of evidence there is I go on, but you ought to be over here. While you have been going about in hotels and sleeping cars, I have been hunting clubland. It is much more pleasant and more certain in the long run.

"Who do you think helped me to the clue I have? Bishop B——. He honours me with more of his episcopal kindness than I deserve. You know I always had a kind of sneaking wonder how a man could be a bishop.

"You would be surprised if I were to tell you the number of queer and questionable stories I have told about myself in the past few months. A man of decent feeling, if you tell him anything queer about yourself, feels bound to tell you something queer about himself to make the footing equal. Now a bishop hasn't anything queer to tell about himself, or, if he has, he's excused. Consequently the bishop, by way of return, told me the following incident:—

"A card was brought to him recently with a letter of introduction from the celebrated chemist C——. In the letter Professor C—— stated that he had been

present at many *séances* given by the bearer of the letter, that all the conditions he laid down had been complied with, that personally he felt sure there was no imposture, that the phenomena he had witnessed had no explanation according to any known law of nature. He did not know the object of the bearer in wishing the honour of an interview with his lordship, but he felt bound to give his testimony when asked for it.

"When ushered in Professor Biglow—the name on his card—informed the bishop that he had taken the liberty of consulting him with regard to the religious faith of a lady through whom wonderful communications were made from the spirit world, and who was possessed of supernatural powers.

" 'What are those powers?' said the bishop.

" 'She can often converse with a spirit, in the light or dark, it makes no difference. The spirit will move material objects at her asking, and, in response to her questions, will reveal wonderful truths about the future life.'

" 'What do you want with me?' said the bishop.

" 'My Lord, this sainted lady believes that she is a member of your Church. But she has but little knowledge of the Articles. It cannot be long before the wonders which she works will be widely known. They are not the common performances, my Lord, but genuine miracles, such as the early Christians worked; and she, believing that she believes in your creed, these miracles will, so to speak, occur under your auspices.'

" 'H'm!' said the bishop.

" 'Now, my Lord,' said Professor Biglow earnestly,

'I am sure, with all the trouble you have had about the miracles which took place long ago, and the unkind way in which Professor Huxley wrote about them in the magazines, you would very much rather not have any new ones—*real* new ones, I mean, which you could not disavow.'

"The bishop kept silent

" 'If now,' Biglow continued, 'I were to persuade the sainted lady, who knows but little of the forms which creeds have taken, to attach herself to the Romanists——'

"The bishop remained silent.

" 'Or to the Unitarians——'

"The bishop did not answer, and, after a moment's hesitation, Biglow went on,—

" 'If so, my Lord, I hope I could look to you for support. It has cost me a considerable sum to support the sainted lady in an appropriate style, and there has been much expense in satisfying the conditions laid down by the Professor. I hope your Lordship can see your way to providing me with a thousand guineas, and I can assure your Lordship that the miracles shall be attached to any denomination your Lordship is pleased to specify.'

" 'I am very sorry,' said the bishop; 'in these cases I make it a rule never to transact business of this kind except with men who have been educated at Eton or Harrow and are members of one of the Universities. Good-morning.'

"The bishop dropped the matter from his memory, but happened to light upon it in conversation with me.

"If Miss Hollies exists in the condition you describe—excuse the '*if*,' I am not any the less earnest

in my efforts—I am sure something curious will turn up sooner or later in connection with her. It is worth while to investigate Biglow and his sainted lady. He probably employs a medium, who pretends to go into a trance, and then converses with Miss Hollies according to a set number of questions.

"Yours ever,

"FRANK CORNISH."

Arrived in London, I found that C—— was travelling on the Continent and had not answered Frank's letter. It was in Nice that I met him.

"I believe you are acquainted with a Professor Biglow?"

"Yes," he replied.

"I should be glad to know his address."

"I am unfortunately unable to give it you."

"You are conducting some experiments with him which you find are of a remarkable nature?" I asked.

C—— did not answer.

"You are probably not aware that these results are produced by a young lady who walks about the room while you tie up the medium and arrange your electrical precautions."

"That is impossible."

"It seems so, but she is transparent."

"In any case she would be seen."

"No, her coefficient of refraction is equal to unity."

"I have heard about you," he said; "you are suffering from a delusion. While regretting your mistake, I must inform you that I am not a man to put up with any annoyances, and shall certainly do my best to protect Mr. Biglow from them."

C—— is a man slightly under the middle height with piercing blue eyes. There is an air of openness to impression about him which makes him seem unlike most other scientific men whom I have known. He is the least untrammelled of mortals by preconceptions of any kind. One of his great discoveries was made while trying to find out if bodies lost weight when heated—a question which is generally supposed to be settled. With almost any one else the assertion of Stella's optical peculiarity would have deprived me of any degree of consideration at all. But in addition to all C——'s openness to novelties, he possessed in a marked degree that ardour for experiment which becomes a second nature with scientific men, and which proved afterwards, alas! so disastrous to our hopes. You had only to suggest a novel experiment to C—— to make him your firm friend.

"You may think it impossible," I said; "but you cannot refuse to take it into consideration. Test it as a matter of fact. I say that this Biglow has under his influence a young lady in the condition I mention. He has taken her away from her friends, and you must admit that he is a most unfit person to have the care of her."

"Biglow seems to me," he said, "a very fair specimen of his class."

"His influence over her is gained by his representations that she is furthering a good cause," I said. "He is deceiving her and you."

"What do you want me to do?" he interrupted.

"When you know she is in the room, or as you would say the spirit, get Biglow outside and ask her,

unheard by him, if her coefficient of refraction is equal to unity. Then tell her that Mrs. Cornish implores her to come to her at 51, Pembridge Gardens." C—— took the address. "I have no expectation that you will gain anything but disappointment, but I have no hesitation in promising to do what you ask. In return, I must beg you to refrain from trying to find out Biglow's address through me. If I can be instrumental in removing the delusion under which you suffer I shall be glad."

"I have no doubt of the result," I said; "ask her to come to Mrs. Cornish. Bring her yourself if you can."

"If what you say is true, I certainly will," he replied. "I will let you know when I am going to meet Biglow next, in about a week from now; meanwhile, we had better both of us go about our ordinary business."

"Above everything, do not let Biglow know you suspect the facts of the case," I said; "if he does he will take her away—you will have done more harm than good."

Through the whole of the ensuing week our exertions to find out Professor Biglow's whereabouts were unremitting, but met with no success. At last a telegram came from C——, informing us that he would call in the course of the day.

"He will bring her," I said.

We got everything ready for Stella; a house full of love and joy was waiting for her.

At last there was a ring; C—— came in.

"Is she coming?"

"Tell us all about it!"

"Was it as I told you?"

We overwhelmed him with questions.

"There is no doubt it is she," he said. "I have just come from a *séance* with Biglow. The first test was one of materialization of the spirit. A lady medium was lying on a sofa. I searched the room very carefully; then I placed wires over her, so that the slightest movement would break contact and give an alarm. There was a loose wrapper of a thin material lying on the back of the couch. After a few minutes it began to lift, and then, evidently robing, a figure moved about the room.

"I asked if it would touch my hand. The figure advanced, and the robe, moving as if an arm were underneath, a warm hand rested on mine for a few seconds and then withdrew. In order to get Biglow out of the room I beckoned to him ; outside the door I said to him, 'No doubt if this is a spirit it would be able to tell me what I do downstairs.'

" 'I think it would,' he said.

" 'Let us go down,' I replied. First he opened the door and said a few words; we then went down together.

"In the lower room I opened a book, took an envelope out of my pocket and put it in at page 300.

"He wished to accompany me up again, but I explained to him that that would spoil the test.

"He seemed doubtful, then made up his mind. 'Very well,' he said, 'but do not do more than ask one question; the medium is suffering terribly today.'

"When I came upstairs, I did not ask about the book.

" 'Is your coefficient of refraction equal to unity?' I asked.

" 'Yes.' a voice replied.

" 'Then you are a real person?'

" 'Aren't you convinced yet?' she answered.

" 'Then it flashed on me that all the experiments were proposed by Biglow—he proposed the experiments and I devised the tests for ascertaining the genuineness of the phenomena—all the experiments were such as she might have played her part in, with the sole aim of proving that she was real. I saw at once how Biglow had managed it all. I ought to apologise to you, Mr. Churton, for my reception of you, but Biglow had told me that you were under the delusion that the spirit was a real person, and had nearly committed murder on an unoffending person who tried to disabuse you of the notion."

"Well, what next, what did you say to her next?" I asked.

"I asked her if her eyes could not be seen.

" 'Very faintly,' she answered, 'if you look exactly at them.' "

"Whatever was the sense of that?" I asked.

"You see," said C——, "if she sees, her eyes must take in some of the light and turn it into consciousness. If none of the light was absorbed it could not produce any impression on her."

"Well, then?"

"Oh, ah, then I asked her if I might bring an actinometer, and measure how much light was absorbed."

"But what had that to do with it?"

"You see, by that means I could measure the coefficient of consciousness."

"Well then," I said, "you gave her my message?"

"Unfortunately, just then Biglow came in, and said something I did not catch, and told me the spirit had dematerialized."

"So you fooled away the time about your co-efficients when you could have saved her," I said.

"It really is a very important question," said Frank, who saw how near the Royal Society was to losing one of its most prominent members.

"I tell you this," I said; "if you had brought her here, you could have looked at her eyes through your actinometer as much as ever you liked; as it is, when we have found her, you shall never bring that instrument near her. What is the address? Tell us; that is the least thing you can do."

C—— gave us the address. When Frank and I got to the house, in answer to our ring a caretaker appeared. He told us the house was let furnished to a Mr. Biglow, who came there occasionally with friends, but did not sleep there. He had been there that morning, but had gone away.

Frank and I kept watch all that day, and had the house watched for weeks, but Biglow never appeared.

The medium, no doubt, had not been in so very sound a trance. She had heard what C—— asked Stella, and told Biglow. He had at once left the house, and there were no means to trace him. The agent told us the house had been rented for a short period only.

I must do C—— justice to say that he did everything in his power to repair the fiasco due to his scientific ardour. With our permission, he talked the matter over with the president of the Psychical Society.

We had hopes that the president would be able to identify Biglow with one of the numerous spiritualistic entrepreneurs known to him. In this we were disappointed, but he gave me introductions to all the mediums he knew. When I found any one of them who could possibly be supposed to answer to Biglow's description, I would take C to meet him. But in every case the result was a disappointment, and in one respect the president did our search a great deal of harm. For he let fall the remark, that rather than believe that a human being had an appearance so nearly like that of a spirit, he was inclined to the hypothesis that Stella was a spirit, who thought herself a human being. This remark had a visible effect on C—— for, as I have said, there was no supposition whatever which he would not take up; no matter how improbable it was, he was quite willing to adopt it.

Mrs. Cornish, I could see, had quite relapsed into her previous state of incredulity, although, to avoid paining me, she talked of Stella as if she were real. Frank was the only one in whom I found any satisfaction. He frankly admitted that he considered that the evidence was against me. But even if it were my delusion, it was good enough for him. He was going to devote himself to the search till I told him to stop.

Amidst all this, the time of my departure for China was approaching. I could not remain dependent on my father indefinitely. I saw in future years that if I were away the belief in Stella would gradually sink away, leaving for her what—in return for her devotion to Michael Graham's memory?

C—— was the only one of us who knew Biglow by sight. And he was a man of many affairs. I must say I never found him unwilling, when I called on him, to accompany me on an errand of identification, however unlikely in promise of success. But no one could expect him to be continually searching. Biglow might have taken her out of England. He was on his guard now. He knew that others, besides myself, suspected the truth, and would redouble his precautions.

One evening, sitting with Mrs. Cornish in the dusk, I ceased talking and looked silently in the fire.

Her hand stole into mine. "Dear Hugh," she said, "I wish you would speak to a friend of mine, a clergyman."

"I will," I said; "Clergyman's the boy."

I took the night express to York, and went out by a local train in the morning. By twelve o'clock Clergyman, alias Sir Trevor, was bounding round me in the extremity of joy. He had seen Biglow. I had heard him through my sleep howling when that man took away all his joy in life. Biglow must have been about the house many days, on and off, when I vainly imagined I was guarding her from harm. My hope was that Clergyman would recognise the man who had robbed us—would recognise him despite any disguises which would prevent my applying C——'s description. I returned to London, and one afternoon, in a retired walk in the park, I saw my old antagonist, Jim, approaching me. There was no mistaking him, despite the fact that he was dressed in a good suit of clothes. He was following a few yards behind a gentleman in a long cloak, with the

collar well up round his neck, and his hat low on his head.

I looked at Jim, wondering if he was meditating a daylight robbery, or if he was employed as a body-guard by some anti-Pamellite politician, when I was startled by a deep growl from Sir Trevor. He was standing straight in the path of the cloaked individual.

I comprehended the situation at once.

"Hullo, Jim!" I said, "this is an old friend of mine," and I pushed my arm through the arm of my new-found old friend. As I did so I whispered in his ear," If you begin to resist, I'll let the dog get at you. He'll tear your throat out before any one can save you."

Sir Trevor, showing his teeth in a way that confirmed my words, fell in behind us.

The man did not say a word. He evidently knew me, and this confirmed my belief that I had got Biglow at last. From my friendly nod to Jim he judged that I had bought him over. He looked round. There was no policeman in sight.

We turned out of a gate; I called a cab, put Biglow in, and followed closely myself. Sir Trevor jumped on us. I shouted to Jim to follow us in another vehicle.

It is a curious fact that, however much imposture a medium practises, even if he starts as an impostor merely, he inevitably comes to believe in the genuineness of spirit-manifestations; he believes there are genuine manifestations, even although his are assisted ones on every occasion. In the same way, Biglow had pretended to mesmerize so many people that he

quite believed there was such a thing as mesmerism, and was prepared to feel as if he were mesmerized on this occasion.

At any rate, he did not make any resistance.

"Take me where she is," I said. He gave the driver an address in Hampstead.

We reached a little villa standing secluded in its own grounds. The door was opened by a person whom I presume to have been the medium of the scene which our friend C—— described.

Biglow looked round. The other cab had not yet appeared. "Tell Jim to wait," I said to our driver; "we shall want both cabs," and then I pushed Biglow inside the hall.

He went into a room leading out of the hall. Evidently the contention which he had made to the Bishop about the expenses consequent on the care of the saint were justified.

"You have brought yourself within reach of the law," I said, "by the abduction of Mrs. Cornish's ward, and I don't doubt you will see the inside of a prison before long. Meanwhile, you have to account to me. Where is Miss Hollies?"

"I will do everything I can," said Biglow. "I do not deny that a spirit appeared at my dear friend Michael Graham's residence, nor that she sometimes condescends to manifest herself here, now that I have devoted myself to the exposition of his philosophy."

"You understand no more of Michael Graham's philosophy than a cow," I answered.

"Indeed I do," he replied. "Being——"

I was not unwilling to pass a few minutes without

further action, as I had seen Sir Trevor bound up the stairs, and knew that, if Stella were in the house, he would soon find her.

A sound of joyful barking cut short his remarks.

"The game is nearly up now, isn't it?" I said.

"Michael Graham was my dearest friend. You want to deprive him of her assistance."

"Not at all," I said, as Sir Trevor came into the room. "I have read every word he has written."

"What do you want, Hugh?" said Stella's voice, quite close to me.

"I want you to come to Mrs. Cornish," I said. "She never received any word about you from her brother, and now she wants you for his sake."

"Very well, Hugh. I'll come if you will wait a little while."

We sat there half an hour, talking about the elections, about Michael Graham's philosophy. Professor C——, the scenery about Beechwood, and many other topics. He exerted himself to produce a good impression on me. I did not feel any anxiety, for Sir Trevor was above—a much more faithful guardian than I had been. At last, a young lady appeared, quietly dressed, with a hat on, and a veil hanging in one or two folds.

"I'm ready now, Hugh," said Stella's voice.

"Stella Hollies," said Biglow, in a tone of the deepest sadness, "reflect; if you go you give up all the work Michael Graham entrusted to you. All of it is lost. They will influence your mind so that you no longer care. They will prevent you from seeing me——

"Oh, not at all," I said. "Miss Hollies is going

to 51, Pembridge Gardens. Call there as often as you can. Could you dine with us to-morrow? Mrs. Cornish will be delighted."

But Professor Biglow had a prior engagement. I put Stella into the cab and let Sir Trevor ride with her. As I got up by the driver I called out to Jim, "Take care of the professor!"

"All right; he's pretty safe with me."

She was won. She looked entrancingly pretty. Those little gloves, how charming to put a ring on the finger beneath—if—— . The veil, too, if the wind would blow it aside—yet, I sadly reflected, if it did I should only see the inside of a hat.

We reached Pembridge Gardens. Mrs. Cornish kissed Stella through her veil and led her away.

Frank came to me that evening in my rooms. He was delighted. "To think, Steddy, after all you found her yourself! Tell me how it happened."

I told him how Sir Trevor had been the principal actor.

"That accounts for the big dog I saw at our house. I wondered how he came there." Then Frank grew very grave.

"There's one thing I want to speak to you about. You won't take it amiss. My mother is in a very precarious state of health. Seeing, or not seeing, Miss Hollies has proved a great shock to her. She did not realize before what it meant The responsibility is too much for her. Now I have a cousin, who lives in Devonshire; she has a charming house——"

"Frank," I broke in; "it seems to me as if, when I was gone, you would all be persuaded again that

Stella doesn't exist; then Bxglow will get hold of her again. She can't go down to Devonshire."

"It isn't that my mother doesn't want to. There's nothing she wants more than to devote herself to her. But it has quite broken her down. It is too much for her altogether. She's an old lady, you must remember."

"There is no way out of it," I said. "When I am gone she will feel isolated. Biglow will get hold of her again. You will all believe she is not real."

"That is impossible," he said, "when once you have heard her speak. Why shouldn't you marry her at once?"

"She would never take me."

"I think you could make her. She has been telling my mother how good Professor Biglow is; how kind he has been to her; how glad she is that you and he made it up, for she is sure you were quarrelling when first you came in. She said that Biglow didn't want her to come away, 'but, of course,' she said, 'I had to do what Hugh told me.' "

"It is rough on her," I said, "but it's the less of two evils for her. I'll ask her to marry me; if she consents I can keep her out of the reach of that man. If I take her abroad and let her see the world, she will know that there is more in life than Michael Graham and his theories."

"Exactly," said Frank, "travel will be the very thing for her; with the people you meet casually it won't seem so strange for her to keep her veil down; she will meet a lot of people on natural terms; get her a blind lady's maid, she'll feel quite at home then."

"I wish you'd stop," I said, "you will spoil the rest

of my humdrum existence if you go on talking like that; I don't think there is a ghost of a chance."

"Why not ? She has not been brought up to act for herself. I should think she would prefer you to Biglow." We did not know then what capacity for independent action lay hid in Stella, waiting for an opportunity to call it forth.

The next morning as I was waiting in Mrs. Cornish's room the door swung open and then closed again; Stella, I judged, must be there. It is a disadvantage to a man to see nothing of the lady he means to propose to. But I was not going to run the risk of losing Stella again.

"Since you went away with Mr. Biglow," I said, "I have been perfectly miserable. I have been looking all over the world for you. Don't you remember what nice times we used to have together?"

"Yes, Hugh."

"You know all about me and my dear old father at home. You haven't forgotten it, have you?"

"No, Hugh."

"I think, Stella, all our misfortunes come from not being frank with each other. I ought to have told you how much I loved you then, but instead of that I sent for Mrs. Cornish to come. Now, Stella, you know so little of the world that perhaps you ought to put off a little longer the one thing I want to beg of you. But I cannot bear to think of your being lost again. If you are not mine now, something tells me that you will never be."

"But, Hugh, ought I not to work for Michael?"'

"Are you sure, Stella, that you understand him? I have read all his writings and they are very difficult."

"Yes, Hugh. At first I understood very well, but he made other discoveries that were very puzzling."

"I do not see how you can expect to understand him rightly without knowing much more. Now, I could take you out into the world. Will you marry me?"

She was silent.

"You were not happy with Mr. Biglow, were you?"

"No!" she said; "and he wanted to make me go to France."

"Think of that!" I said, "just think what a little could have separated us! But you wouldn't go away, would you?"

"No, Hugh; I told him I would not go away. He talked for a long time, and then he became very angry. But I didn't care a bit. He is not like Michael or you; he hasn't any strength."

"Then, Stella, it is settled we will be married as soon as we can."

"Oh, Hugh," she said, "I am worthless in myself, but through what Michael did for me I hope to be something to you."

At this moment Mrs. Cornish came in.

I held out my hand towards Stella. She put hers in mine. I led her to Mrs. Cornish and put both our hands in her hand.

"Stella and I are going to be married."

Mrs. Cornish started. Instead of congratulating us, she said to Stella, "I want to talk to you—please come with me; Mr. Churton will wait a little while."

They went upstairs. In a few minutes Mrs. Cornish came down. The good lady was quite agitated, so agitated that in view of Frank's warning

I became alarmed. But she soon recovered herself, and said: "My dear Hugh, this notion of your marrying Stella is quite out of the question—in after years perhaps, but not now. She does not know anything. She is just marrying you, as she obeyed my wicked brother. She does not love you in the very least."

"is too late, Mrs. Cornish; you should have warned me a year ago. The engagement is made now; it would be very improper to break it off, and first and last I am not going to run the risk of losing her again."

"Is it right for her, Hugh?"

"I will make it right, Mrs. Cornish."

"You will have to be so tender with her—I am so afraid for her, please let her stop with me. I will try to undo the great wrong my brother has done."

I took the dear old lady's hand. I am not sure that I did not kiss her.

"I know better than you what a work I am taking up. But for want of being ready once I nearly lost her. Do not press me any more; you have said what you can; just help us."

Frank had a long talk with his mother. The result was that it was settled we should be married from her house as soon as I received news of my appointment. Mrs. Cornish and Frank wanted to despoil themselves of half of their inheritance for Stella. But I would not hear of it. If she had had money in her own right, I should have been glad, not because it would have added anything to her in my eyes but because I could have made a fairer setting for my jewel in the eyes of the world. But in reality I did not think

much about the setting, for my jewel was invisible.

A discovery I made at this time filled me with uneasiness. If Stella had a retiring, shrinking nature, then I could hope to pass along the path of life without much difficulty—the less attention she attracted the better.

But I found she was awfully fond of talking to Mrs. Cornish, Frank, C——, when he called, which was pretty often; to every one the little chatterbox went on talking. How Michael Graham and she kept it up I can only conjecture.

At length the long expected offer of a post in the Chinese customs came. To my old father I wrote the news of my marriage, asking what a son can ask a father on such an occasion. He promptly sent me a round sum which made it quite easy for me, even if we had to journey twice round the world. I purposely delayed my letter till it was too late for my sisters to come. I could imagine Kate, their spokesman, putting up her eyeglass and saying with her drawl, "Hugh's wife—we like her very much; that is, we should like her if we could see her."

We were married the day before the vessel sailed. I did not know beforehand how I should get over the difficulty of seeing where to put the ring on. She had a very copious veil, many folds of it, and such few of my friends who were there distinctly saw her face underneath, so they all told Mrs. Cornish. Great is the power of imagination! When the moment for the ring difficulty came I was greatly relieved. Stella had condescended to dip her hand in the family flour box for the occasion. That was the first time I had seen any trace of her.

We joined the vessel at Southampton. Those passengers who came on board at Brindisi are like visitors. They find all coteries already formed, and only fall into their appropriate places after a good deal of comment and criticism. I hoped from the first to get a few pleasant acquaintances round Stella, who would entertain her and ward off impertinent curiosity.

My first effort was singularly unfortunate. I can understand the man who said he commenced a long voyage talking like a philosopher and ended it with the conversation of a lady's maid. Trifles are the only things that exist after a three weeks' voyage.

On the back of a deck chair in large gold letters I saw inscribed, "Ponsonby Smith, colonel, 2nd Life Guards."

"I think you've heard my name," I said, introducing myself to the occupant, a man of magnificent proportions, "Hugh Churton."

"Yes," he answered, "I've often heard of you from my brother; glad you're on board ; excuse my not recognising you, but I don't think we've met."

"No," I said; "I knew you by the legend on your chair."

Mrs. Ponsonby Smith received me very frigidly. Her husband had laughed at her way of decorating the chair with his full description, and she took my innocent remark as a piece of ridicule. She tried to start some ill-natured gossip about Stella.

Little Lorrimer, who always repeated her remarks, stopped short once with the words "incurable squint," when I joined a little group of which he was the centre. Stella enjoyed the air, the movement,

the conversations—which never grew deep enough to rouse the fair defender of Michael Graham.

The two most curious individuals on board were De Ivanhoe and Clargis Romano. They loomed about in impossible costumes, tried to talk to everybody, and drove us out of the smoking room, till we voted that they must be suppressed. We soon found out that they were originally, the one a music-hall singer, the other a theatrical agent, but had now entered the service of a patent medicine vendor. They were to be the pioneers in the East of "Sequah's Prairie Oil." The gilded chariot and all the rest was in bulk. They were refrained by the terms of their passage from vending their oil. We had their off-business conversation.

Seymour of the Tokio legation amused us one day by a report of a conversation. He was by himself one day on deck, when De Ivanhoe came up and said, "Well, sir, what do you think of my wife?" Seymour did not know what the man was after, whether he was going to pick a quarrel with him or to confide some grief. He replied very slowly, "Well—in what way do you mean?"

"Well, sir, what do you think of her clothes?"

"Very, very—neat," said Seymour, with the adroitness of a diplomat, making an answer which should not verge on dangerous admiration, and yet at the same time should be acceptable to the presumably somehow ruffled feelings of the husband.

"Yes, sir," answered De Ivanhoe; "my wife is the best dressed woman on board. Call those ladies! There is more stylishness in one of my wife's dresses than in all their rigs." Mrs. De Ivanhoe used to

appear day after day in a new dinner dress, whereas the rest of the ladies reserved themselves for *battue* of more select game.

The De Ivanhoes occupied the state room next mine. One night I heard them talking, in voices evidently intended to carry far,—

"What do you think it is, dear?" said she.

"Oh, it's an eruption, love," he replied.

"Could you cure it, dear?"

"The prairie oil would yank it out of her in a couple of days."

"Why don't you tell him; then she wouldn't always have to wear that veil."

"The Company won't allow it—wait till I meet them on shore."

"Do you understand what Michael meant about the 'path'?" asked Stella of me the next morning.

"It seems to me that it is much more difficult to understand what he meant in reference to matter than with regard to ourselves," I answered. "Don't you feel it would be very difficult to explain to the people we meet here?"

"So difficult I" she said; "there is so much that is new, so many different kinds of people and such different ways of thinking."

"You must get to know them a great deal better before you could make them understand." Then I asked her if she had heard what De Ivanhoe had said the night before. I was afraid his voice had reached her.

"Yes, Hugh," she said, laughing; "he really thinks the Prairie Oil will do everything."

"I think, Stella, we'll stop over a boat at Colombo; you will enjoy seeing a really tropical climate."

We were fortunate enough to secure a bungalow some distance outside the city. It was surrounded by a high and impenetrable hedge of cactus. We sent the servants to find quarters outside, so that here Stella found seclusion like that she was used to at Beechwood. Sir Trevor kept guard. Our maid was invaluable; she was completely blind, and counted for no one.

The man is a poor creature who cannot give his wife a warm and thorough approval; it is the garden ground of the heart in which she can develop properly. Of course to me Stella's transparency was an aberration; my hope of complete happiness lay in her growing out of it. But there were many things to be considered. To alter a condition involving, as Frank put it, every physiological unit in her body, must be a process involving more or less danger—I could not tell how serious. And unless she was thoroughly happy and contented, this danger would be intensified. Then there was the question of her will. She had not found her independent self. She was so wrapped up in what Michael Graham had taught her that for me to disapprove of the condition to which he had reduced her would seem like a disapproval of her altogether. And I was everything to her; she had no other friend or companion—I was all the world to her. I was resolved that she should wish to alter for her own sake; and in all this I was not pretending, for she was so much above me that everything connected with her was lovely and admirable to me. Even this transparency I looked

upon as something beautiful, but very inconvenient. I was not prepared, however, for the thoroughness of my success.

One afternoon I came in hot and dusty. She called out, "Hugh, won't you have a cup of tea?" "Yes," I said; "I'll come directly." But before I moved a little cup of tea wafted along, coming towards me. I sat up and saw, as well as the cup of tea, a little glass vessel—like a beaker, as they call the thin glass cups they use in laboratories.

"What is that, Stella?"

"Drink it," she said.

"But what is it?"

"It doesn't taste at all; it is the best drink in the world."

"Is it a medicine?"

"No ; it is an altering drink."

"What will it alter, Stella?"

"Your coefficient of refraction, Hugh; it will gradually make it equal to one."

Now, during my walks about the city, I had occasionally seen the faces of some men I had known in London, who had come out to posts in the Cingalese civil service. They had not recognised me, and this I had put down to their not expecting to see me there. They would hardly look carefully enough to distinguish me from any other stranger, while I was on the look-out for any one I knew. But it now flashed upon me that I might have been getting transparent all this while—that perhaps my face was a sort of mist.

"Good Heavens, Stella!" I exclaimed, "you haven't been giving me any of that drink before, have you?"

"No, Hugh, not without your knowledge."

"What do you want me to drink it for?"

"You see, Hugh, if you drink it you will become transparent; we shall be like one another. Won't that be nice?"

"Stella," I said, "take that rubbish away."

It was more than I had bargained for. To have a transparent wife is one thing, but to be made transparent oneself is another. However, I had cause to be satisfied. If to make me transparent she thought of using a concoction, perhaps she kept herself transparent by using a similar preparation. If only the bottle would get broken on our voyages!

As soon as I judged that she was sitting down by my side I said,—

"Whatever did you think of giving me that drink for?"

"Well, Hugh, you are just not quite perfect. If you drank that you would——"

"Would what, Stella?"

"Well, Hugh, aren't you just a little bit—a little—violent sometimes?"

"Yes, Stella; it's a horrid fault, and you must help me to conquer it. Whenever I get angry, you make a sign to me, and I'll become calm—that is, if I can see it."

"Oh, Hugh, I can say something to you."

"Very well, but perhaps in my heat I shan't hear you."

"Hadn't you better drink some of that——"

"No, Stella, don't mention it; it isn't the right remedy for my faults. I don't want to be seen and looked at; I don't think about it at all. Michael

Graham invented that drink for girls, not for boys; he would have invented something to prevent them from grabbing things and fighting, if he had turned his attention in that direction."

"That's true," said Stella; "how wise you are, Hugh!"

"No, Stella, it wouldn't do for me to drink that fluid at all. I think you overrate the effect of the liquid on the body, and think too little of its effect on the soul. Michael Graham used it to make your mind good. Now you don't care about being seen, do you?"

"No, I can't bear being seen."

"By me or anybody else, it's just the same; is it, Stella?"

"Yes, just the same. Why should there be any difference, Hugh?"

"Well, Stella," I said, "you see this drink has overcome your moral weakness, and I don't think it is necessary any more. If you could, you should become like other people, and show them that, although they are visible, they needn't let it affect their souls."

"Hugh, I couldn't bear it; besides, Michael wants me as an example of his philosophy. Think how much pains he took with me. Hugh, he was a great man. I must always do as he wanted me to."

Thus I learnt something good and something bad. She warded off opacity by a preparation of some kind, of that I was nearly sure. But she didn't love me. If she loved me, or had begun to love me, she would either hate more to be visible to me than to other people, or else hate it less. Then the time might

come when I should count for something alongside of Michael Graham.

It was a complicated problem. Here was I with my life's happiness at stake; with the most charming, the sweetest girl in the whole world, in this awfully tied up condition of mind and body.

Nature, will it heal her; love, will it restore her?

"Steddy, old man," a voice seemed to whisper to me, "give her time; don't hurry where you don't know. You've got to be father and mother, and school friends and young men and women, lover, and husband, and bridegroom to her. Your devil is Michael Graham, your heaven Stella's perfected arms."

As you have already surmised, I had persuaded Stella to wear something of the conventional garb while we were travelling. Her idea was that, if she wore anything at all, it should be as loosely fitting as possible. She affected long cloaks and mantles.

But I was ably seconded by Ann, who had been a clever dressmaker, and still in her blindness retained enough of her skill to make a few well-fitting gowns. When the wind blew, or when the heat made Stella forget to wrap herself up, I gazed on a figure not so slight as you would imagine, but lithe and active, like a girl of the open air and hunting field would have been.

Indeed, it was no part of Michael Graham's plan to rob her of vigour or grace, but to rob the sight of it from my eyes.

At Hong Kong a reception was prepared for us of the very kind I should have most wished to avoid.

Mrs. Ponsonby Smith had arrived by an earlier

boat, and in the course of a call on one of the ladies of the place happened to talk about us.

"Poor Mr. Churton," she said, "is coming here. His wife, you know, squints most dreadfully; she always has to wear a veil; she isn't presentable; we were very sorry for them. He was obliged to bring her out here, where it doesn't matter so much."

The idea that not being presentable did not matter in the centre of the fashion of the Far East had never occurred to the ladies of the Peak. From this and sundry other remarks of Mrs. Ponsonby Smith's, they discovered that she was desperately envious; that she had been completely cut out during the whole voyage by a girl who didn't even need to show her face. Nobody on board had paid the slightest attention to her, they said, and she revenged herself by spreading these reports.

To account for Stella's hiding her face, they made out that I was a monster of jealousy—a regular Turk, and they determined, as soon as Stella arrived, to teach her to assert herself.

Thus, although I had purposely brought out no letters of introduction, I was greeted most cordially by the few officers I knew, and when I put in an appearance at the club, was introduced, before I could make my escape, to at least a dozen gentlemen, who promised themselves and their wives the pleasure of calling on me and mine.

We could not escape them always; besides, Stella had not the least desire to withhold herself from the world. She wanted to talk and not to be seen; *I* wanted her to be seen and talk, to keep up a kind of balance between the two.

"When Lady Des Voeuxa calls," I said, "you must not keep your veil down. You can do it when you call there, but not when she comes here."

"Then," said Stella, "she will see just how I am, and people will ask you more than you can tell them about Michael."

"No, Stella; you must powder or paint."

"How can you!" she said, and went out of the room.

The fact is—I only got to understand it by repeated experience—that she really felt as if being seen was—she felt about it as a well-bred lady would about exposing more of her person than society permits. It was not a thing to be argued about or discussed; it was simply impossible. In Stella's case, however, there was no society whose verdict might alter her views. Her etiquette was settled by Michael Graham.

"So you are married, Churton, are you?" said an old Blackheath friend, who had been ploughed a few years before myself. "Lucky fellow, you are sure to come in for the good things in the service. The chief's as obstinate as sin—never listens to any representations; but he likes to drop in at the ladies' tea-parties. Never heard of a man with a pretty wife being stuck away at one of the outposts."

This determined me. It was evident that with the community so much interested in Stella—although the reason for their interest was not known to me at the time—it would be impossible to keep our secret for very long. As soon as I could I obtained an interview with Sir Richard, and begged to be appointed to one of the remoter stations.

He received me with great kindness, but seemed

surprised at my request "Hearing that you were married," he said, "I took some pains to make a vacancy for you where you would find congenial society. But since you prefer it, you can certainly go to Wanfoo, the place I designed for you at first. You had better go by the *City of Aberdeen*, according to my previous arrangement for you. She leaves in a week."

It is a curious contrast to pass from a P. & O. liner to a Chinese coasting steamer. There we were amidst a crowd of Europeans; on the *City of Aberdeen* there were a handful of us amidst a mass of celestials.

Our first officer was a Swede. Like many old seafaring men, he had lost all disposition to talk. He told me that at home he would sit silent the whole evening long, his wife beside him silent too. Judging from Stella, I imagine that he had subjected her to a long course of discipline. We had books. That long study of Michael Graham's philosophy had given me a taste for literature that was not by him. Stella was delighted in everything; the amount of ideas that passed through her little head in a day was extraordinary; some of them, I hoped, might help to counteract her early training. The officers were all good fellows. If Mrs. Churton kept her veil down, they did not inquire why. If they wanted to look at a female face, they had their photographs. They could do Sunday duty—the sailor's expression for turning over tht cartes-de-visite of the girls he has left behind at various ports. Now that the *gêne* of other passengers was removed, there was not a

single irksome moment; indeed, at one time the interest became too intense.

Bolton, our second officer, looked like a boy; he was the smallest man I have ever seen filling a responsible position at sea. But he was the most active and resourceful of all our company. At night he would bring out his mandolin. Sometimes, when it was very dark, Stella would take it from him and play and sing.

"Don't you think. Captain," I said one evening, as we were taking a turn together, " that there are very few of us compared to the number of Chinese we carry?"

"Not a bit," he said. "They are peaceful enough —a Chinaman doesn't think of anything but trade."

"But there are many pirates."

"Yes, but they are only formidable to junks, not to a steamer like this."

We had plenty of accommodation on board, occupying two large state rooms on the main deck. The saloon was rather small, and a narrow passage led from it to our rooms. We had engaged a Chinese amah to wait on Ann. Ann was quite an object of reverence to the Chinese; she was blind, and the unfortunate girl was deeply pitted with the small-pox. The combination of these misfortunes seems to affect the Chinese mind as proof of the special favour of Heaven.

One of the most conspicuous objects forward was a large joss. It was lashed just outside the engine room, its owner-worshippers having begged for it to remain on deck. It was large, but very light—it was not solid wood, but was hollowed out inside.

Stella and I were discussing its appearance one day, when two or three coolies came and began knocking their heads down before it

I felt Stella's hand tremble on my arm. "Oh, it is horrible, horrible," I heard her say. "I do not know what they mean, but it's something horrible."

"Come back, dear," I said. "I did not know you would be so shocked at a bit of superstition."

"It is not that," she said, "but it is some horrible evil—I believe they are going to murder us all."

It was curious her chiming in so exactly with my apprehensions. I had a talk with the chief officer.

"Not the least danger," he said; "these are just ordinary coolies going north. We carry them by the thousand. There are fewer on board than usual. Besides, they have no arms, while we are well provided; and there are the steam-pipes."

But the voyage was spoilt for us. Stella spent all her time in trying to understand the amah. In a few days she made a certain amount of progress. As for me, I kept an active watch most of the night, walking up and down, keeping my eyes open while the water flew past.

It was near dawn. I was in the bows, looking ahead at a light which showed from the yard-arm of some native vessel in the distance, when behind me there was the noise of a scuffle, a struggle, a couple of shots, and then a rush and strange, outlandish shouting.

It had come at last. Stella had been in the right. A number of pirates had come on board under the guise of labourers, and they were trying to seize the ship. The attack was too sudden and well concerted

to be resisted — when I got back to the main hatchway resistance was well nigh over. The engine-room was full of the villains.

Fighting clear of those that attacked me, I ran to the saloon. In front of me I saw a couple of men making for Stella's room. I could not reach them, for I was seized and then secured in an effective way. To make short work, they simply drove a couple of spike nails through my arms into the woodwork of the passage. But Stella had a defender. Sir Trevor had one of the men by the throat, and would have dragged them both down had not the other stabbed him again and again.

Trevor out of the way, there was nothing to prevent them forcing the door. But to my surprise it opened. The Chinese girl came out. One of the men, stepping forward, stumbled and fell, as if he were tripped up. Some others came up, and they searched the state rooms right and left, but there was no sign of Stella. Soon convincing themselves that there was no one in that part of the ship, and satisfying themselves that I was securely fastened, they went away to look for plunder.

They went to work systematically. I could hear them overhauling the cargo. By the grating of a vessel at the side of ours, I judged that the light I had seen was a signal. The seizure had been carefully planned, and there were junks waiting to take off the booty.

But suddenly the confusion began again. The Chinamen were excitedly running from side to side. To my intense surprise and alarm, I heard Stella's voice. She was singing—singing in her loudest

tones. Had the poor girl gone mad with terror? But the notes were not agitated or hurried. She was simply singing extremely well. As soon as she had got to the end of one operatic air she began another.

The mystery of the Chinamen's confusion was soon explained, for shortly I saw the joss coming along, moving in the air, flying, and making motions in all directions, petrifying the Chinamen by his miraculous activity. Then I understood that Stella had taken advantage of the delay occasioned by Sir Trevor's defence.

She had found no difficulty in slipping past the ruffians who went to secure her, and she it was who brought the joss on to the scene.

She chose her songs with remarkable discernment; for the music which the Chinese think the most ravishingly sweet is the most bewildering and terror-inspiring in our ears. And so to their ears nothing could be more uncanny and full of deathly terror than our love songs. It was "Home, Sweet Home" as she approached me.

"Take that hammer at my feet," I said; "go into the steward's room. The nails have gone right through."

She went into the room; soon I felt the welcome tap and the loosening of the nails—I was free.

Although the Chinese were astonished at the joss, they did not show any signs of loosening hold of their prey.

"Get them all the money you can," said Stella "then perhaps they will go."

I went to the purser's room. He was inside. "Let me in," I said.

"Is there any one about?"

"No," I said; "make haste."

He opened the door wide enough for me to slip through. He was standing there. He had put his pistol down to let me in.

"Give me the money," I said; "I believe I can get them to go."

"No," he said; "that money goes down with the ship—they will only murder us afterwards if they get it."

There was no time to argue—I took up his revolver and pointed it at him. "I am going to get out of this mess in my own way," I said; "you've got us into it."

"That's true," he said—"there's the coin." He knew that if he hesitated I should have murdered him.

We took each of us a handle of the chest; it was as much as we could lift. He went backwards. I could see the joss and followed it. We put the money down in the saloon before a man who seemed to be the leader.

We did not sec where the box went, for we were instantly thrown down and most cruelly bound, and then thrown down into the lower deck amongst a heap of other men similarly tied.

The sounds above continued, I should say for an hour, then gradually grew less.

"Here we are till she sinks," said a voice.

"Who are you?" I asked.

"Bolton."

"Why should she sink?"

"Of course they've scuttled her; don't you hear the water pouring in? I suppose they didn't want to

cut us about, in case our bodies should be found. But she's going down all the same."

At that moment I felt the ropes which bound me gently pulled—a moment later they loosened. A knife was cutting through them.

As soon as I was loose, I seized the knife from Stella's hand and cut Bolton free. He drew out his knife and we cut the others loose. Then Bolton's qualities came out. The captain and the chief being too badly wounded to move, he took the command. He allowed no one even to stir. He crept up quietly, and saw the junks a short distance away.

No one of us showed himself on deck, but the engineers crept down and made up the boiler fires, which had sunk low. Such of the holes as we could get at we plugged with bolts of wood. Of course with the junks so close, it was no use doing anything till we had got up steam. It was a race between the water and the fires. But there had not been time for the fires to sink very low—the pirates had not thought of dousing them.

After an interminable time, as we were at our different posts, some of us trying in vain to patch up a started plate, the rest attending to the fires, we heard the welcome pulsation of the engine. But the *City of Aberdeen* did not begin to move.

Bolton shouted to me to come on deck. Already a bright stream of water was flowing from the skuppers—the pumping engines were at work!

The screw did not revolve till the ship floated clear. The junks were about a mile away. Far off was the dim line of the shore; the leadsman in the bows sang out, "Twelve."

Bolton was on the bridge working the ship.

Her head began to go round towards the junks.

"What does he mean to do?" said Stella's voice at my side.

"He means to run down those junks," I replied.

"Oh, Hugh, I promised them safety and money if they would spare our lives."

"You did?"

"I did, or the joss did; it's all the same."

"They couldn't understand you."

"Yes, I know enough for that—I learnt how to say that."

"Well," I answered, "I suppose we must stick by your word. Where is that joss?"

"It jumped after them into their last boat."

I went on the bridge.

"Bolton," I said, "I am not going to stand any more fooling; you've precious nearly got us all murdered. I demand that you stand on a straight course."

He didn't answer me; we were nearly pointing at the junks.

I seized the telegraph.

"Drop that, or I'll put you in irons," he said.

Just then the doctor came up and whispered something to him.

"Mr. Churton," said Bolton, "I beg your pardon; I won't run down those junks unless you wish it. There is very little wind, they can't get away. Please, sir, go down and have your wounds seen to."

"You promise not to go after the junks unless I consent?"

"I promise."

As I turned to go down Bolton put his hand to his face.

The doctor took me down. The captain was lying on one of the saloon tables—his leg was broken. One of the engineers was there looking dazed; he had been rendered unconscious by a blow on the head, but had just come to.

When my wounds were bandaged the doctor said, "Drink this," pouring out a stiff glass of whisky.

"That's rather more than my share," I said.

"Drink it up; you've enough to stand," he said.

I drank it up. Then the doctor fairly broke down.

"It's you that need the whisky, not I," I said.

"Stop!" he cried; "you must be told. Everybody on board except your wife!"

I started.

"She must have jumped overboard—she is lost."

He spoke in such grief that a sudden constriction seized my chest. But at that moment the empty whisky tumbler by me tinkled, as if some one flicked it with a finger nail. I knew Stella's little sign.

"She's only hiding," I said; "she'll come out by-and-by."

Captain Smith broke out, "No, sir; every corner has been searched for the lady. God bless her! She is nowhere."

"Now," cried the doctor, "we'll run those junks down."

"Ask Bolton to come here a minute," I said.

It took a few minutes for Bolton to get replaced. As he came into the saloon Stella appeared in the passage in her nicest dress, her gloves on as usual.

"Am I too late to help, doctor?" she said, in a perfectly composed manner. "How are his arms? Are they very bad?"

The doctor gave one gasp. Then he broke out in a frantic cheer. It was re-echoed all over the ship as loudly as the united voices of a dozen Europeans could effect it.

When I went on deck the ship was turning. We were not very far from a junk, in the stem of which the joss, supported at the end of a pole, was waving wildly in the air. We cleared them by a few yards.

Our pumps kept the water from gaining seriously, and soon Bolton had a sail drawn under the bows and looped up on each side. This enabled us to get at the started plate, and we stuffed a bag of cotton waste into it. The next day we met a Russian cruiser. The commander sent a couple of artificers on board, and they built up a false side for us in a few hours. He likewise spared us a few of his stokers, as it was absolutely impossible for us to keep up the fires without assistance. Then he went in chase of the pirates, but I am not aware that he ever caught them. No one knew how we got loose. The kindly sailors had a joke that Stella knew more about a ship than they did, for she could find a place to hide in that no mortal sailor knew. What part she played they will never know, unless you happen to meet them and tell them.

We committed Sir Trevor's body to the deep. Stella was inconsolable. But I could hardly be sorry for him. He is in the dogs' Walhalla—in that part of it where one dog can say to another, "I left from a bear hunt," or, "I came here from a row with the

Chinese." What better things can any dog or man hope to say?

It was not easy at my post to find rural solitude, but we obtained the best approximation by renting a mandarin's country villa. There every day I returned after the working hours to be welcomed by a stream of light pouring forth from the windows, or a song wafted on the breeze. But light and song were not all I wanted. Still Michael Graham and his bequest of invisibility remained—even there, where the pressure of the myriads of an alien race gather all chance sojourners, however incongruous, into a friendly union. Strange, enchanting Stella, a spark of a different fire from the smouldering animations of the East—was she as different also from me? She was perpetually interested and pleased with our little society, with the ways of the people, with the natives. She learned to speak to them with extraordinary rapidity, and assured me that the ladies of our district had by no means the limited intelligence and confined life we ascribed to them.

But as for myself, the climate, or whatever it was, made me grow irritable. There was enough at the office to occupy the most captious mind. But even when I reached home I was content with nothing.

One acquisition which I had long desired came to me in a singular way. Although it gave me great inward satisfaction, it hardly improved matters at all; an increasing irritability crept on me which made me wonder that Stella could endure to be shut up with such a brute. The acquisition was a wedding present from Biglow. He called it a wedding restitution, as he said he hardly expected that I should

be willing to receive a wedding present from him. It was the mass of passages relating to Stella which had been abstracted from Michael Graham's writings. One passage; which came oddly enough under the subject of religion, seemed to indicate that the writer contemplated the possibility of Stella at some time assuming the normal aspect. But I did not choose to show it to her. I preferred to win her against, rather than with, the aid of my enemy. I merely told her that I had found the most reasonable idea in the whole of the philosophy.

The mass of pages lay before me. I expected Stella would want to see them, but she did not show any curiosity. When they were put away she said,—

"What a lovely place you have brought me to, Hugh! I am so happy here."

"The shooting is beastly," I said; "paddy fields all day, and no bag at the end; the wretched natives lurk behind the reeds on purpose, and if you pepper one, a whole village turns out to stone you."

"Hugh, you never come back without something. Think of the splendid wild geese you brought home yesterday; they will last us a week."

"I suppose it is a bit of sinfulness in them to put on all that colour and show?"

She didn't answer this, but said, "Mrs. Tsen Yu came here today ; I could talk quite easily to her. She says she wants to learn English."

"It is extraordinary that you like this place," I said; "you wanted so much to tell Mr. Graham's doctrines to the civilized world. How can you be quite happy in this out-of-the-way comer?"

"Oh, here," she said, "I know I am doing a little

good. I like the people and they like us ; there is nothing strange and rough—I can just be myself."

"It is a delusion, that doing good," I said.

"How, Hugh?"

"Why, you'll soon be doing something mysterious, and make them all believe more strongly in their idolatry. When you took up Biglow you only made some crack-brained creatures crackier. I don't know that anybody was the better for it; I don't see how you can do any real good as you are."

She didn't answer.

"You might say," I went on, "that you did some good on the steamer; of course that was to one's advantage, but it was bad on the whole. You inculcated those pirates with a degree of superstition it will take hundreds of missionaries to eradicate. That moving joss will go all over China, and be a bar to the dissemination of truth. You little contemplate how, wherever you go, people will be plunged into the blackest superstition."

"Hugh, I don't think it is so bad as that."

"What are those men doing there?" I said, seeing a couple of coolies who were moving some trees in the garden.

"They are making a tennis ground Hugh; then your friends can have a game when they come up to see you."

"I wanted those trees particularly for the shade," I said.

She didn't answer. I saw the door open and then close. I thought she had left the room.

When the door closed I put my head on my hands. This was not the sort of thing I had looked forward

to. Here I was finding fault with everything she did, behaving like a brute. Involuntarily I said, "Great God, grant that some day she may bear my image as faithfully in her heart as she does Michael's. Do not let me ever forget that she is her tender, dear self."

Suddenly I felt two arms flung about me. Her lips pressed close to mine.

"Hugh, dear, I will do as you want I am your very own—all yours."

From that day she paid no more heed to the secret which, whatever it was, held her from me, the immolated victim of a confused philosophy.

You have seen the angels' faces, where the old painters pourtraying the new Jerusalem let the Divine love reveal itself for the first time through their colours—it was such a face that began to shine on me.

Every day, when I came back from the customs, I could ask no greater joy than to watch where, as it were from a halo, my gracious Stella became real to me. I cannot say that she had shown any great unlikeness in her behaviour from that which any other loving, faithful girl would have shown, brought up in her peculiar circumstances; but she seemed to become more natural to me. Those impulses and that interest in trifles which is so charming in women seemed to grow stronger. I was pleased when she asked me about the papers I had received from Biglow, for I thought it somewhat unreal for her not to want to know about them.

"What was that passage you said you liked best of all, Hugh?"

"It comes strangely enough at the end of a passage about religion; the first part is in the usual style, the last piece is what I like;" and I read it her:—

"As the light of certainty spreads around physical research, the old beliefs tend to disappear, so little capable as they are of objective proof. With a feeling akin to despair we see crumbling away the fabric we had reared to save the clasp of brotherhood, love strong in death, human personality itself.

"But is not the cause obvious ? We start with a presupposition—we start with a limited notion of substance. Naturally, with a limit set to the possibilities of matter, we find no adequate representation in material terms for much that we feel, apprehending it directly outside t;he artificial sphere of thought. But to conceive no adequate representation in matter is to conceive as unreal, as impossible.

"One turn and the whole difficulty falls away. We have erred as often before, in assuming as an ultimate what is merely a relative term. We must explore the higher matter, that to which our matter, as we conceive it, is but an abstraction. Entering on this path we become aware that in religion we have an intimation of realities, which, from the most concrete and physical point of view, are infinitely important to us. I can only illustrate the view which comes after the first few steps in this direction by comparing the history of man, in respect to religion, to what might very well happen if by chance some man meeting my Stella, without a word of guidance, were to become aware of her, and, imagining her to be a spirit, to love her. She would seem unreal to him, having no share

in the greater part of his life. But gradually manifestation after manifestation of reality would come, till at last he found a helpmate as real as anything in his life before, but infinitely more important to him."

"Hugh," she said, "if I had only been a clever woman, instead of an uneducated girl."

"But, Stella, you are not uneducated; you know a great deal."

"I tried to study, but it was so interrupted! It will be very convenient," she added, looking at her hand where it rested, visible now, even to the delicate finger tips.

"Of course it will, it must have been awfully inconvenient."

"I didn't think it so; but once I did. You know Michael got a gentleman to come down from London to give me lessons on the piano—he came once or twice. Then one day he wouldn't give me a lesson, but went out of the room. I heard him talking to Michael quite fiercely. He said he would not be mocked; he would not teach a girl with gloves on."

It was so much easier to talk to Stella when I could see her. One thing I did not mention to her: my old father had been writing to me to come back. My brother having come into some property from distant relatives, fresh family arrangements had been made. He wanted me to come back and keep up the old place. But I did not like to take the old house and give up the horses, give up the position he had held in the country. It seemed better to be making money in China than to be struggling to make both ends meet at home. Stella, I knew, would want me to do what would please my father best. She had.

simply from hearing me talk of him, a touching devotion to him.

Thinking of the question of money, I said, "I am always surprised that you could have borne to stay with that venal Biglow, making money out of Michael Graham and your peculiarity."

She opened her eyes very wide. "Why, Hugh, we spent a great deal of money."

"You spent a great deal of money? Where did you get it from? I didn't know Biglow had any."

"But, Hugh, every month I spent two hundred pounds, and he spent as much more, for he said we would pay equally."

"Wherever did you get the money from?"

"By writing on a bit of paper—Michael Graham taught me how."

"Show me."

She took a piece of notepaper, and wrote :—

"WANFOO, *August 29th*, 1889.

"Pay to bearer one hundred pounds.

"STELLA HOLLIES.

"To CHILD'S BANK, LONDON."

"That's not your right name," I said.

"No—I know it is not ; but I have not written to tell them I was married."

"Do you mean to say they honoured that?" I asked.

"Of course, Hugh. Michael told me not to spend more than two hundred pounds a month, unless I wanted to buy anything expensive: then I was to go to Mr. Underwood in the City."

"Have you been to him? How does he know you?"

"He knows me by my voice, and by my writing. He is such a kind man; but last time I went he would not give me any money."

"Why not?"

"You see, Hugh, Mr. Biglow thought it would be a good thing to found a college for the study of Michael Graham's works—not for young students, you know, but when they had finished their college courses. He wanted me to give eight thousand pounds, and he would give eight thousand pounds and start it."

"So Mr. Underwood would not let you have that money?"

"No, he said he would not; and he told me to send Mr. Biglow to him."

The sacred hunger for money, I thought, is the cause of most good things. If Biglow had been content with drawing that two hundred a month, he might have gone on indefinitely. But he tried to get an extra thousand out of the bishop, and gave me a clue just in time.

I found, on communicating with Mr. Underwood, that Stella had a moderate fortune in her own right, derived chiefly, I expect, from the economies of Michael Graham's unostentatious way of life.

This made our course quite plain. We remained at my post for some time longer; then, Stella having still a very transparent complexion, we started on our way home, taking care to avoid a boat carrying coolies. I took Mrs. Churton to Pekin to call on Sir Richard Part. She and he became very good friends.

She received quite an ovation from the ladies of Hong-Kong. They admired the complete way in which Stella had put down my monstrous disposition to jealousy. Her accomplishments in this respect were a passport to their sympathies.

You can imagine how glad Frank, Mrs. Cornish, and we were to meet again, for my occupation in China had threatened a life-long separation. I have the unlimited admiration from my sisters for a wise and judicious selection in my marriage. It is the quality they admire most in a man. You will get on splendidly with Stella; she is fonder of a talk than of anything else. Is there any trace, you ask, of weakness, or any effect from the peculiar condition in which she remained for so long? None, that I am aware of, except this, perhaps. My boy upstairs astonished the nurse by being born transparent; however, he soon took in enough of this wicked world's nutriment to become as opaque as the rest of us.

CHAPTER III

CONCLUSION

IT was evening when Churton finished. I was so much interested in anything that concerned my old friend that the time had slipped imperceptibly away. Walking towards the house he said,—

"I've told you this for a purpose."

"What is it?"

"Talk to her; you will find out."

But the days passed away without any occasion arising. It was a pleasant house to be in, and there were other guests. At length late one afternoon, breaking into the subject, I said, as we were sitting together,—

"Did you never, Mrs. Churton, feel any resentment for the strange condition in which Mr. Graham left you?"

She looked at me with an expression of surprise, whether because I asked the question at all, or because of the idea I suggested, I could not tell.

"Oh, no! I was so willing; any one who knew him would have been."

"Well, it has ended happily!"

"Yes, Hugh puts everything to rights; but I feel as if I had forgotten something, as if we all had forgotten. He cared so much——"

"For his experiments?"

"No, for people, for all people. I cannot be quite happy often."

"But what can you do?"

"That is the sadness. I don't know how to do what he wanted."

"Well," I said, "that is the fate of all unintelligible philosophies."

"You must not judge," she said, "by Hugh or me; we could not explain it to you. I understood what he said at first, but I could not understand the 'Path.' You see, it was so sad that Michael had only an ordinary girl to talk to. I think he left out something, and supposed that I knew it."

"Have you his papers here?" I asked.

I would have done a good deal for the look of gratitude she gave me when I commenced to read the great pile in which Michael Graham had recorded his labours.

It must have cost Churton a great effort to have toiled through them—as you have already gathered he has even more than the average English incapacity for ideas. But I mastered their contents, and that is how this present narrative comes to be written, for one day I said to her that people would be interested in Michael Graham if they knew about her.

She, looking at me with that expression which loving faithfulness to the dead brings into the face of beautiful women, answered,—

"Why not tell them?"

"Would Hugh like it?" I asked.

"No one would connect it with us," she said; "no one except the one or two who know already, and Hugh hasn't read anything except the newspapers since he began to fight the railway. I don't think he'd mind anything that is written in a book."

An Unfinished Communication

CHAPTER I

I WAS traversing a quarter of New York in which the streets, winding and squalid, with low buildings on either hand, resemble the alleys of an old world city. Turning a corner, I was in the most dejected of all that I had passed. Some vigorous, successful effort no doubt had its origin here, but the street was more like the last halting-place but one in a weary and dispirited struggle.

Yet even here were signs of that feverish activity which makes even the most squalid streets of our land different from those of the old world. Little stores wedged themselves in the basements; narrow, strip-like eating-houses thrust themselves into impossibly small spaces. Here and there a bell-pull wrenched off betokened the common lodging-house, while scattered over all the grimy windows and doors were the notices of decaying trades, the signs of struggling hand industries, the advertisements of professors in the last stage of indigence. Bootmakers, flower-makers, a dancing mistress, piano lessons, shorthand in five weeks, all these I read. Jetson Street seemed a favourite camping-ground for the cheap lesson-giver. Wearied with these sordid details, I passed rapidly on, buried in my thoughts.

But even in the least attentive mood an unusual word, a mis-spelling, an incongruity of any kind has the power to attract the eye and cause it to send a signal to the brain. There was a house opposite which, by its carefully patched and preserved paint, its unbroken railings, seemed to suggest that it had struggled painfully to preserve appearances, and only succumbed finally because after all it was in Jetson Street. On the door was the unusual notice that took my eye. A plain drab board had the words—

MR. SMITH,

UNLEARNER.

Of all the misdirected efforts towards earning a livelihood this, I thought, is the most futile, and I paused to smile at the foolishness that put it up. What weary, dull-eyed failure was it who, unable to succeed in any pursuit, advertised himself as willing to impart his incapacity to others? But as I stopped there somehow came into my mind the idea, that genuine services such as this foolish creature pretended to offer might not be unacceptable to myself. How pleasant it would be to let pass away some of that verbiage I learnt at school—learnt because teachers must live, I suppose. The apeing and prolonged caw called grammar, the cackling of the human hen over the egg of language—I should like to unlearn grammar. The sense came over me, faintly at first, but gathering strength, of how much I should owe to any man who would rid me of what I learned at college—that plastering over of the face of nature, that series of tricks and devices whereby they teach a man knowing nothing of reality to talk

of it as if he did. There passed before my mind that pallid series of ghosts, ghosts of what had once been some man's living, practical work, the books by which professors—because they must live, I suppose—keep younger men from life and work.

A gleam of hope came over me that I might forget my philosophy lectures and the teachings of that bespectacled Doctor of all the sciences, who always turned the handle the wrong way, while he told us the principles by which things go. The line at infinity, it would be nice to forget that—and the unconscious will—the principle of being and not being too, which, not much in itself, yet, like an active commercial traveller, makes business at both ends.

It would be pleasant too to forget the Darwinian theory, which tells me things are as they are because they are not something else; and astronomy, which kicks the globe into companionless cold space; and physics, which tells us we are but the result of multitudes of moving particles. If all these were to sink and disappear from me, then perhaps I should be face to face with something not a spectre, not an instance and example of a phase, a formula, a barren set of words.

The letters stared me in the face unmistakably, for I had approached close to the house. When seen near, its apparent superiority to its surroundings vanished. But the inscription on the board was clear, emphatic, and, as paint was estimated in that street, of not such very ancient date.

Perhaps here, in this obscure corner, is some neglected philosopher, who, like Socrates, can teach a willing listener that he does not know. Perhaps at

his words that hollow crust will crumble away, that is each man's idea of himself and his fellows, letting the man himself be known.

Could he really teach me not to know—to be as though I had not known—would not that be to forget? To pass out of those shades of vast and poisonous thoughts co-eval with the race? Could he wipe out those foul ideas that pollute man's strength and woman's beauty—can he make the mind as though they had never been? Can he take away those thoughts that cast their withering shade over earth's fair flowers and turn the man to brute? Can he put an end to divided endeavours and self-contemptuous indifference ?

If I could forget—lose consciousness of those ineptitudes which show me too plainly what I am; forget the helpless ending of all hope, the hollow emptiness that fills the place in me, of friendship, love, and truth.

Hastily I stepped up to the door and pulled the bell. But instead of a vigorous peal the wire creaked far in its bearings. I stood looking at the door—the paint had long lost all trace of its original colour; it was covered with marks, chipped here and there in flakes, worn through where it had been rubbed and kicked by entering feet.

A curious gate, but it opened. In the dark passage I saw a woman, a little child was hanging to her gown; another smaller still she carried in her arms; from far beyond there came the sound of crying.

"Is Mr. Smith in?"

I looked with interest at this porteress of the porch.

She was fastening her dress at the neck, her hair came straggling over her face, and her gown was shabby; but her form, strong and substantial, had a touch of antique grace. Comely but unanimated features surmounted her deep bosom. Her eyes moved slowly towards me like the placid eyes of a browsing ox, as she answered me with deliberation.

"He's left here."

"Where has he gone?"

"Jenny," she called out, "where's Mr. Smith's trunk gone to?"

"Don't know," returned Jenny's voice.

Here was an end of my inquiry, but I asked,—

"Had he much to do?"

"I don't know that any one came to see him, though perhaps he let them in himself."

"Did he say anything to you?"

"He wasn't the kind that talks much; he kind of kept to himself."

"Do you remember anything he said?"

"Well, he did say as I was a better one in his line than he was himself, but I guess that was one of his ways."

"What sort of man was he?"

"Oh, nothing in particular; you sort of felt you'd seen him before. He'd a black beard and kind of looked you through."

Jenny's voice came from the upper landing. "His trunk ain't gone yet." In obedience to a howl from below, she moved off to little Harry or Susan or Jane or one of the swarm.

As I walked away I was glad that I had avoided meeting some seedy individual ready to spout his

nonsense. But it was not clear to me what he meant by his signboard And what did he mean by his remark to the woman? Was it a joke at his unsuccess? He said she taught better than he did—taught unlearning better. What did he mean? Unlearning, forgetting! Why, I thought, of course the woman is an infinitely better professor of the art than he could ever be. For what is childhood save a vast forgetting, all the piled-up pack of cards, the theories, aims, strifes, emulations of a generation cast down in one sweep of oblivion, no vestige remaining. Yes, Mr. Smith is capable of a shrewd remark. Is it not as if mankind longed for the same thing that I do, and sought for it from woman? Forgetting, wiping out, the capacity of beginning again. Remorse wiped out, the ignominy of being sunk lower than any conceivable degree of unmanliness—this faded completely away! Is this then the secret of the tendency of man to woman—the longing for forgetfulness of the race? She, the soft Lethe, wherein all errors are forgotten? Love, the desire of forgetting? Are we but falsely what we think we are, this wrapped-up system of membranes, arteries, vessels but a secondary part of life, the real thing that passing on, that birth and re-birth, the proceeding to happy oblivion after oblivion: and man an eddy in the current, a loitering, a delay, a complicated error, a worked-up stage with a horrible power of mismanagement, hiniself a mistake, his chief passion to be forgotten? Strange that most reasons for wishing to forget come through women, and woman is the means of forgetting—woman her own antidote. But I had rather see what Smith has to say.

CHAPTER II

ON my left was the grey sea; before, behind, and on my right stretched an unbroken waste of sand, level and smooth where it approached the ocean, but beyond the last line of the sweep of the storm rising in little grass-covered hills. All around was monotonous and still. The clouds hung low in a great darkening veil, and the thick, blurred air was laden with fog. It was one of those days on which Nature makes herself all alike, letting all the jarring differences fall away and presenting an image of rest and peace. The only breaks in the great sameness were the furrows left by the ripples of the falling tide, and myself, a black speck, troubling the. immensity. The marks on the sand would soon be swept into oblivion by the rising ocean in its advance. But I—well! if it were to happen, no one in the world would care, no wheel of business or friendship would be hampered—so little was there in my life that I had come fifty miles out of my way, had given up a day and accepted the prospect of a night at a miserable boarding-house, in order to meet an individual from whom I could by no possibility get any good, who probably was an impudent pedant. I had sent to his landlady for Mr. Smith's address, and on the eve of starting for a journey to the south had received a scarcely legible scrawl, in which she informed me that the professor was at the little out-of-the-way

fishing village which I had just left. I had arrived in the morning; singularly enough the little steamer which set me down at this remote spot bore two other passengers for the same place. We had exchanged words. One of them was an artist who had his sketching things with him, a man of a singularly refined and pleasing expression; a brow beautifully moulded; and a mobile countenance, but worn—a bohemian evidently, who mingled the delights of art with the chance pleasures of a careless crowd. The other was a contrast in every way; he was robust and square cut, carefully dressed, speaking in a slow, deliberate manner, with an air of thought about him which was contradicted by the paraphernalia he put into the boat that took us off—the sample cases of a commercial traveller. We all three came to the boarding-house, which was the only accommodation the village afforded. I made inquiries as to Mr. Smith's presence, and learnt that he had gone out early that morning, intending to walk to a still smaller village farther along the coast and return in the evening. Accordingly I had determined to go out and meet him on his return journey. I had no fear of not recognising him or not meeting him; there was but one path, and the sandy vista of coast presented no figures but those of fishermen near at hand waiting by their boats.

The path left the level sands and wandered up and down amongst the sand hills—hills produced by nothing but the ceaseless winds, but made permanent by the coarse and straggling grass. At a turn in the winding path I suddenly came face to face with the man I sought. He was tall, dark, and walked rapidly;

his eyes were keen and piercing, but he did not look at me till, standing directly in his path, I said, "Mr. Smith, I believe." With a gesture of his arm he arrested my hand, which I had involuntarily raised; he looked me in the face and said," Excuse me, we have not met before." This was not the indigent professor of a purposeless art whom I had expected to meet; the glance was full of concentration and energy—the glance of a man accustomed to seize an occasion, not of a waif and dreamer, but of one who directed the destinies of others. Still it must be the man I sought, so I continued, "I called on you in New York, attracted by the singularity of your notice."

"In what do you consider it singular?" he asked.

"Unleamer," I said; "that is not usual."

"Some mischievous boy, no doubt, has put an 'un' before a word of a very usual significance."

"The significance may be common enough, but 'learner' is never seen on a door plate; the more usual designation is 'teacher'—learner in such a position has no significance."

"In that case you do not better it much by putting 'un' before it."

"It is perfectly intelligible," I replied; "in composition the word learner retains its primitive significance of an importer of learning, and unlearner is one who relieves others of the burdens of knowledge."

"Admitting that," he replied, "a man may profess elocution or Greek in New York and yet not be willing to impart instruction wherever he goes."

"Certainly," I answered; "but as I am not likely to see you again, perhaps you will satisfy a natural

curiosity on my part as to the nature of the profession of which you are the most eminent representative."

"You do me too much honour," he replied; "I am at the very bottom of the calling."

"To do justice to both our views, in brief, you are the only representative of the profession."

"You are right," he answered, "unless you would include in it those who contribute their services by teaching something in an inefficient manner."

"Omitting those who hardly count, I can understand that the demands on your services are so incessant that you hardly care to interrupt your brief period of rest," I said.

"Indeed, I do not find myself much in request—I would gladly welcome a competitor or two, if there were more demand for the kind of service I render; it is I that have to seek, not I that am sought. But what is it you wish to know?"

There was, if not in his words, at any rate in his expression of countenance, an air of aloofness and superiority which I judged inappropriate coming from a struggling teacher, so I said,—

"There is a certain absence of display and ostentation about your profession which is commendable. A dancing master, a teacher of the flute, in offering to instruct tacitly lays claim to the possession of skill in dancing or flute playing, whereas you, in offering to aid in unlearning, lay claim to proficiency and ability in nothing."

"I am quite willing to admit," he answered, "that you possess intelligence, if that is the object of your remarks, but at present I am not exercising my profession."

"Perhaps your indisposition to exercise your profession has something to do with my possession of intelligence," I interrupted.

His manner changed—for the first time he looked me full in the face; I felt as if I was called on for a combat. Not that there was anything unfriendly in his look, he might be on my side or against me, but it was a face that took away from me in a moment any inclination for trifling insincerity or pretence—it was like the face of battle.

"Are you sure," he said, "that you want to unlearn? Look at the sea. From here we can see a multitude of small waves; if we were on a high eminence we should see the larger ocean billows on whose surface merely these small disturbances are. From a still greater height we should see the great wave of the tide, whose great sweep might mean life or death to a swimmer, buffetting the tumultuous little waves. Is it not the greater tides that you should strive to learn, forgetting the momentary disturbances?"

"No," I said; "that is more learning, not less—and there need be no forgetting in that learning, for from a close and intimate knowledge of the little waves the larger movements could be discovered, depending as they do on the larger movements."

"And yet," he replied, "it is the path to that which you seek, for in unlearning, as well as in everything else, there is a certain heedlessness and recklessness which defeats its own end, a desire of grasping the all which lays hold on nothing."

"There is no need for you to tell me that," I answered, as my past thrilled through me.

"Then wherefore forget? What you have been is the food on which your soul lives. Think how closely connected memory and self-consciousness are; snap the last chord of recollection and you would lose the sense of personal identity."

"I do not want these stale moralities," I said; "we are fettered and bound by the past, and oblivion—utter oblivion—is a cheap price to pay for freedom."

"So you know that you are fettered and bound, but you have got to learn that you act in doing nothing; you do not see where freedom lies. But have you ever lived? for life is where man takes up the work of nature and forms a net-work of close personal knowledge, linking each to each, preparing that body in which the soul of man lives. Three people came to me once, whose destinies were influenced by each other. One of them, a farmer in New England, had committed a murder. Up to forty years of age he had lived among the people of his little village, as one of them, as in these rural communities they carry on their lives. But he fell into difficulties, and, going one day to the house of his largest creditor, he found him inexorable. A quarrel arose : there was no one about. He killed the man, and taking a sum of money, sufficient to relieve him from his difficulties, he went away unperceived. The murder was attributed to roving vagrants. But the farmer found a sense of isolation and aloofness creeping over him. At last, when he could bear it no longer, he went to a neighbour and told him of his crime. 'Least said the soonest mended,' said he, and counselled the man to keep silence. 'But,' said the murderer, 'I want

you to help me; you, to whom it does not matter, can be quite open and perfectly known by every one, then I being linked on to you and you to them, I shall be joined again.' But his neighbour hesitated —there were several things quite inconsistent with his position as a deacon which prevented him from acceding to this request. Being moved by the man's eagerness he explained everything fully to him and finally convinced him that what he asked was impossible. The murderer let some time go by till, finding himself sinking still deeper in his isolation, he told a young and lovely girl of what he had done. She was very sorry, and told him that he must live a very good life ever afterwards. 'But I want you to help me,' he said; 'it will not cost you anything. I want you to be perfectly open, so that every one knows everything about you; then you, knowing everything about me, I shall be linked on.'

"'But,' she exclaimed, 'I could not tell John all about James,' and pitying the man she told him all about herself. He, seeing that he was unreasonable, went away, and after a time gave himself up, and was executed. Then his neighbour felt a new earnestness and cheerfulness come over him, and the girl—she was married then—threw her arms round her husband and in a flood of tears felt a weight and oppression removed—he had done for them what he had wanted them to do for him."

I heard a quick step, and close to us I saw the artist. He addressed my companion without a moment's hesitation. "My name is Eustace Thompson," he said;"[11] I must have missed you. I went on to the village beyond, and, finding you were not there, I

came back; I want you to tell me about this unlearning."

He had hardly finished speaking when, from the direction in which I had come, we were joined by the other of my two fellow passengers. He had overheard the last words, and said, "My name is Clement; I have come on the same errand."

"Gentlemen," I said, "I have already had some conversation with our friend here, and it seems, as far as I can make out, to be a condition of receiving his assistance that we depart from our usual habitudes in life and form a kind of spiritual network: that we lay aside our reserve: so that, another knowing the details of our existence, and we knowing his in turn, we form a body connected together in the way in which persons are connected together. This body is to be a vehicle for the spirit of man to work through, as our own bodies, organized in their turn in a mechanical way, are vehicles for our spirits to work through."

The artist seemed to be immediately affected by the unlearjer's presence; for, with an appearance of half-concealed agitation, he said, "I am willing to accept any conditions you impose. From my earliest boyhood I had a love for the beautiful, and an overmastering impulse towards painting. As soon as I could shake myself free from the influence of my relations, who are all in business in Ohio, I came to New York, but it was too late to counteract the results of my early training in the local art schools. I found myself condemned to hopeless mediocrity. In the shifting hand-to-mouth life I lead, I never see any, except models, the keepers of boarding-houses, and their chance inmates. But along with my love of

art and connected with it I have ever had the strongest yearnings for the high, pure beauty of perfect womanhood. Those visions of it which painters have left on canvas and sculptors have fixed in stone shone over me in youth with a holy light. But in the murky air bright stars grew dim, no touch of the reality came near me. Often I would walk in the park, and when I saw some face pass by whereon sat the grace of true royalty of womanhood, supreme object of my adoration, I would pass the rest of the day in wondering recollection. Those were happy days till I awakened to the thought, 'Why always in images, or seen from afar—why never one heart-beat nearer me?' and I plunged into the bitter dream of an impossible bliss. I am too poor to marry, and have seen no woman whom I can tolerate beside the ideal that holds me.

"A year ago I was commissioned to make a set of drawings. General Walker wished to put some glass windows in a church, and in order to pay a compliment to his sister, thinking it would please her, he asked her to sit for the heads of the saints. She has a sweet, though faded countenance, and the design was to pourtray her face in different positions in the three windows. He chose me to prepare the drawings, and the lady, his sister, came to my studio.

"She is one of those individuals, somewhat colourless themselves, who live much in their sympathies, and, in the long-continued sittings which were necessary, I found myself talking to her on all subjects—talking at last of the ideal woman. She laughed at me, told me to look carefully and said I should see her some day. On one occasion, giving

the reins to my fancy, I said, 'I have seen her—this ideal'; and I described a face, the look, the gesture, the figure, the manner of one in whom all I had ever seen of grace and beauty were combined.

"She listened to me with interest, a deeper kind of interest than the occasion seemed to warrant, but said nothing, inquiring merely where I had seen my ideal. I told her she had passed me, driving too rapidly by me in the park.

"Every day afterwards she asked me if I had seen the lady of my dreams. Sometimes I told her I had, sometimes I told her I had not. She always asked me for a closer and closer description; occasionally she seemed disappointed with what I said, but never disappointed with what I cared about; it was always some trifle of dress or mere detail that displeased her, and on such occasions she would bid me look more carefully next time. I played at this game thinking that she, too, had her ideal of what a woman should be, and willing to gratify her in the innocent pastime, gratifying myself too, for she had that sympathetic charm which makes it not impossible for a man to speak of that of which he dreams, which he can never hope for.

"At last one day she astonished me by saying, 'I know her—I know this lady you have watched for so often—she has seen you too.' It became interesting. In a spirit of devilry I completely deceived the kind creature; it was easy enough to see what she wanted me to say; for every time I divined her thought and added some fresh trait of description, she breathed a deep sigh of satisfaction; whenever I began to go away a look of pained apprehension came into her

eyes. The secret came out at last. It was her niece, who had been cruelly deceived—had married so unhappily—but it was all over now save the effect on her. She had relinquished the world, had found herself unable to take up life again, but lost all belief in man.

"'Her thoughts are just like yours,' she said; 'she loves Nature and all pure, beautiful things. She is living now completely retired; nothing we can do will make her go into society, she has given up the world.'

"I talked to my foolish sitter. I have had my dreams of the beautiful and fair. I talked to her, making messages of thought to the fair unknown, and through her I received fragments of charming remarks her niece had made—little touches that had an individuality of their own before they were lost in her limp kindliness—it was as a faintly-breathed perfume of fair flowers distantly odorous. Poor Matilda had never felt the stir of love come closer to her than in wafts from others' passion, but she had her delight in the reflected glory of it. As an amusement, and because the things she told me were interesting, I pretended to be in love with the unknown one, always praying and begging for a meeting.

"At last Matilda, with tears in her eyes, abandoning her old maidenly reserve, took my hand in hers. 'My friend,' she said, 'it is everything to her. You are not like other men I know. She has been so cruelly deceived once; if you are not all I know you are, she will never believe again that there is anything in the world for her.'

"'Where shall I meet her?' I asked. 'I do not know,' she replied.' 'We will meet at the picture-

gallery,' I said; 'at those eternal symphonies of colour and imagination. Walking before them, I shall be able to speak to her.' 'Oh yes,' she said, 'she has promised to meet you; it does not matter where.'

"'I will go to-morrow morning at eleven. Tell her I will come up the steps at eleven.' She rose to go. 'How shall I know her?' I added. She looked at me in surprise. 'How will you know her?' 'I did not mean that,' I said hastily. 'Of course I mean, how shall I know that she will let me speak to her? I could not venture unless she gave me some sign.' 'Oh.' she said, 'I will ask her to drop her handkerchief, then you will know that you may speak to her.'

"'The next morning at eleven I went up the steps of the museum. There were several people coming in and out I looked at them, wondering which of them it could be; who was the unknown? I proceeded leisurely up the steps, composing my features to the grin which was, I felt, the appropriate expression for the high-complexioned girl who had made this appointment for a joke with a poor devil of an artist—for the girl who had been fooling Matilda as much on her side as I on mine. But I did not see any one who corresponded to my expectations. I was almost inclined to turn back and give up the folly myself, for I saw coming down the steps the wondrously beautiful pale-faced woman, with eyes like stars and the grace of all nature in her, that I had ever dreamed about—the ideal of all my life, only fairer far. I quite forgot all about that other one as she passed quickly down, passing quite close to me. She had a thin veil on, and as she passed

me I involuntarily looked steadily on her. 'One look on a creature like that is all that life holds for poor wretches like myself,' I thought, and then I raised my gaze, looking up the steps for my high-complexioned beauty. But there was no one there. Suddenly I remembered that she, the very dream of all my life, she had dropped something when she was at the head of the flight of steps—there had been a gleam of white—it was that that had attracted my attention, and I had turned my face in her direction. Why, it is she! she is the one who came here to meet me! The conviction flashed over me. I turned hastily down the steps. But it was too late. She was nearly at the gate; she entered a carriage standing there and drove away.

"At the sitting on the next day Matilda was very late. She came at last. After I had been painting some time I said, 'I am sorry I did not understand.' Matilda rose; she was trembling. 'I didn't come here to-day for the painting,' she said; 'I came here to say good-bye. It is too sad to be angry with you; you don't know what you have done.' She went. I sent the paintings of the glass windows; in due time they were finished and put in the church. But I could never gain the opportunity of a word with Matilda again. That glorious face, the promise of such happiness as I never dreamed that life could have afforded me, is ever with me. I have lost everything—there is nothing for me now, not even the miserable pleasures I had before. Can I forget her or myself or both?" he added, questioning the impenetrable face of the unleamer.

"I haven't anything of the artist in me," said

Clement; "but I had a desire which showed itself in my earliest youth as strongly as his for beauty. I desired certainty—to know; it quickly became evident to me that the only path to certainty lay in the study of real, material things. All certain and clear thought is connected with them, and anything else men have supposed in place of them—principles, essences, spirits—are less than they, poor and uncertain substitutes. Most of all the hypothesis of a creation and a Creator appeared to me unwarranted and uncalled for. At the same time my circumstances were such that the only avenue open to me by which I could enter upon a life of study was one which the religious benevolence of the past had scattered abundantly. I was able to enter a theological seminary, and in due course of time I became a preacher. But in calculating my life I had not reckoned on the overmastering attraction which low society has for any one who, as I was, is entirely out of any close and hearty intimacy with his surroundings. The religious body with which I was connected removed me, not unnaturally, from their midst. I came to this country as a secularist lecturer, but I have gradually become converted to the religion of this country—the practical religion—a belief that the will of the people is divine, with the added revelation of the dollar: I mean, that what people want it is your supreme duty to provide, and what they want is shown by what they will pay for. That, and its corollary, a home—a seat at one's own fireside, with a pleasant, loving wife beside one—is what I believe in. And the process of my conversion was hastened by a letter I received from a girl who had refused me

before. She had been going out as a missionary, but she writes now in her bright way that she thinks I need converting more than the heathen. She stands in, you see, for the same reason that a woman of the modern school would give for standing off. Now with her notions and character it is necessary I should put aside my old rationalistic convictions, and I come to you to unlearn them because they are true."

Having finished he looked at me inquiringly, as if to say, "It is your turn now." Eustace Thompson had not listened to him, and now took advantage of the silence to speak hurriedly in a low tone to the unlearner. This left me involved in a conversation with Mr. Clement, for which I had little liking.

"I don't believe in any of this," I said. "There is much that you can tell only to one other, if to any other at all. That you have told what you did just now would cause, if she knew it, acute pain to the warm-hearted, impulsive girl who has promised to marry you. You will get to learn this in the happiness which I hope you will enjoy with her. Among the words which to you were mere empty forms you must have often repeated the truth, that there is One to whom the heart can speak when all mortal ears are deaf."

"That sounds beautiful enough," he said, "but it is the beauty of death; the glories of life lie in the other direction. In what you expressed when I came up lies a truth which I have often dimly felt. Nature presents to us a mechanical aspect in things, but in persons there is a personal relation. No doubt behind these persons there is as much hidden to us as there is hidden behind the outward aspect of the

world to a savage; but we must discover it in the same way as we have discovered our material knowledge, by direct observation. A metaphysical theory kept men from the path of science for ages, and a metaphysical theory of a personality apart from persons keeps us from finding out what is behind the appearance here, too."

"You take the contrary view to mine," I said. "We have our own ideals, aims, convictions of right and wrong; the fact of communication is quite secondary."

"No," he replied. "Contact with other human beings is primary, all comes from that; right and wrong is merely the fashion of the court of humanity, changing from age to age. When we bind ourselves in our actions by the sense of right, we are like people who build a cistern up in the air instead of hewing it in a rock. The way is to live in openness, to look on concealment as self-murder—as it is; then, by the conditions of our life, our actions are restrained."

"It does not matter, then, what pigs we become so long as we are all in one sty!"

Eustace Thompson at this moment raised his voice, saying, as he turned to go, "Then you will do nothing for me?"

"You do not really want anything I could do," was the reply. "The experience which you have had could only have come to you because you were born an artist in the true sense of the word; it is that which will lift you above the platitude of your Ohio School. One look, one movement, one faint glimpse of her are all that can be yours. Then live in them,

and you know what art is,—that intense effort, with its little all of visual rays, to keep the reminder, that is on the face of sky and mountain, sea and man, of a bliss that has turned from man."

His next words were addressed to Clement:

"You belong to a modern school which finds reality in the fulness of the relations in which a thing is; you do not conceive it as existing apart from its relations. Now, as the events and circumstances in which you know an individual disappear in time, you cannot believe that he continues to exist. But why should you say that the events and circumstances which are past in time exist no longer, making your consciousness a measure of existence? Thought is a path which it is difficult to retrace. You must go on. You believe in the permanence of matter, the conservation of energy. Take the next step and recognise the conservation of events. Every event which you experience is a permanent thing, altering but always existing. Think of yourself, this is the conception of the soul for you, as always existing in every act and circumstance of your life, so that you—your complete self in your whole life—are continually changing and altering, the present being that part on which you are now engaged. In this way you can come into substantial agreement with the one who is to be your life's companion."

"But," said Clement, "there isn't room for any more than I can see in space."

"Here you introduce a conception which has been made for utility into a discussion in which we have need of certainty. You cannot observe anything which is not analagous to an activity of your own.

For purposes of use you have gained an intuition, by means of which you observe the world in space. If you want to know more of existence, you must not take the conceptions of the arts and manufactures without criticism, but you must form a higher intuition by means of which you can observe more."

"I see what you mean," said Clement; "though I have always before dismissed such notions as chimerical." Then turning to me, with that conviction of his words being valuable which so seldom leaves a man who has gained his living by talking, he said:—

"It is perfectly possible that what we experience as fleeting, passing events in time should be permanent, altering things. Imagine this piece of wood"—he took up a piece of drift wood a few inches long—"passing through a sheet of paper, but paper of a curious kind, which closed up round all the irregularities of the wood. A creature living on the paper, and having no experience beyond it, would think of the successive sections of the piece of wood as a piece of matter in his limited world, while the face of the piece of wood would appear to him as a series of changes affecting the contour of the section. He only knows the surface as a series of changes. Now if the piece of wood is altering itself, that surface which, perceiving it under his conditions, he calls a fleeting series of events may be changing and altering, and similarly——"

Nothing was to be gained by continuing a discussion of this kind. Mr. Smith had refused to do anything for the artist, and he was now trying to devise a *modus vivendi* for Clement and his missionary—a

matter which did not interest me at all. So I turned to him and said :—

"I shall be stopping on this coast for a few days; perhaps I shall have the opportunity of meeting you again."

He answered me by an inclination of his head.

"Do you know," I continued, "if I can find accommodation in the village farther on?"

"Yes," he answered; "there is one house where you can make yourself comfortable, if you do not object to simple fare. You will find it a very interesting place."

"I will go on there. May I ask you," I added, turning to Clement, " to have the kindness to tell the people on your return to send my things after me?"

"I'll see to that," said he.

"Before many days are over I will meet you again," said the unleamer, and we turned in opposite directions.

CHAPTER III

DARK clouds hung around, hastening on the obscurity of night; the little footpath went wandering in and out between the sand hills, and wearied of it, I left it, striking far out to where the line of the sea was visible. Walking on and approaching nearer to this sure guide, I wondered what would happen if, pressing on and on, I entered the looming waters, and, passing beyond the possibility of return, were swallowed up. Were I to be dropped out of the world really and for ever, who would care? Some people, perchance, would faintly wonder what had become of me. But none of the wheels of business or of life would be stopped—the irrevocable end of all would come, closing upon a life of wasted opportunities, of heedlessness, fraught with bitter pain to others, of real disappointment irrevocably suffered, for death has placed its seal on them. How is it and wherefore that I have been landed in such an unreal world, one in which I could welcome any greed, any passion, as a god giving me life, and wiping away the dull emptiness that fills all things ?

There must be reality somewhere. But all I have ever sought has been fictitious—sham knowledge was all I learnt and empty aims were all I conceived. And when I began to live in the world I could not distinguish feigned love: I did not understand the

signs of deceit and mockery. Rather, was I not a deceit and mockery myself? Forget—if I could but forget! No atonement, no re-doing possible! What I envy most is these sands, whose miserable furrows are washed away by to-morrow's tide. Oblivion, whose image is the great, dark wall of cloud and shifting, barren sand—that is what I long for, the only possible beginning.

A singularly clear and musical cry came to me. I looked, but saw nothing. The immense waste stretched to right and left, on and behind. Far on my left was the white line of the living waters, far, almost undistinguished, on my right were the low sand hills of the shore. From somewhere between me and them came the cry. It was repeated, and at length I discerned a figure far in shore—though whether it were a woman or a boy, I could not tell.

Turning, I began to walk towards the creature who, starting out of this barren immensity, hailed me, and wished to speak to me. But it did not await me; it came towards me, making signs and movements, from which I gathered that I was to retrace my steps. I went back, always tending in shore, and it moved parallel with me. At length it beckoned to me, and approaching directly I saw that it was a girl. "The sands are very dangerous out there," she said, "this is your best way"; and keeping some distance in front of me, she led me to the path which ran among the sand hills. Almost before I could thank her, she had turned off along another trodden way, and was lost to sight.

Walking on and on, at length I reached a little village. A boat had come in far down on the sands; three

or four men were hauling it up. All the houses, save one, were miserable huts. The exception was a large, barn-like cottage, dilapidated, but offering a promise of sufficient room.

"Who lives in that house?" I asked a man whom I saw inside the half-opened door of a hut. He came out and addressed me leisurely, showing his white teeth, and looking in the gathering dust like a darker blot against the grey sand." That is old Jack's house—he's at home now."

There was nothing in the scenery to interest me, nor in the people, part negro, part white, living together in these little hovels where the land was of no possible value. Why did they not take more room for their dwelling places? Each hut was crowded close to the others, and each was so small that it suggested the utmost poverty.

I knocked at the door, and found old Jack Hudson willing to take me in. I told him that I might stop a few days, and gave him some money to get me a meal. The room I went into was exquisitely neat. A few wild flowers stood in a little vase near the window; there were curtains made out of disused nets. Old Jack took a basket and stood by the door; presently I heard him talking to some one outside, and then he told me to wait a little—all would be ready soon.

In a little while there came in, carrying the basket with her purchases in it, the same girl who had warned me of the danger into which I had so unsuspectingly walked. She greeted me with a smile, and told the old man of my adventure. He warned me against the sands, offering to go with me if I wanted to walk

over them. The tide came in rapidly, and in many parts there were quicksands; if there were anything of a sea on, even a good swimmer would be in danger.

The next day I spent in exploring the neighbourhood, trying to find in what way it would fulfil the promise of interest which Smith had given me. But I found absolutely nothing. The region was almost uninhabited. Farther inland there were great swamps, which cut off the coast from the cultivated land. The people of the shore won a hard livelihood by fishing and growing rude patches of corn and potatoes. Returning in the evening I found that Jack was out, but the girl, "Nattie," was sitting at the rude table with three or four little fellows, laughing and talking to them, and teaching them to write and read.

"Pray excuse my interruption," I said; "I did not know you were the schoolmistress."

"Oh no," she said, "I could not be that; I am only helping them a little."

"Helping them for school?" I asked.

"No," she answered; "there was an old man here once who kept a school, but he has gone away, and they want to know what he taught me."

"May I look?" I said, taking up one of the well-thumbed copybooks.

"Please do," she replied; "that's Johnny's book; he is a great writer. Johnnie, won't you read your story to the gentleman?"

Up stood a chubby little fellow, with a wide, red mouth, and began to read with the utmost solemnity:—

"Once upon a time there was a carpenter named Chota. He lived in a house close by the mountains,

and near to some forests which had no end. His business was to get logs of wood, so one day he started out and went into the forest. He went along paths that were quite dark, for the trees were high above them. They were only little lines running in the great dark woods. As he was going along he saw a huge wolf. The wolf opened its mouth and looked fierce, just as if it had been waiting for him. He was awfully frightened. But at last he got his courage up and resolved to show no fear, but to go straight forward. He came to the place where the wolf was crouching down. He expected the wolf would spring upon him and eat him up. But the wolf did not move. The wolf turned its mouth to him, and kept it open. He looked at the wolfs mouth, as it opened widely in front of him. He saw a large bone—a horse's bone—sticking in the wolf's upper jaw. Then he knew why the wolf kept his mouth wide open. He went up to the wolf and put his hand into his mouth and pulled out the bone. Up got the wolf and wagged his tail. Then it bounded away into the woods. Another day in another part of the forest he heard a great howling. He did not know which way to run. At length, as nothing came after him, he walked straight forward, and there he saw a wolf caught by the leg in a split tree. The tree had been kept open by a wedge, but the wolf had pushed out the wedge with his leg and the tree had caught him. When the wolf saw him he howled louder than before. Then Chota went up and drove the wedge in again and the wolf drew his leg out and ran away. Another day a wolf came after him; he thought his last hour had come, so he turned round to die bravely, like a

man. But the wolf held up his paw. There was a large thorn sticking out of the wolf's paw. When the man saw it he stooped down and pulled out the thorn. Then the wolf wagged his tail and limped away. Not long after, walking through the woods, he heard a horrible kind of coughing. He was much afraid, but reflecting that a man must not give way to fear, he went on. Right in front of him he saw a wolf standing on half of a large fish. He had eaten the other half, and a bone was sticking in his throat. He opened his mouth and turned to the man. But the man felt very cross, and said, 'I cannot be always pulling bones out of wolves' throats and thorns out of their paws, and their legs out of trees.' So he paid no attention to the wolf, but walked on. Soon afterwards, thinking it not safe to walk so much in the woods, he went to the town, and became a house carpenter."

"Johnnie's quite a writer," I said, "but I don't quite see his moral."

"Oh! I think it's a very good moral," said Nattie; "if you don't do a kindness, you had better be careful."

"And become a house carpenter?" I asked.

"Yes, that is better than being eaten up."

"I hope you told Johnnie he ought to help a wolf up to seventy times seven."

"Yes, but he is impatient."

"So you let him write according to his own nature and then make for safety."

Just then the door opened. Jack Hudson came in and the children ran out. He sat down at the table and busied himself over the food which Nattie

brought out and set before him. Looking at his coarse, expressionless features and rust-coloured beard, I could not believe he had any relationship to the dark-eyed, level-browed, graceful girl whom he called his daughter. When he had finished his meal, he pulled out his pipe and sat smoking in silence. I asked him a question or two; but he replied by a gruff monosyllable. I did not see why he should drive me out of the room, as he had done the children, so I kept my seat, and tried to draw the daughter into conversation. She was moving about attending to household matters.

"Do you like stories with good endings?" I asked.

"I like any kind of stories," she replied, "but I have only read two or three."

"You did me a great service yesterday. I cannot swim very well ; if the tide had caught me, I should have been in serious danger; may I do something in return—may I get you some books?" She was silent for a moment or two, then said:

"I should like Heenan's *Art of Self Defence*."

"Oh, certainly," I replied, rather astonished at her choice. "But I don't mean only one; tell me of some others."

"If you give me another one, I should like one about boats—how to sail different kinds of boats, and how to find the way at sea."

The wind was blowing outside, the regular roll of the surf made itself plainly heard. I went to the window and looked out: the lights in the little village were all extinguished. When I turned round she was gone. The old man was asleep in his chair. I went to my room, and at length fell asleep, wonder-

ing by what stretch of ingenuity this village could be called interesting.

The next day, hiring a boat, I sailed along the coast till evening. It was a dreary, abandoned stretch — low hills, the monotonous swell of the ocean, sparsely wooded patches, breaking the aridness; that was absolutely all the eyes could see. The only relief in the weary scene was the gleam and splash of a seagull's wing—one was always hovering near.

One or two days passed in this manner; then a morning broke of storm and rain, which forced me to keep indoors. All day long old Jack sat in a corner of the room, till, weary of doing nothing, I began to talk to him, speaking to him as if he had intelligence and knowledge, disregarding his silence. It was a fruitless effort. But I became aware that I had a listener; the singular feeling came over me of the presence of an intelligent and a responsive mind. The door into the next room was open, and walking across the floor, I saw that Nattie was sitting there, her hands folded in her lap, her work dropped, her head bent forward as if in profound attention.

Going back to my seat I talked of anything and everything, of what men had done in the world in the past, ever with the sense of a responsive and eager listener in the room beyond, though old Jack was nodding opposite to me. I told of the sunny shores of Greece, where every rocky islet that parts the waves is rich in memories of human life, crowded with figures of the human drama, back and back till where, lost in the dimness of ages, the shapes vanish into heroes, gods, and monsters. I spoke of the places I had visited, the scenes of coast and grove and mountain, and

all the while, the old man having long fallen asleep, her listening became more intense. She rose and came into the room, sitting down by the old man's side. In her wrapt silence I called to mind the old days when I had dreamed many a dream. Pity if for her I cannot make the faded colours glow. People have found them fair—these ancient legends; they are fair, but not for me. Still, I can spread them here in this far corner of the globe, and, unmoved myself, let the listening fisher-girl see pass in due procession the legendary pageant of the ages.

So beginning, I passed along the line of the great chroniclers of the spirit, where Homer throws the gauntlet down warm from his glowing hand, beginning there, and touching on those souls that have seen the challenge and shouted across the waste of years, "The wine of my blood is strong as thine, disturber of the quiet pool of time," sending defiance ringing back. I told her Plato's dream, of Socrates, of Alcibiades' fiery youth; I passed to Rome and Roman men and matrons. Then, gliding down the stream of years, I told her Cervantes' long, strange tale of Quixote, Knight of Mancha. Then she looked at me with pained eyes, all aglow for life's great empire; and to comfort her I told her what Cervantes should have set down closely and in order on his fair-written page. I told her of Don Quixote's one happy day — I do not mean a day wherein he was happy because of some yet unacted-out delusion, but a day in which time and tide and the soul of noble woman truly served, all swept on with him, he threading aright for once the devious maze.

For on a day as Don Quixote, Knight of La

Mancha, came to his journey's end, and his tired horse went slow with drooping head, right in front of him, parting from the low hostel where he wished to pass the night, he saw certain varlets coming forth, starting on their way when all good men stop and are rested from the day's long toil.

Then, bethinking him they meant some ill, he tarried not, but passed straight on, and Rosinante bore him while his loose armour clanked in the silent night. Soon he passed the sullen crew, who parted before him, and loitering let him ride on. He went to warn whosoever came of the foul knaves behind, or else, seeing some lonely lady advancing into danger, turn and hold the caitiff crew while she rode into safety.

But the path went on and on, and no traveller came nor any house. The narrow path led far away from the road whereon he had been travelling; over hill and dale, away and away, and deep into the night he rode coming to no turning, meeting no men.

At length Rosinante could go no farther, so he left her in a thicket and walked on with visor raised, gazing at the darkness of the path. Presently the woods opened, and the moon, hardly showing itself above the trees, casting an uncertain, pale light, he saw the shadow of a castle tower, and all around the blackness of the walls. He went on, but as he stood upon the moat's deep edge no voice hailed him. As he moved round, no watchful eye noted him. And see, where the great drawbridge hung suspended high there was no watchful light burning. But what was that? A slender bridge woven with ropes, along which a page might run or a single foeman pass, while the great bridge stirred not, was thrown across,

leaving no hindrance whereby one might not steal into the castle.

Once, twice the lord of La Mancha called, but no one answered. Then he crossed and found himself within the rampart of a noble fort. But round him were none but sleeping men. When he spurred them with his foot, they groaned, but moved not. With his sword he hacked the slender bridge till it fell hanging into the deep moat, a wasted thread of gossamer.

Then, knowing that the foul enemy who had wrought this enchantment could not escape, he passed on, walking with drawn sword on the sweeping rampart.

He passed, seeing nought but sleeping men; but when he came again to the high-lifted drawbridge, he saw in a door's deep shade a figure all clad in armour of grey steel.

And a woman's voice hailed him—wondrous sweet, low, yet clear, commanding:

"Ho! watchman, what of the night!"

He knelt upon one knee and answered:—

"Oh, armed lady, thy soldiers all sleep an enchanted sleep. I crossed the bridge unhindered, and cut it down lest the worker of ill should escape."

"I thank thee, noble knight," the lady answered; "within and without my faithful servants sleep a sleep from which they cannot stir, and some, I fear, are dead. It is a drug which has caused this evil. I will watch at the window whilst thou walkest round and seest if aught come from without or within."

The knight of La Mancha walked within the walls around the tower, and saw nothing save a rat peering

into the faces of the sleeping men. Him, the traitor, he pierced with his sword, and returning beneath the window, told how all were sleeping or dead within the walls.

As he drew near the wondrous voice cried, "Ho! watchman, what of the night?" And from the steel-grey helmet of a mighty warrior the tender, fearless eyes looked out, and the pale, wistful face. Lo! all the place was hung with beauty as with a cloud. All through the night he paced round the keep, and once and again he cut the ropes and hooks with which the caitiff crowd without, who came when all seemed safe, tried to clamber up the silent walls.

But the traitor within the walls was dead, and he, with mighty adoration of noble knight for noble lady, kept watch and guard. And the pale, wistful face, with golden hair—so pale and wan in the moonlight—was safe all through the long watches of the night. Seven times he spoke with her—seven holy words, seven noble, gracious words from those sweet lips of hers. Then the dawn slowly breaking, and the drowsy soldiers slowly staggering to their feet, he loosed the ropes that held the drawbridge up, and walked away, leaving the saved castle bathed ever more and more in the warm adoration of the rising sun.

He found his steed, and mounting rode on; and all the rest that Cervantes tells us is true.

At last I was silent, and she lifted her eyes—eyes such as, looking on the world, transfigure it. Power and patience, tenderness and reverence. Had Odysseus entered at that moment, entered beneath that

roof in his wanderings, I should not have been surprised, witnessing as I did her sudden and wondering awakening to a home—a home which the cottage walls and the little village had hidden from her, for I saw her pass within those palace walls which the great spirits of the past have built, making a habitation for souls like their own. To have heard my words any one might have imagined that I was reading pages out of a classical dictionary. But a soul discerns a soul: her soul stood trembling, apprehending the world-soul.

"What is your real name?" I asked.

She unfastened a little locket she wore round her neck. It was of plain gold, and on it was traced in minute stones the word "Natalia." Inside was a lock of dark hair.

"Is this all yow know?"

"Yes," she answered, pointing to the old man as he slept; "he took me for his own child when I was cast up by the sea. Mother was very kind to me, but she died long ago."

"Then you have no friends or relations of your own?" I said.

"I have no relations; no one knows who I was or what my name was before he took me."

And so it was. Old Jack would not talk about her, but I found in the village some in whose memories the very distant past of ten or twelve years ago was not obliterated, and they told me that after a stormy night the shore was strewn with fragments of a wreck, and Natalia was washed ashore, miraculously preserved. The fishermen were not eager to make known their good fortune, and took the obligation of

rearing the child as repayment on their part of the prodigal gifts of the sea, making no inquiries and courting none.

"Yes," one old woman said, "Nattie came from some foreign parts; but she's been took real care of. She can sail a boat most as well as a man, and Jack would leave her his house and boat if he wasn't so much in debt."

A period of gusty, uncertain weather set in that put a stop to all distant expeditions. But often between the storms were hours of brightness. Natalia was my guide to many a place that her fancy had transfigured—and yet not transfigured, for her bright joy in the flowers, the little, paths that led between the hills, the haunts of the birds, and the spots where you could see shy, wild creatures at work or play, lent them nothing which was not rightly their own. Day by day she became less silent—asked me questions, and grew responsive to what I told her. The old man sat in his accustomed seat or mended his nets, while step by step she lived into the world as my poor account gave it her: the sea and the sky and I were present at that awakening of a mind.

Outside the village, or ratlier the close-pressed group of huts, was a pathway with high palings on either side, made to keep off the drifting sand. I was walking along the little winding road at noon, when in front of me I heard the sound of a dispute. Natalia's clear voice rang out, "You shall not!" I stepped round the corner in time to see a couple of the village lads threatening Natalia. She was facing me, with some tiny brown object clasped close to her. One of the lads lifted his arm to strike her, when

quick as a flash her hand darted out, and he was lying on his back—it was as effectual and as scientifically delivered a blow as I had ever seen. The other fellow ran away right into my arms. I held him. She picked up the little creature she had let fall for a moment, and which appeared too injured to run. As she stepped past me she looked at the fellow I held with flashing eyes. The one who had fallen down slowly got up. "You are pretty cowards to try and strike a girl," I said. "She won't let us alone," he answered, "she takes our things away; there ain't a chap here that ain't afraid of her." "You call preventing your killing squirrels taking your things, do you?" I said; "get off!"

The lads slunk away. I could easily see that it was as they said; if it came to a question of fighting none of them had a chance with that lightning celerity of hers. But what a life for a girl—a girl like Natalia—a spirit like hers to exhaust itself in a conflict with village cruelties! Her face showed what she felt—and her blow. It was not a girl's part, but her indignation, her contempt, her tenderness moved her to it, and she did it effectually. She had nothing in common with these heavy fisher folk. Who was she?— a singular, wild girl, living on the sands by the sea. But there are plenty of incongruous things—and what had it to do with me?

"Natalia," I said, when I returned, "I hope you do not often fight as you were doing to-day?"

"Why not?" she asked.

"It is very dangerous," I said.

"Oh no," she replied, " they could never touch me. A stranger who came here told me the same as you

do, but when I told him how wicked the boys are, he saw it was necessary, and he taught me how to fight.

"What did he teach you?" I asked.

In reply she let down a piece of cord which was fastened over one of the beams in the ceiling. It had a loop in it. She stood in front, and hit out with her left hand. Her little hand went through the loop, which was only just large enough to let it pass, and back again so quickly that I could only see a gleam of white and a trembling in the air.

"That is what he taught me to do," she said; "it all depends on quickness and hitting exactly what you aim at."

"But," I said, "you do not put much force into these blows."

"No, of course when you are fighting you hit differently; but I don't know much about it—only enough for here."

"What was the stranger like?" I asked; "when was he here?"

"I can't tell you what he was like. The first time he came was a year or more ago, but he was here again the day you came. He told me I must wait, for the time before he told me he would take me to my own father and mother."

"But, Natalia," I said, "a woman as you are growing to be does not fight. She tells a man what is wrong, and he goes and does the fighting for her. Her life has to do with different things."

"But," she said, "if I set the boys fighting they throw stones, and two or three set on to one, and sometimes the one I want to win gets beaten. I think I had much better do it myself."

The weather changed again. Fine day succeeded to fine day, and from the moment when the sun tinged the sea mists till he sank again in the unending plains of sand, the sky was full of light. The blue sea lay like a jewel in its setting of dull gold—the sands so pale and wan to let their flashing playmate gleam the brighter. The clouds came sailing in from the ocean, their fairy fabrics laden with gifts of beauty drawn from the depths of the distant sky.

Open and wide stretched the canopy of sky and cloud, and yet not open and wide enough, for just as some rare flower fills a woodland dell with its fragrant beauty, burning like a star, so all the stretch of sea and land and cloud gathered round Natalia, the darling of the sea whom it had saved, the foster-child of the patient land whom it had cherished well; for who else had taught her that ineffable grace? who else had breathed into her soul those premonitions of life's deep passion? who else had taught her to catch the thoughts of those high souls, whose words, faintly echoed, leave all unmoved the slumbering world? The courage of the storm, the grace of each pale flower of the strand that gives all its tender beauty to its arid spot of sand—all was hers; and she moved breathing life and meaning into all around her.

"Have you ever thought of going away from here?" I asked her.

She looked through the little window, across the dull sand; a stretch of the far-off sea was visible.

Her eyes lighted up.

"All that I have told you about the world," I continued, "is not much like it; it is a place full of deceit, difficulty, and disappointment——"

"I am not afraid," she said.

"Then you would go?"

"Yes."

I expected to meet with opposition from the fisherman, but he accepted the prospect with stolid indifference. He merely stipulated that if Natalia went he must have some one in her place to look after the house and attend to his wants. I easily satisfied him.

A few days passed—days of change in Natalia. She grew graver, but there was a quiet, suppressed joy in her face. In the evening she sat busy with her needle.

"You need not work so hard," I said. "I have sent for a box of ordinary clothes, such as people wear in cities."

"Why should you give me so much? What have I done for you? what can I do?" she said.

"Listen, Natalia," I said, "I will tell you a story. Once there was a people who had become more highly civilised than anything we dream of. They lived long ago, when all the arts that have been forgotten, and which we are finding out again, lay within the knowledge of their wise men. They protected themselves from the heat of the sun and the rain of winter by a great glass roof, which went all over their city. They knew how to make food without using the land and things that grow. So they lived altogether, enclosed within the walls of their town and under the great roof, busied with arts and sciences. Now, the nations around waged war on them, but their knowledge was so great that they were invincible. Once in a combat they took

prisoner an Indian chief who was leading an attack on them. They did not put him to death or let him go, but kept him in their town. He was free to walk about, and the great men of the city were glad to see him in their houses, for he had been a great chief, and there was something noble about him. One day, going to the house of a high magistrate, he stood at the door, but did not enter. The magistrate came to the entrance of his hall, and said, 'I pray you come in.' 'No,' said the Indian, 'come out with me'; and taking the magistrate, he led him out of the city, beyond the walls, out from under the roof. It was spring-time, and all the flowers were blooming, and the birds were singing. The magistrate wondered, for, like all his fellow-citizens, he had never gone out beyond their artificial habitation, but had ever kept within the limits of what they had built for themselves. When he returned he took others out with him, and showed them the face of Nature. In the centre of the town in after years, when he and the Indian were dead, there rose a great bronze statue—the statue of the Indian—and on the pediment was written, 'To him who, having nothing, yet gave us the greater gift.' It is something like that, Natalia, that you have done for me."

"But how, when you know such wonderful things, can I do anything for you?"

"What good are they if I do not care for them? No, Natalia, it is better to give you a few clothes than to make a bronze statue to you, but besides I shall make a statue to you out of the bronze of my heart."

She looked as if she were about to say something,

but kept silence, and something seemed to check her in her talk with me. Early in the morning she bade farewell to her friends of the village, gave one last look at all the familiar sights, and we set out, walking together over the long waste of sand, with the sea far off on our right. "We can still see the cottage," I said. But she did not turn round. Her face was set steadily forward: and indeed we had a long walk before us, for we were going to meet the little steamer, the one means of communication between this remote region and the outer world. There was no time to linger.

"You must send back some things from the city to make your little friends remember you."

"Yes. I should like to do that."

"Look at the sea," I said; "how it rises out of the blue arch yonder and holds its breath, till where it whispers its secrets in the sands."

"Oh, do not look at the sea," she said; "it took away all those that loved me, and I am sure it will take away all that I shall ever love."

We reached the little hamlet where the steamer touched, and presently, leaving its long line of smoke behind, it passed into the distance.

CHAPTER IV

NO picture of solitude can be greater than that of the long, fading line which lingers still when the vessel that left it marked on the sky has vanished. The steamer was gone, bearing Natalia to her new life, carrying her to her destination. At last every vestige of the long, thin line had disappeared. I arose and turned, uncertain where to go. I wanted to see the place again where she had lived, to talk to some of the little fellows with whom she had talked so often, to hear their unconscious repetition of her words. I turned and walked by the sea. It was growing dusk; the tide was low. In that level, monotonous waste I guided myself as I walked by the dim meeting of land and water; the rising wind blew chill.

I had walked for an hour or so, when I thought I heard a cry; it was like the musical cry with which she had hailed me—it must have been about at the same place. I looked around; there was no one there. Suddenly about my feet came the foam of a wave; the wind whistled, all the sea was a sheet of foam.

Trying to reach the dry land, I came on a treacherous place and sank up to my knees. I extricated myself with difficulty. Then, striving to remember the directions she had given me, I began to retrace my steps. But the waves were upon me—waves such as one could not hope to swim through; a storm was blow-

ing, and all the sea was a sheet of foam. I struggled on for some distance, when all at once the sand seemed to suck my feet down. I felt that I must make haste if I did not want to get into serious danger. Resting my body on the water, I freed my feet, and found my way to a firmer place. But, proceeding, the waves suddenly seemed to me higher. I had come to a depression in the sand, and at last one wave went over my head.

For some seconds I held my breath, then I felt the air again, but at the moment I was breathing a long roll of foam came: my mouth was full of water. Choosing my time, I tried to get a breath from beyond the foam by leaping up from the bottom, but I only gained momentary inhalations, and before long my breath refused to be controlled. Water—there was nothing but water; it was in my eyes, in my ears, over my head. But I became calmer, not more excited, fighting my way step by step, when I could find the ground in the direction in which I judged the shore lay. "This predicament," I thought, "will be a good one to think about when I am safe by my own fireside in the evenings. It will make me relish safety and comfort." A larger wave, which gathered without these awful foaming tops, lifted me up. I saw that I had been struggling along instead of inshore. Then it was all a period of confused gasps and determined struggles, I becoming all the while calmer and more sure of reaching the shore by steady swimming. I gave up trying to keep my head above. I trusted to chance, and swam steadily through the water, with a slow, methodical stroke. I seemed to make hardly any exertion at all about it.

"How strange it is," I thought, "that I have not seen the boat that will rescue me, provided I cannot reach the shore myself."

Then, perfectly plainly and clearly, though I knew I was struggling in the water, I heard my father's voice: "Come, old boy," he said, "and sit on my knee." I saw the fire burning, the tea-things were on the table. At that moment I felt the air again, gasped a great breath, then down—down. At my side I felt there was a little girl in black—yes, it was she, my sister; we were following my brother to the grave. "So both of us are lost," I thought; "poor mother, if she had known this was to be the end of all!" Then I became aware of the over-powering pressure of the water; my body seemed to hang limp and flaccid. How do I know which is the direction of the land? What is the use of struggling? All I can do is to keep my mouth shut and trust to the waves throwing me on shore.

My mother's hand was on my shoulder—I had my hat in my hand—there were crowds of people. I had on my new blue knickerbockers; there was some dust on my shoes, as I sat down I wiped it off. There was a crowd of well-dressed persons—why, I was in church! But there was a dimness about, it all; instead of being there I was riding with my father in a car. There was an old horse with a big head toiling and toiling along outside the window, but always going backward. Then, as in a dream, I saw a downcast face—Gretchen's; how I longed to know what the look on her face meant! But the scene changed to a street in New York and a curious notice on a door. Then I was walking with Natalia—the steamer went and

then—why, here really I was drowning!—the water deep, deep above me. "At any rate she will be with good friends," I thought; "she will be cared for;" and I was thankful for my forethought. Suddenly it came over me that this was what the unlearner meant, saying he would meet me here. And thinking thus, I, too, pass beyond life, awaiting, like all the others, what meets us there.

* * * * *

All the vagueness as of a dream passed away. I was actually with my father, sitting by his side. Through a window I saw a horse's head jogging up and down. The horse was trotting; I could see the motion of every step—yet it was going backward all the while. I asked my father—we sitting in the street car together—"Why does that horse go backward when he is going forward?" But my father was reading his paper and did not answer me. I went on looking with amazement at the horse going backwards, though he was trotting on. Then my father said, "We'll get out here." The car stopped, and I saw with satisfaction the horse go on, dragging his load quite fast after him.

* * * * *

Then I find myself lying down, trying to go to sleep in the woods. I know Scotchy is near me, though I cannot see him. We call him Scotchy because he comes from Scotland; he is at the technical school with me. There is no doubt about my being really with him, though it seems only a moment from the last scene. I know my father is dead and my mother is very poor; my uncle sends me money every month. Scotchy is lying wrapped up in his

thick cloak; I'm in my waterproof blanket. The sounds of the night woods are mysterious around us, full of a nameless influence. Out of them comes distinctly the noise of a larger animal moving. The footstep of the fox is of all sounds that I know the most tense upon the ear. The pit-pat of his footfalls comes so quick and regular, then it stops. I lie perfectly still, but the animal waits suspicious. Then he comes on again and stops. When he moves the footfalls come regularly, mechanically; then they stop absolutely, suddenly. I feel his readiness for sudden flight, for sudden spring also. In the dark stillness of the night I do not know what size I am, and there close beside me is fear and ferocity, changing into one another so quickly. It might be a tiger, and I a hind. From nothing so quickly as from a footfall spreads Nature's contagion of fear or fury. At length in the silence I can bear it no longer.

"Scotchy," I say, "are you asleep?"

"No."

"Tell me something to break the silence."

Scotchy says: "I will tell you about Anstruther, who was ruined in the bank failure; all his people were ruined together; there was no hope of recovery. He did not sit down to repine, but went into a foundry as an apprentice. He settled down, hoping to become a regular hand, getting, if he were lucky, in the course of time his two pounds a week. One day, as he was filing at his bench, a party of ladies and gentlemen came through the shop. When one of them was opposite his bench, she looked at him. It was the old look and the treasured smile. She put out her dainty gloved hand for him to shake, but

he could not take it in his oily hand. She said, 'I am so glad you are going bravely to work,' and then the party of visitors moved on. Soon after that there came a parcel to his lodgings. Opening it, he found—it was her writing—a little cylinder, a round, oblong piece of iron. It was quite plain and simple, accurately turned; but nothing, not designed for anything, except it might be a paper-weight. So he used it for a paper-weight

"But presently the piece of iron began to come in his dreams. It occurred persistently. She came, too, by flashes and gleams, seeming to point with meaning in her gesture to the round piece of iron. In his dream he took the cylinder in his hand, weighing it, and it seemed lighter than it should be if it were solid iron. Waking, he remembered his dream, and looked with interest at the iron keeping a few pieces of paper down. It was a simple object enough, yet night after night it came persistently, she always appearing, also bidding him do something, and pointing to the piece of iron—she with her old smile, and a touch of new, winning, beseeching loveliness. At last, in his dream, he put the thing in a lathe, and turned the end off. Out of it, for it was hollow, began to drop rubies and pearls and precious stones of many kinds; it was full of jewels, inestimable, rare jewels. Always with the jewels falling out his dream ended."

"Did he weigh the real paper-weight in his hand Scotchy?" I asked.

"Yes, he did."

"Was it light?"

"Yes, it was."

"Did he turn the end off?"

"No, he knew the workman who made it had cored it out with sand; he saw them every day at the works putting a core of sand inside their coating to save metal."

"Is there any ending to the story?"

"Yes,—he did not see her ever again."

* * * * *

I pass suddenly and vividly into another night. I am sitting with my arm round Nellie's waist, her head is leaning against my shoulder; sometimes I pass my other hand through her long hair, sometimes I press her face to mine. In the New England village where my mother and I are living all the people are engaged in making boots. I am talking about my prospects. I was living at home because my uncle had fallen into difficulties, and could send me no more money. "Nellie," I say, "I will get a place in the factory; then we can get a cottage of our own,"

"Yes, Teddie," she says, "father can get you a place where he's foreman——"

"Oh! I shan't go there, because I'm going to be foreman myself, and I won't turn him out."

"Brave, kind Teddie, it won't turn father out, will it?" she says.

Then the clock strikes one, and she lets me out. That evening is followed by other evenings, and all alike are filled with the delicious clasp of her soft waist, till one evening I say, "I'm not going to be a shoemaker all my life," and she bids me good-bye at two o'clock, crying and sobbing.

* * * * *

I find myself in a little room. It is a lodging ; I know it well. My clothes are all torn, and there is rage in my heart, for a farmer in New Jersey set his dog at me when I only tried to sell him a book. On my table is a letter; I take it up. My mother writes to tell me Nellie is married; she breaks it to me gently, but I know she is glad; she never liked Nellie.

* * * * *

I am sitting in a room upstairs; it is a large, well-lighted room, with book-shelves all around. I know that I am in Cambridge, living with my mother in a house that we have taken, while I go to the University. A brother of my father's has left us all his money. Much of my time I spend with my mother, the rest over my books. There is a kind of difference and aloofness I feel with the other boys. I am just opening a great parcel, reflecting that it is better to buy books than to try and sell them. I have no friend like Scotchy; I am wishing that I had.

* * * * *

It is a dark, cloudy night, in which but a little space overhead the beams of the street lamps are lost. I am stepping briskly along, carrying a cane. The pavement seems elastic, a breeze sweeps up from Central Park, while in my ears floats the music I have just heard, changing itself into scenes and the rapid passing of figures. Before me are the spacious courts of heaven, wide with the width of a sunny landscape, gleaming with the white illumination of marble. Across the great court comes a heavenly messenger, a boy, bearing on his candid lips a mes-

sage. Two of the blest souls who were sitting there, speaking on some high theme, look up when he approaches. The one is St. Paul, the other I know is St. Simeon Stylites. For his sake the tide of high argument breaks and repeats itself. Beneath the heavenly peace of St. Paul's grand face you still can see the trace of his spiritual wrestling, the marks of the intellectual athlete, the all-encompassing, dominating mind. The far-reaching vision St. Paul was explaining to him had occupied the whole of St. Simeon's attention, and the puzzled, almost anxious, look on his face as he raised it towards the messenger reminded one, though it was heaven, of what his look on earth must have been.

"There is some one come to be judged," said the boy, "a woman."

"Who is she?" asked St. Paul. "What does St. Peter say?"

"St. Peter," the messenger replied, "does not know anything about her, she did not come that way."

"Then she is not a mortal; Simeon, shall we see her?"

"What is she like?" asked St. Simeon.

"I cannot tell," said the heavenly messenger; "she is covered all over and hides her face. She bears a bundle in her arms."

"I think," said St. Simeon, "we can judge her, Paul; it seems to be some penitent; to veil her face is good."

A figure drew near with a mean robe flung all about her, and in her arms a great bundle. But her walk was as the walk of a humbled queen, and in her voice there was the ripple of the waters, the sighing

of the winds, the song of the birds, as she prayed, "Judge me, I have stolen these."

"'Tis well," said St. Paul, "that thou bringest them back. What are they?"

She stooped, rested the bundle on heaven's floor, and opened it. The mean, worn covering was folded back, and there was nothing and yet everything—everything that men have seen of colour in the sunset or in the deep sky. There were the grace of the dappled limbs of the fawn, the lines of strength of the tiger, the wonderful green of the forests, the all-burying forests in their wonderful mazes, the delicate blue of the distance, the depths of the ocean, the semblance and likeness of everything there has been on earth. There, without the substance and body of them, were the grace and beauty of human countenances, the bloom on the cheeks, the vermeil lips, the glance of loving, passionate, ardent, alluring eyes, and the quiet, long, still gaze of dark eyes. There was the glamour and grace and beauty of all that man has ever loved to gaze upon—the tendril-crowned boy Bacchus, in his radiant appeal to the eye, was there, though he was not. There were the flash of white limbs through translucent water, the raised arms of Venus, her head waving like a flower between them. All was there; not the substance of things, but the show of them—all colour, all sights; and the wonderful-voiced woman spoke. Her speaking was like a song, like all the music that ever sounded, like all the sounds that ever were, so rich and full and deep it was—calming, soothing; passion-arousing, awakening, mocking, loving, enticing—the cadence of wind-swept forests, the laughing of a girl

all were in it as she said, "All these are not mine, and I have taken them, all the sounds of my voice, and these I have brought here. Henceforth I will be mute and without all these. Oh, judge me."

St. Simeon hid his face in his hands, for he had never thought to see that in heaven which he had avoided as much as in him lay on earth. But St. Paul, the ardent tent-maker, the endurer of toils, familiar with many climes and men, looked at the mingled show of the wonderful bundle, awake, alert, and ready to inquire how the question that arose should be settled in accordance with his system. He did not listen to St. Simeon, who exclaimed, with still averted eyes, "Thrice happy man! Oh, cast all down into the deepest hell, that, there being no more of those on earth, men may save their souls."

But asked wherefore, these being not hers, she still had taken them, bedecked herself with them, "It was mine," she answered, "at the creation to keep the busy atoms dancing, to turn and twist them on their moving course, playing the shuttle of vibrations in all the system. But men wove robes and garments, inventing light and colour, placing light and colour and sound before me. They praised me, calling me Nature and wonderful, beautiful. I, because I liked their praise, put on these robes that were none of mine, making pretence to be as they would care to see me; all that you see I put on, feigning to be what men praised—I, who all the while have no part in any of these things, whose it is to move the atoms on their ceaseless wheeling."

St Paul was silent, not for the moment discerning how the law and sin bore on all this, when the

greater light of a Presence made them know that another was there.

For thus it is in heaven, if perplexity or doubt assail any of the blest spirits, such is the order of that happy world, the higher spirits there, that dwell in greater illumination and glory of light, reveal themselves, and at their words all lies plain and clear.

To Nature standing suppliant there, begging for judgment and peace, with all that made her fair in man's eyes surrendered by her, the Judge of all spoke:—

"Child, know that, because thou caredst for man's praise, there is that in thee wherewith thou canst be to him all he longs for. Leave here these feigned garments and the voice he has lent thee; go thy way, be to him as thy awakening heart tells thee."

Nature turned and went. On earth a new day began. The light of dawn, the sunset of even, no longer were what man put on her, but were of Nature's own. In all the visible world, in all the joys and beauties of the earth, she began to be herself, not clothed in the feigned robes she wore before, in which, because man had woven them, there was of his evil.

In that new day no more was there deception in the joys men clasped, no longer did the glamour hide an emptiness within, no rose fell crumbling and withered the moment man pressed it to his lips. No longer in all his joys did man perpetually grasp his own imaginations and beyond them—emptiness; no longer did he chase the mask of pleasure for its own sake, seeking but himself. For behind all joys,

all delights, was she filling his soul more full of her, there herself squandering each hour more pleasures than he had ever dreamed of, each almost unmarked, each lost and overwhelmed in the imfolding glory of her awakening heart.

"Very pretty, white limbs flashing through the water is good," says a voice by my ear.

There by my side is my intimate friend, whom I know better than I do any one else.

"It has nothing to do with you. I was thinking of an escape from you," I say.

"And so you made a pretty picture to please me. Lord, what a time we would have in that renovated world!"

And the creature puts out his tongue, licking like an animal licks round its chops—a perfectly beast-like, unconscious gesture—then he goes a step or two ahead, wheels round and faces me.

"Foul brute, shall I never escape you?"

"You don't want to," he says, with an insinuating grin on his animal countenance.

"Keep your place at any rate. I have thoughts you have nothing to do with: you touch and influence me but by a corner of myself."

"We won't quarrel about that," he says. "We are old friends, you know, and you are always thinking about me, really, however much you may seem to go after other things."

He is still standing opposite me. I look straight in his face—a thing I seldom do—looking at him searchingly, inquiringly.

"Ah ! but I remember you different," I say, as I look, "or rather there were two of you, who came

to me together; you, yes, but you were different when the other was with you, you were different. He had so quiet and intense a look on his uplifted face, it was as if he saw an angel. I knew you both, when I felt the heavenly wonder that Nellie should speak to me the day we met outside her father's gate/"

The low face of the creature before me looks perplexed and troubled, as if some human feeling could penetrate him too. "Yes," he says, "there were two of us, but he hadn't my vitality." Then, with a leer, he adds, "Come with me; I am left you."

"To heel, dog!" I say, and he comes crouching after me. As I walk, I see one and another of his kind following or arm in arm with men like myself, and I know that the city is full of them. There comes by a wretched man in rags, blear-eyed, his intimate beside him, so distorted and deformed, I wonder he can crawl. The two are quarrelling. I hear the man say, "You've brought me to this, have you? but see what a fine thing I've made of you."

I turn to him who is following me, saying, "I, calm-lipped, self-controlled, can let all pass wherein you live. I belong to that band which strive for objects you know nothing of."

"Making yourself endlessly wretched," he returns. "You know you have no joy in life save for me, and all you think or do is to give me pleasure."

"It is not so," I say. But he is close to me; he takes my arm familiarly; I know I shall never be rid of him, and do not want to.

* * * * *

"A singular talent you have for making inappropriate observations," says Paget in his drawling voice;

"I know them well. The worthy pair of burghers you have just pointed out as living a simple, patriarchal life have just signed an agreement for their simple Gretchen, whom you appreciate so highly, at Hoffner's Colosseum. Their other girl was a great disappointment to them, she went lame; but they count on this one."

I do not doubt Paget. He employs his leisure, which is ample, in the study of the personnel of the Viennese music halls, but I cannot help remarking: "A pure, innocent girl like that! It is impossible that they mean to give her over to that life."

"They know what they are about. They have been very careful of her; it is faces like that which are most charmingly provocative in the right setting; they lose their value if they begin too young. Come over; I'll introduce you."

We join the trio. The man looks like a respectable sub-official in a Government department. But he has no reserve in discussing his daughter's engagement with my friend. Gretchen sits silent, her eyes cast down. It is a pretty, simple face, fresh and charming.

"Madam," I say suddenly, addressing the mother, "cannot you keep your daughter from that place?" She looks at me offended. I am aware of a look of amusement in Paget's eyes. But in Gretchen's, what is it? She glances at me, and in that glance there is something which moves me strangely. What is it, appeal, gratitude, interest? But her eyes are cast down again before I can read anything for certain.

* * * * *

Into my room comes Paget "Here's the old fox's

answer to your proposal; he says he won't accept any assistance from you to help Gretchen to study for a different branch of the profession; and he won't take a sum to enable her to marry. He considers she has good and honourable prospects in the line he has chosen for her, and he requests you not to see them again, unless you will marry her. He's got an idea—"

"No more of this," I say. "I should be glad to discontinue our acquaintance in future." A feeling of repulsion against these traffickers in maiden innocence and modesty, and against Paget, who had become callous to this kind of thing, comes over me. Gretchen's look is in my eyes—it is appeal, yes, it is a desperate appeal. Paget stands still a moment, then he says, "All right," and goes away. I remain standing—Gretchen my wife! If so, what a horror it would be that she should remain a moment in her present surroundings!

* * * * *

It is my home—this room I find myself in with the fire burning brightly—there Gretchen sitting opposite, looking at it, like me. Her face is an enigma to me still; she does not care to speak in English, and my German does not interest her. All at once, as I am watching her, I hear a voice speaking to her. It is he—that other part of myself that I call my friend.

"Gretchen," I say, "it was not I who spoke to you just now."

"There is no one else here."

"Do you think that was I myself?"

"Yes, of course."

"Gretchen," I exclaim, "it was to save you from such as he that I married you."

"Ich verstehe nicht was du meinest—Liebst du mich nicht?"

"Why, Gretchen, don't you know the kind of love I love you with? I love your happiness, your good, first of all; I would have done anything to make you happy. If it would have made you happy you should have had any money you liked without me."

Her eyes gleam for a moment with a happiness, a gleam as of an imagined happiness, such as I had never seen them shine with before. Then she turns to me and says: "Ach! scherze doch nicht. Die Männer sind alle gleich."

The sudden illumination of her face brings it home to me; I might have known it any moment before. There was a young actor whom I had sometimes seen at her parents' house—it was he whom she loved. She had married me, as she would have danced before the footlights, because she must get money.

And I know that this friend, this part of me, had fooled me; it was he who had directed every move that led me to my marriage, when I thought my motives were so different. You can blame me, you who have never been fooled by this Pan creature, who weaves the exhalations of earth into the shapes he wills, who assumes the garb of pity, duty, sacrifice, speaks in the name of utility, common sense, sanctity, and whatever he finds will gain his ends.

In a moment I know I am to Gretchen but the man who bought her, deprived her of that spark of love at which she warmed her little hands, which

might have become a flame and irradiated her whole life.

There are moments when you realize how absolutely true all your friends say of you is, how false is the impression of yourself you have been living under. I know that the reasons my acquaintances assigned for my marriage were the true ones. Gretchen was a simple little beauty whose charms would certainly have made her a success in her destined profession. Because she had looked at me as a girl cannot help looking at a man who takes an interest in her—no, because my friend had led me, had taken possession of me, I had married her; had very likely spoiled her life too, for she had conceived the idea that, because she gave up the man she fancied, she would have every luxury money could give her.

* * * * *

"Now he's putting his frills on," says Adela Stephenson.

Opposite her is sitting her husband, my old friend Scotchy, concocting in an impressive manner in the tin brazier a welsh rabbit of his own invention, in which bananas replace the cheese.

"He must be a great assistance to you, Mrs. Stephenson."

"Oh, he is."

"I think," said Stephenson, "we might have sherry"—he is evidently deliberating with what fluid he could replace beer.

"I think I said sherry," he repeated, looking at her.

"It is in the cupboard," she replied, with an ostentatiously unconcerned air.

With the air of a martyr he gets up, finds the

sherry, pours in a glassful, and proceeds with his stirring.

"If anything gets very desperate," says Adela, continuing her conversation with me, "I call him in. Louie was desperately naughty yesterday; she's his niece, not mine, so I told him he must punish her. I had punished her enough myself, for she always says something to make me feel mean when I punish her, and I felt very small, for she had been very naughty. So Robert said he would punish her. I told him she would say something to make him feel small, but he was nobly willing. He told her she was to go without her orange for a week at breakfast—she always has one. She said, 'Many children don't have an orange ever.' I don't think he was a bit more successful in his punishments than I was."

Walking away, I reflect that, because of me, Gretchen will never tell any one he's putting his frills on, or its equivalent in German. It doesn't do me good, seeing the little nook Stephenson lives in. What do I care for all the aims or institutions of men? Those with whom I would join, in a desire for rational good, what do they do but push me down into the void and emptiness of my union with Gretchen? All good objects and good people—much more likely I care for bad objects and people: they at least promise me freedom. What good did all that ever I learned do me? It is all barren words, artificial, all a sham, making me so that I cannot know a sham from a true thing, even when it is myself. I catch sight of a notice with a curious word on it It is the board with "UNLEARNER" written on it. I approach.

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. . . I see the look in Natalia's eyes as she listens, see the cottage walls recede as she lives in the palace-home the poets have made for such as she.

* * * * *

. . . The last thread of smoke has vanished; how long it hung suspended in the air! The very last sign and token of her now gone, and solitude enfolding from the air, the sky, the sea wrapping in folds and folds upon my heart.

* * * * *

. . . The waves are over me; I lie moving in the rushing waters, a sodden, inert mass. My meagre existence is over; nothing achieved, nothing done; empty, worthless. Was it worth while that my father and mother should have tended me, loved me, cherished me, for this? The bright dewdrops of the spring of life shone; how different from this I thought I was, but it is over now.

* * * * *

Stay, what is this sudden surprise? Just as truly as I am lying here, rising and sinking with the heave of the waters, so I am in each of the scenes and places I have ever been in, living and acting in them. It has been coming over me in scenes which I thought were vivid memories, but now I know they are actual presences. I am a child again with other children. I see my father: each step, each act, each little thing, I go through again, living the very life I lived before. I am a man with other men and women. I am moving, speaking with them, and they with each other—not only I, but all are living as they ever lived. My whole life has become to me as my body was in the

life just finished. In any part of my life I can be with whomsoever I will: I walk with my little sister, I talk with Scotchy. But an oppressive bond is on me; I do exactly the same things I did before; I say the same things. I cannot get out of the chain of events; cannot say, "How strange it is, Scotchy, that I should have died, and yet you and I be talking here!" Yet though the bond—the fetter of unalterability—is on me, all feeling of loss and of the irrevocable passes away, for all are here; once together I know for ever together.

But watching closely with so eager a curiosity, I see that each of us is not doing exactly the same—and see, our lives are altering.

And a new consciousness comes over me. I see that, like everything else in Nature, our lives are altering, developing, our whole lives in every event and circumstance. I see my life suddenly transformed from the pitiful thing it is. I see that it is changing—the whole of it. It is the body of a higher will, changing, moving, altering in a new direction wherein death does not lie. Tis life, indeed, for what may not my life become? I feel that sudden touch which Nature lays on all those that die, saying to them, "Know! I am ever changing, altering. With me everything is in a state and stage of development I allow not anything to be cast in a rigid mould, not even thy past life in thy imagination."

And the will that acts along the whole line, the will whose body is the whole life—that I catch, fragmentarily present here and there in my life—that will, shown, not in great things, but in minute, almost

invisible changes, that will is what I prize and treasure, for it is the means whereby my life alters, the means by which it is what it has become.

But I long to pass from this wide consciousness; for, while I have it, I am not in the work of altering my life. To do that I must give up this wide view, and, plunging in it part by part, let all else of my life save the present seem like mere memory or expectation.

To this I pass. Meanwhile I see that once I did not fall into my error, and again I shall not. From one state to another I proceed, and in my life, as it now is, I welcome all its life-long burdens as a step upon the way, the necessary attendants upon a progression. My aversion to all the piled-up fabric of human thought, level with the clouds, reaching the foundations of the earth, I understand it well; was not Natalia hidden from me; then? For all thought, all questioning of the unseen, is but a step towards her whose soul moves with ours; all is unable to be understood by those incapable of love. Well did Dante picture wisdom as, for him, the light of the countenance of her who spelt her name really and actually with a B and E. The cold, keen blade of the intellect is beaten from the sorrows of lives on lives. It is only as life after life—each differing from the last in virtue of the will, that has the whole of life for its body—that we in life can picture our true destiny.

And in this brief vision between life and life, in which the soul sees how from life to life events mould and shape themselves, I see that my life has not ever been as it was in this one course. All is

slowly altering from life to life, and in my higher consciousness I see wherefrom, whereunto it moulds itself. I see how each little thing is different, and how in just this, that now I have lived, I grasp the realized results of ages of the higher transverse growth. Once I did not turn back, when the steamer took Natalia on its evanescent water-path, but went with her, leading her to a life which her intolerant spirit could not brook. I know that once I held her hand in death, and she, unmoved by life's failure, turned to me and smiled a look of hope. That lives within me, and I feel that horror of betraying her noble innocence, which is all that remains in life's consciousness of the ghastly ruins of an error in the past. Now I know that I have attained, attained so much as makes me nearer, many a step nearer, to my life with Natalia; for it is only in the world-regard in the care for all life that souls can walk together perfectly, and only so now will Natalia and I walk together. And we shall walk together. Were it not so, I would not tell you this. For we ourselves are larger than the limited life we think is all, and that most holy union of soul and soul, not in one of our fleeting lives, not in many, is it attained. The great personal ends of the world pass over fleeting lives and lives, each life giving us that task which, unless done faithfully, is an inseparable barrier, which, accomplished, is a step. And maybe for a period, as I pass again and again in life through the changes that we in life's concentration think are all, I may not see Natalia. But I know she awaits me. How long it will be I know not, but each moment of silent earnestness, each trace of that great will which

alters all, in all my life, I prize and worship, for it brings me nearer her.

And Gretchen, too, I see her growing—feel that the refusal to bend her instinct of love to time and circumstance is slowly awakening, will gather strength, and sometime she will not be the creature of her parents' wish.

Behind the visions of my unfinished, ended life, I see the figure of the Unlearner, not standing as he did that day upon the sands, but receding, becoming larger, more and more remote, till he is like that space which lies beyond aught we can ever think of, and he seems to say: "Thou shalt attain at last, but so much must first be done."

THE END.

EDITORIAL NOTE TO THE CELEPHAÏS PRESS EDTION

This electronic edition of the second series of C. H. Hinton's *Scientific Romances* was prepared from the following sources found online: (*a*) HTML transcription of "Many Dimensions" prepared by Eric Eldred from the anthology *Speculations on the Fourth Dimension* (New York: Dover, 1980) and posted on the Eldritch Press pages at ibiblio.org; (*b*) Page images and unproofed OCR plaintext of the 1888 pamphlet edition of "The Education of the Imagination" bound up together with the pamphlet editions of the first series of *Scientific Romances*, posted at archive.org and (*c*) Page images and unproofed OCR plaintext of the 1895 Swan Sonnenschein / Macmillan edition of *Stella and an Unfinished Communication*, also posted at archive.org. With the texts from (*b*) and (*c*), layout &c. of the original print editions has been preserved; obviously it has not been possible in the present edition to exactly reproduce layout, pagination &c. of the original print edition of *Scientic Romances* series II.

Electronic editions of the first series of Hinton's *Scientific Romances* ("What is the Fourth Dimension," "The Persion King, or the Law of the Valley," "A Plane World," "A Picture of our Universe" and "Casting out the Self") and *The Fourth Dimension* (including *A Language of Space*) have already been issued by Celephaïs Press.